

## Article

# Participation in Active Sport Tourism and Life Satisfaction: Comparing Golf, Snowboarding, and Long-Distance Running

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**Abstract:** Research has shown that participation in sport tourism can enhance wellbeing. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between wellbeing generated through participation in active sport tourism and overall life satisfaction. Three different types of active sport tourism (i.e., golf, snowboarding, and long-distance running) were compared to explore whether the type of experience impacts the relationship between active sport tourism wellbeing and life satisfaction. Broaden-and-build theory was used as a theoretical foundation. Data were collected via an online self-administered questionnaire. Respondents were recruited via a Qualtrics panel ( $N = 418$ ). Analysis of variance indicated that snowboarders rated the positive emotions acquired from active sport tourism significantly lower than golfers and runners. Furthermore, hierarchical multiple regression showed a significantly stronger relationship between positive emotions and life satisfaction for golfers and runners compared to snowboarders. Theoretical contributions and practical implications are discussed.

**Keywords:** active sport tourism; wellbeing; golf; snowboarding; running; life satisfaction



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## 1. Introduction

Active sport tourism experiences are associated with positive emotions, enhanced social connections, accomplishment, a state of flow, and meaning [1,2], and therefore result in enhanced wellbeing as defined by positive psychology [3]. Research shows that wellbeing is a correlate of psychological, socio-economic, and environmental factors [4–6]. Within the tourism, recreation, and sport scholarship, the contribution of recreational sport pursuits to overall wellbeing has been evidenced [1,2,7,8]. Such pursuits for many (e.g., skiers, snowboarders) involve travel to access the required settings which leads such activities to cross over into the realm of active sport tourism which is defined as travel to participate in leisure-based sports [9].

Presumably, active sport tourism experiences generate a high sense of wellbeing since the positive effects of physical activity are combined with the travel effect [10]. Travel effect commonly refers to an improved state of wellbeing generated from an escape from a high-stress daily routine to a more relaxed vacation environment [11]. While several empirical studies have found positive association between participation in active sport tourism and overall wellbeing, there is a gap in our knowledge of the effect of types of experience. Although active sport tourism includes a diverse range of activities taking place in distinct natural environments and/or built facilities, our knowledge of the influence of such factors on the sense of wellbeing that tourists acquire from their experiences is still limited. To address this gap in the literature, this study compared the wellbeing generated from participation in three different types of active sport tourism: golf, long-distance running, and snowboarding.

Active sport tourism has been considered one of the central pillars within the sport tourism research stream [12,13]. While scholars have focused on various sport and leisure activities, ‘active sport tourists’ is the term generally referred to individuals who travel to participate in such leisure activities for obtaining pleasurable experiences [9]. Snow-sports and golf have been of great interest to researchers since the early stages of sport tourism scholarship [14,15], likely due to the fact that participants of both sports are economically privileged groups who are more likely to travel to participate in their sport [9]. However, over the last decade, with a trend towards adoption of active lifestyles which coincided with a growing number of mass participation community sport events (e.g., marathons, triathlons), long-distance running started to receive attention as another form of active sport tourism [1].

The three sports (golf, running, snowboarding) are different in terms of the triad of activities, people, and places that define sport tourism experiences [16]. Specifically, runners and snowboarders experience higher levels of physical exertion, high degree of risk and excitement (possibly an adrenaline rush or runner’s high) while golfers have more relaxing vacations and experience a lower level of travel stress. Additionally, within the United States, while most of the snowboarders need to travel long distances to mountainous areas, runners and golfers usually are able to access their sport setting within a short distance from home. Travel distance is closely linked to length of the trip, and additional travel activities that sport tourists participate in during a sport vacation. Environmental factors (e.g., weather or the required settings) constitute another point of difference for the three sports; snow mountains, golf courses, and urban/suburban settings can have distinct influences on the cognitive and affective aspects of a sport tourist’s experience [17,18]. Based on cognitive appraisal theory [19], such different experiences derived from various types of active sport tourism can serve as stimuli, influencing the formation of sport tourists’ emotions. This contention can provide us with a solid base for comparing the wellbeing outcomes of tourism associated with each of the sports. All the aforementioned factors have been found to be correlates of wellbeing: positive emotions [20], travel activities [21], income and education [22], travel distance and length of the trip [23], and weather [6].

The purpose of this study was to compare the wellbeing outcomes of participation in the three aforementioned types of active sport tourism experience and the subsequent effect on overall life satisfaction. Findings will contribute to the emerging body of knowledge on tourism and wellbeing by investigating the heterogeneity of the experience outcomes.

## 2. Literature Review

### *Positive Psychology, Wellbeing, and Tourism*

The mainstream psychological studies and practices after World War II mainly focused on curing mental illnesses [24]. It has been only over the last couple of decades that positive psychology and a focus on prevention emerged and has been receiving attention as a new direction in psychology [3,24,25]. Positive psychology emphasizes preventing mental illnesses through nurturing positive experiences and helping individuals to flourish [24]. From this perspective, wellbeing is not only the absence of mental disorders but also the presence of positive mechanisms such as positive emotions and positive relationships [24]. A review of literature showed two predominant approaches in studying wellbeing: eudemonic or hedonic [26]. Hedonism assumes wellbeing to be positive affects such as pleasure and gratitude while eudemonism suggests wellbeing includes cognitive and conative elements such as meaning, achievement, and engagement [3].

Over the last two decades or so, positive psychology has received increasing attention from tourism scholars. A hedonic approach has been popular in investigating whether positive feelings (e.g., excitement, satisfaction) generated during tourism experiences (as one domain of life) contribute to enhancement of individuals’ overall wellbeing/life satisfaction [21,27,28]. It has been found that expectation of a trip is related to heightened pre-trip happiness [29]. Mitas and colleagues (2012) [30] found that overall positive emotions, and specifically joy and interest, were risen both prior and during a leisure trip.

From a bottom-up spillover perspective that postulates overall satisfaction with life is an accumulation of satisfaction with different domains such as job, family, and leisure, Sirgy et al. (2011) [31] found that traveling can affect tourists' wellbeing positively through mechanisms such as escape from routine, and also negatively because of travel fatigue and stress. Similar results have been found in other studies indicating that while vacations have hedonic value for tourists, a range of travel-related issues create negative affects that could potentially counteract the positive feelings, namely, cultural shock [32], relationship issues, worrying about travel risk and safety [17], and homesickness [32,33]. Thus, plausibly, vacations that involve higher levels of stress or disagreeable incidents are associated with lower levels of happiness [29]. Certainly, type of the activity and environment are among antecedents of the consequential positive and negative emotions. Larsen et al.'s (2009) [17] study showed that when tourists perceive activities or places as risky, they experience more travel worry which subsequently affects the overall happiness gained from the trip. In terms of the activity effect, Shin and You (2013) [34] examined the relationship between the type of leisure activity and life satisfaction among Korean adolescents and found that sport activities were positively related to leisure satisfaction which subsequently had a positive effect on overall life satisfaction. However, sedentary activities had a negative effect for female students and no effect for male students [34]. Bosnjak et al.'s (2016) [4] study on active sport tourism showed that differences go beyond a binary divide between active and passive leisure. Different sport tourism activities yield different emotional outcomes depending on perceived difficulty, required effort, importance of the activity for the participant, and potential self-realization, all of which were predictors of self-expressiveness (i.e., reflection of self-identity through an activity). Active sport tourists that experienced higher degrees of self-expressiveness during a trip were happier with their trip experience [4].

While in more recent studies of positive travel effects, scholars have also considered the eudemonic aspects of wellbeing such as sense of accomplishment acquired from achieving travel goals [35], there have been controversies over discriminant validity of the hedonic and eudemonic domains of wellbeing in tourism contexts. Several studies have noted the overlap in eudaimonic and hedonic domains of tourist wellbeing [1,2,8,36]. It has been discussed that eudemonic experiences result in hedonic feelings while the opposite is not always the case and that all hedonic feelings are not linked to eudemonia [26,36]. Relevant to this study, in a sport tourism context [2] discussed that the overlap in different domains could indicate that people assess the wellbeing acquired from tourism experiences as an overall sense of fulfillment or satisfaction with that experience. Hence, while tourism experiences involve both eudemonia and hedonia, in tourists' minds, all elements are so closely linked that they are manifested as an overall positive or negative affect towards that experience, commonly known as the feel-good factor [2]. Considering findings of the previous studies and the discussions around hedonic and eudemonic aspects of wellbeing, a hedonic approach was deemed adequate for the purpose of this study. Therefore, Fredrickson's (2001) [20] broaden-and-build theory was used as a theoretical foundation.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

Previous research provided some evidence that sense of wellbeing obtained from experiences vary based on the type of activities that individuals become involved in as well as their perceptions of the surrounding environment [4,17]. Based on the bottom-up spillover approach, overall life satisfaction is an accumulation of satisfaction with individual domains of life. Fredrickson's (2001) [20] broaden-and-build theory explicates the short- and long-term effects of positive emotions on coping with negative incidents and on overall wellbeing. Accordingly, positive emotions broaden individuals' minds in the short-term which helps them develop lasting intellectual, physical, psychological, and social reservoirs. Hence, while positive emotions are usually situational and short-lived, in the long term, individuals can draw upon their reservoirs to offset negative emotions. She further postulated that experiencing positive emotions with others creates long-term unions that individuals can capitalize on in the future [20].

Founded on the broaden-and-build theory and previous research on active sport tourism and wellbeing, we hypothesized that all sport tourism experiences generate positive emotions and help the participants develop resources that enhance their overall life satisfaction and wellbeing. The main purpose was to assess the effect of the experience type (golf, snowboarding, and long-distance running) on the type and amount of generated positive emotions, and on overall life satisfaction. Three research questions were posed:

- (1) Do different types of active sport tourism generate different types of positive emotions?
- (2) Is there a relationship between active sport tourism positive emotions and overall life satisfaction?
- (3) Does the type of active sport tourism moderate the relationship between active sport tourism positive emotions and overall life satisfaction?

## 4. Methods

### 4.1. Data Collection

Purposive sampling method was used to collect data, and an online panel of active sport tourists (golfers, runners, and snowboarders) were purchased from Qualtrics. Individuals who had taken at least one trip related to their sport over two years before the data collection were recruited. To minimize measurement and response error, the questionnaire was pretested through a panel of experts ( $N = 11$ ) and a pilot test was conducted with a small group of respondents ( $N = 50$ ). The final version of the questionnaire was distributed after the process of pretesting and revising was completed.

Data were collected from active sport tourists within the U.S., so the number of participants across the three sports was deemed infinite. For a population size greater than 100,000 where the confidence interval is 95%, and  $p = 0.5$ , a sample of  $n = 400$  individuals gives a precision level of  $\pm 5$  [37]. A stratified sample of individuals across the three sports, 18 years or older, who had taken at least one trip related to their sport over two years prior to the data collection were recruited. Institutional review board approval was acquired prior to initiation of the study and respondents were asked to read the informed consent statement at the beginning of the survey and agree to participate. Data were screened for outliers, skewness, and kurtosis, and no severe violation of the assumptions of statistical tests were found. The screening process resulted in 418 complete usable cases that were used in further analysis: golf  $n = 126$ , snowboarding  $n = 153$ , running  $n = 139$ .

### 4.2. Participants

Respondents' age ranged from 18 to 77 years old ( $M = 37.22$ ,  $SD = 13.09$ ). Golfers ( $M = 43.89$ ,  $SD = 14.71$ ) were older than snowboarders ( $M = 33.36$ ,  $SD = 9.42$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and runners ( $M = 35.41$ ,  $SD = 12.8$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). The proportion of male and female respondents was almost equal: 50.9% of the respondents were female ( $N = 213$ ; golf 31.9%,  $n = 68$ ; snowboarding 36.6%,  $n = 78$ ; running 31.4%,  $n = 67$ ) and 49.04% were male ( $N = 205$ ; golf 28.3%,  $n = 58$ ; snowboarding 36.6%,  $n = 75$ ; running 35.1%,  $n = 72$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 1.27$ ,  $p = 0.52$ ). Regarding racial background, the greatest percentage were White/Caucasian (73.4%,  $N = 307$ ; golf 79.4%,  $n = 100$ ; snowboarding 75.2%,  $n = 115$ ; running 66.2%,  $n = 92$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 1.52$ ,  $p = 0.13$ ). More than half of the respondents were married (43.5%,  $N = 182$ ; golf 52.4%,  $n = 66$ ; snowboarding 37.3%,  $n = 57$ ; running 42.4%,  $n = 59$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 1.81$ ,  $p = 0.07$ ) followed by singles ( $N = 171$ , 40.9%, golf 31.7%,  $n = 40$ ; snowboarding 44.4%  $n = 68$ ; running 45.3%,  $n = 63$ ); the largest number did not have any children (44.3%,  $N = 185$ ; golf 33.3%,  $n = 42$ ; snowboarding 51%,  $n = 78$ ; running 46.8%,  $n = 65$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 1.46$ ,  $p = 0.10$ ). In terms of education, the largest number had a bachelor's degree (34.2%,  $N = 143$ ; golf 32.5%,  $n = 41$ ; snowboarding 30.1%,  $n = 46$ ; running 40.3%,  $n = 56$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 2.88$ ,  $p = 0.02$ ). With respect to employment status, more than half of the respondents indicated that they had full-time jobs (61.2%,  $N = 256$ ; golf 61.1%,  $n = 77$ ; snowboarding 61.4%,  $n = 94$ ; running 61.2%,  $n = 85$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 0.16$ ,  $p = 0.85$ ). The biggest percentage of the respondents reported an annual income of \$100,000 or more (22.5%,  $N = 94$ ; golf 29.4%,  $n = 37$ ; snowboarding 20.3%,  $n = 31$ ; running 18.7%,  $n = 26$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 1.38$ ,  $p = 0.14$ ).

The largest number of the respondents indicated that they were intermediate level in their respective sport (40.3%,  $N = 56$ ; golf 48.4%,  $n = 61$ ; snowboarding 37.9%,  $n = 58$ ; running 40.3%,  $n = 56$ ). In terms of travel profile, more than half of the respondents took sport trips with their friends (54.7%,  $N = 76$ ; golf 69.8%,  $n = 88$ ; snowboarding 75.8%,  $n = 116$ ; running 54.7%,  $n = 76$ ) followed by solo travelers (23.7%,  $N = 33$ ; golf 15.9%,  $n = 20$ ; snowboarding 26.1%,  $n = 40$ ; running 43.2%,  $n = 60$ ), and family members (39.6%,  $N = 55$ ; golf 60.3%,  $n = 76$ ; snowboarding 72.5%,  $n = 111$ ; running 39.6%,  $n = 55$ ). The types of accommodation most commonly used during the sport trips were hotels (73.4%,  $N = 102$ ; golf 81%,  $n = 102$ ; snowboarding 61.4%,  $n = 94$ ; running 73.4%,  $n = 102$ ), and staying with family/friends who lived in the destination (30.9%,  $N = 43$ ; golf 28.6%,  $n = 36$ ; snowboarding 41.2%,  $n = 63$ ; running 30.9%,  $n = 43$ ).

#### 4.3. Measurements

The online survey consisted of three sections that contained measures of positive emotions, life satisfaction, and demographics. A single item was used to determine participants' type of sport "What is the sport that you most frequently travel to participate in?" Active Sport Tourism Positive Emotions (ASTPE) were examined through three items that measured joy, content, and positivity on an eleven-point scale where 0 = not at all and 10 = completely as suggested by Butler & Kern (2016) [38]. For example, "To what extent does taking [golf/snowboard/running] trips make you feel joyful?". The scale showed adequate internal consistency ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ).

Life satisfaction was measured by using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985) [25]. Items were placed on an eleven-point scale where 0 = strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree. The internal consistency of the scale was adequate ( $\alpha = 0.92$ ).

Demographic variables included age, employment, education, gender, and relationship status. Age was operationalized as a categorical ordinal variable (1 = 18–29; 2 = 30–39; 3 = 40–49; 4 = 50–59; 5 = 60 or older), employment as a binary variable (0 = unemployed; 1 = employed), education as a categorical ordinal variable (0 = high school or less; 1 = undergraduate; 2 = graduate), and relationship status as a binary variable (0 = never married/separated/divorced; 1 = having partner/married). The above chi-square analyses indicated that a few demographic variables (e.g., age, education) are significantly different across three active sport tourism types. Previous literature also demonstrated that these demographic variables were found to be associated with wellbeing [22], and therefore were used as controlling variables.

#### 4.4. Data Analysis

To address research question 1 (i.e., testing sport-based differences in positive emotions), a one-way ANOVA was conducted with 'type of sport' as grouping variable and the three ASTPEs as dependent variables. We used Bonferroni post hoc analysis to further specify the specific differences among three sport sub-groups. Regarding our second and third research questions, we first conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to ensure the validity of the psychometric scales (i.e., ASTPE and SWLS). Kline's (2005) [39] criterion was utilized to test the goodness of the model fit per which good fit is indicated by values greater than 0.90 for Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and less than 0.08 for Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). The validity of the measurement scales was confirmed when a measurement model including ASTPE and SWLS was tested and demonstrated good fit indices ( $\chi^2/df = 27.94/19$ ,  $p = 0.085$ ; CFI = 0.996; TLI = 0.994; RMSEA = 0.034; SRMR = 0.023). The items for positive emotions and life satisfaction were then averaged for further analysis. We then ran hierarchical multiple regression and slope analyses to investigate the relationships between type of active sport tourism experience, ASTPE, and LS, controlling for demographic characteristics (i.e., age, employment, education, and relationship status). To examine the moderating effects of the type of experience on the

relationship between ASTPE and LS, interaction terms were created by multiplying the average score of ASTPE and sport-type dummy variables. Long-distance running was used as a baseline and two dummy variables were included for the type of experience: (a) golf interaction: 1 if golf and 0 if otherwise, and (b) snowboard interaction: 1 if snowboard and 0 if otherwise. SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 26.0 were used to analyze the data.

## 5. Results

The mean ratings for all three ASTPE items were above the mid-point of the scale, however, ANOVA indicated statistically significant between group differences in how the three items were rated  $F(6, 1576) = 72.041, p < 0.05$  (Table 1).

**Table 1.** ASTPE for three types of active sport tourism ANOVA.

| ASTPE    | Golf<br>( <i>n</i> = 126) |           | Snowboard<br>( <i>n</i> = 153) |           | Running<br>( <i>n</i> = 139) |           | Between<br>Group <i>df</i> | Within<br>Group <i>df</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>P</i> |
|----------|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------|----------|
|          | <i>M</i>                  | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i>                       | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i>                     | <i>SD</i> |                            |                           |          |          |
| Joyful   | 7.44                      | 1.74      | 7.09                           | 1.90      | 7.37                         | 1.91      | 2                          | 415                       | 1.420 *  | 0.243    |
| Content  | 7.34                      | 2.02      | 6.31                           | 2.22      | 7.20                         | 2.13      | 2                          | 415                       | 6.08 **  | 0.002    |
| Positive | 7.52                      | 1.87      | 6.78                           | 2.11      | 7.46                         | 1.97      | 2                          | 415                       | 9.95 **  | 0.000    |

Note: \*  $p < 0.05$ . \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

Bonferroni post hoc analysis showed that golfers and runners rated the two types of ASTPE (i.e., content and positive) statistically significantly higher than snowboarders, whereas joyful was not significantly different (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Post hoc analyses of pairwise comparisons Bonferroni.

| ASTPE    | Type of Sport<br>(I) | Type of Sport<br>(J) | Mean Difference<br>(I–J) | <i>P</i> |
|----------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Joyful   | Golf                 | Snowboard            | 0.353                    | 0.348    |
|          |                      | Running              | 0.078                    | 1.00     |
|          | Snowboard            | Golf                 | −0.353                   | 0.348    |
|          |                      | Running              | −0.275                   | 0.623    |
|          | Running              | Golf                 | −0.078                   | 1.00     |
|          |                      | Snowboard            | 0.275                    | 0.623    |
| Content  | Golf                 | Snowboard            | 1.03 *                   | 0.000    |
|          |                      | Running              | 0.140                    | 1.000    |
|          | Snowboard            | Golf                 | −1.03 *                  | 0.000    |
|          |                      | Running              | −0.894 *                 | 0.001    |
|          | Running              | Golf                 | −0.140                   | 1.000    |
|          |                      | Snowboard            | 0.894 *                  | 0.001    |
| Positive | Golf                 | Snowboard            | 0.739 *                  | 0.007    |
|          |                      | Running              | 0.063                    | 1.00     |
|          | Snowboard            | Golf                 | −0.739 *                 | 0.007    |
|          |                      | Running              | −0.676 *                 | 0.012    |
|          | Running              | Golf                 | −0.063                   | 1.00     |
|          |                      | Snowboard            | 0.676 *                  | 0.012    |

\* Note: The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted to test whether ASTPE is related to LS and whether the relationship is moderated by the type of sport (i.e., long-distance running, golf, and snowboarding). The analysis involved three steps: First, age, employment, education, and relationship status were entered as control variables and accounted for 5.8% of variance in LS,  $F(4, 413) = 6.39, p < 0.001$ . Second, ASTPE and two dummy variables were entered where the dummy variables accounted for 21.1% of the variances in ASTPE,  $F(7, 410) = 16.91, p < 0.001$ . Third, the two interaction terms (a and

b) were entered and accounted for 23.6% of variance that resulted in 2.5% difference in variances compared to step 2,  $F(9, 408) = 13.94, p < 0.001$ . The snowboard interaction (ASTPE  $\times$  snowboard) was found to be statistically significant ( $b = -0.55, p < 0.05$ ). The summary of results is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** The relationship between ASTPE and LS hierarchical multiple regression.

|  | Model 1 | Model 2  | Model 3 |
|--|---------|----------|---------|
| ASTPE                                    | —       | 0.39 **  | 0.48 ** |
| Golf (1 = Golf; 0 = otherwise)           | —       | −0.03    | −0.04   |
| Snowboard (1 = Snowboard; 0 = otherwise) | —       | −0.16 ** | 0.36    |
| ASTPE $\times$ Golf                      | —       | —        | −0.04   |
| ASTPE $\times$ Snowboard                 | —       | —        | −0.55 * |
| Age                                      | 0.01    | −0.03    | −0.02   |
| Employment                               | −0.02   | −0.03    | −0.03   |
| Education                                | 0.17 ** | 0.18 **  | 0.19 ** |
| Partner                                  | 0.14 ** | 0.12 **  | 0.12 ** |
| R <sup>2</sup>                           | 0.06    | 0.21     | 0.24    |

Note: \*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

## 6. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to compare the wellbeing outcomes of participation in three types of active sport tourism experience: golf, snowboarding, and long-distance running, and the subsequent effect on overall life satisfaction. Applying a hedonic approach and founding the study on Fredrickson's (2001) [20] broaden-and-build theory, three research questions were posed to investigate the wellbeing outcomes of active sport tourism experiences, the relationship with overall life satisfaction, and the moderating effect of the type of experience. Previous studies tend to discuss sport tourism as a singular concept or present research into one activity or a small range of similar activities. Our findings confirm the call to consider the unique contributions of participation in various types of active sport tourism.

Generally, all three types of emotions that were used to measure ASTPE (i.e., joy, content, positivity) were rated highly which aligns with previous research findings that participation in active sport tourism generates a sense of wellbeing [2,8]. With regard to our first research question, although there were no significant differences in positive emotions between runners and golfers, the significantly lower ratings in content and positivity were observed for snowboarders compared to runners and golfers. Such findings are somewhat inconsistent with previous literature, demonstrating that snowboarding trips generate a higher sense of wellbeing compared to golf and running [8]. A possible interpretation regarding the lower level of positive emotions among snowboarders could be related to its limited seasonal window. Compared to running and golfing, snow-based sports are usually experienced during winter [40]. The experience could lead to the formation of emotions (i.e., content and joy), but they could fade over time unless individuals are continuously experienced. Although such an interpretation is based on the authors' speculation, a longitudinal design that focuses on the effects of sport tourism activity types may generate different findings.

Furthermore, it was found that while golfers and runners are similar in how changes in positive emotions impact their life satisfaction, snowboarders experience less of an impact which, again, was contradictory to our initial assumption regarding snowboarding, that as a high-intensity sport that takes place in cold weather, it produces more dopamine and hence generates more positive emotions compared to other sports. This can be explained by negative emotions that may possibly undo some of the positive emotions generated during the trip [20]. Within the U.S., snowboarding requires long-distance travel for most people which is usually associated with more hassle, higher cost, stress, and travel fatigue. Furthermore, snowboarding as an extreme sport is perceived as a high-risk activity which may create additional stress for the tourist. A combination of these, all

of which have been found to negatively impact the wellbeing obtained from tourism experiences [17,21,23,29], could explain the smaller impact of snowboarding on positive emotions and life satisfaction compared to golf and running. In addition, unlike golf and long-distance running, snowboarding is a highly seasonal activity that individuals may seldom imagine during summer. Such a sport tourism activity may have difficulties in consistently generating nostalgia. Based on the hedonic treadmill hypothesis [41], such a seasonal activity might be inferior, as consistently generating nostalgic sport tourism experiences in the mind of sport tourists can be challenging.

This study addressed the gap in sport tourism and wellbeing literature regarding the independent effect of different factors, herein type of sport, on the wellbeing generated through experiences. This was our first step in developing a multifaceted multidimensional model that will synthesize the correlates of wellbeing and illustrate a nexus of influential socio-economic and psychological factors in the context of active sport tourism.

Findings regarding the contribution of active sport tourism to life satisfaction can be useful for policy makers and marketing practitioners. This is particularly relevant at this time when the COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impacts on individual and collective global wellbeing. The findings demonstrated that three sports in this study (i.e., golf, running, and snowboarding) deemed to contribute to positive emotions and life satisfaction. Furthermore, these activities are enjoyed in an open-air environment, which could be considered a safe option to avoid infection. Hence, policy makers whose primary concern is the public wellbeing can regard active sport tourism activities as a good travel option in returning to the new normal. From the marketing perspective, since sport tourists who participated in snowboarding rated their positive emotions relatively lower than runners and golfers, snow sport destinations may consider providing further support for visitors to encourage continued participation. On top of providing enhanced safety services at the resorts and facilitating the travel process to combat travel stress, fatigue, and risk perception, it is presumably imperative to utilize technologies to remind sport tourists of positive experiences derived from snow-based sport to keep their positive emotions at a high level, backed by hedonic treadmill hypothesis [41].

We acknowledge that, like other research, this study has limitations and delimitations. The instrument was relatively long which might have caused respondent fatigue. Since a paid panel of respondents were recruited, a delimitation of this study could be problems related to non-probability sampling such as coverage error whereby all members of a population do not have a nonzero chance for taking part in the study [42]. Furthermore, the majority of the participants in all three types of active sport tourism are white, educated, and from upper socio-economic classes [9], hence, the result may not apply to participants from distinct backgrounds. However, this delimitation provides an avenue for future research. Investigating optimal frequency of active sport trips and also ideal length of the trips could be another direction for future research.

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