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**ANALYZING THE CONSUMER VALUE DIMENSIONS
OF RURAL TOURISM**

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY AND FUTURES STUDIES

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PH. D. DISSERTATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| LIST OF FIGURES | 7 |
| LIST OF TABLES..... | 8 |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | 10 |
| INTRODUCTION | 11 |
| 1. THE INTERPRETATION FRAME OF RURAL TOURISM | 15 |
| 1.1. INTERNATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF RURAL TOURISM..... | 16 |
| 1.2. DEFINITIONS IN HUNGARY..... | 20 |
| 1.2.1. <i>Organization-level approaches.....</i> | 20 |
| 1.2.2. <i>Researchers' interpretations.....</i> | 23 |
| 1.2.3. <i>The summary of Hungarian interpretations.....</i> | 25 |
| 1.3. SYNTHESISED INTERPRETATION..... | 25 |
| 2. THE ROLE OF VALUE CREATION IN THE COMPETITIVENESS OF SERVICE PROVIDERS..... | 28 |
| 2.1. THE DEFINITION OF COMPETITIVENESS AND ITS COMPONENTS..... | 28 |
| 2.1.1. <i>Approaches of competitiveness</i> | 28 |
| 2.1.2. <i>Competitiveness at micro-level</i> | 31 |
| 2.2. THE CONTENT OF VALUE CREATION..... | 33 |
| 2.2.1. <i>The relationship of consumer demand and corporate success</i> | 33 |
| 2.2.2. <i>The definition and components of consumer value</i> | 34 |
| 2.2.3. <i>Consumer value in the context of experience</i> | 38 |
| 3. VALUE – EXPERIENCE RELATIONSHIPS IN TOURISM | 45 |
| 3.1. CONSUMER VALUE DIMENSIONS IN TOURISM..... | 45 |
| 3.2. THE INTERPRETATION AND MODELS OF TOURISTIC EXPERIENCE | 49 |
| 3.3. EMPIRICAL STUDIES WHICH EXAMINE THE RELATIONSHIP OF TOURISTIC EXPERIENCES AND VALUES..... | 55 |
| 3.3.1. <i>International researches</i> | 55 |
| 3.3.2. <i>Hungarian researches</i> | 60 |
| 3.3.3. <i>The summary of empirical research findings.....</i> | 61 |
| 4. THE METHODOLOGY OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES | 64 |
| 4.1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND AIMS | 64 |
| 4.2. THE STRUCTURE AND METHODS OF RESEARCH..... | 68 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| 5. RESEARCH FINDINGS | 74 |
| 5.1 THE FIRST PHASE OF THE RESEARCH: INDICATOR CREATION..... | 74 |
| 5.1.1 <i>Value and experience indicators identified in previous researches</i> | 74 |
| 5.1.2 <i>Value and experience indicators identified in semi-qualitative consumer interviews</i> | 76 |
| 5.2 THE SECOND PHASE OF THE RESEARCH: EXPERT INTERVIEWS..... | 78 |
| 5.3 THE THIRD PHASE OF THE RESEARCH: LARGE SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY | 80 |
| 5.3.1 <i>Hypotheses of the research and their interpretational frame due to the transformation of the country....</i> | 80 |
| 5.3.2 <i>The findings of the questionnaire survey</i> | 85 |
| 6. SUMMARY | 110 |
| 6.1. FINDINGS OF THE HYPOTHESIS ANALYSIS | 110 |
| 6.2 HUNGARIAN AND INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON | 113 |
| 6.3 THE SIGNIFICANCE AND THE BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH | 116 |
| REFERENCES | 118 |
| PUBLICATIONS IN THE TOPIC | 130 |
| ANNEXES..... | 133 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|-----|
| Figure 1: The content of rural tourism in my initial interpretation | 26 |
| Figure 2: The relationship of rural and countryside tourism | 26 |
| Figure 3: The theoretical connections of my field of research..... | 30 |
| Figure 4: Four areas of the experience | 40 |
| Figure 5: Experience pyramid | 50 |
| Figure 6: The development of touristic experience researches | 52 |
| Figure 7: The possible components of touristic experience | 53 |
| Figure 8: The system of consumer experience components in tourism-hospitality | 54 |
| Figure 9: The structure of consumer value | 63 |
| Figure 10: The connecting points of my research questions..... | 67 |
| Figure 11: Amount of rural accommodation and capacity (1998-2011)..... | 83 |
| Figure 12: Distribution of rural accommodation capacity (on 31 December 2010)..... | 84 |
| Figure 13: Number of guests and guest nights in rural tourism (1998-2011)..... | 85 |
| Figure 14: Distribution of the sample according to age groups..... | 87 |
| Figure 15: Distribution of the sample according to qualification..... | 88 |
| Figure 16: Perception of the price of accommodation | 89 |
| Figure 17: Distribution of the sample based on motivation | 91 |
| Figure 18: Distribution of motivations according to age..... | 92 |
| Figure 19: Distribution of motivations according to regions..... | 93 |
| Figure 20: Distribution of motivations based on people travelling together..... | 94 |
| Figure 21: The content of rural tourism as reflected in the empirical study..... | 96 |
| Figure 22: The concentration of physical environment indicators..... | 98 |
| Figure 23: Concentration of interaction indicators | 100 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table 1: The direction and content of the approaches to rural tourism | 18 |
| Table 2: The direction of tourist motivation in rural tourism..... | 19 |
| Table 3: Rural attractions and the products of rural tourism | 21 |
| Table 4: Selected one-dimensional value interpretations..... | 36 |
| Table 5: The directions of multi-dimensional customer value researches..... | 36 |
| Table 6: Comparison of consumer value approaches..... | 37 |
| Table 7: Value dimensions in tourism according to highlighted empirical studies | 62 |
| Table 8: Findings of the semi-qualitative research | 77 |
| Table 9: List of indicators evaluated by experts..... | 79 |
| Table 10: Distribution of subjects in the sample with materialistic – spender features..... | 89 |
| Table 11: Distribution of subjects with personality traits preferring modern – traditional values ... | 90 |
| Table 12: Order of preference of programs..... | 95 |
| Table 13: IPA values of the indicators of the physical environment | 97 |
| Table 14: IPA values of interaction-related indicators | 99 |
| Table 15: Value factors in rural tourism..... | 102 |
| Table 16: The order of importance and dimensions of rural tourism’s consumer value factors.. | 105 |
| Table 17: Factor matrix of guests’ experiences | 106 |
| Table 18: Characteristics of rural tourism based on guests experiences | 108 |
| Table 19: Order of importance of consumer value dimensions..... | 109 |
| Table 20: Summarised evaluation of hypotheses..... | 113 |
| Table 21: International comparison of my research findings..... | 114 |

MOTTO

„Getting to know foreign lands, cities and people is the oldest and
most excellent way to inner enrichment.”

(Abu Ibn Safhar, 3rd century BC)

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INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the third millennium we can see that the desire for experiences and intellectual challenges is strengthening and becoming more and more intertwined with the shifting of consumer behaviour from material values towards ethical and intellectual values. This is a clear reaction to the materialistic orientation of the consumer society. Instead of strongly materialistic factors, in the “new economy” or “experience economy” intellectual skills and abilities are the major creators of value, in the economic sense. However, a high level of material consumption is also necessary so that post-materialistic values could come forward. Complete industries were built upon these values, such as the production of organic food or sports equipment, as well as rural tourism offering experiences. Nevertheless, the multitude of offered products and services, the fast selection and the de-materialisation of consumption are all pointing towards one direction: the consumer is becoming more and more unreliable with increasingly complex preferences (Szabó – Hámori [2006]).

The travellers’ expectations of touristic value and adventure have also significantly transformed. Holidays that offer standard, but also individualized services are more highly respected. More and more people recognize that a crowded and polluted city may not necessarily be the best option for relaxation after stressful working days, thus they often aim to find romance, culture, as well as silence and peace offered by the nature of the countryside in the village.

Studying the role of the country and the village in tourism has been in the focus of my interest since I was a student. I wrote my thesis in 2007 about the supply-side success factors of rural touristic destinations. During my PhD studies, I revealed my ideas in several conferences on tourism, regarding different aspects of tourism, such as its economic and social role; its competitiveness; its effects on the quality of life, but I also began dealing with the issue of why rural tourism is needed in the market of tourism, that is, what value it can create for tourists. In my opinion, in the tourism of our age, rural tourism is a refreshing phenomenon, which can help domestic and foreign tourists to learn about, to better understand and sustain our country, our culture and our traditions, as well as to increase their respect to nature, to meet their desire for authentic experiences, all of which can significantly contribute to economic growth.

Today, the study of the role, the opportunities and the development of rural tourism gets a great enough emphasis in the research of the academic and professional community, however, in the policy of tourism, at national level, it hardly enjoys priority, because of its economic performance. Nevertheless, it is worthy of studying and research due to its effects on the society, the environment and job creation. The importance of the issue is proven by the fact that the Tourism World Organization organizes more and more European seminars to improve this tendency.

Estimations are available on the international significance of rural tourism: according to the calculations of UNWTO, 3% of international travellers take to travelling with the motivation of exploring the world in their minds. Rural tourism, however, is characterized by dynamic growth, showing 6% annual growth, which exceeds the tempo of the expansion of world tourism (Mintel [2007]). According to the latest estimated figures published by the European organization of rural tourism, EuroGîtes [2011], currently a total of 3,6 million places¹ are available for travellers at over 400 000 rural touristic hosts.

For the *topic of my dissertation*, I have chosen the study of consumer value dimensions present in rural tourism in Hungary. The scientific approach to the value creation and competitiveness of this area belongs to the lesser studied fields in Hungary, and it has been in the focus of researchers' interest internationally mainly for the past few years. Thus, apart from curiosity, learning about the topic and its empirical research has also been a major challenge for me. The constant guidance and inspiration from my consultants, teachers and colleagues, however, encouraged me to continue my research.

The aim of my research is to carry out a study, which, based upon the theory of value creation and competitiveness, as well as upon the findings of international empirical studies can reveal and rank the factors of consumer (tourist) values, its components and major dimensions, therefore the major *question of my research* is composed in the following way:

What is value for tourists in rural tourism?

As the question of my research is complex, it can be divided into several sub-questions, the disclosing and descriptive analysis of which I intend to carry out using research methods containing qualitative and quantitative elements. My further questions of research are as follows:

¹ Appr. the double of Europe's 2nd most popular destination, the total touristic capacity of Spain.

- *Q1. Who make up the demand of rural tourism?*

Identifying the segments is a major issue in value analyses, since the service must be created to meet the diverse needs of different consumer groups. I also believe it worthy of analysing whether there was any change in the target groups of rural tourism on the basis of today's touristic trends (ETC [2006]).

- *Q2. What is the motivation of tourists and what does rural tourism mean to them?*

Apart from demographic characteristics, I would like to point out the motivation of tourists, since I believe, through this we can better identify what rural tourism means to them, and it can also provide a good starting point to define consumer value.

- *Q3. What partial factors, indicators make up consumer value in rural tourism?*

In my research my aim is to identify motivational indicators based upon the literature and consumer interviews, as well as refine them with expert interviews, and finally carry out their empirical testing.

- *Q4. Which value dimensions make up consumer values in rural tourism, and among them, to what extend is the value of experience emphasised?*

Today's experience- and value-oriented consumption also encourages me to examine in what forms and dimensions it appears in rural tourism, which value elements are more and which are less emphasised.

Regarding *the structure*, my thesis is built up of six chapters. After the introductory thoughts on the rural tourism research, in the first chapter of my paper I am going to deal with the interpretation of rural tourism internationally and nationally, also creating my own synthesised interpretation preliminarily. The introduction of micro-level approach to competitiveness and the interpretation of value creation on the consumer side will be in the focus in chapter two, where I intend to continuously narrow the circle and introduce the concept of experience, as supposedly,

one of the most significant elements of consumer value today. In the third chapter of my paper I am focusing on the theoretical identification of consumer experience and value dimensions, also introducing the results of relevant international studies published on the topic so far. In the fourth chapter of my essay I am going to describe the methodology of my research. In the fifth chapter I am giving a detailed analysis of my research findings, while I am going to close my dissertation with the sixth, the Summary chapter.

My study, based upon a consumer survey, I believe, is significant both from scientific and practical points of view. Its scientific significance lies in the fact that the interpretation and measurement of consumer value seen in rural tourism is going to fill a gap in the literature of tourism management, while knowing the research findings, it will be possible to plan the supply or product development and the marketing strategy of the product in practice.

1. THE INTERPRETATION FRAME OF RURAL TOURISM

The aim of my initial chapter is to introduce the diverse definitions of rural tourism in a structural classification along with the interpretation of the connection between the term „rural tourism”, used in the international literature and domestic rural (country) tourism, as well as to develop a synthesized definition. From among the supply and demand-side definitions, the latter one is of greater emphasis for me, since in my research I am aiming to reveal those values of rural tourism which provide experience for the demand-side, i.e. for the tourists.

In my views, in order to analyse the connection between the terminology of "rural tourism" (countryside tourism) used in the international literature and the expression of village (or very often country) tourism used by the Hungarian literature, we also need the international and Hungarian interpretation of word "*rural*".

When trying to understand the meaning of country, the countryside or rural areas, social (order of value, attitude), economic (agricultural, other raw material producing industries) and cultural (country lifestyle and traditions) aspects can be determining as well. The complexity and difficulty of the topic is shown by the fact that several approaches fail to focus on the clear and exclusive definition, but rather on classification.

In the case of Hungary, a typical feature of the definition of the countryside is to describe it as a province, i.e. the opposite of urban areas, which approach identifies the country as the major scene of agricultural activity, but also uses negative qualities and pejorative terms. The difficulties of providing a precise definition are increased by the fact that besides the official territorial identification, according to which a settlement is called rural if the population density is below 120 people/km², or below the population of 10.000 people (UMVST [2007 p. 29.]), while in the Hungarian public language the terminology of "the country" covers all the territories outside the capital or outside one's own settlement (Kovács, T. [2003]).

Regarding international examples and the literature, as well as the Hungarian features of the countryside (for a more structured summary, see Kulcsár [2011]), the approach of Kovács T. [2003] on the countryside coincides with my ideas. According to this approach, in Europe the

terminology of the countryside can be applied to identify a traditional or even modern village, or a small town and the area surrounding it, which (definition) also includes the rural areas of transformed structure and its inhabitants. On the whole and in general, with the terminology of the country we refer to areas and villages outside big cities and urban agglomerations, regardless of the population density and any specified limit value.

1.1. International definitions of rural tourism

As the result of economic development, we had to witness the continual foundering and depopulation of rural regions. Having recognised this problem, the EU set the priority of giving a halt to the deterioration of provincial areas and lagging regions, as well as encouraging closing up. As the positive consequence of these measures (national campaigns, EDEN program² etc.), holiday resorts have become popular and crowded, regaining the balance in the market of tourism as well. An increasing number of tourists choose the countryside as a holiday destination, voting for calmness instead of crowded places; choosing peaceful and clean villages instead of champagne and noisy cities; enjoying nostalgia and the idyllic countryside instead of modern-age environments. The definition, the identification of such touristic activity, as well as the description of its elements have been the target of research even today.

The generic term of types of tourism

The international literature has offered a wide range of definitions for the meaning of rural tourism (Roberts – Hall [2003]). Taking the focus of the supply, several other terminologies are also available (agro-, eco-, farm-, green tourism, etc.) as regards tourism, based upon the resources of families living in rural areas. The meaning of these definitions may differ from country to country, depending on the local "country" categories, traditions and cultural relations. In the majority of cases, however, the analysis of other content features is also required besides the definition, such as the institutional background, the structure of the countryside and the settlements, geographic features, existing industrial policies, etc. The drawback of such a multitude of definitions is that uniform regulation is not possible or only with difficulties. A further

² European Destination of Excellence

problem is posed by its unsettled relation to other supply forms of tourism. It can be attached among others to

- *farm tourism* – in this case the accommodation, food and entertainment is provided on the farm (Sharpley – Vass [2006]),
- *green tourism*, where the countryside and its sustainable natural and social environment appear as a central element (Safeinherit Network [2001]),
- *agro-tourism*, where the tourist has the opportunity on the farm to participate in the agricultural activities in an authentic environment (Phillip et al. [2010]),
- *eco-tourism*, which offers a responsible and sustainable travel in the natural environment, and which at the same time contributes to the improve the welfare of the local community (TIES [2006]).

The definitions of rural tourism can be rather different from one another regarding the fact that in certain countries the emphasis is laid on the farms and the role of nature, while in other countries on the agricultural activities outside the cities (Hall et al. [2005]). The country-specific definitions are listed in the annex.

Definitions of rural tourism

Rural tourism in a simplified way could be defined as tourism created in the countryside (Sharpley [1996], Bramwell – Lane [1994] In: Frochot [2005]), but this definition would not reflect the complexity of activities that make up rural tourism. Perales [2002] differentiates between two kinds of rural tourism. In his views there is traditional rural tourism, which means that the accommodation is provided on the farm, and there is modern rural tourism, where visitors wish to get a deeper knowledge of nature and the architectural heritage. The definition of Gannon ([1994], In: Rátz – Puczkó [1998]) says that rural tourism is the total of services and entertainment programs offered by the hosts and the local inhabitants in order to attract tourists into their region, thus making some extra income. If we accept this broader definition, we can say that rural tourism does not only include farm- or agro-tourism, but also the opportunity of vacationing close to nature, the rural atmosphere and other services besides the accommodation, such as festivals, recreational possibilities, gastronomy, and the sales of handicraft or agricultural products. Thus, on the list of motivations may appear the feeling of being closer to nature and people, the search for originality and authenticity, enjoying silence, experiencing the rural lifestyle

and culture, as well as the desire to learn, to participate in outdoor activities, and to an ever increasing extent, the totality of all these experiences. The study of UNWTO (In: Mintel [2007]) also considers the personal experience of rural lifestyle, culture and agriculture as the focal element of rural tourism. The authors draw the attention to complexity and the series of experiences and adventures. In their definition, every other touristic activity carried out close to nature, as well as the people in any rural environment are part of rural tourism, if it involves an over 24-hour stay at rural accommodation.

On the basis of research, it can be declared that the supply-side definition of rural tourism is gradually being replaced by motivation-based definitions that coincide with the consumers' desire to acquire rural experiences, thus creating the comprehensive direction of rural tourism that consists of new, traditional and modern elements as well. (Table 1).

Table 1: The direction and content of the approaches to rural tourism

| Direction of approach | Research | Content of definition |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Supply side | EC [1986] | accommodation and all other attached rural activities provided on farm |
| | Thibal [1988] | rural hospitality based on local co-operation aiming to create jobs and improve economy |
| | EC [1988] | supply-side touristic activities to enhance the preservation of local values and the creation of jobs |
| | Gannon [1994] | all the services and entertainment programs provided in a rural region for supplementary income |
| | OECD [1994] | all the traditional services provided by local families connected to the natural environment and favouring local traditions based on the characteristic appearance of the rural area |
| | Sharpley [1996], Bramwell – Lane [1994] | touristic services provided in the countryside |
| Demand side | EC [1999] | tourism provided in low density areas (forests, mountains, holiday areas off the beaten track, agricultural areas, villages, wilderness) according to the tourist's choice, and based upon the hands-on experiences of the characteristic physical and human environment |
| | Mintel [2007] | complex touristic activities carried out in rural environment in close connection with nature and people, based upon the personal experience of the rural lifestyle, culture and agriculture |
| Integrated | Hall et al. [2005] | a form of tourism sometimes created by demand, sometimes done in order to supplement service income |
| | EuroGîtes [2011] | accommodation provided in traditional rural environment, offering experiences of local gastronomy and lifestyle, as well as activities done in nature |

Source: my own selection

Based on the tourists' motivations, the different layers of rural tourism are crystallised. International practices also point out two levels of rural tourism, which in my assumption are an internal (core) service and an external (supplementary) service. (Table 2).

Table 2: The direction of tourist motivation in rural tourism

| Country | Direction of motivation |
|---|--|
| Ireland, the United Kingdom, Finland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Portugal, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Iceland | Activities in the nature (e.g. horseback riding, biking, hiking, animal watching) |
| Italy, Luxembourg, Moldova, Bulgaria, Croatia, Ukraine, Greece, Cyprus, Belarus | Rural culture and lifestyle (e.g. traditions, crafts, gastronomy, stock-raising, architecture) |
| France, Spain, Serbia, Latvia, Estonia, Romania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Austria | The complex appearance of the rurality and the nature |

Source: Based on EuroGites, Rural Tourism International - Training Network, Dettori et al. [2004], Peters et al. [1994], Maestro et al. [2007], Zobena et al. [2005], Vofkori [2004], Turner [1993] my own selection

The above mentioned classification points out that today, regardless of the fact whether the countries consider this form of their tourism as farm-tourism, agro-tourism, green tourism or rural tourism (we could continue the list of different expressions), basically two topics are in the focus:

- One of the topics which can be found in most cases is *being close to nature*, and the services attached to it (sledging, riding a horse cart, trekking, etc.) and programs, including sports (cycling, mountaineering, rafting, horse-riding, etc.) and activities encouraging relaxation or learning (walking in nature, animal watching, collecting herbs or picking mushrooms, etc.).
- The other topic is being in the *countryside*, including rural culture, traditions and lifestyle, in which in the focus you can find the rural, village or farm lifestyle, agricultural activities around the house, the role of domestic animals, gastronomic specialities and last but not least the relationship between the guest and the host, which is unique.

Similarly to the earlier mentioned approach of Perales [2002] on traditional-modern rural tourism, I regard the presence of "being in the countryside" as a traditional core service, while ensuring "to be close to nature" a complementary service. Nevertheless, the weight of the layers in the touristic service compared to one another, that is, which type of service bears a bigger value for

the tourists (the traditional or the modern) is questionable. The directions of development and the criteria of success can be identified in possession of this information.

1.2. Definitions in Hungary

The term "rural tourism", widely used in the European literature can be translated as country or village tourism as well, but regarding its direction and content elements, it can mainly be interpreted as the Hungarian – not real value – village tourism (Antal [1996], Csizmadia [2011], Kovács, D. [2002], Szabó [2006]). Similarly to international literature, the Hungarian interpretation of village tourism is also extremely colourful.

1.2.1. Organization-level approaches

1. The definition applied by Association of Hungarian Rural and Agrotourism³

In the Hungarian interpretation there is no clear dividing line between rural and countryside tourism. FATOSZ uses the meaning of "village tourism" either as a synonym or the most general form of rural tourism (Szabó [2006]). The term of "village tourism" known in Hungary does not clearly define a type of touristic product. It is rather its complexity and its feature of embracing other products which can be regarded as a principle feature. Rural tourism means

- providing accommodation in a village environment (the host receives the guests at the accommodation organized on his premises),
- offering cultural programs (local traditions, festivities, events, folklore),
- gastronomy (the host offers his own home-made food, wine, brandy, squash, etc. to the guests, thus is in connection with agro-tourism),
- wine tourism (the host presenting his own wines in his own wine cellar),
- walks in nature (visiting nature preserve areas),
- spa/health tourism (making use of a nearby spas or the special local climate),
- horse-riding (involving the local horse stables in the offer),
- and organizing camps for children.

³ The Hungarian name of the association: Falusi- és Agroturizmus Országos Szövetsége (FATOSZ)

If we wish to further refine the definition based on supply elements, rural tourism is "not only creating, maintaining and presenting a high quality infrastructure and typical services to meet the widespread demands of Hungarian inhabitants, as well as foreign tourists who wish to spend their free time in a rural, village environment, but also protecting nature and the environment, the co-operation of the local community and its institutions, as well as improving their quality of life along with providing professional representation of interest for the service providers of rural (village) tourism." (Szabó [2006 p. 13.])

Within the term of "countryside tourism", the association defines *rural tourism* as the tourism of regions, where

- the attractions are dispersed and are not strong in themselves;
- progress depends largely on the organization and co-operation of the local community;
- the development of tourism, as well as regional and rural development produce results which strengthen one another.

The table below shows the system of the four major countryside attractions, the special products of rural tourism, as well as the connecting system of other products of countryside tourism. (Table 3).

Table 3: Rural attractions and the products of rural tourism

| Attractions | Special products of rural tourism | Product types of linking countryside tourism |
|---|--|---|
| I. Values of rural nature | Active farm (cycling, fishing, hunting, hiking, biking) Equestrian farm Ecofarm (organic farms, fruit and herb gardens, energy and water savings, selective waste collection) | Hiking Cycling tourism Fishing, hunting Horse tourism Agritourism Ecotourism |
| II. Material and intellectual heritage of the countryside | Farm of traditions (traditional food, rural culture, arts & crafts) Rural lifestyle farm (practical experience of rural life, folk crafts, pets) Farm for family and kids | Cultural tourism Agritourism Youth tourism |
| III. Values and products of agriculture | Health farm (reform lifestyle, healthy local food, relaxation and sports equipments) Farm for "village kitchen table" (culinary experiences, local products) Wine/brandy farm (tasting, wine / brandy production process) | Health tourism Agritourism Agritourism, wine tourism and local theme routes |
| IV. Special offers | Wheelchair friendly farm (accessibility, combined with the offers of health, equestrian, tradition, and wine farm) | Cultural tourism Agritourism, Health tourism Horse tourism Ecotourism |

Source: based on Szabó [2006 p. 14.], FATOSZ [2012]

The table indicates how widespread and what in-depth content can be used to introduce the connection between countryside tourism with rural and agro-tourism in its core.

II. The definition applied by the Ministry of National Economy (NGM)⁴

In accordance with the interpretation of the Strategy for the Improvement of Tourism, the narrow definition of *rural tourism* is: "making use of the complex touristic facilities and the supply of the village, jointly offering village lifestyle, local traditions, culture and where it is available, agricultural facilities. In the broader sense of the meaning, rural tourism provides host accommodation anywhere, except for in spa and health resorts, including the village-like parts of any settlement (offering accommodation, catering and programs) if the location and the activity meet the typical system of requirements of rural tourism" (NGM [2011 p. 48.]).

The Ministry justifies the importance of the development of rural tourism by the fact that the majority of tourist attractions can be found in the most under-developed regions of the country. In many settlements, mostly in villages, tourism is the only economic branch, thus it plays an outstanding role in employment as well. In its supply-side, but also demand-oriented definition, the Ministry emphasizes that experiencing new, authentic adventures, the desire to learn and get the knowledge are the most fundamental touristic motivations today.

According to the Ministry, we can make use of the advantage of our historical, cultural and social heritage by supporting old traditions (such as handicraft, cultural events, gastronomy, arts), while also helping to transform them into 21st century touristic products, by providing a high level of touristic infrastructure for it, advertising and marketing it both inside and outside the country (NGM [2011]).

⁴ The Hungarian name of the ministry: Nemzetgazdasági Minisztérium (NGM)

1.2.2. Researchers' interpretations

1. The emphasis of supply aspects

According to Csizmadia [1992], rural tourism means that people who live in the village offer their unused accommodation facilities within their homes to serve holiday-making besides their full time jobs (agriculture, industry) as a complementary activity, while the environment and the atmosphere of the village, characterized by animal keeping and agricultural production, is preserved in its originality (Csizmadia [1992] In: Kovács [2003b]). The relevance of this approach today is rather low today, in my opinion. My experience says that as the growing demand of guests and the comfort factor have appeared in the focus, guests prefer to be put up separately from the host.

The approach that defines rural tourism as a complex touristic supply, emphasizes the importance of supply organization and marketing. Rural tourism is the whole of touristic products which can present in a complex way what the country can offer in a settlement (Antal [1996] In: Könyves [2001]).

According to the interpretation of urbanisation, on a widespread commercial basis rural tourism aims to satisfy the needs of domestic and foreign guests who want to spend their free time outside the city in a looked-after village, in a country environment which has local and regional attractions and which is also characterized by the co-operation of local institutions and the service providers (Csizmadia [2000], Dávid et al. [2007]).

In the viewpoint of Könyves [2001], rural tourism is an economic activity and the use of the space which applies local resources to create touristic products: it offers typically active adventures, as well as the accommodation and catering facilities of the village environment based on the attractiveness of the countryside. The author also draws the attention to the wage-earning activity of the host and the preservation of local culture.

In 1999, when the preparations were made for the prime ministerial conference and the Parliamentary open day on tourism, after industrial discussions, the definition of rural tourism was created as a generic term, which also includes farm-, bio- and horse-riding tourism, agro-tourism

based on the sales of local agricultural products, village holidays with cycling, rafting/canoeing, sports and eco-tours, wine-tours, as well as events and camps showing local traditions and handicraft (Könyves [2001]).

In Hungary, in order to enhance the classification of rural touristic accommodation, the definition of rural accommodation provision was put together. Thus, for the government and the tax authority, the interpretation of rural tourism is derived from the difference between bed and breakfast service provider, classified as private accommodation, and village accommodation provider. In accordance with the currently effective regulations, rural accommodation is: [(according to the effective 2000 year No. CXIII law on the approval of "Project for the Spacial Planning of Lake Balaton, as a Priority Region" (Balaton Kiemelt Üdülőkörzet Területrendezési Terve) and "Lake Balaton Spacial Planning Regulations" (Balatoni Területrendezési Szabályzat)] any type of accommodation offered at settlements under the population of 5000 inhabitants or in areas below the population density of 100 people/km², created so that the village lifestyle, local country traditions and culture, as well as agricultural traditions could be presented in a complex way, together with the attached services (239/2009. (X. 20.) Government Regulation) provided in settlements not belonging to special holiday resorts, and with the exception of spas and health resorts, registered in accordance with special legal regulations on natural health facilities.

II. The emphasis of demand aspects

According to the interpretation of Mrs. Nanszák [1996], rural tourism is to spend the holiday in the country in a natural and built environment, which offers optimal recreational facilities for those trying to escape the pollution and harm of the city, and to authentically preserve, protect and transmit the traditions of the settlement (Nanszákné [1996] In: Bainé [2003]).

Kovács [2003b] gives an excellent summary of the views of Hungarian researchers on the topic, and underlines the idyllic rural environment and village lifestyle which presents a strong value for consumers, as well as the programs that allows for the combination of experiences: horse-riding, sports, relaxation and agricultural activity. Satisfaction, however, can only be ensured if the quality of the human factor is high standard, too. The role of the highly qualified host with great personality is paramount in making the received service a real experience.

In the earlier referred to Strategy for the Development of Tourism (NGM [2011]), the emphasis is laid upon the traditional characteristics of rural tourism, as well as nature, as a complementary factor.

1.2.3. *The summary of Hungarian interpretations*

The definition of rural tourism known in Hungary does not clearly define a product-type tourism. The interpretation of rural tourism is becoming more and more wide-range, the boundaries of the definition are getting "blurred" and in the Hungarian literature, besides rural, the terminology of country or country-rural is continually appearing. Its basic characteristic is complexity and the fact that it embraces several other products. Apart from providing accommodation in a village environment (on the host's premises), rural tourism can include cultural offers, gastronomy, wine tourism, walks in nature, health tourism, horse-riding and children's camps. (Szabó [2006])

Among the definitions found in the Hungarian literature you can find the following features of rural tourism:

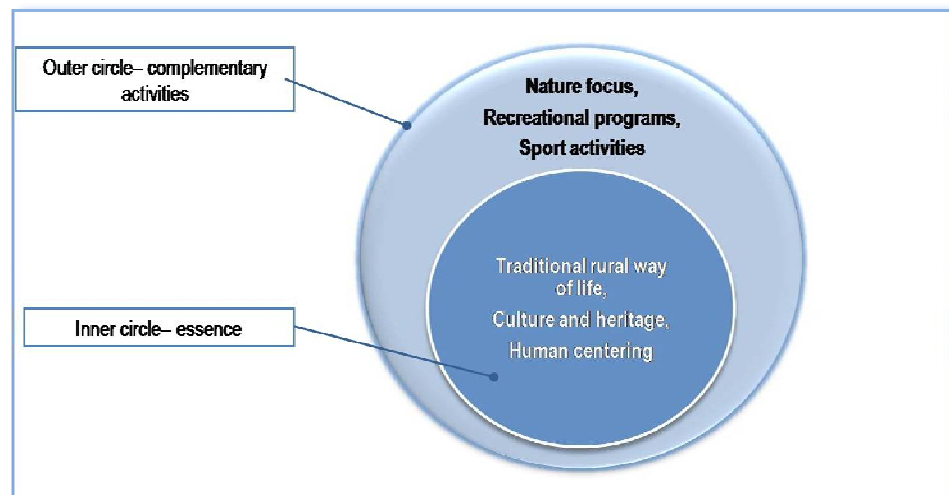
- it supplements the family income,
- it is a touristic activity carried out in the country, and
- a provision of complex services in catering, accommodation and programs, attached to agriculture and nature.

On the basis of all these we can assume that the interpretation of rural tourism from the Hungarian point of view is a complex form of tourism, in which village lifestyle and all the attached activities appear as the core (the basic) service of rural tourism, as the supplement of other services offered in the broader environment.

1.3. Synthesised interpretation

Having reviewed the Hungarian and the international definitions of rural tourism, as a summary I intend to present the definition of my interpretation, which I will follow and aim to develop in the later chapters of my essay and in my empirical study (Figure 1).

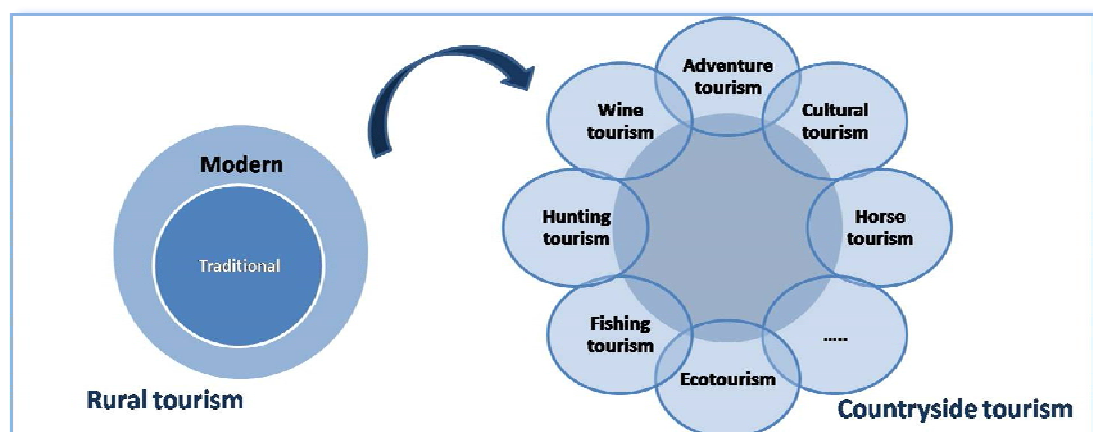
Figure 1: The content of rural tourism in my initial interpretation



Source: My own edition

During the analysis of the definitions, we could see that the circle of motivations consisting of activities in nature can refer to different levels of experiences in the majority of cases (abroad the most frequent focus is "being close to nature", while in Hungary the rural lifestyle is of primary importance). In my view, rural tourism in the narrow sense of the meaning is a form of tourism that is based upon rural traditions and lifestyle offering personal experiences. This core activity of rural tourism today is supplemented to a greater extent by other activities which can be carried out in nature, creating the broader sense of the meaning, as well as the diversity of the touristic experience (Figure 2).

Figure 2: The relationship of rural and countryside tourism



Source: My own edition

As a summary, in my interpretation, the supply side rural tourism refers to a form of tourism that provides catering, accommodation and programs for tourists in a village environment in a way that the travellers have the opportunity to experience traditional country lifestyle and agriculture through personal relationships, and besides learning about rural culture and heritage, it creates modern free time activities and also gives the chance to practise sports in nature.

2. THE ROLE OF VALUE CREATION IN THE COMPETITIVENESS OF SERVICE PROVIDERS

Improving the competitiveness of tourism enjoys priority both in Hungary and at international level. In the focus of the Hungarian strategies for the development of tourism (MTH [2005], (NGM [2011]) are *competitiveness* and the *improvement of the quality of life*: These strategies place the emphasis on working out touristic development directions that are guided by *value-orientation and market demand*, the starting point of which is that the *values* provided by tourism, and tourists' motivations are mainly built upon *experiences*⁵.

In this chapter of my dissertation my aim is to examine the significance of the demand side of competitiveness and value creation. I am going along the following logic: I am going to deal with the different approaches of the theories of competitiveness and I will give the justification of my choice; then I will introduce the relationship between value creation and competitiveness, focusing on the elements of consumer value⁶ and its importance; finally, I will close the topic by analysing the connection between consumer value and the category of experience.

2.1. The definition of competitiveness and its components

2.1.1. Approaches of competitiveness

Today the research and the assessment of competitiveness are highly widespread and popular. Its terminological eligibility, however, cannot be uniform, since competitiveness is relative and can be understood from different viewpoints. The research of competitiveness is constant, with its definitions triggering a lot of debates. Striving to create an overall definition which is recognized by everyone, Chikán [2006] argued that "pertinence in competition is a key condition of survival at all the levels of economy. Probably everybody could agree with this general definition".

⁵ I use the terminology of experience in the positive sense in my essay.

⁶ The definition of customer value in my essay is the same as consumer value, since the focus of my research is the market of consumers (end-users). Certain books in the literature use the terminology of customer value – this is mostly true of the literature of activity management –, therefore, in such cases I also keep the terminology of customer value.

I would emphasize the following from among the approaches of competitiveness (see Sziva [2010]):

- *Ex post / Ex ante approaches*

Ex post competitiveness refers to results achieved so far, that is, to the index numbers of past achievements, the improvement or the deterioration of competitiveness. Ex post approach allows for the comparison of the competitiveness of the investigational units, on the one hand being related to past events, while on the other hand being related to competitors. The ex ante side concerns the factors that determine competitiveness: it includes the conditions offering competitive edge, as well as the features of the business environment. The examination of the ex ante side is of great importance as regards companies and economic governance, since it aims to answer the question of what factors must be influenced in order to increase competitiveness (Török [2005], Lengyel [2000], Némethné [2010]).

- *Supply / Demand side approach*

Török [1996] places the emphasis on the two sides of pertinence in competition: the effectiveness of production and meeting demand. Thus he identifies competitiveness on the supply side within the effectiveness of production, while on the demand side in meeting the requirements of world market demands. The success achieved in the two dimensions together is the foundation of competitiveness, but phasing is hindered by the problem of measurability, since competitiveness can be measured by cost advantages on the supply side, while by performance on the demand side (Török [1996], Francis [1989 and 1992] In: Czakó [2000 p. 24.]).

- *Approach according to levels of interpretations*

Traditionally, competitiveness can refer to four levels of the economy: national, industrial, corporate and product (Chikán [2006], Majoros [1997]), of which the levels of macro-economics (domestic economics) and micro-economics (entrepreneurial) are paid more attention to in theoretical approaches.

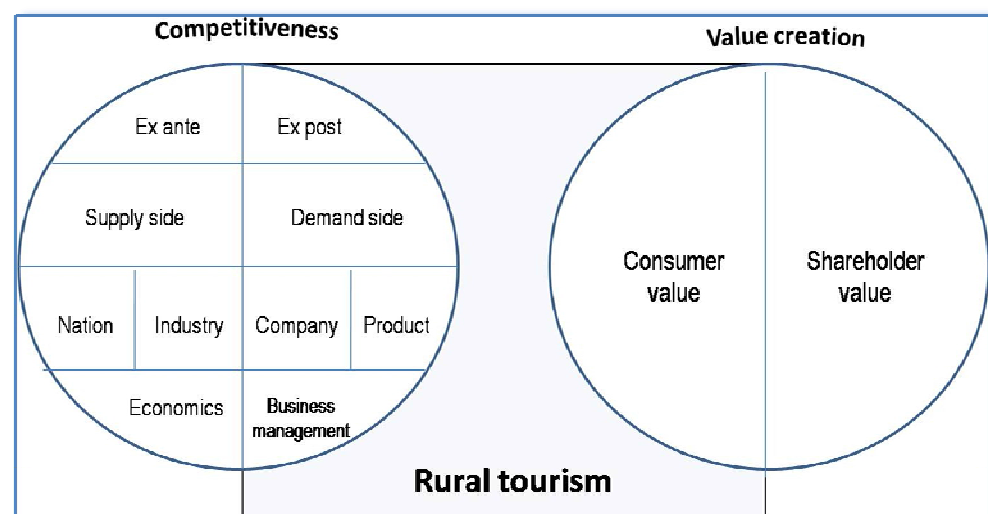
- *The approach of social economy / management and business administration*

From among the approaches of competition, the direction of economics and management and business administration deserves more attention. In the focus of the economics approach of competitiveness is primarily the performance of national economies and their foreign economic

relations. The most important roots and inspirations of "competitiveness studies done in this area are macro-economy and especially international economics." (Czakó [2000 p. 26.]). The economic approach examines competitiveness at macro level, while management and business administration regard approaches from the company perspective. When examining macro-economic competitiveness, the most important starting point of the management and business administration approach is that a national economy is successful in the international competition, if its companies are successful. From this aspect, management and business administration competitiveness researches place the emphasis on the ex ante factors, looking for answers to the question: the provision of which competition environmental conditions are required for companies to operate competitively, thus making the national economy competitive as well. The crucial cornerstone of the management and business administration background theory of competitiveness is provided by Michael Porter. Porter [1990] believes that in the transformed economic, commercial and financial system of connections, the comparative advantages based on factor supply do not ensure the welfare of a country in the 20th century, due to the interlocking of nations, and he argues in favour of "locally creatable competitive edges", the competitive advantages.

In my paper I strive to draw the attention to the interactions between customers (tourist) and the businesses serving rural tourism, as well as to value creation in the village environment, as a factor of competitiveness (Figure 3).

Figure 3: The theoretical connections of my field of research



Source: My own edition

The question of competitiveness in this case concerns what makes a product, a service or an area more attractive for the guests. My purpose is to draw conclusions from the interpretations, the measurability issues and the success factors of corporate competitiveness about the creation and significance of consumer value regarding rural tourism (for the definition, see sub-chapter 2.2.2). Therefore, the subject of my research is the output side of touristic success and competitiveness (demand conditions) (Ritchie – Crouch [2000], [2003]), the factors which are valuable for the consumers, as well as the unfolding of the components of value. I am going to highlight the role of experience, since the experience provided for tourists can be regarded as a value. I will analyse the competitiveness of businesses from the aspect of management and business administration (also building in the elements of strategic management and marketing management) and I will regard product-level competitiveness a part of it. In the focus of my research is the role of consumer value in competitiveness, thus for me the approach of ex post (result) and the demand side competitiveness are relevant.

2.1.2. Competitiveness at micro-level

Defining corporate competitiveness has generated several debates in the literature, however, in spite of the variegation of approaches, researchers agree that:

- the competitiveness of companies cannot be separated from the competitiveness of the *products and services* they provide, which are influenced by price and non-price factors as well.
- corporate competitiveness is shaped by the effects of a number of factors which are not to be analyzed in one given moment, but always *dynamically*, and which must be evaluated taking the tendencies of changes into consideration. (Némethné [2010 p. 181.]).

The competitiveness of the products (services) can be expressed by the following:

- the price of the product is lower than that of the competitors,
- the quality, the technical standard of the product exceeds rival products,
- the attaching services are more advantageous for the customers than those of the competitors.

A product can be regarded competitive if it possesses at least two of the above mentioned three alternatives. (Botos [1982] In: Némethné [2010 p. 182.]

The company's ability to keep and increase its market share is primarily determined by features directly linked to the product, but it is only one factor of corporate competitiveness. When trying to define corporate competitiveness, it is highly justified to take into consideration the following factors: efficiency, strategy creation, resources, corporate capabilities, knowledge and human factors (Findrik – Szilárd [2000], Szentes [2005], Chikán [2006]).

The above mentioned approach unifies the supply and demand side factors of competitiveness, which is also supported by the ideas of Attila Chikán [2006 p. 44.]). According to him, "the company carries out a *dual value creation*: it has to realize the creation of value for the consumer and the proprietor within the same process."

The conditions of lasting competitive edge are assigned to corporate resources and fundamental abilities by certain authors (Grant [1991], Barney [1996], Prahalad - Hamel [1990]), with the following common elements: difficulty of copying, durability, providing customer value and transparency. A significant feature of fundamental abilities is that with them, products and services can be created which provide a greater value to customers than the competitors (Prahalad - Hamel [1990]).

The most complete definition to be found in the literature is offered by the definition of Competitiveness Research Centre, which has refined it for several years (Chikán – Czakó [2009 p. 78.]): the definition says that the competitiveness of companies lies in the fact that by keeping social norms, companies offer products and services to customers in a way that they are willing to pay the price for them that is higher than that of the competitors. Its pre-condition is that companies could adapt to external and internal changes, in order to be able to fulfil market criteria more favourably than their competitors. In this definition the requirements of environmental adaptation and dual value creation is highly emphasized. The forecasting and shaping of customer demands, as well as the profitable operation are of key importance in the long-term existence of companies (Chikán [2003a], [2003b], Yuan – Wu [2008]). This definition is closest to the topic of my dissertation, since I believe that providing a customer value is indispensable in reaching corporate competitiveness. When creating the customer value, the first step for the company is to understand customer value, that is to identify the most important value dimensions of its consumers, and the characteristics of performance regarded critical or crucial by the

consumer. These value dimensions show, how the business can create value to its customers through its products and services, and how it can contribute to the success and the long-term profitability of its own enterprise.

In order to realize the objectives of my dissertation, I regard it important to examine the source of consumer value, value dimensions, competitive edge (corporate success) and the related concept of the category of experience, as well as the connection between them.

2.2. The content of value creation

By *value creation* we refer to a procedure, during which the resources of the company are converted to consumer value (Chikán [2003a]). In the concept of the earlier mentioned dual value creation (Chikán [2003b]), satisfying the consumer's requirement is conceptually related to consumer value, while gaining a profit is related to the increase of proprietor value. The company offers a useful product or service to the consumer, and if this usefulness bears a greater value to the consumer than the largeness of the market price to be paid for it, the company managed to increase the consumer value to the customer. Viewing the transaction from the supply's perspective, we must take into account to what extent the market price asked for product sales or service provision can exceed the costs of production, i.e. whether the company can realize a profit, thus contribute to the owners' increase of value. The relevance of the concept in rural tourism can be traced in the supplementary income of businesses and the improvement of the quality of life (service provider/entrepreneurial value), while for tourists it is embodied supposedly in the subjective judgement of the natural and built environment of the country, the relaxation, the community experiences and the appropriate proportion of price and value. I will later examine the improvement of consumer value in more details.

2.2.1. The relationship of consumer demand and corporate success

From the viewpoint of examining demand-side competitiveness, for me the consumer side of dual value creation is relevant. The operation of the company that in the long run aims to satisfy consumer needs and achieve a profit will determine the effective management methods of

corporate procedures. In accordance with the process-oriented approach, the chain of procurement-production-sales will be triggered by customer demand and the expectation.

The information on demand can be of key importance for the companies for the following reasons:

- to avoid unnecessary capacities,
- to create more reliable forecasts regarding marketability and income,
- to create production and service-provision, taking quantity and quality into account, as well as to schedule them
- to realise cost-optimisation.

This means that one of the guidelines of successful corporate operation and market orientation is to meet the revealed customer needs. Therefore, the competitiveness of a company greatly determines whether it can create long-term value for its customers. (Chikán – Demeter [2004 p.75-76.], Kolos et al. [2005]).

Gallarza – Gill [2008] also emphasised in their study that the analysis of the value provided for customers is relevant and significant firstly due to its key strategic aspects for the management, and secondly, regarding studies on consumer behaviour. Today both the academic world and industrial studies pay growing attention to the analysis of consumer value, as one of the major indicators of long-term business performance (Oh [2000]), and repeated purchase (Jayanti – Ghosh [1996]).

2.2.2. The definition and components of consumer value

The consumer/customer value studies often have to face the difficulty that value is an abstract term and it has many different meanings and perceptions, therefore it is not possible to give a precise definition (Zeithaml [1988], Rao – Monroe [1989], Dodds et al. [1991], Woodruff [1997]), so it is necessary to analyse the theoretical value concept preliminarily in an empirical way (Lin et al. [2005]).

The concept of consumer value can be examined from different aspects: we can take the approach of product-oriented sales (Schmitt [2003] In: Kozma [2009]), Kotler's marketing concept

(see Kotler [2003] In: Hou – Tang [2008]), as well as the recently introduced CRM⁷, or consumer experience management (Schultz [2003] In: Kozma [2009]). According to these new interpretations, the consumer value reflects the largely *subjective* (Hofmeister et al. [2003]) or *personal opinion of the consumer* as to what extent the received product or service meets his expectations (Parasuraman et al. [1985]), and businesses have to face serious challenges so that they could understand and build it into their market strategies.

According to Chikán – Demeter [2004] consumer value is created if the benefit of the consumer from a given transaction exceeds the complete cost of the possession of the received product and the service package.

This subjective definition of value is rather comprehensive, which we can unfold through the definition of *value dimensions* (Gelei [2006]). Value dimensions deconstruct customer value into its elements, showing which major components or dimensions of the received product- or service package can significantly contribute to the growth of customer value (Walters [2002] In: Gelei [2006 p. 12.]). The literature of activity management uses the definition of the *competitive edge source* (Chikán – Demeter [2004 p. 25.]) in the same way, and it clearly defines the key factors, through which customer value can be understood, or improved. Such key factors are: *price, quality, flexibility, reliability* and *services attached* to the central product.

As a summary, we can say that the literature defines customer value in one-dimensional and in multi-dimensional sense of the meaning. Researchers defining customer value along one dimension, place the emphasis on the transactional value, where the consumer values the difference between the received product/service and the price paid for acquiring it. (Table 4).

⁷ Customer Relationship Management.

Table 4: Selected one-dimensional value interpretations

| Research | Value concept |
|---|---|
| Zeithaml [1988] | the customer highlights the usefulness between the value given and received for the product/service |
| Morrison [1989] in: Murphy et al. [2000] | the personal cost-benefit analysis of the individual |
| Dodds et al. [1991] | perceived difference between quality and the price paid |
| Stevens [1992] | value for money concept: the connection between the price, the quality and the quantity |
| Chang – Wildt [1994] in: Murphy et al. [2000] | the combination of the perceived quality of the product and the attaching price |
| Fornell et al. [1996] | the difference between the paid price and the relative quality |
| Oliver [1999] | the difference between the positive (received product) and negative function (price paid) |

Source: Gallarza – Gil [2008 p. 6.]

Other authors often define customer value as a multidimensional perceived value, describing it as "complex" (Lapierre [2000]), "having several factors" (Babin et al. [1994]), "dynamic" (Parasuraman – Grewal [2000], Woodruff [1997]) or "subjective" (Zeithaml [1988]) (Table 5).

Table 5: The directions of multi-dimensional customer value researches

| Research directions | Research focus |
|---|---|
| Target-value theory: Customer value hierarchy | customer experience (consumption aims, characteristics, conclusions) |
| Utilitarian and hedonistic value | customer experience: 1. functionality, rationality, tool-oriented, task-oriented, 2. entertainment- and emotion-centeredness, experience-orientation |
| Value theory | external value (consumption based on usefulness), internal value (consumption based on emotions), system-based value (the rational connection between external and internal value) |
| The theory of consumption value | Many consumption decisions are possible: e.g. functional, social, emotional, epistemic, conditional |
| Holbrook's [1999] consumer value typology | „interactive, relative, consumer preference-based experience“; 8 different value types (result, excellence, status, respect, entertainment, ethics, aesthetics, spirituality) in 3 aspects (external or internal, focusing on the self or others, active or reactive) |

Source: Based on Sánchez-Fernández – Iniesta-Bonillo [2007]

To summarise we can see that the two types of consumer value definitions differ in what is listed below (Table 6).

Table 6: Comparison of consumer value approaches

| One-dimensional consumer value | Multi-dimensional consumer value |
|---|---|
| Basis: management science, cognitive psychology | Basis: consumer behaviour theory |
| Utilitarian and economic concept | Behaviour psychology |
| Cognitive approach | Cognitive-affective approach |
| Simplicity | Complexity |
| Focus: how to evaluate | Focus: how to improve consumer value |
| Lack of consensus regarding value antecedents | Lack of consensus regarding value components |
| Unclear connections among value antecedents | Unclear connections between value components |
| Value can be directly observed | Value can only be seen indirectly, through its components |
| Often appears in literature | Rare publications in literature |

Source: Sánchez-Fernández – Iñiesta-Bonillo [2007 p. 442.]

After the literary review of consumer value, the conclusion can be drawn that Holbrook's typology covers the broadest meaning, also including the economic, social, hedonistic and altruistic motives of value. In my views, the spreading of this approach can have a great significance in tourism management, on the one hand because the author defines value not only as the antecedent of a purchase decision, but also as the result of the experience deriving from consumption. On the other hand, because in this case instead of standardised services, the determining factor is the relationship of tourists (consumers) and touristic enterprises (service providers), while for the consumer, the key determining factor can be the personal experience.

In accordance with what was mentioned above, the key factor tends to be the subjective perception and experience of the consumer at the final evaluation of the purchased product or service. Preliminary expectations and the actual perceptions play an important part in consumer satisfaction. The customer, whose expectations are exceeded by the usefulness of the purchased product or service tend to behave loyally to the enterprise, while a disappointed customer can easily be tempted. Very often, however, satisfaction is not enough for long-lasting customer relations, because the value received beyond expectation can be much more emphatic. (Chikán – Demeter [2004]).

As a conclusion we can say that in essays published so far three areas of consumer value researches have appeared: 1. research of values encouraging the customer for product selection and purchase, as well as re-purchase, 2. analysing the relationship of quality-value-satisfaction-loyalty, 3. the relationship of economic-psychological, which is the relation of cognitive-affective consumer value dimensions.

The analysis of multi-dimensionality is a relevant approach for the unfolding of consumer value dimensions present in tourism. The following dimensions can appear among the components of consumer value:

- on the one hand, dimensions may appear that derive from *rational (cognitive)* decision and focus on functionality (e.g. the price and quality of the service elements),
- on the other hand *affective dimensions* may turn up that have an effect on the consumer product-related perception (such as atmosphere, feelings, relationships, experiences).

The experience value dimension can be interpreted in the broader sense and it may happen that it includes the whole of affective dimensions. However, I regard the idea of De Yuan – Wu [2008] highly important, which points out that even the complete consumer judgement can be based upon the complex experience itself. The question may arise whether consumer value and experience value can be corresponded to each other completely or not.

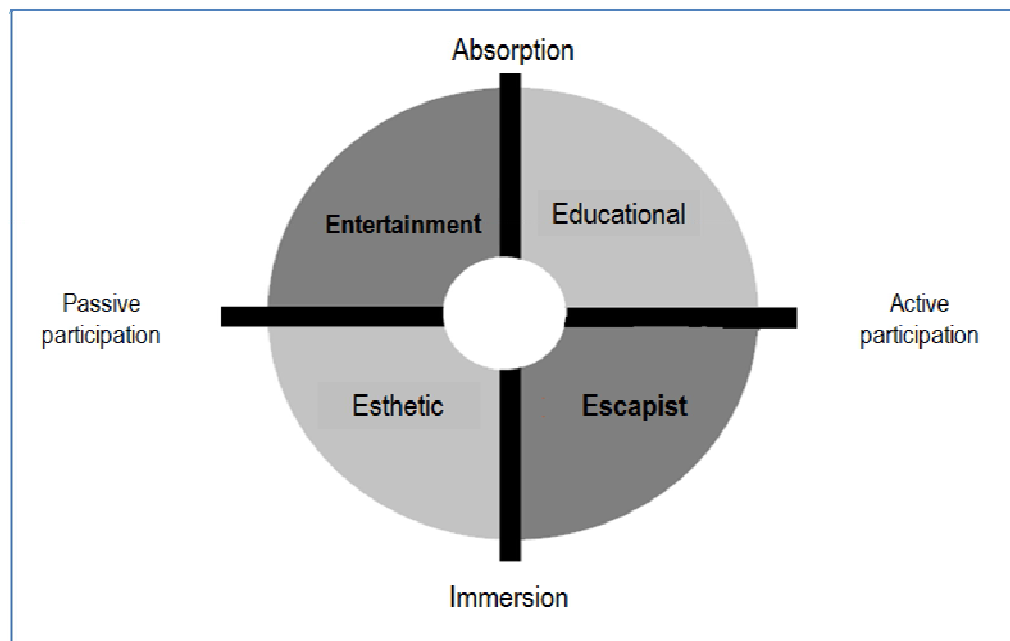
2.2.3. Consumer value in the context of experience

Recently, a growing interest can be traced in the concept of experience, the reason for which can be that the desire for experiences and intellectual challenges are intertwined with the shifting of consumer behaviour from material values towards ethical and intellectual values. Here we are talking about values such as beauty, health, friendship, personal fulfilment, tolerance, environment-consciousness, etc. This is a kind of reaction to the overly materialistic orientation of consumer society. Instead of strongly material factors, in the "new economy" intellectual skills and abilities are the major value creators in the economic sense. In order to bring forth post-materialistic values, a high level of material consumption is also necessary, since complete industries are built upon these values: from the producers of organic food and sports equipment to travel agencies organizing exotic travels. The diversity of the offered products and services, the fast selection and the de-materialisation of consumption are all heading into one direction: the consumer is becoming ever more unpredictable with his preferences becoming more and more complex (Szabó – Hátori [2006]).

The interpretation of *experience* is highly colourful. Besides humanistic psychology (see Maslow [1972], Csíkszentmihályi [1997]) and sociology (see Éber [2008]), it is a widely used expression in

the literature of marketing and management as well. Customer experience was first mentioned in the early 1980s when apart from the customer behaviour approach based upon rational decisions, Holbrook and Hirschman [1982] also drew the attention to taking the aspect of experience into consideration. Pine – Gilmore [1998] was the first to deal with the concept of experience economy. First they examined the development of economic value, according to which we can find mass products at the cheapest price at the market, then as the price increases through the making of the product and the provision of services, we are approaching the creation of the most expensive premium experience. This, however, does not mean that an enterprise is capable of providing real experience simply by "packing" some experiences to its different services. Providing experience itself is a different station following the service. In their views, the most important feature of experiences is that they are memorable. Besides, their key characteristic is that they are personal and are the most significant signals of value. The default of the required services or the experience might generate consumer disappointment (Michalkó – Irimiás [2011]). Towards the end of the 20th century, "selling" the experience was realized mainly in American theatres and theme parks. These places enjoy popularity until these days not only in the US, but in many other countries of the world, too. There are many other businesses, however, which are aiming to enrich consumers' experiences by offering better or more accurately organized services or providing something "unique". Pine – Gilmore [1998] also emphasise that experiences may have a lot of different features, all of which must be satisfied in the best possible way, and must harmonise with one another to be able to speak about real consumer experience. Excellent design, marketing and service, ingenuity and the ability for renewal are all critical qualities of experiences. The authors believe that one dimension of how experience can be captured is through the *degree of consumer involvement*, which can be passive or active. The other dimension is the (environmental) connection, that is, the link between the customer and the experience or activity (engaging attention or total indulgence, empathy) (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Four areas of the experience



Source: Pine – Gilmore [1998 p. 102.]

Experiences can be divided into four broader categories according to the mentioned dimensions: *entertainment*, *education*, *escapism*, *aesthetics*. The most complete experience is provided by the four areas all together. The authors [i.m.], apart from naming the areas, also make suggestions for the "direction" of the experience: thematising, emphasising uniqueness, eliminating negative elements (e.g. avoiding extremities), making the experience memorable (e.g. souvenir), the opportunity to enjoy the experience with all the five senses.

In the economy of our era, on the demand side a characteristic element of consumer behaviour is experience through the consumer's decision, while on the supply side the only significant competitive edge arises from the fact of how intensive an experience a company can provide for the customer or the consumer of its product or service. In this way, experience appears as a product component in the market (Michalkó – Rátz [2005]).

According to Puczkó [2009], the appearance of the creative industry (as supply) and the experience economy (as demand) can be traced back to the fact that the consumers' lifestyle has become part of the intensive, high quality and multi-dimensional gain of experience. The type of experiences that derives from vacationing, for instance, strengthens the consumer in the qualities of his lifestyle, such as:

- active lifestyle, based upon involvement,
- pastimes based upon culture,
- creating an environment, in which it is hard to draw the line between consumer and service provider,
- consumption, based on the presence of strong desire for stimulation or on the interest beyond the virtual.

Thus, we can state that the desire for experiences points well beyond shopping, moreover, experience economy and experience society are not unusual any more. Just the opposite, as Puczkó [2009] also emphasises in his study that nowadays, novelty is represented by the appearance of authentic consumption and "*authentic economy*".

The characteristics of the typical consumer living under new conditions are the following:

- wants to break from the environment of his flat and work,
- is looking for "more fantastic" experiences than those at home,
- likes relaxation, entertainment and interactive experience,
- is aware of the fact that "real" and "artificial" experience exist, but often he does not differentiate between them,
- is relatively young (between the age of 15-45) and has a high discretionary income,
- is individualistic and independent,
- enjoys luxury, comfort and security,
- is looking for controlled excitement,
- is a conscious consumer,
- has short concentration skills and reluctance,
- is interested in new technologies and media,
- his expectations are described by the so-called "3S-model":
 - ♦ Surprise – in consumption, the role of surprise is crucial, there is no experience without it.
 - ♦ Sacrifice – the connection between the expected and perceived service depends on the relation of the experience and the sacrifice to be made for it.
 - ♦ Satisfaction – in an optimal case, the coordination of desired values, results and satisfactions regarded acceptable is of key importance (Puczkó [2009 p. 26.]).

The findings of several researches (Uriely [2005], Page – Connell [2009], Carbone – Haeckel [1994]) prove that the components of consumer experiences are made up of the interaction between the buyer and the service provider (perhaps a third party), novelty, different factors influencing the behaviours, the involvement of the consumer in the process of service- and experience provision, as well as how memorable the event of shopping and consumption was.

The consumers of our age – especially in tourism – do not intend to buy just a product or a service, but rather a complex experience, the chain of experiences. The role of customers, as well as their involvement in service has increased. This phenomenon in Heinonen and his co-authors' [2010] studies has introduced the new, customer dominant logic of service provision, in which *customer's activities, processes, practices, spiritual and emotional experiences, as well as other activities determine customer value*. This view does not, of course, doubt the importance of the service provider, it only places a greater emphasis on the relationship of consumers and the world embracing them. The authors go beyond the concept of products and services' value-in-use, value-in-possession and value-in-exchange, and instead, they prefer the more comprehensive, although less frequent interpretation of value-in-life or value-in-experience (Turnbull [2009]). According to Meyer-Schwager [2007], the received experience also determines how direct or indirect the relationship of the consumer is with the company.

In the case of *value-in-experience*, its *external and internal aspects* can also be determined (Babin et al. [1994], Mano – Oliver [1993]). In general, we can say that while external value perceptions derive from the accomplishment of a task, internal value perceptions come from the funny and entertaining aspects of the experiences (Babin et al. [1994], Holbrook [1999]). Mathwick and his colleagues [2001] somewhat simplified the value typologies created by Holbrook and introduced in the previous sub-chapter, and suggested a scale of value measurement, which consists of the excellence of service, the return for the consumer, as well as aesthetics and entertainment along external/internal and active/passive dimensions.

On the other hand Otto – Ritchie [1996], pointed out that for measuring the touristic service experience, the dimension of hedonism, spiritual calmness, involvement (interaction) and recognition can be emphasised, which in my interpretation, contain the cognitive and affective dimensions of general consumer value, that is, the overlap of value and experience categories.

Gentile and his co-authors [2007], in a broader definition, but with a similar content, offer an excellent summary of experience components, which contribute to the improvement of consumer value:

- *Perceptions*. Consumer experience created by factors that affect our sensory organs, such as vision, hearing, sense of feeling, tasting and touching.
- *Emotions*. The consumer's mood, feelings and emotions all influence the evaluation of the experience.
- *Understanding*. The consumer's opinion about the product, service and experience is determined by how much he can understand and how much he has learnt about it. Understanding can have an influence on future purchases as well.
- *Practicality*. Consumer experience derives from activity and participation.
- *Lifestyle*. Experiences are the result of the acceptance of values and beliefs.
- *Relations*. Experiences are based upon the consumer and the social relations of the environment surrounding him.

The value-oriented approach links research directions and definitions to experience researches, for example, service experience, consumer experience, customer experience, consumption experience, shopping experience, etc. (Carú – Cova [2003], Harris et al. [2003], Gentile et al. [2007]). These interpretations agree on the fact that the *experience* is directed by the service provider and *for the consumer it carries value based upon personal experience*. According to Meyer – Schwager [2007], consumer experience is the *internal and subjective evaluation* of the relationship between the service provider and the customer. In the definition of Prahalad and Ramaswamy [2004], *the value currently focuses on the customers' experiences*. In the interpretation of Vargo and Lusch [2008], value always depends on the unique and phenomenological perception of its beneficiary, thus, *value is always unique, based upon experience and sense, and it always depends on the context*. In the perspective of Carú – Cova [2003] and Holbrook [1999, 2006], experiences consists not only of cognitive and planned elements, but subjective and inseparable emotions as well, while *value is an interactive and relative experience*. In this way, experience derives from the consumer's own activity, behaviour and depends on his mood. Heinonen and his colleagues [2010] emphasise that experience is more than just a series of perceptions, it is more like a long-term and context-dependent relationship.

As a conclusion I can say that since the scientific interpretation of complex experience is rather rich and diversified, the definitions of the authors and researchers regarding the elements of experience are also diverse. Despite this, in my essay it is a common feature that *experience* 1. comes from the consumer's relationship with the service provider or its product, and with other consumers or local people; 2. is personal; 3. can influence the consumer in a holistic way, as well as rationally, emotionally, sensually, physically and spiritually.

Experience is a complex expression, the interpretation of which can take place from several different angles, depending on the area of science, e.g. psychology, sociology or business studies. Thus, the appearance of literature is highly rich and diverse, too. The major interpretation frames of experience are the following:

- The psychological approach builds the definitions of experience around the terminology of individual feelings, memorable events, consciousness and behaviours, mostly presenting the associations of "happiness", "turning inward", "beyond ordinary feelings" or "intensive empathy", that is "flow" (see. Maslow [1972], Csikszentmihályi [1997]).
- The social approach uses expressions, such as lifestyle or social context, and it mostly displays the ideal of a "beautiful", "interesting" and "valuable life", and presents the "quality of experience" which replaces the quality of life, as the classifying "index" of social class (see Éber [2008]).
- In the management approach, the consumer, marketing, value and value creation are in the focus. Provided we look at experience from the supply side, we must supposedly think of some consumer-engaging event, while in case of the demand side approach, during these events the consumer will experience the "flow", which is enjoyable and memorable. This latter approach is closest to the topic of my dissertation, therefore I am continue focusing on it.

The most respected consumer value researchers of the management literature, Woodruff [1997], Holbrook – Hirschman [1982], Holbrook [1999] and Sparks et al. [2007] all emphasise that value can best be captured in consumer experiences. Tourism can be a significant territory for the analysis of the relation between the value of experience and the value for the customer, since due to its characteristics, it is an outstanding sector for the provision of experience. Therefore in the following chapter I am going to deal with the presence and interpretation of value and the experience dimension in tourism.

3. VALUE – EXPERIENCE RELATIONSHIPS IN TOURISM

The growing importance of experience, as a socio-economic phenomenon is influencing tourism as well. Taking the experience economy approach as the basis, leisure tourism can be defined as migration to gain experiences, and the market demand for it is mostly determined by the solvent demand, interested in touristic experience. In our developed world, the primary motivation of the fast-growing touristic demand for a long time was relaxation and the desire for a change in the environment. The last decades of the century, however, brought about serious changes in the systems of both international and national tourism, particularly in the fields of consumer and travelling habits, the characteristics of tourists, their cultural and environmental sensitivity, as well as in the area of supply for market destinations and services. The transformation of consumer habits resulted in the serious diversification of demand, and contributed to the strengthening of the consumer-orientation of supply. Moreover, in the past decades there has been a rise in the number of experienced travellers, who can compare the benefits and disadvantages of the destinations competing with one another, and because they have had several different experiences, they are more critical in their travelling decisions. The global appreciation of the importance of the natural environment and the cultural, historical heritage also contributed to the restructuration of touristic demand. Touristic products which can satisfy individual needs and provide unique experiences have also revaluated. Motivations such as pure relaxation or doing nothing are losing their significance, and the demand for activities which provide real experiences is rising. (Michalkó – Rátz [2005], ETC [2006]).

In this chapter of my essay, I am going to describe the components of value for tourists, I will pay major attention to the interpretation, the types of experience and their influence on consumer value, then finally, I will summarize the findings of empirical studies on the topic, which also serve as the basis of my own research.

3.1. Consumer value dimensions in tourism

As I have already detailed in the previous chapter of my dissertation, the basis of every company's (in this case, touristic service providers) long-term success and competitiveness is the long-lasting satisfaction of their consumers, which occurs if they can create value for them.

Therefore, the definition of consumer value components and dimensions is highly critical in tourism as well (Yuan – Wu [2008]). Their analysis, as regards their scheduling, can happen before or during purchase, during or after consumption, taking the dimensions into account, or as a one- or two-dimensional definition, and the identification of the antecedent or conclusion side of value is also possible (Holbrook [2006]). In the field of tourism there are relatively few studies on the identification and measurement of consumer value dimensions (Sánchez et al. [2006]), nevertheless, we can assume, based on the achieved results, that due to its being so abstract, impossible to conserve, heterogeneous and complex, the one-dimensional (trade-off) model of value would be too simple to define consumer value with. Instead of the functional (mainly price and quality based) approach, the socio-psychological approach might be appropriate (Williams – Soutar [2000]).

The value dimensions revealed by Sheth et al. [1991] and Sweeney - Soutar [2001] serve as a starting point in the literature of tourism as well for the identification of consumer value dimensions. The first study is about the functional, conditional (environmental conditions), social, emotional and epistemic (recognition) values, while the second is about emotional and social value dimensions, and the two forms of functional values: the comparison of price and value, and the evaluation of the difference between the expected and the received quality. The importance of the perceived consumer value was highlighted by Gallarza – Saura [2006]'s study from the aspect that quality-value-satisfaction-loyalty is a chain, thus re-purchase cannot take place if the product and its environment does not present value for the consumer. Jamal and his co-authors [2011] even stressed that within this chain, value is a better identifier of consumer loyalty than quality or satisfaction. Therefore, creating the value is a critical element of corporate success.

Earlier, for the empirical testing of the touristic value model, the utilitarian approach was the most dominant method, where value was defined in the relation of quality and price (Jayanti – Ghosh [1996]). Today, a growing number of researches apply the multi-dimensional approach of value, such as Petrick [2002], who, besides the *price and quality dimension of value*, identified *emotional and reputational dimensions*. Al-Sabbahy et al. [2004] supports the argument that value deriving from the use of the product and its transactional value can also be a significant dimension of consumer value. Sánchez and his fellow researchers [2006] later applied the *comprehensive investigation of consumer value*, during which they examined the customer behaviour before and during purchase, during and after consumption in its six dimensions (the

professionalism and equipment of the travel agency, the quality and price of the product, emotional and social values). On the whole, the authors identified two major groups of the values perceived by the tourists, which have functional or emotional impressions as components. The *functional aspect* refers to the rational and economy based value approach of consumers, while the *affective aspect* is based upon the consumer's emotions, perceptions and the influencing effect of the social environment (Sheth et al. [1991], Sánchez et al. [2006], Sweeney – Soutar [2001]). By emotional aspect, Sheth and his colleagues [1991] refer to elements, such as fear or sense of security, excitement, passion, romance, while by social aspect they mean all the interactions between the consumers and other people in contact with them. Some authors (Otto – Ritchie [1996]) emphasise that tourism, compared with other industries, has a much bigger potential for freeing the consumers' experience and emotional reactions.

The *experience value* dimension of consumer value is also of great importance, which, according to Mathwick and his co-authors [2001], is built upon interactions during service provision and it mixes the *external* (utilitarian, objective) and *internal* (enjoyment, subjective) value. In the widely accepted interpretation of Holbrook [1999], consumer value is made up of four distinguishable elements:

- firstly, it is the selection of preference,
- secondly, it is determined by subjective-objective interactions,
- thirdly, it is relative, since the consumer compares different products, value creation depends on his personality and the surrounding environment,
- lastly, consumer value is more in connection with experience than with the purchase of the product or service, thus he argues in favour of using the terminology *experience-based value*.

Just like the previously mentioned authors, Holbrook derives the category of experience value, according to internal/external and active (participant)/reactive (passive) aspects, from the interactions between consumer and his environment. In the author's interpretation, the birth of experience value is dependent upon the following:

- has the consumer's investment (external/active) into the product/service returned?
- what is the level of quality (external, passive)?
- entertainment (internal, active) and
- is aesthetics (internal, passive) a feature of the received product/service?

For the measurement of service experience Otto – Ritchie [1996] has developed a scale, which marked *hedonism*, *peace of mind*, *participation* and *recognition* as experience dimensions. As opposed to this view, Gallarza – Gil [2008] defines efficiency, quality, social value, entertainment and aesthetics, as the major components of touristic value. During their years of research into timeshare, Sparks and his fellow authors [2007] drew the conclusion that in tourism customer value is made up of 12 value dimensions. These dimensions may, of course, vary between the types of tourism (e.g. a completely different value dimension may appear in city tourism than in rural tourism), yet there are non-specific value components, which in general, are relevant for all the touristic products, such as comfort, location, recreational facilities, social dimension and entertainment/fun. In their researches of the field of health tourism, Hallem and his co-authors [2010] concluded (in accordance with the researches of Sheth et al.), that for tourists buying touristic package holidays, the components with the highest value are the quality, the price of the package, the form of relationship between consumer and service provider, the triggered emotions, recognition and favourable environmental conditions. Williams – Soutar [2000] also examined these value components in their research, during which the authors made the statement that the mentioned value components can be identified not only as consumer value dimensions, but also as experience dimensions or components. Thus, *touristic experience* is also the *amalgamation of different value dimensions*, too. Nevertheless, the authors draw the attention to the aspect that apart from the functional (price-quality) dimension, other socio-psychological components may vary depending on the situation, the time, the consumer's personal attitude, or the product's own features. In his studies on consumer values in rural tourism, Komppula [2005] also drew the conclusion that the value perception of guests is influenced by several value elements of the service, as well as the whole of the learnt experiences. He divides the value created during service provision into three stages, where first is the expected value, which is to satisfy the needs of the consumer and originates from the consumer's intellectual, social, possessive and escapist motivations. The following stage is the perceived value, which can be derived from the consumer's experiences before and during the use of the service. Finally, the experienced value follows, which can partly derive from experiences during and after service provision, but also expresses the difference between the received and expected value.

In the field of hospitality, which is strongly attached to tourism, experience dimensions are mostly determined by the interactions between participants, the quality of the core service (the quality of

food and drink) and the physical environment (infrastructure and atmosphere) (Walter et al. [2010]).

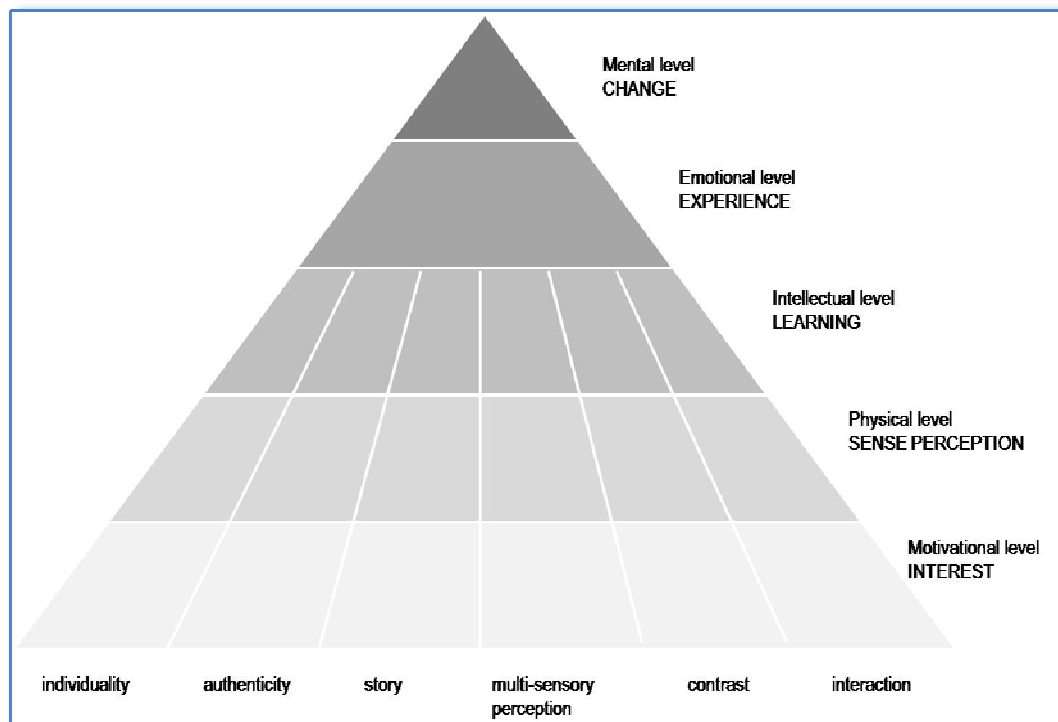
As a summary we can say that consumers can acquire values from different types of experiences. Experience value compared to consumer value focuses on value components, which are preserved in the consumer after these experiences. Thus, there are a lot of similarities between experience value and consumer value, and yet, the researches into experience value are rare. Yuan and Wu [2008] used the consumer value concept for the measurement of experience value, since most researchers of the field agree that the major dimensions of consumer value are made up of emotional and functional characteristics.

3.2. The interpretation and models of touristic experience

The interpretation of experience is rather special in tourism, since it is the actual foundation of the products/services of this industry. Researches that aim to unfold the content of touristic experiences, examine the topic from anthropological, sociological and psychological aspects as well. In the general sense, touristic experience is an instrument to define the *meaning of a touristic activity or event* (Otto – Ritchie [1996]).

Today's society and economy are built on experiences, which is clearly shown by the experience pyramid of Tarssanen [2009] that can be adapted for the tourism industry as well (Figure 5). Regarding the process of consumer experience we can say that experiences are based on motivations, then enhanced through a sensory and learning phase, the common effect of which on the consumer is seen in achieving the *change* (e.g. during the experiences of the holiday, after relaxation, the tourist returns home relaxed, refreshed and changed). Regarding the experience content of the product, several levels and components can be relevant. For the consumer of our age, the levels of optimal experience appear in the uniqueness and the authenticity of the product, besides which it is of great importance that the received experience is created as a complex whole, embracing one topic, influencing all our five senses in a positive way, setting a contrast to our ordinary days and ensuring the birth of personal interactions.

Figure 5: Experience pyramid



Source: Tarssanen [2009 p. 11.]

The *definition of experience* can be grouped into several different categories:

1. according to the managerial approach, it can be captured on the basis of the *consumer's emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual perceptions*,
2. if the satisfaction analysis is the starting point, we can regard it the *root of effects influencing the consumer before and after the travel*,
3. or, grabbing the essence of experience, we can define it by experiencing it on the basis of *authenticity*, that is, the real experience (Tung – Ritchie [2011], Pine – Gilmore [1998], Wang [1999]).

The experience can be identified from the supply and demand side approach as well. If we apply the *supply side* approach, by experience we may mean a consumer-engaging *event* (Pine – Gilmore [1998]), while based on the *demand side* view, experience originates from the enjoyable, entertaining and memorable discovery of *interactions* during these events (Oh et al. [2007]).

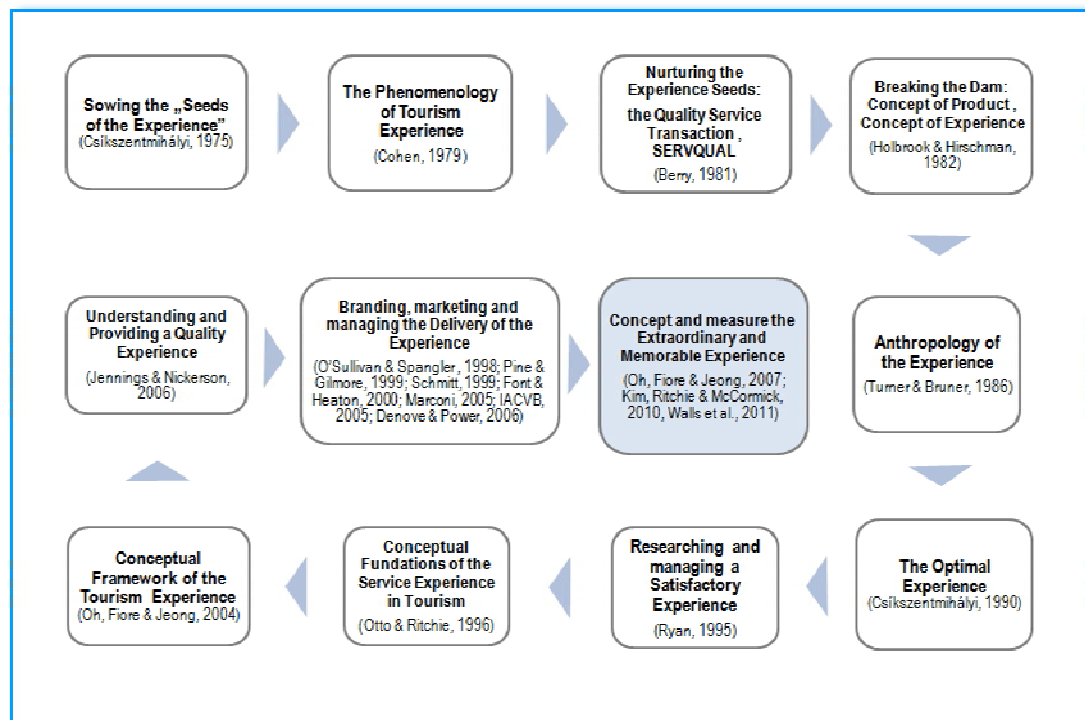
The sought-after experience is rather diverse and can vary for each individual. The most characteristic types are listed below, according to Michalkó – Rátz [2005]:

- *excitement, adventure* (e.g. experience from white-water rafting);
- *real or perceived danger* (e.g. taking part in a survival program);
- *new knowledge, skills* (e.g. skills learnt in a handicraft camp);
- *aesthetics* (e.g. the experience of admiring a beautiful landscape);
- *being together, company* (e.g. memories of a romantic honeymoon);
- *novelty* (e.g. the experience of trying new activities);
- *exoticism* (experience created by the tourist visiting a destination with a culture significantly different from the tourist's own country).

Touristic experience studies are prepared along several dimensions, from different aspects, but the major research directions are as follows (Ritchie et al. [2011]) (Figure 6):

- *Conceptualisation*: The primary aim of these studies is to introduce the theoretical background of the topic, definition and understanding the essence of touristic value.
- *Behaviour-identification*: Several researches identify experience as the result, but among the researches we can find those that describe experience in a transmitting role, and it is defined as the precondition of consumer satisfaction, re-purchase and offer, i.e. the future consumer behaviour and decision.
- *Methodology*: Scientists agree that among experience researches the number of studies that give priority to methodology and focus on measurement is rather low, thus in the future encouraging this method is critical. The majority of research methods currently are qualitative (Q-method, case studies, interviews) analyses, while the number of quantitative studies is relatively low.
- *Experience types*: Most researches focus on identifying the different experience types and their features in special products, such as heritage, culture, adventure, wine tourism or sea cruises.
- *Practical significance*: The drive of experience research is mainly presented by its contribution to the success of the supply side, thus with the knowledge acquired this way, its primary aim is to improve the company's marketing and management practice.

Figure 6: The development of touristic experience researches



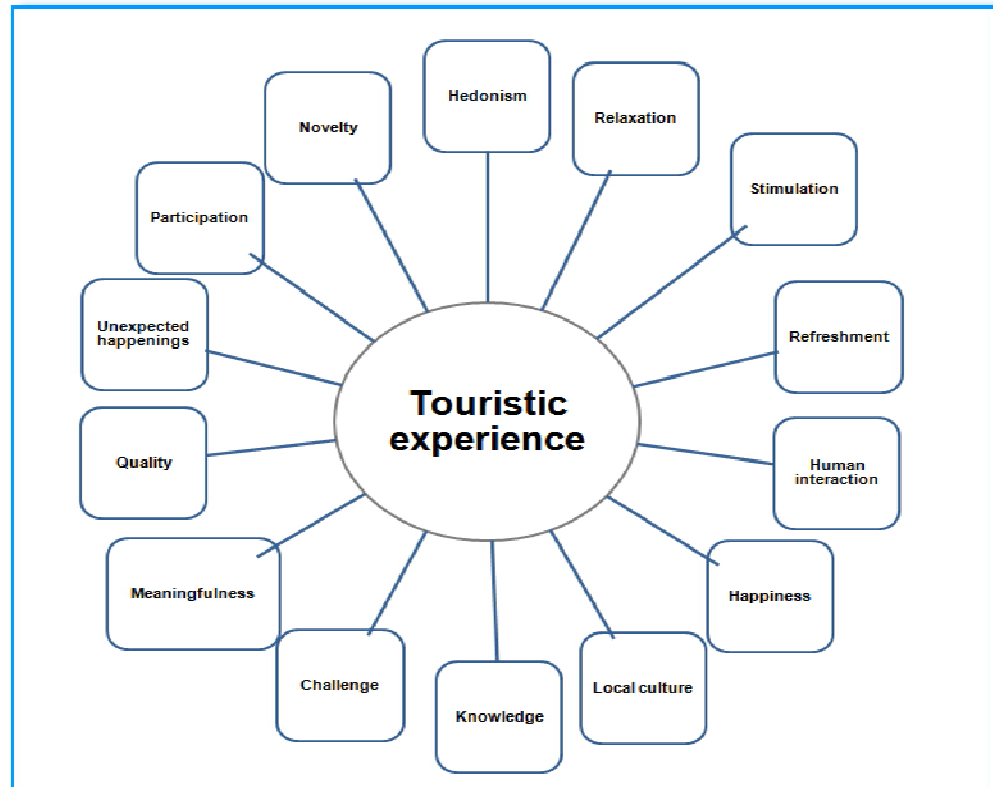
Source: based on Ritchie – Hudson [2009], Ritchie et al. [2011], Walls et al. [2011]

In order to reveal the components of touristic experience, several researchers (Oh et al. [2007], Hosany – Witham [2010]) used the experience concept of Pine and Gilmore [1998] as a starting point. Oh and his co-authors [2007] conducted a survey among tourists on providing accommodation in the country, while Hosany – Witham [2010] conducted a survey on sea cruises about what experience means to them and to what extent the 4 experience areas (education, entertainment, aesthetics, escapism) appear as the components of experience. In both researches, experience is significantly determined by aesthetics, followed in the first survey by learning, entertainment and escapism, while in the second study, the second most significant was the experience of entertainment, followed by learning and the desire to escape from ordinary life.

In their management-oriented study, Kim et al. [2010] emphasised the importance of endeavour to have a *memorable* touristic experience. In their opinion, the quality of service and the satisfaction with the quality of service are not sufficient for tourists any more. They are looking for memorable experiences, which might be the best way to encourage the consumer for re-purchase. Since, however, experience is influenced by many factors (such as personality, situation, time and place), it is worth examining them separately for each touristic product. On the basis of researches carried out so far, however, certain components can be traced, which in

general can contribute to the creation of touristic experience and making them memorable, as shown in Figure 7.

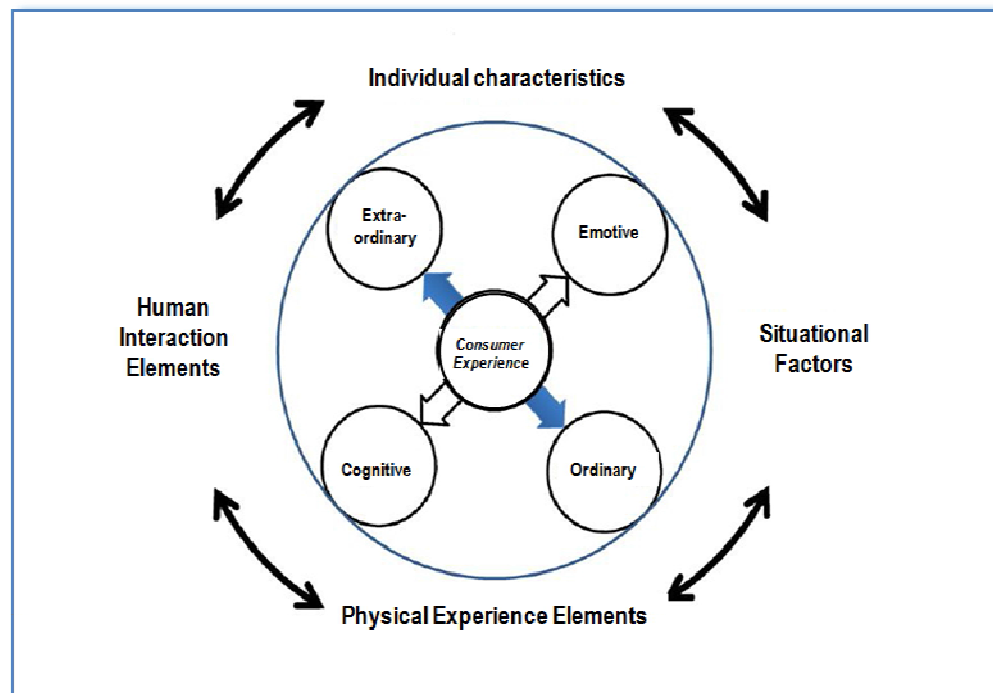
Figure 7: The possible components of touristic experience



Source: My own edition based on Kim – Ritchie – McCormick [2010]

Since capturing the experience is difficult, several researchers placed different aspects in the focus. In order to enhance the understanding of the comprehensive interpretation of experience, I regard it worthwhile considering the framework of Walls and his co-authors [2011], which consists of this diverse approach to experience, refers to the role of the consumer as well as to the influencing effect of the external-internal environment (Figure 8).

Figure 8: The system of consumer experience components in tourism-hospitality



Source: Walls et al. [2011 p.17.]

The system interprets consumer experience in tourism and hospitality along two axes and four components: *ordinary*, *special*, *recognitive* (objective) and *emotional* (subjective). The process of experience creation, as we could see it earlier, can be influenced by external and internal factors, which are different for every individual. These influencing factors can be grouped, thus we can draw the conclusion that the experience of the tourists is mostly influenced by *physical elements*, *human relationships*, *individual character traits* (personality traits) and *situational factors*.

Generally, every touristic activity is partly an escape from ordinary days, from the usual, the traveller wants some intensive and positive experience which fills him with energy and memories that he can think back to happily on ordinary days; and yet, we can see ordinary, routine elements during the travel, such as sleeping, eating, drinking, which are necessarily included in touristic experience. The experience, however, can be made special by putting these routine activities in an extraordinary environment. Thus, for instance, if a tourist can taste authentic food or sleep on the carved ice bed of a hotel made of ice, an "ordinary" meal or sleep will become a unique experience, and consumer experience will increase all in all.

On the other axis the objective (recognitive) and subjective (emotional) experiences appear, which are expressed by to what extent the consumer experience depends on his own will.

Participation in the touristic activity is influenced by the thoughts and feelings of the consumer at the given moment. Human relationships may also improve the quality of the experience. Individual traits and situational circumstances make up the group of factors which cannot typically be influenced by the service provider, thus are also critical.

As a summary, we can say that although tourism is the best means to escape from everyday life, the experience of the tourist is influenced by many factors which are also present in our ordinary life. Touristic experience is the individual's perception of touristic activities, personal experiences and subjective evaluation of the events before, during and after the travel (Tung – Ritchie [2011]). The extent and the success of the experience – which is always multidimensional and unique – may be determined by the quality of the host-guest relationship, as well as the tourist's ability and willingness to take in experiences (Walls et al. [2011]). In the case of my research topic we can assume that rural tourism can play a major role in today's experience economy, if among others it can provide the experience of learning, delectation, novelty and social relations either separately or together for consumers and tourists, as well as generate income for service providers.

3.3. Empirical studies which examine the relationship of touristic experiences and values

The appearance of consumer value in the literature of tourism is primarily characterized by practical empirical studies prepared with theoretical validity, aiming to improve the company's performance. Studies focusing on theory creation or theory control (mostly based upon the models of Pine – Gilmore [1998], Sheth et al. [1991] and Holbrook [1999]) are currently not numerous, and existing researches need further refinement as well (see Williams – Soutar [2000], Sparks et al. [2007], Gallarza – Gil [2008], Oh et al. [2007], Kim et al. [2010], Hosany – Witham [2010]).

3.3.1. International researches

Consumer value researches in tourism can be divided into three groups from theoretical viewpoints: qualitative researches, primary researches applying qualitative and quantitative

methods and indicator-based comparisons (partial factors indicating the components and dimensions of consumer value) with complex (qualitative/quantitative) primary research.

- Qualitative researches

Researches made with the qualitative method allow for the deeper understanding of factors influencing the consumer value. A common feature of qualitative researches in the topic is that researchers use the forms of in-depth interviews (Hallem et al. [2010], Komppula [2005]), the content analysis of experience diaries (Musa et al. [2010]) or focus group interviews (Williams – Soutar [2000], Sparks et al. [2007]).

I believe that the consumer value research of Sparks et al. [2007] is outstanding among qualitative researches, because the authors examined the preferences, the attitudes of tourists and the types of product components that carry or decrease value for them in the tourism industry and specifically in the Australian timeshare ownership. The research of the three authors lasted several years, during which time, they constantly refined their results. In the focus of their approach was value, as a consumer experience concept, since the subjects also defined factors that carried value for them on the basis of their experiences. The analysis was conducted by the coding method typical of qualitative researches, during which the 12 general dimensions of the consumer value were defined on the basis of codes and key factors mentioned by the subjects: *comfort, location, relaxation, social environment, entertainment, pride (possession), financial gains, flexibility, gift/reward option, luxury, novelty*, of which the last seven dimensions can specifically be found in timesharing tourism. After exploring the dimensions, the authors carried out their categorisation at each level, identifying the group of dimensions as generic value which can be generally applied for almost all the touristic products, and they identified as expanded value the whole of those dimensions that are particular for the product.

I would like to emphasise Komppula's [2005] research, because similarly to my topic, he also conducted consumer value researches in the context of rural tourism, using the case study method, based on interviews. The author identifies the consumer value examined in the market of tourism with the experience, and he regards it the basis of the touristic product, along with service quality. The research was conducted in Finland, where rural tourism is a favourable form of tourism. The major questions of the research referred to why tourists decide to choose rural

tourism from among the diverse forms of tourism. The survey was conducted using a sample of 47 elements (selecting from the guests of 9 businesses from different parts of the country). The subjects were chosen with the help of service providers in a way that they offered subjects into the sample who were regarded as typical consumers of their service. The results showed that the consumer value for the guests primarily derived from the process of service. The Finnish example identifies the product of rural tourism as regards the expected value approach at three different levels: the core and essence of the product are holidays in a peaceful and silent environment. To it several service elements are attached in the next circle, the existence of which are crucial: accommodation, meals, activities in nature, sauna. The outer circle of the product, which is the improvement of its value, is presented by the attractions and facilities other than accommodation (e.g. social contacts, country atmosphere, local attractions). The received results proved that in rural tourism, the consumers' perception of value is based on *emotions*, but during the first purchase tourists tend to focus on the existence of technical and *functional* factors. From the aspect of my own research, I regard the Finnish example important, as it uses the method of motivation-based value exploration, however, I plan to use the definition of value in a broader sense, thus for me, in my research apart from the expected value, the identification of experienced value would be interesting.

- Researches containing qualitative and quantitative elements

A great example for research with the current methodology is offered by Sánchez et al. [2006]'s much-cited consumer value analysis. The research is regarded unique, because the authors aimed at the exploration and the evaluation of the global consumer value (GLOVAL), which includes the experience before and during purchase, during and after consumption, that is the experience originating from both consumption and purchase. The authors carried out the survey in Spain. During the initial qualitative survey, two focus-group analyses were conducted about the value judgement of the consumers as regards touristic packages. The aim of the first focus-group survey was to reveal value factors, while the aim of the second one was the reinforcement or dismissal of the previously identified factors. The number of elements in the sample was 10, while its composition regarding age, gender and qualification was heterogeneous. The participants evaluated the travel agency and the purchased touristic package, but we must remark here that the evaluation was mostly done on the basis of the received experiences. The respondents first spoke about how satisfied they were with the product, then expressed their wish of planning to

buy the product again in the future or not. Among the identified value dimensions, functional (quality of facility, quality of service, professionalism, price/value ratio, product quality), emotional (trust, perception) and social (recognition, brand image) value components appeared. To measure these value dimensions and their variables (40 variables), the authors carried out quantitative research in 3 Spanish cities (Madrid, Valencia, La Coruña), based on personal interviews with questionnaires, marking the responses on the 5-point Likert-scale. 402 respondents were part of the sample stratified according to quota and age. As the result of the research conducted using factor analysis, the authors stated that for consumers *value is made up of functional, emotional and social dimensions*. Listed among functional value dimensions were the equipment and professionalism of the travel agency, as well as the evaluation of the quality and price of the product, while emotional and social dimensions referred to calmness, atmosphere, hedonism and human relations. The authors stressed that the examination of the touristic product cannot be carried out only rationally, and *experience-based approach* can be the *key to future surveys* of this kind, as mainly these will become the key factors of satisfaction and loyalty. As compared to previous research models (Holbrook [1999], Sweeney-Soutar [2001], Sheth et al. [1991]), the authors also claim that *on the whole consumer value is made up of cognitive and emotional dimensions, as well as affective dimensions* containing social value elements.

- Complex researches containing indicators, qualitative and quantitative elements

Significant researches using indicator systems (Oh et al. [2007], Gallarza-Gil [2008], Kim et al. [2010], Jamal et al. [2011]) were prepared by theoretical foundation: researchers work out the indicators to be examined built upon one of the theoretical models of consumer value (mostly upon the basic models introduced above). A general feature of these researches is that they analyse the components of consumer value, along indicators identified in the theory and the results of qualitative researches, and evaluate these indicators on the 5-7-point Likert-scale in a quantitative way. A further common feature is that prior to conducting the survey on the importance of partial components shaped by consumer motivations, they are checked and refined through expert interviews.

Gallarza – Gil [2008] in their research examined the presence of Holbrook's consumer value in tourism, based on university students' touristic behaviour. They presumed that consumer value is

the consumers' experience with the product, which is always relative, interactive and based on preferences. Following the identification of value components from earlier researches, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 4 experts, and made 4 focus-group surveys with the participation of students. During the focus-group survey, the students' touristic experiences were revealed in order to identify Holbrook's value dimensions (in this case, efficiency, quality, social relations, entertainment and aesthetics). The factors created this way were measured on the 5-point Likert-scale with the participation of 229 Spanish students. The research conducted from the perspective of consumer behaviour provided the opportunity for the multidimensional analysis of touristic value, based on the also multidimensional consumer value model, during which the value dimensions of social relations were counted as a significant component of experiences.

Due to the earlier introduced overlaps in the concept of consumer value and consumer experience, I regard the research of Kim and his co-authors [2010] on touristic experience dimensions highly significant, which was based on Pine and Gilmore's [1998] four-element (education, entertainment, aesthetics and escapism) model indicators, supplemented by the results of interviews and expert questionnaires, and measured in a survey. On the basis of the 511 questionnaires, 7 factors of the memorable touristic experience were identified (with 24 variables). These factors included: *hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, sensible activity, participation and gained knowledge*.

Jamal and his fellow authors [2011] investigated the factors bearing value for tourists in the case of Malaysian rural tourism to show and rank in order of importance the functional and experience aspects of consumer value, examining how the value can be improved through different experiences. It is really important to remark that the definition of Malaysian rural tourism is very similar to the Hungarian, emphasising the features of the products, such as natural, cultural and connected to local traditions. The authors also support my opinion that in rural tourism, the number of demand side value analyses is rather low (Musa et al. [2010]), since in the focus of researches you can mostly find the supply side, the attitude of service providers and the description of conditions for their competitive operation. Concerning the research methodology, he collected the value and experience indicators of former researches and models (Sánchez et al. [2006], Otto – Ritchie [1996]), which were prepared with the participation of 8 people (mainly from the national rural tourism association, as well as service providers, domestic and foreign

tourists) and completed with the results of the interviews made with them. The respondents were asked to give their opinion on the program supply of rural tourism, highlighting which one presented experience for them and how important they were. The listed value dimensions were the following: in case of the *functional* value the price, the quality and the facility itself were important, in case of the *experience* dimension the activities, the culture, the acquired knowledge and human relations were dominant, while the *emotional* aspect also appeared as an experience dimension. The resulting 37-element indicator list was evaluated and refined by a group of expert consultants with scientific degree, and as a result, a list containing 30 partial factors was created, which was measured by the researchers in a survey with 353 participants, on a 7-point Likert-scale. As a result of the exploratory and reinforcing factor analysis, researches found that the consumer value is influenced by 20 variables in 5 dimensions. The resulting value dimensions in their order of importance were: 1. *emotional*, 2. *experience (activity, culture, knowledge)*, 3. *experience (guest-host relationship)*, 4. *functional (quality of accommodation)*, 5. *functional (price)*. The current research also justifies the former findings of Komppula [2005], according to which in rural tourism the role of emotional and experience factors are more important than that of the functional dimensions, such as price and quality.

3.3.2. Hungarian researches

In Hungary, no theoretical researches have been conducted so far to show the consumer value factors in tourism and rural tourism, which might be due to that fact that only in recent years has the topic been in the focus of attention both in professional and in academic circles. The Third Annual International EuroGîtes Conference on Rural Tourism held in 2007 also urged to conduct of a survey on consumer motivation, value and satisfaction which could serve as the basis of developments (Fekete, 2008). Nevertheless I regard it important to emphasise that from the aspect of the practical approach of competitiveness, the national strategy of rural tourism was prepared for the years 2011-2020 which set the practical objective of creating the conditions of reception for service providers, forming co-operations as well as increasing the number of attractions, in order to shape experience provision and keep guests. The current strategy is not primarily based on theoretical models and the identification of consumer expectations, but on practical experiences, statistical figures and expert interviews, but I believe that its creation is highly significant in increasing the success of Hungarian rural tourism.

As I have already pointed out, demand side researches are rather rare in the Hungarian touristic market. Earlier Kornélia Kiss [2001] conducted a qualitative survey on comparing the motivations of Hungarian and Finnish guests in rural tourism, in which the author stresses that

- regarding their composition, there are mainly domestic guests,
- their major motivations are: to escape from the noise of the city and the desire to spend their free time in a stress-free environment,
- and to recognize and learn about the values of village life.

As regards the segments, the participation of city intellectuals, mainly retired people and families with small children are dominant, but groups of young people without children are also represented. Their favourite activities include trekking, learning about old professions and participating in the activities around the house.

3.3.3. The summary of empirical research findings

The researches emphasise the role of different, but at the same time rather similar value factors through many factors and indicators. In Table 7, I collected the value dimensions included in the most important theoretical-based, empirical studies.

Table 7: Value dimensions in tourism according to highlighted empirical studies

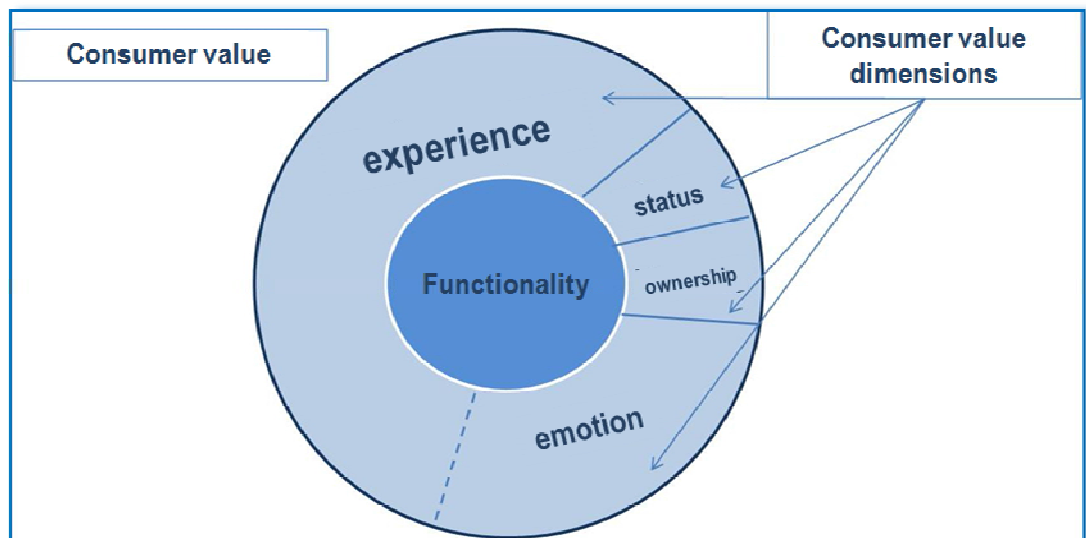
| Value, Experience dimensions/ Researches | Otto – Ritchie [1996] | Komppula [2005] | Sánchez et al. [2006] | Oh et al. [2007] | Sparks et al. [2007] | Gallarza-Gil [2008] | Kim et al. [2010] | Jamal et al. [2011] |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Experience value | X | X | | X | X | | X | X |
| ~ hedonism, activity, entertainment | X | | | X | X | X | X | X |
| ~ peace of mind | X | X | | | X | | X | |
| ~ interaction, participation | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X |
| ~ cognition | X | X | | X | | | X | X |
| ~ aesthetics | | X | | X | | X | | |
| ~ escapism | | X | | X | | | | |
| ~ novelty | | | | | | | X | |
| ~ local culture | | X | | | | | X | X |
| Emotional value | | X | X | | | | | X |
| Functional value | | X | X | | X | X | | X |
| ~ price | | X | X | | X | | | X |
| ~ quality | | X | X | | X | X | | |
| ~ facilities | | | X | | X | X | | X |
| ~ professionalism | | | X | | | | | |
| Ownership value | | | | | X | | | |
| Status value | | | | | X | | | |

Source: My own edition based on the studies marked in the table

Examining the studies as a whole, we can see the frequent appearance of *functional*, i.e. objective and rational values, as well as *affective*, i.e. subjective values based on emotions and experiences, and in the majority of cases this latter one is more emphasised. For consumers, price and quality are the basic condition for the selection and evaluation of the service, but at the same time, they tend to identify value with their own experiences, in which cases *exploring*, *social relations*, *entertainment* and *aesthetics* are of outstanding importance.

Following the analysis of literature on touristic experience I believe that consumer (tourist) value is based upon functional value dimensions, supplemented by affective, primarily experience, emotional, possessive and status values (value dimension) (Figure 9).

Figure 9: The structure of consumer value



Source: My own edition based on literature marked in Table 7

4. THE METHODOLOGY OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES

In this chapter of my dissertation, my aim is to investigate the analysis of consumer value dimensions reviewed in the literature and the forms of touristic experience in Hungarian rural tourism. The models of consumer value have already been adapted into the literature of tourism, although empirical studies are not widespread. That is the reason why their research is being encouraged both at Hungarian and international level. In my opinion the basis of success of rural tourism in Hungary can be the identification of tourists' motivations, attitudes, as well as factors that carry value or experience for them, since it may reveal useful information both scientifically and practically. Therefore, the focus of my research is to adapt consumer value theories to rural tourism.

4.1. Research questions and aims

The aim of my research is to conduct a survey which, on the basis of the already introduced theoretical background and the findings of earlier empirical studies, is capable of identifying and ranking the components of consumer (tourist, guest) value and its major dimensions, thus my major research questions are as follows:

What is value for tourists in rural tourism?

For the definition of rural tourism, I use my own synthesised definition, which I intend to further refine as the result of my research findings. As a starting point, by *rural tourism* I refer to a form of tourism which *offers catering, accommodation and programs for tourists in a village environment by also providing the opportunity to experience traditional country lifestyle and agriculture through personal relationships, giving the chance of learning about country culture and heritage, as well as offering modern leisure and sports activities in nature.*

Apart from identifying the supply side, the definition also refers to the significance of its demand side, where programs, experiencing new, authentic adventures, learning and the desire for recognition can become one of the most fundamental touristic motivations and also a factor that carries a consumer value.

My research question is complex, therefore it can be divided into several sub-questions, the exploratory and descriptive analysis of which I will carry out using research methods that consist of qualitative and quantitative elements. The findings of my research can be determined by how guests define rural tourism; how social norms and lifestyle influence the values; in what type of destination the research was conducted, regarding supply and demand; and what are the guests' characteristics and motivations.

My research questions regarding the Hungarian situation were inspired by the theoretical aspect of international literature and the findings of the empirical studies conducted in the field so far. As I have already introduced all of them in detail in the previous chapters, in this sub-chapter I intend to deal with only the most significant aspects. I will give a summary of my research questions in the following points.

Q1. Who make up the demand of rural tourism?

The identification of the segment is significant in value analysis, since the service must be adapted to the diverse requirements of different consumer groups. Segmentation can be carried out in different ways, among others based on the subjects' demographic, geographic, lifestyle or motivational qualities (Park – Yoon [2009]). As we could see in the research of Kiss [2001], the major segments of rural tourism in the demographic sense are senior intellectuals, families with young children and young people with no children. It is worthwhile studying if there have been any changes in the target groups of rural tourism as the result of today's touristic trends (ETC [2006]).

Q2. What is the motivation of tourists and what does rural tourism mean to them?

Apart from demographic features, my aim is also to identify the motivation of tourists, since I believe through this it is easier to define what rural tourism means to tourists, and it can also serve as a great starting point to define consumer value. It turns out from the aggregated findings of the researches in the field (Frochot [2005], Molera – Albaladejo [2007], Perales [2002], Kastenholz et al. [1999], Park – Yoon [2009], Komppula [2005], Kiss [2001], Pesonen et al. [2011]) that the major motivation of guests is usually the following: *exploring the culture, active*

relaxation, search for peace and calmness. Further inspiring factors are the opportunity for the *family to be together, a friendly welcome, a new environment, good food,* and an increasing number of tourists are also attracted by the *beauty of the landscape and outdoor activities in nature.*

In the first chapter of my essay, I have tackled the interpretations of rural tourism, which are rather diverse both internationally and in Hungary. The differences in interpretations can be traced back to the different definitions of the country by the nations, so we could see examples for countries where calmness, nature and activities attached to it are a focal point in rural tourism (e.g. Norway, Denmark), while elsewhere experiencing the traditional culture and rural lifestyle are in the centre (e.g. Austria, Romania). As there are no empirical findings in this field about Hungary, in my research my purpose is to learn the opinion of Hungarian tourists about the connection between the two central elements of the product.

My assumption is that rural tourism – due to its nature and structure of supply (Szabó [2006], Miklay [2007]) – should be presented to tourists as a complex, a so-called “core” product, built on country traditions and lifestyle, and a strongly linked, external “supplementary” product, offering activities carried out in nature outside the host’s premises.

As a preliminary study, I conducted a survey in 2009 to examine this issue using the method of simple, random sample, interviewing 120 people (Kulcsár [2009]). My findings then showed that the factor with the highest level of motivation for guests was recreation in a quiet and peaceful environment, activities that can be done in nature, country lifestyle and learning about the culture. In my research, I regard it useful to carry out the examination of the features of demand from the territorial aspect, where regional specifications can also be identified.

Q3. What partial factors, indicators make up consumer value in rural tourism?

The partial factors of consumer value can only be adapted as a starting point from former empirical studies (Jamal et al. [2011], Kim et al. [2010], Oh et al. [2007], Otto-Ritchie [1996], Sánchez et al. [2006], Pesonen et al. [2011], LCTA [2010]), and due to the specific environment, the diverse cultural and social features, they must be preliminary tested and defined. During my research, my aim is to identify motivational indicators based on literature and consumer

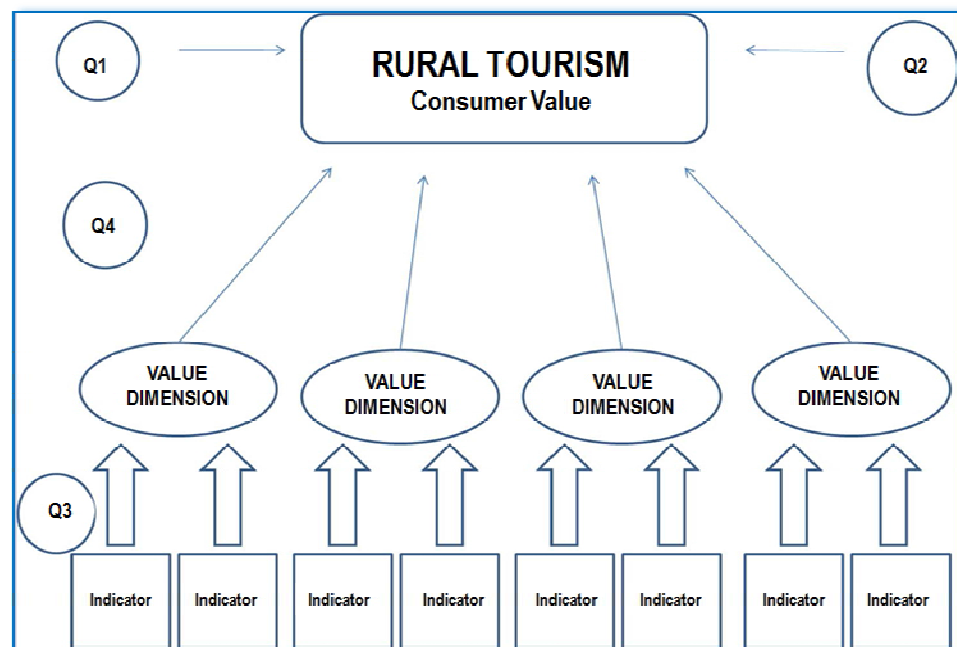
interviews, as well as refine them through expert interviews and later conduct their empirical testing.

Q4. What value dimensions make up consumer values in rural tourism, and among them, to what extent is the value of experience emphasised?

The findings of earlier empirical studies (Komppula [2005], Jamal et al. [2011]) draw the attention to the fact that for guests taking part in rural tourism, the existence of affective value dimensions (experiences based on emotions and personal relationship) can be highly emphatic. This is supported by the fact that compared to other touristic products, this form of tourism represents a lower standard, as regards the equipment and the price of the accommodation. So, it seems that the guests are looking for value in something else. When examining consumer value, I apply the multidimensional approach. Within this, I analyse the group of functional values and the group of affective values as well.

The connecting points of research questions Q1-Q2-Q3-Q4 are shown in Table 10.

Figure 10: The connecting points of my research questions



Source: My own edition

4.2. The structure and methods of research

In this sub-chapter, my objective is to clarify the questions related to the methodology of the empirical study and give a short introduction of the traits and structure of the sample and the applied procedures.

The aim of my quantitative study based on qualitative research is identification and description, during which I will focus my attention to identifying and measuring consumer value dimensions. In my qualitative research I have completed indicators identified by secondary sources with further indicators, as the result of a small sample consumer survey, then I have refined the created list of indicators on the basis of expert opinions, in order to increase the validity of my research. As the next step of my research I have conducted a quantitative questionnaire-based survey, by which my aim was to identify, interpret and analyse the indicator-based consumer value.

Exploration is typical on occasions when the researcher turns towards a new field of interest, or when the investigated phenomenon is new or not explored. The value of such researches is that they enhance better understanding and the establishment of further research in the topic. Descriptive research serves to precisely measure and describe certain characteristics of the analysed population (Babbie [2000]). Researches which aim to explore, then to measure with the scaling techniques are regarded successful (Kim et al. [2010], Jamal et al. [2011]). The structure of my research can be divided into the following three parts:

1. Creating indicators

For the identification of the factors valuable for the guests of rural tourism, the experts of the earlier mentioned empirical researches (see sub-chapter 3.3) suggest the preliminary, motivation-based identification of the indicators. Their necessities are also justified by the fact that the location, time, the personality and the motivation of the subjects, thus their perceptions vary according to the destinations. Two basic cases of indicator creation are secondary research in literature, while on the other hand, its complementation by interviewing consciously selected subjects in groups or individually (Jamal et al. [2011], Kim et al. [2010]).

In my research as a first step, I identified indicators based on the literature of Jamal et al. [2011] (20 indicators), Kim et al. [2010] (24 indicators), Komppula [2005] (16 indicators), Pesonen et al. [2011] (31 indicators) using their research findings, then I compared them with the characteristics of Hungarian rural tourism (Szabó [2006]).

I found it necessary to complete the resulting list (thus increasing the validity and reliability of my research) with the perceptions of Hungarian tourists who had already participated in rural tourism several times before, since we can assume that the more a tourist participated in rural tourism, the more numerous experiences he has, thus he is more capable of expressing which factors meant a value and an experience for him. I conducted the survey with a heterogeneous small sample size (N=30), regardless of gender, age, qualification, residence or marital status, and I interviewed the subjects with *personal, open questions*. The subjects were selected for the sample after voluntary personal applications, taking the viewpoints of heterogeneity into account. Prior to the research I called subjects to participate in my study on the homepage of National Association for Rural and Agro-tourism, Tourism Competence Center of Budapest Corvinus University and on the online pages of Facebook communities.

For the method of data collection I used the technique of semi-qualitative *critical case technique*. This method is widespread in the literature of service management and service marketing, as it is an excellent way of observing consumer behaviour and examining consumer satisfaction with (Flanagan [1954]). The method is based on story-telling, during which consumers share their positive and negative memories and experiences about the product, the service or the service provider. The classification of these positive and negative cases through *content analysis* provides an excellent basis for the creation of value indicators (Kim et al. [2010]). We can say that critical cases represent the factors which lead to changing consumer behaviour and creating their value judgement. I asked every participant in the sample to think back to their country holidays, name 3 things that made it worthwhile taking part in rural tourism, then give 3 reasons why they would not recommend it to others, and finally I asked them what and why it was an experience to them. The identification of indicators based on the literature and on consumer interviews took place between March and May in 2012. I compiled my list (the Hungarian relevance of which I checked by consulting experts on the topic) on the basis of the above mentioned method and by taking preliminary indicators from the literature.

My reasons for selecting this methodology are the following:

- there has been no comprehensive motivation survey to identify consumer values and experiences in rural tourism, thus this area is rather unexplored. Therefore, the starting point of the research besides collecting secondary data is revealing consumers' opinion. Since the field of research is not mature enough, the qualitative technique of interviewing consumers is justified here (Malhotra [2008]).
- the international studies introduced in sub-chapter 3.3 also suggest using a smaller sample based qualitative consumer survey as the basis of quantitative research and scale creation, which may not be reliable in themselves, but they offer a good complementation to secondary research and serve as a great basis for questionnaire surveys.
- applying the method of critical case, the subjects' responses are not limited, they can form their answers completely freely, based on their own experiences, contributing to the identification of truly region specific (Hungarian) features, as well as giving information about the best and the worst consumer experiences (Gremler [2004]).
- the method is of inductive nature, it does not require the creation of hypothesis, thus it can be applied well in exploratory research, contributing to the enrichment of our knowledge of the lesser studied phenomena (Edvardsson [1992]).
- applying the method of content analysis, the critical case technique is an excellent starting point and a complementation of further empirical (e.g. questionnaire-based) studies (Babbie [2000], Gremler [2004]).

2. Expert interviews

I refined the complex list of indicators through independent expert interviews (N=7), in order to increase the content validity.

Expert interviews are necessary in cases when the more precise identification of the problem is required, which helps researcher to better understand and overview the topic. The selected sample is small, but it contains the respected and experienced scientists, researchers and experts of the research field, who can help with their knowledge of the topic to guide the researcher's further studies in the right direction (Malhotra [2008]).

I consider expert interviews justified, because there has been no research in Hungary about value dimensions in rural tourism and the international findings are region-specific, thus their adaptability might be limited. Striving to produce a research of high validity, I formed the relevant indicators of value dimensions based on the opinion of experts, who have the best insight of this topic in Hungary. When compiling the composition of the circle of experts, I paid attention to have both the industrial side (rural tourism certifiers, mayors, FATOSZ representatives) and the academic side (teachers and researchers in tourism) represented. The interviews took place in June and July 2012.

3. *Large sample questionnaire-based survey*

In order to be able to measure and dimension them, I have further analysed the list of indicators evaluated by the experts through the large sample *questionnaire-based interview* of the tourists. The questionnaire-based survey is the best method available for the researcher who wants to collect authentic data to describe the mass which is too large for direct observation. Questionnaire-based surveys are perfect to measure the attitude or the orientation of a larger sample mass, too. Yet, they are characterized by low validity, but high reliability, thus a great emphasis must be placed on the forming, composing and ordering of the questions. The findings can be generalised well, but attention must be paid to avoid "over-generalisation", i.e. it is wise to pay attention to the analysis of critical cases (Babbie [2000]).

In my quantitative research I prepared a double questionnaire interview. I conducted my field questionnaire research in cooperation with the National Association for Rural and Agro-tourism. Within the frame of this cooperation, the association gave me the opportunity to place my questionnaire on their homepage and also helped me get in contact with touristic service providers in the country's regions, where the number of guests in rural tourism is outstanding and the activity of the enterprise is successful.

Using the method of non-probability sampling, I sent my questionnaire to 25 touristic businesses in 7 regions, where they had it completed by their guests with the method of simple, random sample. I sent out 300 questionnaires altogether. Out of the received 148 questionnaires, I could

process 132 questionnaires. I believe that the number of businesses included in the sample is appropriate, regarding the fact that international researches were also made with a similar number of elements in the sample: in Finland 186 questionnaires were sent back from 36 businesses with the help of service providers and as a result of personal interviews done by university students; in Austria from the guests of 12 businesses, altogether 183 responses were returned (Pesonen et al. [2011]), in Malaysia, from 3 villages, 361 questionnaires were completed altogether (Jamal et al. [2011]). When selecting the subjects, an important principle was representativeness and randomness, which means that the sample should approximately have the same features statistically as the mass (guests taking part in rural tourism) to be analysed. Nevertheless, since in Hungary the characteristics of the guests are not known, the basic mass is unknown, thus the conditions of representativeness cannot be controlled.

I forwarded my retrospective online questionnaire-based research (N=220) exclusively to tourists who already took part in rural tourism and who have valuable experiences. The sample subjects were reached through research appeals placed in touristic journals, at universities and colleges, on the homepage of Tourism Competence Center of Budapest Corvinus University, and the National Association for Rural and Agro-tourism, in newsletters and on Facebook. With the double questionnaire interview my aim was to investigate if there is a significant difference in the answers of consumers interviewed on the location and in the form of retrospective online research.

As regards the content structure, my questionnaire can be divided into the following issues:

- questions about the motivation of tourists,
- questions about travelling habits,
- questions about the meaning of rural tourism,
- questions about the evaluation of supply conditions,
- questions about factors which have a value for tourists,
- questions about the components of experiences,
- questions about the demography and psychography of the respondents.

The questionnaire consists of closed, nominal ordinal, semantic differential questions and questions measured on the Likert-scale. Prior to the questionnaire-based survey, in order to increase validity, I *conducted a test-questionnaire survey*, as a result of which I modified some

forms of questions and response alternatives. The survey was conducted in August and September 2012.

In my research I applied several different methods, according to the principles of triangulation and the research options of the topic. This research strategy builds upon the approach that qualitative and quantitative methodologies used parallel with each other can appropriately complement each other, thus it may result in the more exact understanding and recognition of the studied phenomenon. The advantages of triangulation can re-assure the researcher of the correctness of his research findings, since the different approaches may result in observations which cannot be wedged into the frames of one single model (Jick [1979] In. Bódi-Schubert [2011]).

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this chapter I am going to introduce and analyse the findings of my research. First I will list the indicators identified in the literature and from consumer interviews, then I will reveal my conclusions drawn from expert interviews, and finally in the third sub-chapter, I will analyse the characteristics of demand, consumer value factors and value dimensions identified in the survey.

5.1 The first phase of the research: Indicator creation

The first phase of my empirical study concerned the identification of indicators which helped the analysis of the research problem. In Hungary no research has been carried out in the field of consumer values in rural tourism, so the indicators of international researches served as the basis of indicator creation (Jamal et al. [2011], Komppula [2005], Pesonen et al. [2011], Kim et al. [2010]), which I have complemented with further indicators I identified during the semi-qualitative consumer interviews (critical case technique).

5.1.1 Value and experience indicators identified in previous researches

1. *Indicators identified by Pesonen and his fellow researchers [2011] in the rural tourism of Austria and Finland*

In the research the respondents mainly talked about *emotional* values on the basis of their experiences. Apart from *relaxation*, *active participation* in the used service is also important for them. They want to have *new experiences* they can talk about later to their friends. It is significant for them to visit touristic destinations where *through active programs* they can have an insight into *the everyday life of the village*. They want to *feel important* and have an influence on what is happening around them in cooperation with the hosts. In connection with the programs another aim was to take part in *exciting*, often thrilling *adventures*. They also placed emphasis on *recreation with the family*, and besides active relaxation, *comfort and the feeling of "being served"* also largely affected respondents in their decision.

2. Indicators identified by Komppula [2005] in the rural tourism of Finland

Seeing the results, we can conclude that *silence* and *calmness* greatly influenced travellers in choosing a village, instead of a city for their holiday destination. The *landscape* and the *vicinity of nature* are important factors. For them the different programs mean *recreation*, *calmness* and an *escape from the hustle and bustle of the city*. *Relaxing with the children*, *taking part in agricultural work* and *visiting and learning* about the nearby areas are especially significant. As regards the accommodation, *friendly hosts* and the *sauna* are a major demand.

3. Indicators identified by Jamal and his fellow researchers [2011] in the rural tourism of Malaysia

The research defines 5 major indicator groups (value dimensions) of consumer value: *experience built upon emotional guest-host relationship*, *experience built upon programs*, *culture and knowledge*, *functional dimensions built on touristic facilities*, as well as *price-related functional dimensions*.

Emotional dimensions include *positive feelings*, *new and memorable experiences*. As regards the experience dimension, in the guest-host relationship the tourists truly valued when *hosts adapt to their needs* and *absolutely serve and spoil them*. Therefore, a good relationship is highly appreciated.

Concerning the experience dimension, *programs*, *culture* and *gaining knowledge* are also significant. Among the programs, *festivals for the preservation of traditions* and *visiting the land around the village* gave guests new experiences. On the list of expectations from the facility we can see *order and cleanliness*, *traditional and folk style*, as well as *calm and peaceful* environment. Their remarks about the price were altogether positive regarding both the host family stay and the local, traditional handicraft objects, so *price* also appeared as a value factor.

On the whole, the indicators of researches can be divided into the following indicator groups:

- *peaceful relaxation*,
- *escape from everyday life*,
- *new experiences*,
- *spending free time with the family*,

- *involvement – active participation,*
- *hospitality,*
- *pampering,*
- *personal interaction,*
- *winning positive feelings,*
- *cleanliness and order,*
- *appropriate rate of price/value.*

4. *Experience indicators identified by Kim and his fellow researchers [2010] in the tourism of Canada*

In their survey, the researchers investigated the indicators of memorable touristic experience in order to be able to dimension the category. According to their conclusions, touristic experience may consist of the following indicators and factors:

- *hedonism:* excitement, activity, enjoyment,
- *novelty:* once-in-a-lifetime feeling, uniqueness, extraordinariness,
- *local culture:* kind local people, local cultural values, good impression of the destination,
- *freshening:* sense of freedom, renewal,
- *usefulness:* sensible pastime, learning, experiencing,
- *participation:* reaching aims, realising desires,
- *knowledge:* discovery, expansion of knowledge, meeting new cultures.

5.1.2 Value and experience indicators identified in semi-qualitative consumer interviews

Due to the territorial diversity and the different definitions of rural tourism in the countries, I felt it important to conduct a consumer interview based on the small sample (N=30) critical case technique, in order to estimate the relevant indicators in the Hungarian market of rural tourism.

I conducted the interviews individually with the subjects of the research. The shortest interview lasted half an hour, the longest for 2 hours. I asked the participants of the survey to recall memories of their last holiday in a village and tell me what was really important for them during the holiday and also what was experience for them. The semi-structured interviews were complemented by filling out a short questionnaire consisting of open questions, in which I posed the major interview questions once more as a control. The responses in a coded form can be

seen in Table 8. The *Consumer value* column of the chart shows the respondents' answers to the question of what value means for them. The *Experience* column of the chart displays factors which mean experience for customers.

Table 8: Findings of the semi-qualitative research

| N | Consumer value | Experience |
|----|--|--|
| 1 | romanticism, peace | impression, friendly atmosphere |
| 2 | authenticity, atmosphere, nature | participation |
| 3 | nature, at home, "a lot of fun for little money" | social interaction |
| 4 | escape, relax, experience | value! |
| 5 | price, foods, host | value! |
| 6 | host, foods, programs | participation |
| 7 | history, nostalgia, relaxation | value! |
| 8 | history, nostalgia, relaxation | value! |
| 9 | host, nature, surrounding area | value! |
| 10 | host, price, nature | participation |
| 11 | entertainment, foods, nostalgia | aesthetics, peace |
| 12 | nature, silence, good company | activity |
| 13 | host, nature, simplicity | clear surrounding area |
| 14 | people, customs | good sleeping |
| 15 | peace, fresh air, "attentive human behavior" | peace, delicious food |
| 16 | authenticity, but quality | attraction |
| 17 | tradition, host | interaction, peace |
| 18 | host, food, peace, nature | local flavors, landscape |
| 19 | host, food, "hiding from the world" | together as a family, there's no hurry |
| 20 | nature, atmosphere, food | host, foods |
| 21 | nature, atmosphere, price | programs, foods |
| 22 | nature, honesty, authenticity | village lifestyle |
| 23 | organic vegetable, atmosphere, host | host, programs |
| 24 | food, host, attractions | value! |
| 25 | attractions, way of life, culture | animals, local flavors |
| 26 | immediacy of hosts, culture, price | sense of freedom |
| 27 | "togetherness", nature, way of life | adventure, climbing |
| 28 | way of life, customs, nature | foods, family, atmosphere |
| 29 | fresh air, host, foods | activity, experience |
| 30 | host, foods, refreshment | aesthetics |

Source: My own edition

Three conclusions can be drawn from this phase of the research:

- factors which have an experience value for the respondents do not differ from the indicators of international surveys,
- there was a difference, however, in experience factors. The value interpretation of Hungarian respondents shows a similarity to international examples in that during their summary they often mentioned the factors of *aesthetics*, *country culture*, *involvement*, *attraction* and *personal interactions*, while the internationally widely cited indicators of *hedonism*, *novelty* and *refreshment* (Kim et al. [2010]) did not appear. I believe that this conclusion is not the result of territorial differences, but rather that of the differences of the product, i.e. tourists favouring rural tourism supposedly do not have the chance to often experience novelty, enjoy the "once in a lifetime" feeling or stay in an environment suitable for hedonistic lifestyle, owing to the nature of the product.
- the price and value factors are the same in most of the cases with the difference that it is consciously or unconsciously represented in the statement of the consumer, i.e. often he himself remarks that for him there is no difference between the two concepts.

5.2 The second phase of the research: Expert interviews

To ensure the reliability of the survey, I examined the Hungarian relevance of the identified indicator groups through expert interviews. For the evaluation of the list of indicators, I asked Hungarian experts of the topic who have academic (professors and researchers of tourism) and practical (classifiers, mayors, representatives of FATOSZ) experience of the field (Table 9).

Table 9: List of indicators evaluated by experts

| Consumer value indicators of rural tourism | |
|--|---|
| 1. Unique style accommodation | 23. Feeling of independence |
| 2. Authentic accommodation | 24. Whole family togetherness (shared experience) |
| 3. Clean, tidy accommodation | 25. Shared experience with friends |
| 4. Quiet, peaceful settlement | 26. Participation in traditional programs |
| 5. Attractions, cities in proximity | 27. Visiting festivals |
| 6. Proximity of residence to destination | 28. Experience cultural differences |
| 7. Getting information through the accommodation's own website | 29. Excursion opportunity nearby |
| 8. Complete service package | 30. Understanding rural life |
| 9. High level of quality standard | 31. Learning from the host |
| 10. Low price | 32. Searching for adventure and extremity |
| 11. Fair value for money | 33. Opportunity to purchase local products |
| 12. Host care of his guest (meal, programs) | 34. Physical activity, sport |
| 13. Host adaptation to consumer needs (flexibility) | 35. Refreshment for the body and the soul |
| 14. Host – guest friendship | 36. Proximity of nature |
| 15. Hospitality (sincere feelings) | 37. Visit friends and relatives |
| 16. Feeling of novelty | 38. Proximity of house animals |
| 17. Memorable holiday | 39. Consuming traditional meal |
| 18. Nostalgia | 40. Consumption of market garden products |
| 19. Sense of security | 41. Understanding agricultural activities, active participation |
| 20. Escapism | 42. Experience of rural way of life and atmosphere |
| 21. „Once in a lifetime” feeling | 43. Getting experiences |
| 22. Away from home feeling as at home | 44. Ordered settlement |

Source: My own research

As the result of reviewing the literature of the field and after semi-qualitative consumer interviews, I identified 44 value indicators, which can be relevant for rural tourism. After the experts' evaluation of the created indicators, I found that for the consumers of rural tourism in Hungary, the following factors are supposedly of great importance:

- clean and orderly accommodation, peaceful and quiet settlement, low price, suitable price-value ratio, the host's flexibility, memorable holiday, sense of security, escape from everyday life, common experiences with the family, common experiences with friends, taking part in traditional folklore events, outing opportunities within easy reach, filling up of the mind and the body, vicinity of nature, traditional food and new experiences.

Nevertheless, experts say that in Hungary, the following aspects are less important for guests when selecting rural accommodation and destination:

- the destination's closeness to the residence, buying a complex touristic package, interaction and friendly relationship with the host, sense of novelty, learning about the location, experiencing (extreme) adventure, physical activity, visiting relatives, or participation in agricultural activities.

The testing of the relevance of these indicators was carried out in a large sample questionnaire survey.

5.3 The third phase of the research: large sample questionnaire survey

5.3.1 Hypotheses of the research and their interpretational frame due to the transformation of the country

Hypotheses

As my research consists of both qualitative and quantitative methods, I regarded it methodologically correct if I created my hypotheses, identifiable in quantitative studies, after conducting the first and second phase, based upon their findings. Therefore, based upon all the above and my previous studies, as regards my research questions, the examined period (summer 2012) and the sample, I composed the hypotheses of my research in the following way:

Q1. Who make up the demand of rural tourism?

H1. Among the consumers of rural tourism, middle-class urban intellectuals represent a larger proportion than elderly or young age groups.

H2. Rural tourism is mainly favoured by guests who respect traditional values and are materialistic.

Q2. What is the motivation of tourists and what does rural tourism mean to them?

H3. Among tourists' motivations, learning about the cultural values of country life is more highly rated than natural values.

Q3. What partial factors, indicators make up consumer value in rural tourism?

H4. The authenticity of the accommodation and the surroundings of the house are of outstanding importance for tourists.

H5. The peaceful and orderly environment of the accommodation and the destination is of outstanding importance for tourists.

H6. Country lifestyle and cultural elements to be experienced as part of the local community are of outstanding importance for tourists.

H7. The competences and helpfulness of the host is of outstanding importance for tourists.

Q4. What value dimensions make up consumer values in rural tourism, and among them, to what extent is the value of experience emphasised?

H8. For the consumers of rural tourism, affective value dimensions represent a greater value than functional value dimensions.

The transformation of the countryside, the current situation of rural tourism

Before testing the hypotheses, due to the complexity of the study and due to current transformation processes, I think it is really important to list factors which help or hinder the survival of the countryside and closely-linked rural tourism, thus provide an interpretational frame to my research findings.

The present situation of the countryside and the currently felt *transformation processes* provide the frame for its existence, for the growing demand and for the opportunities to improve its supply of rural tourism. We must not forget that people leaving the countryside owing to privatisation looked for jobs in the cities. Agricultural activities in the country significantly shrank, and were often replaced by industry and the service industry. Villages – mainly in the agglomeration areas around cities – however, remained attractive for city intellectuals, who relocated to the countryside in search of peace and healthy lifestyle. The effect of these transformations among

others is that today less and less people deal with agriculture (livestock farming and plant cultivation) in villages, and traditions are not preserved by the younger generations, they are mostly presented during artificially created events (festivals). Citing Imre Kovács [2010 p.24.], today the typical feature of the Hungarian countryside is "rustica nova", i.e. country without peasants, which means that "peasantry disappeared from the Hungarian society in the structural, cultural, social and functional sense as well".

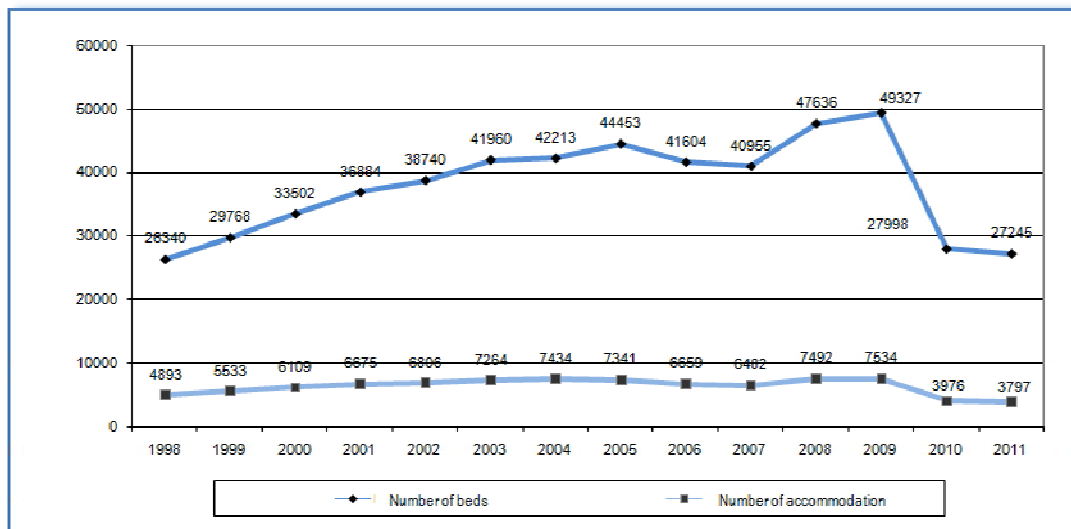
The essence of rural tourism in the traditional sense is represented by the rural farming lifestyle, but due to its transformation, this touristic product will take on a different meaning too, and presumably, different touristic motivations and value factors will appear. In my opinion, there are *two options available for the management of rural tourism*: the rather challenging *preservation of the traditional values* in spite of the transformation procedure, and the *interpretation of the essence of the country for consumers*, or the acceptance of modernism along with the transformation of the product, and following the example of "green tourism type" destinations (see Great Britain, Denmark or Finland) and giving *priority to the values of nature*.

The market of rural tourism has been undergoing a significant transformation, in my views. On the one hand due to the processes influencing the countryside, while on the other hand because of new regulations, and owing to the effects of the new classification and specialisation systems targeting quality growth. The current characteristics of rural tourism in Hungary can be summarised in the following way:

Supply side

- The available figures of the number of registered hosts and the capacity of accommodation in villages have been at our disposal since 1998 (Figure 11). Until 2009 the capacity data had been rising annually. After 2009, in accordance with the 239/2009 government regulation, rural accommodation is the accommodation at a settlement below the population of 5000 inhabitants, and below the density of 100 inhabitants/km², thus the capacity almost halved after 2010 (from 7534 host families to 3797 host families).

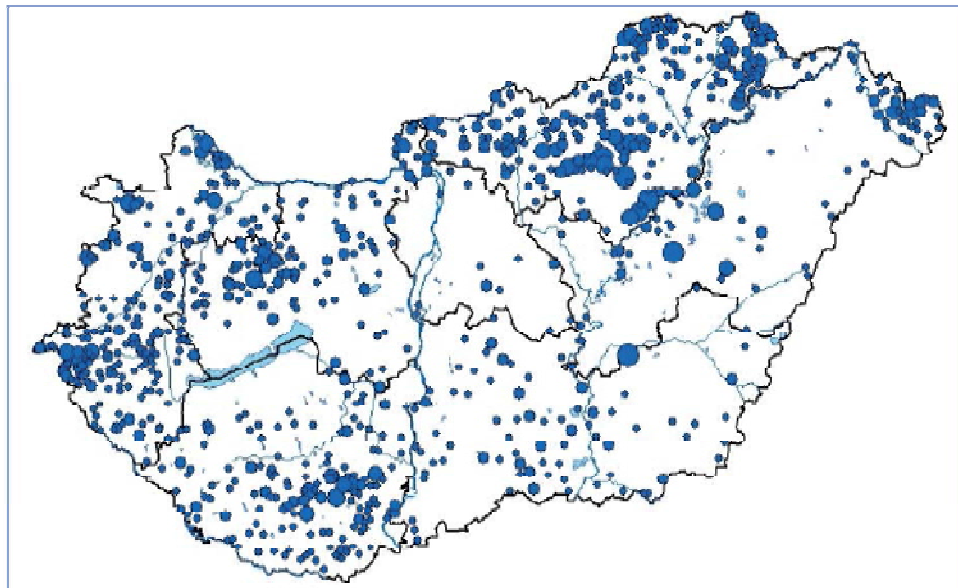
Figure 11: Amount of rural accommodation and capacity (1998-2011)



Source: Based of the figures of Central Statistics Office (KSH) [2012]

- The Number of hosts families in 2011 was 3 797, which is 4,5 % decline compared to the previous year. 10 468 rooms awaited the guests with 27 245 beds. The fall in capacity of rooms reached 1,6 %, while in the number of beds it was 2,7 % (Central Statistics Office/KSH [2012]).
- Providing village accommodation is typical mainly in Northern Hungary, and in the western and southern Trans-Danubia regions, where 60% of all the capacity is concentrated, while the figures are the lowest in the Central Hungary region, with only 2% of the total capacity (Figure 12).
- In the future, the new system of accommodation classification, launched in the summer of 2011, as well as the use of National Trademark, the improvement of rural tourism products, and the creation of specialised houses offering special products may all encourage the quality improvement of supply, thus can contribute to the increase of tourism.

Figure 12: Distribution of rural accommodation capacity (on 31 December 2010)

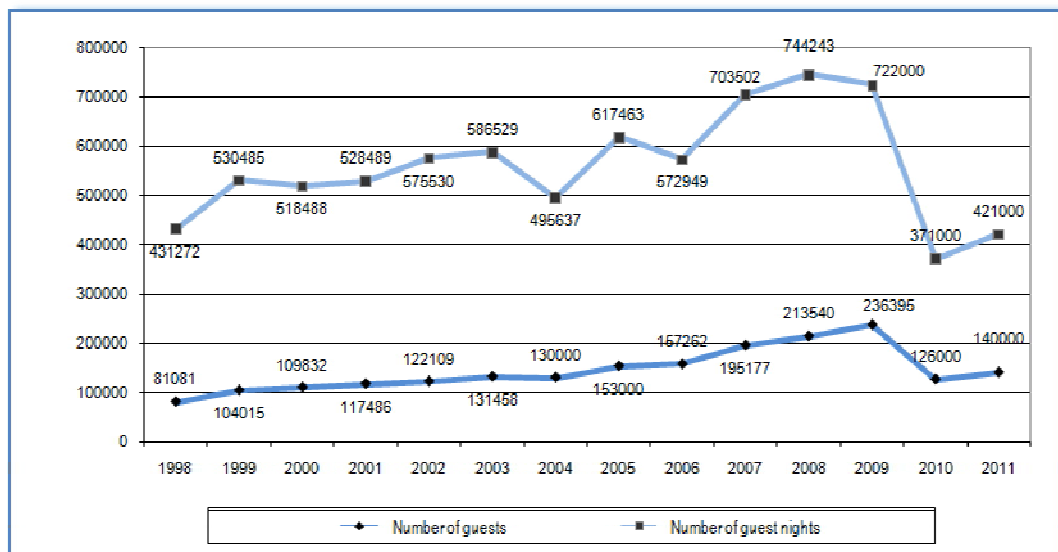


Source: Central Statistics Office (KSH) [2011 p. 41.]

Demand side

- The peak year of the registered demand in rural tourism was 2008 (Figure 13). The number of guest nights in that year exceeded 744.000. In the following years demand was characterized by a decline. In 2011, the number of guest nights fell by almost 50%, as compared to the peak year (Central Statistics Office (KSH) [2012]).
- The fall had several reasons (Szabó [2012]): shrinking market due to the economic crisis; the earlier introduced Government Regulation, which regulated the classification of accommodation unfavourably; the changes of the tax regulations in effect in 2010, which terminated the tax exemption of rural accommodation provision (up to the income of 800.000 HUF) and also that of the linked services (up to the income of 400.000 HUF).

Figure 13: Number of guests and guest nights in rural tourism (1998-2011)



Source: Based on figures by Central Statistics Office (KSH) [2012]

- Examining the annual figures, it is a favourable development that the figures of tourism in rural accommodation rose by 13% from 2010 to 2011; the ca. 140.000 guests spent 421.000 guest nights in rural tourism in 2011. In this figure the ratio of domestic guest nights reached 89,3%. Compared to the previous year, the number of guest nights increased by almost 13,5 %. The average length of stay did not change compared to 2010 (3 nights). Almost 40% of the guests and guest nights concentrated in Northern Hungary, and the over 20% ratio of Western Trans-Danubia is also outstanding.

5.3.2 The findings of the questionnaire survey

During the analysis of the findings of my empirical research, I applied descriptive statistics, primarily frequency analyses, importance-performance analysis (IPA), and multi-variant data analysis techniques, cross-tabs-analysis, variance-analysis and factor analysis with the help of SPSS 18 statistical program package.

Based on the major aspects of the analysis, I primarily compared the findings of the questionnaires conducted on the field (N=132) and online (N=220), and found appropriate to process, so that I can learn whether the data are comparable or not. I found it important to investigate whether the composition of the samples from two different sources is different or not. Does it have any effect on the result of the interviews if the tourists are interviewed during their

holidays on the field or in a retrospective research online? Below is the short summary of the major findings of the questionnaire.

In the case of questionnaires prepared on the field:

- Distribution of sexes: 34,1% men, 65,9% women
- Largest frequency of age groups: aged 25-35: 31,8%, aged 36-49: 31,8%
- Largest frequency of qualification: college/university degree: 46,2%
- Largest frequency of residence: city: 53,8%
- Major sending region: Central Hungary: 31,8%
- Largest frequency of touristic motivation: relaxation in a peaceful environment: 26,5%, the complex experience of the countryside: 23,5%
- Largest frequency of the interpretation of rural tourism: complex service package: 47%

In the case of online questionnaires:

- Distribution of sexes: 25% men, 75% women
- Largest frequency of age groups: aged 36-49: 36,4%
- Largest frequency of qualification: college/university degree: 56,8%
- Largest frequency of residence: city: 42,3%
- Major sending region: Central Hungary: 52,7%
- Largest frequency of touristic motivation: relaxation in a peaceful environment: 25,9%, the complex experience of the countryside: 30,5%
- Largest frequency of the interpretation of rural tourism: complex service package: 39,5%

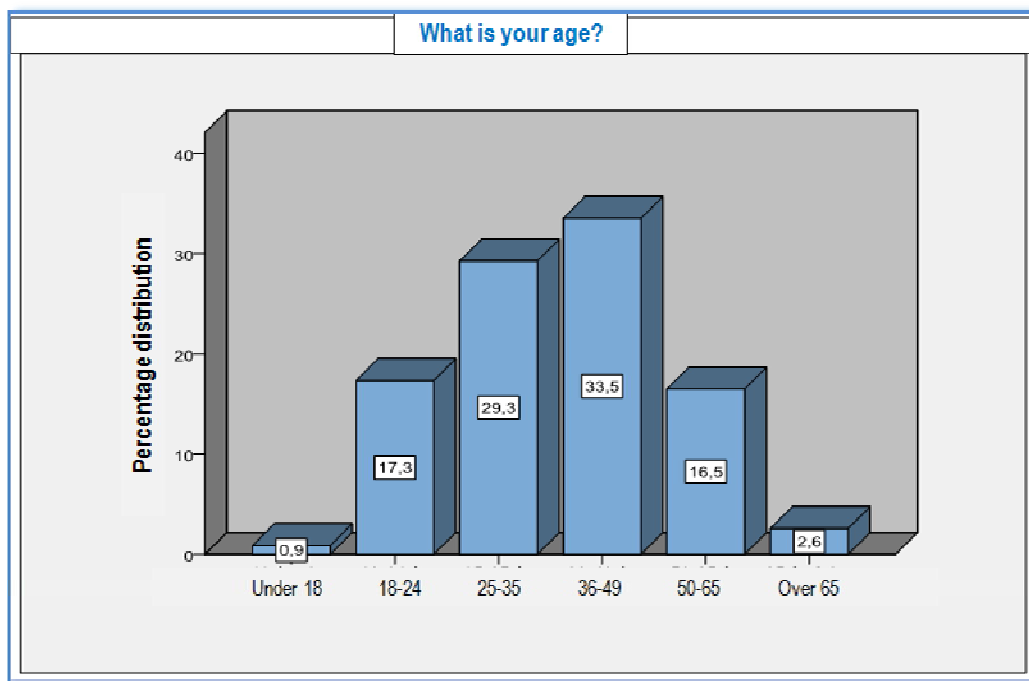
The compared data confirmed that the composition and preference of the two samples did not contain any significant differences, moreover, they rather tended to strengthen each other, so I will continue to analyse the data together, in a 352 subject sample.

1. Sample characteristics

In the sample of 352, the ratio of men and women is 28,4% and 71,6%. Regarding the distribution of age, the demand of rural tourism is mainly the 36-49 age group (33,5%) and young adults

(29,3%)⁸. The demand of the junior and senior age groups for rural tourism is rather low (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Distribution of the sample according to age groups



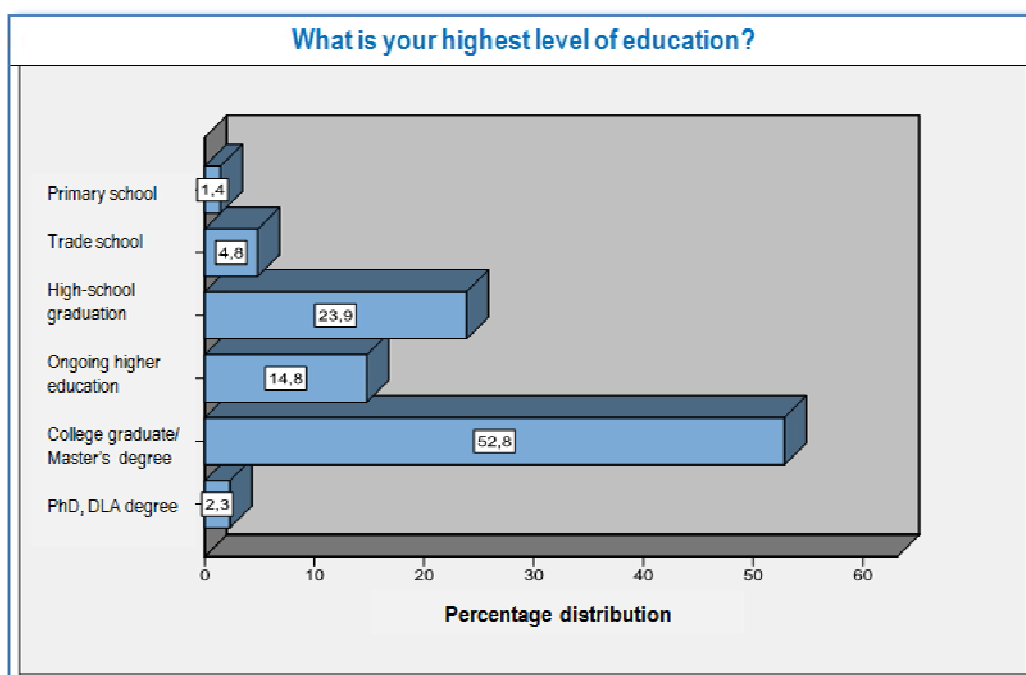
Source: My own research

Rural tourism does not seem to be attractive for village population, its demand is mostly comprised of city dwellers (79%) – inhabitants of Budapest (32,4%). The explanation for this result can be that for people living in villages, the village atmosphere does not appear as a motivational factor.

Regarding the qualifications, the dominance of the intellectuals with college/university degree can be observed (55,1%) (Figure 15).

⁸ Since there is no precise information of the characteristics of the basic mass, the representativeness of age and sex is not relevant. An interesting fact, however, is that in this respect the sample characteristics show a great similarity to the age and sex distribution data of those registering on the Facebook-page of the National Association for Rural and Agro-tourism (Szabó [2012]).

Figure 15: Distribution of the sample according to qualification



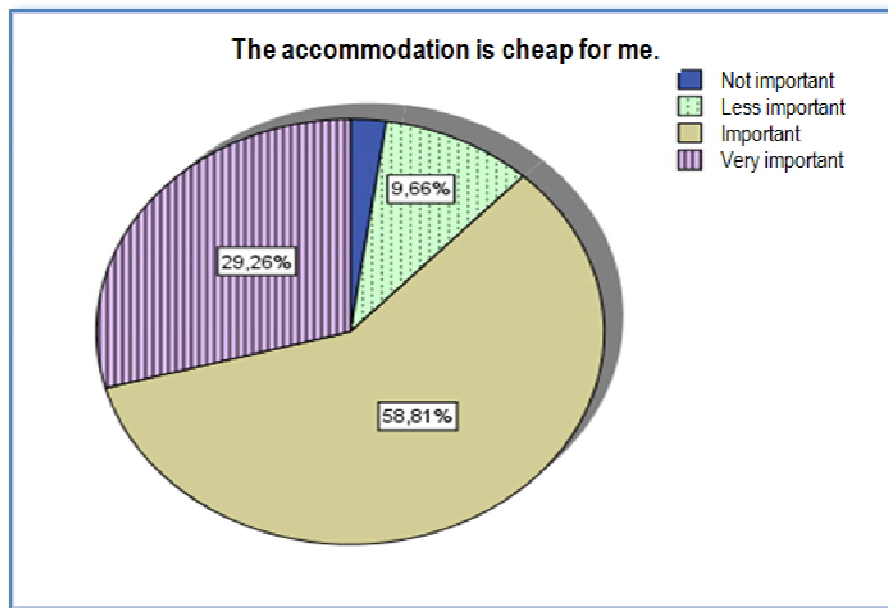
Source: My own research

Conclusion

H1. Among the consumers of rural tourism, the city-dwelling middle class of intellectuals represents a larger ratio than the elderly or the younger generation. – I agree with it.

For tourists choosing rural tourism it is important to find cheap accommodation (88%), which can be attributed to the characteristics of the touristic product (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Perception of the price of accommodation



Source: My own research

Twice as many people admit to be materialistic (35,8%) than spenders (15,4%) (Table 10). As opposed to this, when selecting the accommodation, the subjects prefer to choose higher category houses, marked by 3 sunflowers (21,3%) or 4 sunflowers (29,5%), from among the categorized types of accommodation. Based on the findings I drew the conclusion that for most guests the classification of the accommodation is of secondary importance, as in many cases they do not even know (33,5%) what category their accommodation was. This statement can be traced back to the fact that a lot of accommodation does not have a qualification in Hungary, or the sunflower sign is not a well-known or valuable brand.

Table 10: Distribution of subjects in the sample with materialistic – spender features

| Personality characteristics: materialistic - spender | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Materialistic | 33 | 9,4 | 9,4 | 9,4 |
| | 2 | 93 | 26,4 | 26,4 | 35,8 |
| | 3 | 172 | 48,9 | 48,9 | 84,7 |
| | 4 | 45 | 12,8 | 12,8 | 97,4 |
| | Spender | 9 | 2,6 | 2,6 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

Source: My own research

The materialistic attitude of the respondents is coupled with a personality favouring traditional values. Only 25,6% of respondents said they were modern thinkers, for 32,4% traditional values are important, while 42% belong to the intermediate category (Table 11).

Table 11: Distribution of subjects with personality traits preferring modern – traditional values

| Personality characteristics: Preferring modern – traditional values | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Modern | 39 | 11,1 | 11,1 | 11,1 |
| | 2 | 51 | 14,5 | 14,5 | 25,6 |
| | 3 | 148 | 42,0 | 42,0 | 67,6 |
| | 4 | 68 | 19,3 | 19,3 | 86,9 |
| | Traditional | 46 | 13,1 | 13,1 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

Source: My own research

Conclusion

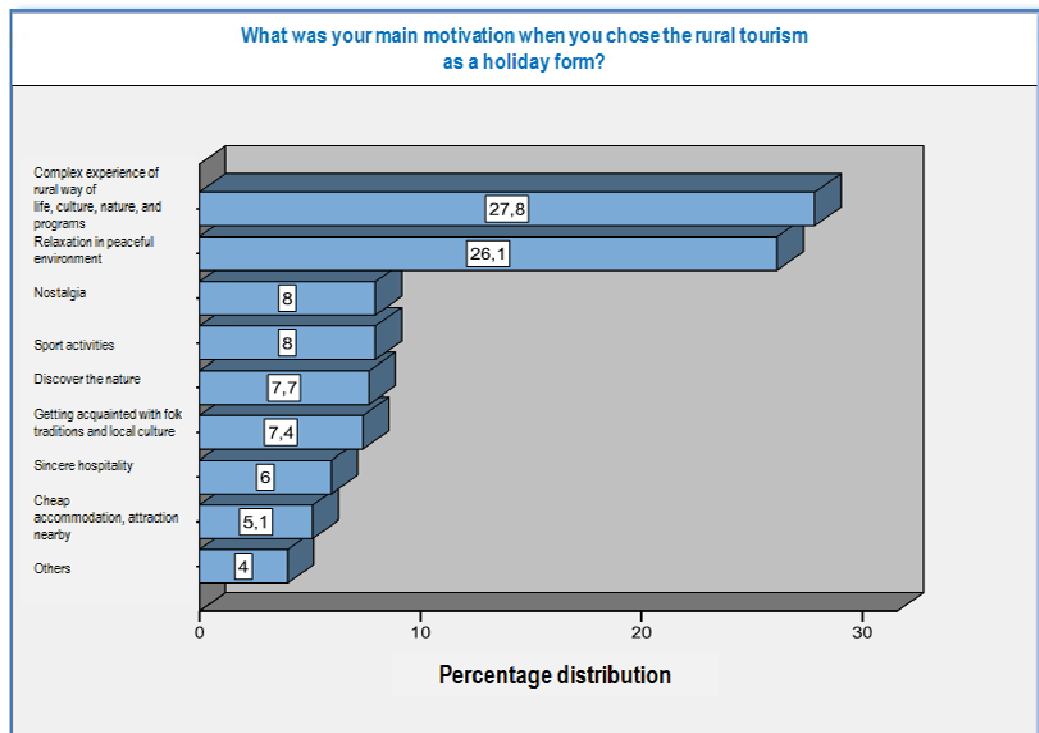
H2. Rural tourism is primarily favoured by materialistic guests in favour of traditional values. – I partly agree because although the dominance of materialistic guests has been proven, the proportion of guests preferring traditional values was not significant.

2. The content and interpretation of domestic rural tourism – Based on consumer responses

In my research I was particularly interested to know how today's touristic trends (ETC [2006]) – individual consumption, conscious travelling, the search for authenticity and value, complex touristic packages – can influence Hungarian rural tourism. What is the key motivation of tourists when they choose rural tourism, and what does rural tourism mean to them? Does the theoretical model which I outlined in the first chapter of my thesis exist? Is there a form of rural tourism in Hungary which is built upon the "internal", traditional or the "external", modern values of the rural tourism product?

The findings show that in Hungary the consumers of rural tourism choose this form in order to experience the countryside (27,8%), but apart from that, there is a circle of consumers for whom undisturbed relaxation in itself is a major motivation (26,1%) (Figure 17). In order to identify these groups, I conducted a cross-tabs analysis.

Figure 17: Distribution of the sample based on motivation

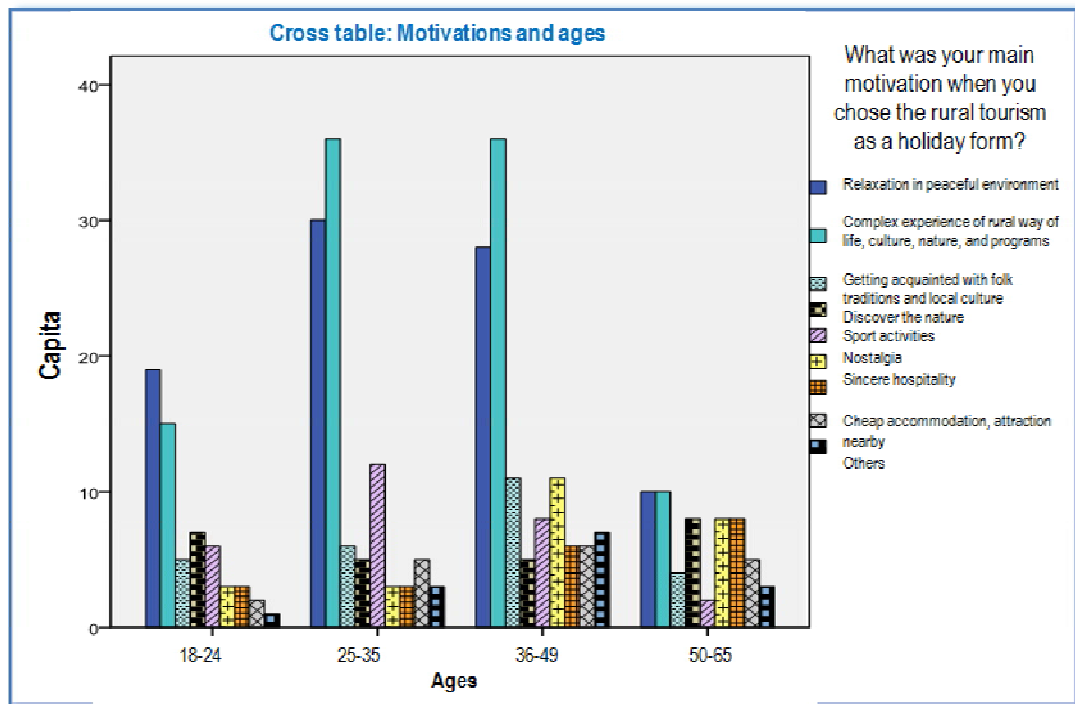


Source: My own research

Examining the motivational factors in the age groups, we can see a significant, medium strong relationship between the variants (Figure 18). So the cross-tabs analysis is suitable to determine whether the age influences the motivation of selecting rural tourism. On the basis of the findings we can declare that 35% of young adults and 30,5% of the middle class people arrive at the destination with the purpose of experiencing the countryside in a complex way. Also in the same age groups, the motivation of relaxation is 29,1% and 23,7%.

Figure 18: Distribution of motivations according to age

($\chi^2 = 38,367$; $df = 24$; $p = 0,032$)



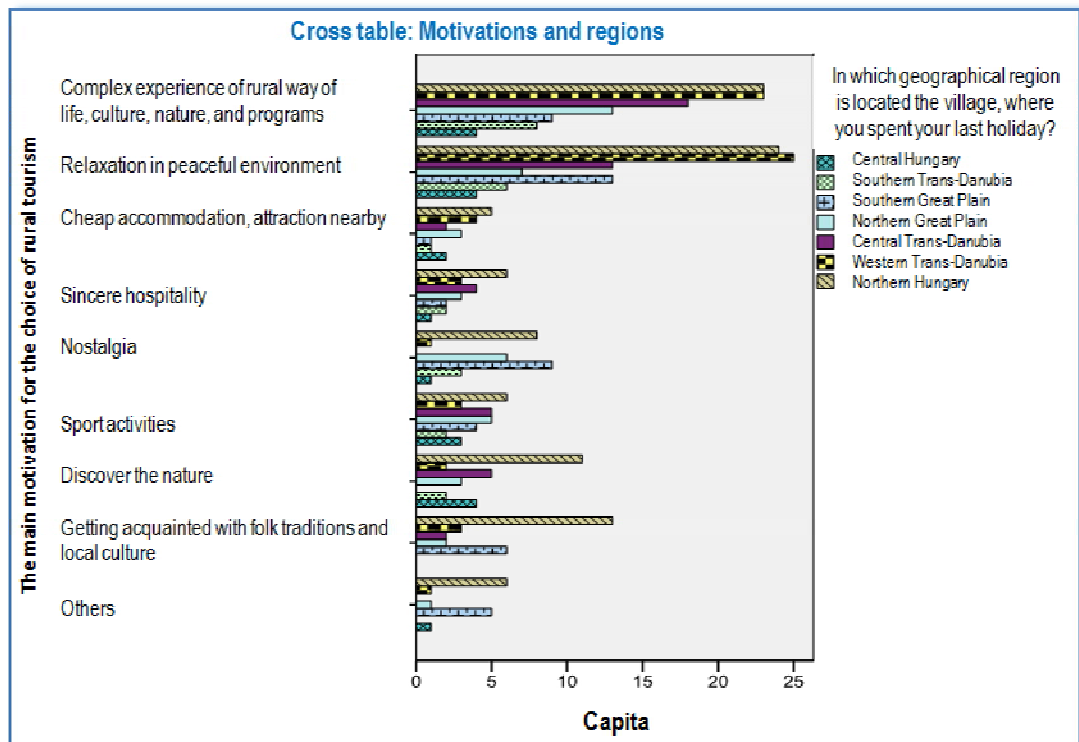
Source: My own research

In the group of young adults, relaxing in a peaceful environment has a stronger motivational force (31,1%) than complexity (24,6%). For the elderly generation the major motivation to select rural tourism besides relaxation (17,2%) and complexity (17,2%) is the vicinity of nature (13,8%), experiencing nostalgia (13,8%) and real hospitality (13,8%).

At the level of 95% validity we can see a significant correlation between the motivation of consumers and the receiving destinations too. Tourists looking for the complex experience of the countryside as well as peaceful relaxation, willingly choose Northern Hungary (23,5%/26,1%), Western Trans-Danubia (23,5%/27,2%) and Central Trans-Danubia for the location of their holidays (Figure 19).

Figure 19: Distribution of motivations according to regions

($\chi^2 = 67,990$; $df = 48$; $p = 0,030$)



Source: My own research

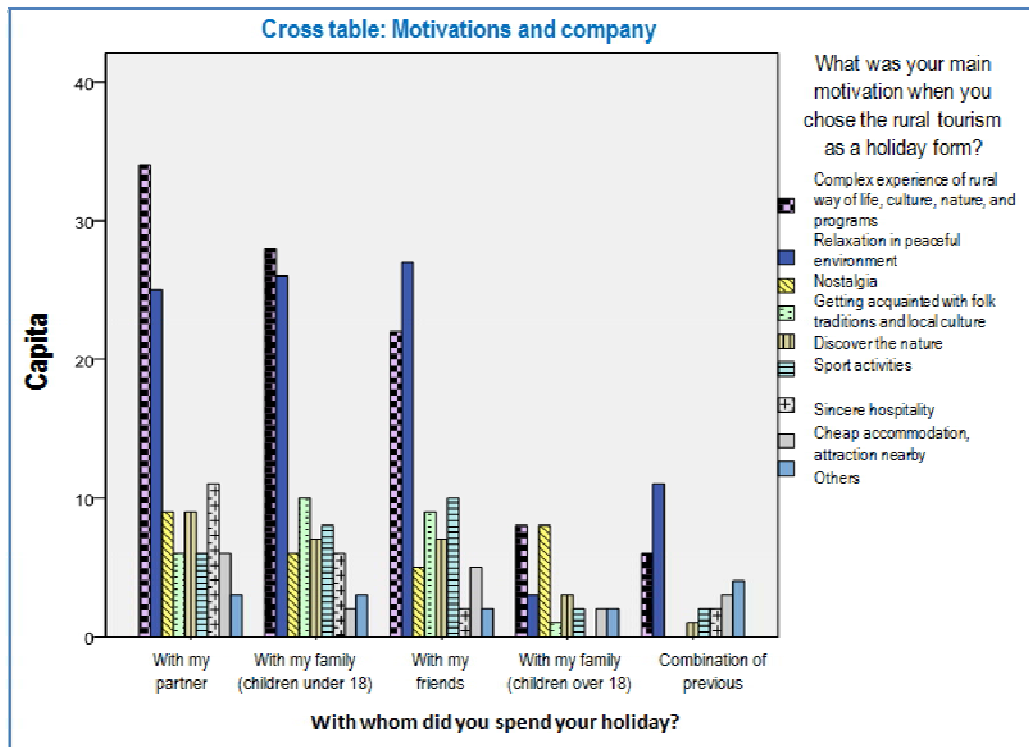
Travellers seeking to experience genuine hospitality mostly choose the Northern Hungary region (28,6%). If the guests want to experience a nostalgic atmosphere, they prefer to choose the region of the Southern Alföld region (32,1%), as well as Northern Hungary (28,6%). For sports lovers the primary destination is Northern Hungary (21,4%) and Central Trans-Danubia (17,9%).

As a summary we can say that regarding most motivational factors (culture, nature, calmness, sport, hospitality), Northern Hungary is the most popular region, yet those travelling to seek nostalgic feelings, usually choose the Southern-Alföld as their destination.

The primary motivation of families with children and of couples is to experience the country in a complex way (29,2%/31,2%), while for young people, who primarily travel with their circle of friends, peaceful relaxation and recreation are the key motivational factors (30,3%). The cheap accommodation in rural tourism does not present a primary motivational force in either community (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Distribution of motivations based on people travelling together

($\chi^2 = 51,947$; $df = 32$; $p = 0,014$)



Source: My own research

Another remarkable finding is that by analysing the motivational factors according to residence (village, city, capital), the dominance of the complexity of the countryside is significant, the difference, however, is that for capital-dwellers another major motivational factor is sports activities in the country (16,7%), but as opposed to that, the number of tourists from Budapest travelling exclusively with the intention to learn about folklore and traditions is really low (1,8%).

As I already revealed, the order of motivations can change according to age groups, destinations, residence and people travelling together. On the whole, from the findings of the research we can draw the conclusion that in the first place tourists choose rural tourism because of the values of nature and the attaching programs, while in the second position is visiting the sights of the surrounding area (attractions not in the village, but within easy reach from there) and in the third place is learning about the country lifestyle and activities around the house (Table 12).

Table 12: Order of preference of programs

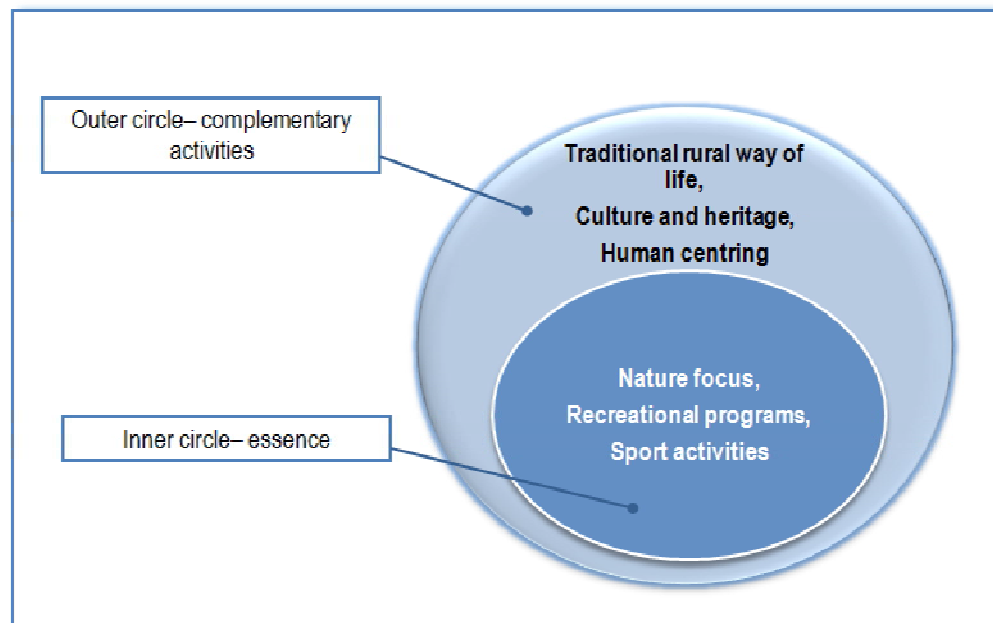
| Program preferences | Online | On site | Summa | Ranking |
|--|--------|---------|-------|---------|
| Hiking and discover the nature | 544 | 387 | 931 | 1. |
| Visiting the main attractions of the surrounding area | 638 | 383 | 1021 | 2. |
| Getting acquainted with farm activities around the house (e.g. vintage, bread baking, canning) | 802 | 460 | 1262 | 3. |
| Participation in traditional programs (e.g. crafts, folk-dancing) | 806 | 459 | 1265 | 4. |
| Visiting festivals | 814 | 547 | 1361 | 5. |
| Silent passive activities (e.g. reading, board games) | 916 | 536 | 1452 | 6. |

Source: My own research

The position shows the place of the choice option in the order, based on the accumulated results of questionnaires filled in online and in destinations. The highest position option was valued most by the respondents. The scores show how many people chose this option. The most important option got the lowest points; while the least important option got the highest score.

We can draw the conclusion that the majority of consumers in rural tourism travel to experience the complexity of country lifestyle, culture, nature and authentic programs, although among these the most important for them is discovering the values of nature and recreation in fresh air in a beautiful environment. Thus, the elements of the theoretical model of rural tourism I have set up will change places: nature-orientation will shift into the internal, essential circle, while country lifestyle, culture and heritage will be transferred to the circle of supplementary services (Figure 21).

Figure 21: The content of rural tourism as reflected in the empirical study



Source: My own research

Conclusion

H3. Among the tourists' motivations, getting to know the cultural values of country living is more important than the values of nature. – I reject it.

3. Consumer value indicators in rural tourism

The results of indicator testing belong to the third group of my research findings. My aim was to check how much my list of indicators, based upon secondary and semi-qualitative primary sources, is relevant in Hungarian rural tourism. Although in my focus of interest as a researcher was the importance of these indicators, I also analysed the performance of service providers, that is, consumer satisfaction. The practical relevance to identify the difference between importance-performance is really high, as it gives an excellent feedback to the supply side as how to appropriately shape their product or service to fit the customer needs (Martilla – James [1977]). For the analysis of this issue, I used the frame of IPA (Importance-Performance Analysis).

I divided the earlier identified indicators into two parts, and examined their importance separately, regarding the *physical environment* and *human interactions*. The consumers signalled on a 1-4 point evaluation scale how important the indicators are, and how satisfied they were with the given indicators.

The list of indicators concerning the *physical environment* and the IPA values can be seen in Table 13.

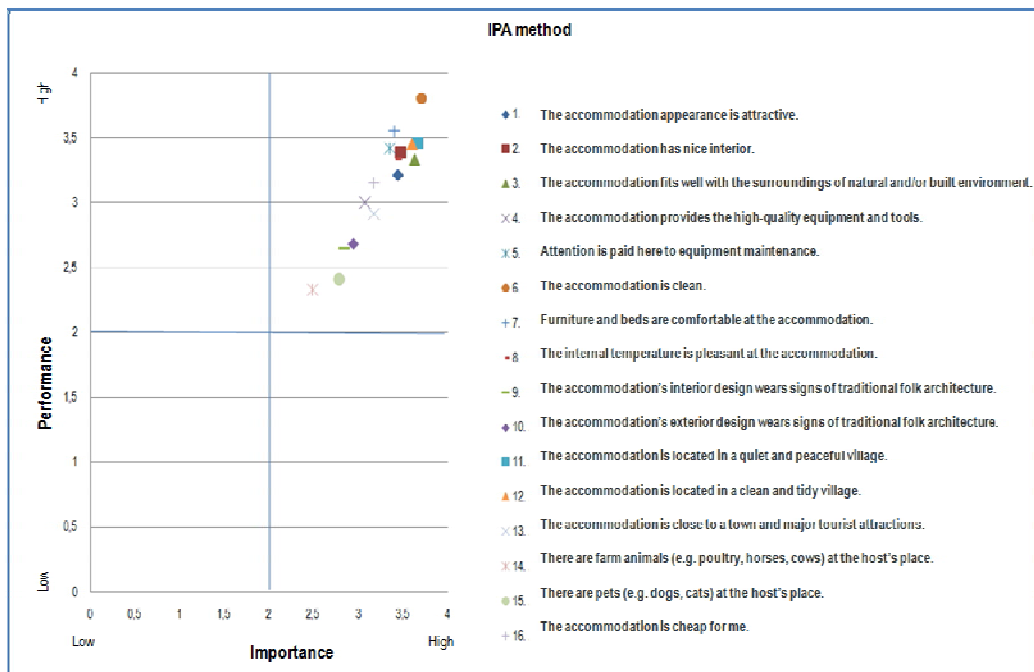
Table 13: IPA values of the indicators of the physical environment

| Value indicators regarding physical environment | Mean | | Importance-Performance Difference | t-test (Sign.) |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| | Importance | Performance | | |
| 1. The accommodation appearance is attractive. | 3,44 | 3,21 | -0,23 | 0,000 |
| 2. The accommodation has nice interior. | 3,47 | 3,39 | -0,08 | 0,000 |
| 3. The accommodation fits well with the surroundings of natural and/or built environment. | 3,63 | 3,33 | -0,30 | 0,000 |
| 4. The accommodation provides the high-quality equipment and tools. | 3,07 | 3,00 | -0,07 | 0,000 |
| 5. Attention is paid here to equipment maintenance. | 3,35 | 3,42 | 0,07 | 0,000 |
| 6. The accommodation is clean. | 3,70 | 3,80 | 0,10 | 0,000 |
| 7. Furniture and beds are comfortable at the accommodation. | 3,40 | 3,55 | 0,15 | 0,000 |
| 8. The internal temperature is pleasant at the accommodation. | 3,42 | 3,34 | -0,08 | 0,000 |
| 9. The accommodation's interior design wears signs of traditional folk architecture. | 2,84 | 2,65 | -0,19 | 0,000 |
| 10. The accommodation's exterior design wears signs of traditional folk architecture. | 2,94 | 2,68 | -0,26 | 0,000 |
| 11. The accommodation is located in a quiet and peaceful village. | 3,66 | 3,46 | -0,20 | 0,000 |
| 12. The accommodation is located in a clean and tidy village. | 3,60 | 3,45 | -0,15 | 0,000 |
| 13. The accommodation is close to a town and major tourist attractions. | 3,17 | 2,91 | -0,26 | 0,000 |
| 14. There are farm animals (e.g. poultry, horses, cows) at the host's place. | 2,49 | 2,33 | -0,16 | 0,000 |
| 15. There are pets (e.g. dogs, cats) at the host's place. | 2,78 | 2,41 | -0,37 | 0,000 |
| 16. The accommodation is cheap for me. | 3,17 | 3,15 | -0,02 | 0,000 |

Source: My own research

Based on the research findings we can see that although the appearance and the folk style of the accommodation and how it fits into the environment are important for consumers, their experiences suggest that it is not always the case, which resulted in consumer dissatisfaction. Importance values were higher regarding the characteristics of the settlement as well. Another interesting result is shown by the issue of farm animals and domestic animals around the house. Although they are of medium importance for tourists, there is a more significant difference as compared to the satisfaction with supply. Positive values were given to questions on the equipment and cleanliness of the accommodation, which means in our case that the consumers' satisfaction was higher than the importance they represented (Figure 22).

Figure 22: The concentration of physical environment indicators



Source: My own research

The IPA method shows in our case that service providers of rural tourism with indicators critical and important for their guests, can meet consumer needs, that is, businesses on the whole enjoy the competitive edge. The cleanliness of the accommodation represented the highest importance and satisfaction, while the presence of animals the lowest.

Conclusion

H4. For tourists the authentic atmosphere of the accommodation and the house is of outstanding importance. – I reject it.

H5. For tourists the calm and peaceful environment of the accommodation and the destination is of outstanding importance. – I agree with it.

Examining the consumer's satisfaction with *human factors* and their importance, we can see that the evaluation of importance-performance is much more balanced (Table 14). The tourists felt deficiency in that the host could not provide sufficient information for them on the sights of the area, or about programs worth visiting. Arranging programs around the house of the host also proved critical, and although there would be a demand, only few hosts provide it. Another aspect of dissatisfaction is the interaction with other guests or local people – tourists regarded them rather intolerant and unfriendly.

Table 14: IPA values of interaction-related indicators

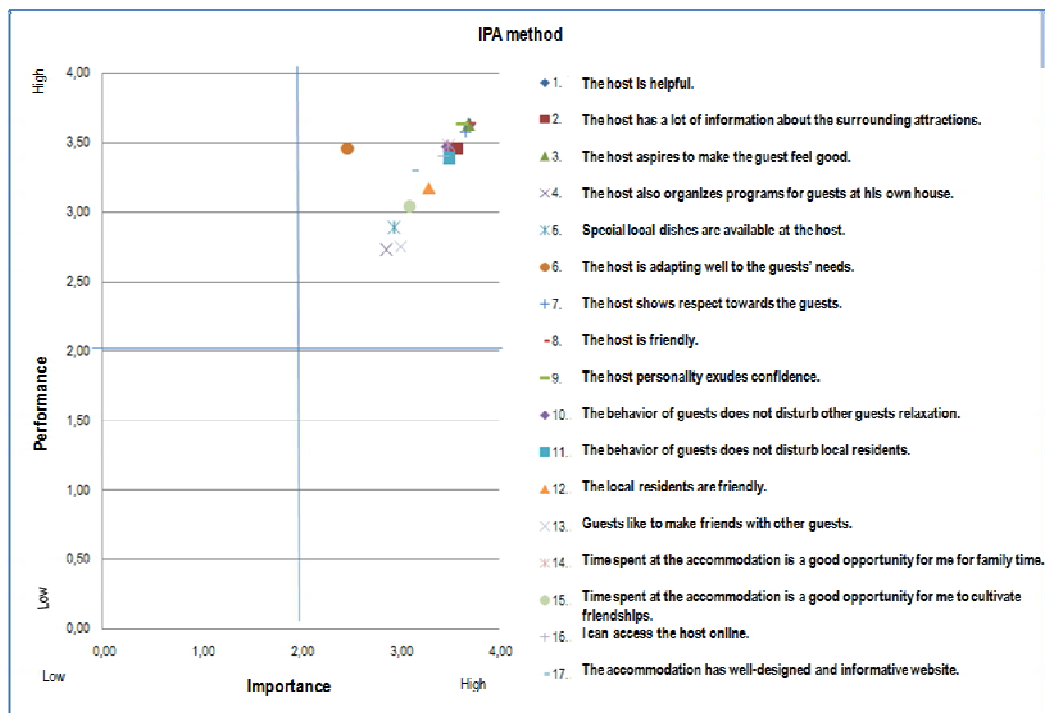
| Value indicators regarding human interaction | Mean | | Importance-Performance Difference | t-test (Sign.) |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| | Importance | Performance | | |
| 1. The host is helpful. | 3,70 | 3,63 | -0,07 | 0,000 |
| 2. The host has a lot of information about the surrounding attractions. | 3,57 | 3,46 | -0,11 | 0,000 |
| 3. The host aspires to make the guest feel good. | 3,69 | 3,63 | -0,06 | 0,000 |
| 4. The host also organizes programs for guests at his own house. | 2,86 | 2,73 | -0,13 | 0,000 |
| 5. Special local dishes are available at the host. | 2,94 | 2,89 | -0,05 | 0,000 |
| 6. The host is adapting well to the guests' needs. | 2,47 | 3,46 | 0,99 | 0,000 |
| 7. The host shows respect towards the guests. | 3,66 | 3,58 | -0,08 | 0,000 |
| 8. The host is friendly. | 3,71 | 3,64 | -0,07 | 0,000 |
| 9. The host personality exudes confidence. | 3,63 | 3,63 | 0,00 | 0,000 |
| 10. The behavior of guests does not disturb other guests relaxation. | 3,48 | 3,47 | -0,01 | 0,000 |
| 11. The behavior of guests does not disturb local residents. | 3,50 | 3,39 | -0,11 | 0,000 |
| 12. The local residents are friendly. | 3,29 | 3,17 | -0,12 | 0,000 |
| 13. Guests like to make friends with other guests. | 3,01 | 2,75 | -0,26 | 0,000 |
| 14. Time spent at the accommodation is a good opportunity for me for family time. | 3,49 | 3,48 | -0,01 | 0,000 |

| | | | | |
|--|-------------|------|-------------|-------|
| 15. Time spent at the accommodation is a good opportunity for me to cultivate friendships. | 3,10 | 3,04 | -0,06 | 0,000 |
| 16. I can access the host online. | 3,44 | 3,40 | -0,04 | 0,000 |
| 17. The accommodation has well-designed and informative website. | 3,13 | 3,30 | 0,17 | 0,000 |

Source: My own research

Among the indicators, the personality, the attitude and the preparedness of the host, his respect for the other guests, the online accessibility of the accommodation, as well as the existence of supply conditions for an enjoyable family holiday are of great importance.

Figure 23: Concentration of interaction indicators



Source: My own research

We can see in Figure 23 that although local programs and the consumption of traditional food are of lesser importance, tourists still missed them. The only extraordinary value among the indicators was the host's adaptability to the demands of the guests. On average, service providers could achieve a better performance in this issue than what the existing demands would be.

Analysing the human factors, we can say that service providers can meet the consumer's high expectations, but we can observe that on the whole, consumers are more critical with human factors than with the physical environment, giving higher importance values to the indicators.

Conclusion

H6. Country lifestyle and cultural elements to be experienced as part of the local community are of outstanding importance for tourists. – I reject it.

H7. The competences and helpfulness of the host are of outstanding importance for tourists. – I agree with it.

4. Consumer value dimensions in rural tourism

Following the identification of value indicators and the testing of their relevance, I can say that all the indicators have IPA-values characterised by high importance and high satisfaction, although among them there are important (above the value of 2,5) and outstandingly important (above the value of 3,5) indicators, and I believed that their further accumulative study is justified. In my research I asked tourists choosing rural tourism to signal on a 4-point scale the importance of a given factor during their holiday.⁹ In order to identify the latent structures behind the consumer's responses, I carried out a factor analysis on the 33 indicators. In the focus of my interest as a researcher were the dimensioning of these factors, and setting up the order of importance for these dimensions. I conducted the factor analysis with Varimax rotation. The method serves data compression and the identification of data structure, where the number of initial indicators is contracted into factor variants, which are directly non-observable. I identified whether the indicators are suitable for factor analysis using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)-criterion, and the variance quotient methods. The adaptability of the factor analysis is very good in the first case, if the indicator has a value over 0.8, while in the second case, if the indicator value is over 60% (Sajtos – Mitev [2007]).

After the factor analysis of indicators linked to the physical environment and human interactions, I separated 10 factors. The results of the analysis can be seen below, in Table 15.

⁹ I used the even-point forced scaling method to avoid neutral responses.

Table 15: Value factors in rural tourism
(Varimax rotation (KMO=0,848; explained variance: 69,1%))

| Rotated factor matrix | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Value indicators | Factors | | | | | | | | | |
| | F1 | F2 | F3 | F4 | F5 | F6 | F7 | F8 | F9 | F10 |
| The host is friendly. | ,769 | ,016 | ,116 | -,032 | ,063 | ,254 | ,066 | ,125 | ,039 | -,034 |
| The host aspires to make the guest feel good. | ,721 | ,167 | ,131 | ,159 | -,054 | -,081 | ,067 | -,070 | ,074 | ,151 |
| The host shows respect towards the guests. | ,716 | ,114 | ,094 | ,001 | ,063 | ,245 | ,119 | ,115 | ,094 | -,033 |
| The host is adapting well to the guests' needs. | ,675 | ,043 | ,224 | ,143 | ,232 | ,136 | ,021 | ,074 | ,163 | ,005 |
| The host personality exudes confidence. | ,666 | ,052 | ,218 | ,018 | ,007 | ,310 | ,009 | ,207 | ,108 | -,013 |
| The host is helpful. | ,665 | ,176 | ,030 | ,212 | -,078 | -,025 | ,041 | ,263 | ,106 | ,159 |
| The host has a lot of information about the surrounding attractions. | ,474 | ,169 | ,155 | ,458 | ,012 | -,015 | ,034 | ,029 | ,122 | ,321 |
| The accommodation has nice interior. | ,161 | ,750 | ,254 | ,051 | ,103 | ,026 | -,031 | ,101 | ,024 | -,016 |
| The accommodation appearance is attractive. | ,072 | ,682 | ,104 | ,165 | ,112 | ,117 | ,036 | ,092 | -,032 | ,048 |
| The accommodation fits well with the surroundings of natural and/or built environment. | ,207 | ,644 | -,034 | ,003 | ,234 | -,025 | ,136 | ,130 | ,022 | ,122 |
| The accommodation provides the high-quality equipment and tools. | -,009 | ,599 | ,442 | ,088 | ,092 | ,084 | ,030 | -,161 | ,094 | ,172 |
| Furniture and beds are comfortable at the accommodation. | ,075 | ,156 | ,763 | ,032 | ,094 | ,083 | -,017 | ,177 | ,128 | ,035 |
| Attention is paid here to equipment maintenance. | ,239 | ,325 | ,625 | -,032 | ,004 | ,123 | ,046 | -,074 | ,054 | ,103 |
| The internal temperature is a pleasant at the accommodation. | ,182 | ,161 | ,586 | ,050 | ,138 | ,178 | ,039 | ,170 | ,184 | ,076 |
| The accommodation is clean. | ,347 | -,036 | ,570 | -,011 | -,115 | ,074 | -,033 | ,171 | -,020 | -,003 |
| Guests like to make friends with other guests. | ,073 | ,095 | -,028 | ,687 | ,150 | ,367 | ,163 | ,072 | -,008 | ,078 |
| Time spent at the accommodation is a good opportunity for me to cultivate friendships. | ,008 | ,194 | -,117 | ,682 | -,016 | ,109 | ,087 | ,160 | ,160 | -,110 |
| The host also organizes programs for guests at his own house. | ,298 | ,021 | ,167 | ,603 | ,348 | -,092 | ,232 | -,068 | ,075 | ,237 |
| Special local dishes are available at the host. | ,269 | -,111 | ,214 | ,563 | ,518 | -,073 | ,184 | -,005 | -,066 | ,148 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|------|------|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| The accommodation's interior design wears signs of traditional, folk architecture. | -,020 | ,289 | ,045 | ,113 | ,840 | ,102 | ,193 | ,077 | ,023 | ,047 |
| The accommodation's exterior design wears signs of traditional, folk architecture. | ,028 | ,270 | ,019 | ,137 | ,835 | ,099 | ,166 | ,111 | ,037 | ,063 |
| The behavior of guests does not disturb local residents. | ,196 | ,096 | ,173 | ,160 | ,004 | ,815 | ,015 | ,011 | ,041 | ,113 |
| The behavior of guests does not disturb other guests relaxation. | ,234 | ,045 | ,157 | -,001 | ,061 | ,799 | ,009 | ,029 | ,111 | ,179 |
| The local residents are friendly. | ,192 | ,059 | ,094 | ,384 | ,218 | ,524 | ,074 | ,284 | -,020 | ,059 |
| There are farm animals (e.g. poultry, horses, cows) at the host's place. | ,098 | ,063 | ,003 | ,191 | ,189 | ,026 | ,919 | ,012 | ,010 | ,018 |
| There are pets (e.g. dogs, cats) at the host's place. | ,111 | ,068 | ,012 | ,145 | ,171 | ,044 | ,917 | ,053 | ,051 | ,099 |
| The accommodation is located in a quiet and peaceful village. | ,198 | ,052 | ,124 | ,058 | ,115 | ,045 | ,005 | ,807 | ,048 | ,080 |
| The accommodation is located in a clean and tidy village. | ,268 | ,193 | ,255 | ,155 | ,049 | ,115 | ,075 | ,712 | -,044 | ,130 |
| The accommodation has well-designed and informative website. | ,176 | ,039 | ,183 | ,043 | ,087 | -,011 | ,037 | -,048 | ,841 | ,011 |
| I can access the host online. | ,190 | ,001 | ,076 | ,112 | -,049 | ,140 | ,020 | ,071 | ,837 | ,107 |
| The accommodation is close to a town and major tourist attractions. | -,006 | ,167 | ,153 | ,241 | -,033 | ,128 | -,035 | ,111 | ,042 | ,738 |
| The accommodation is cheap for me. | ,138 | ,044 | ,006 | -,101 | ,193 | ,192 | ,162 | ,087 | ,072 | ,696 |

Source: My own research

After completing the analysis, I created the following groups of indicators arranged into factors:

- *F1. Host attitude:* it is important for the guests that the host is helpful and friendly, and has information about the touristic attractions and events of the area.
- *F2. Attractive accommodation:* it is important for the guests that the accommodation is nicely decorated both inside and outside.
- *F3. Clean, well-equipped accommodation:* it is important for the guests to have clean and well-maintained accommodation, equipped with comfortable furniture.
- *F4. Interaction and activity at the accommodation:* it is important for the guests to have a stay which is rich in impulses, i.e. to have personal contacts and be part of the programs during their stay.

- *F5. Authentic accommodation*: it is important for the guests that the rural accommodation represents authenticity and has the typical features of traditional folk architecture both inside and outside.
- *F6. Peaceful relaxation*: it is important for the guests that during their holiday they have a harmonious relationship with the local people and with other guests, not disturbing each other's activity.
- *F7. Presence of animals*: it is important for the guests to see domestic and farm animals on the host's premises.
- *F8. Nicely arranged, clean settlement*: it is important for the guests that the accommodation can be found in a clean, nicely arranged and peaceful settlement in a nice environment.
- *F9. Online availability*: it is important for the guests to also receive information of the host's services and get in touch with him online.
- *F10. Cheap accommodation close to a major attraction*: it is important for the guests to have a low-priced accommodation, not far from the major tourist attractions of the area.

I averaged the consumers' responses given to the questions with an evaluation scale linked to factors (1 = not important – 4 = very important). As a result, I got the given indicator group's (factors) order of importance, from which I drew the conclusion that for guests the most important group of indicators during their rural holiday is *the orderliness and cleanliness of the settlement (destination)*, followed by *the neat and attractive arrangement of the accommodation*, while the third group of indicators is the *personality, preparedness and helpfulness of the host* (Table 16).

Table 16: The order of importance and dimensions of rural tourism's consumer value factors

| Ranking | Value factors | | Number of indicators | Mean | Dimensions |
|---------|--|-----|----------------------|------|---|
| 1. | Nicely arranged, clean settlement | F8 | 2 indicators | 3,63 | Functional (Quality) |
| 2. | Attractive accommodation | F2 | 3 indicators | 3,51 | Functional (Quality) |
| 3. | Host attitude | F1 | 7 indicators | 3,49 | Functional (Quality) |
| 4. | Peaceful relaxation | F6 | 3 indicators | 3,42 | Affective (Experience - recreation) |
| 5. | Clean, well-equipped accommodation | F3 | 5 indicators | 3,39 | Functional (Quality) |
| 6. | Online availability | F9 | 2 indicators | 3,29 | Functional (Quality) |
| 7. | Cheap accommodation close to major attractions | F10 | 2 indicators | 3,17 | Functional (Price) |
| 8. | Interaction and activity at the accommodation | F4 | 4 indicators | 2,98 | Affective (Experience – human interactions, activities) |
| 9. | Authentic accommodation | F5 | 2 indicators | 2,89 | Affective (Experience - milieu) |
| 10. | Presence of animals | F7 | 2 indicators | 2,64 | Affective (Experience - milieu) |

Source: My own research

Seeing the order of the factors we can conclude that for the rural tourists of our age the indicators linked to the conditions of the physical environment are of greater importance than those linked to the human factors. Apart from this we can see that the strive for "modernisation" is valid for the analysed circle of consumers, the sad consequence of this tendency is that the traditional features of the village, the authentic environment, and the presence of domestic and farm animals may be crowded out of demand.

After analysing the average values of each factor according to segments, I can draw the following conclusions¹⁰:

- *Young people aged 18-25: „seeking fun”.* Cheap accommodation, common programs with their circle of friends, orderly and clean accommodation and destination represent value for them.
- *Young adults aged 25-35: „wanting to escape from the city”.* High quality accommodation, online availability and the vicinity of animals represent value for them.

¹⁰ Due to their size, I will display the result charts of the variance-analysis in Annex 5. I did not segment respondent groups under the age of 18 and over the age of 65, owing to their low number of sample elements.

- *36-49-year-old middle aged people: „seeking the country atmosphere”.* Orderly accommodation and settlement, the personality of the host, peaceful relaxation, authentic environment and the online availability of the host represent value for them
- *Elderly people aged 50-65: „looking for peace and quiet”.* Clean accommodation, personal interactions, peaceful relaxation and cheap accommodation represent value for them.

In the next step of my analysis I strive to identify what guests' experiences were about rural tourism on the whole. I conducted the survey with factor analysis (Table 17).

Table 17: Factor matrix of guests' experiences
(Varimax rotation (KMO=0,848; explained variance: 90,6%))

| Rotated factor matrix | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Guests' experiences | Factors | | | | | | |
| | F1 | F2 | F3 | F4 | F5 | F6 | F7 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays are relaxing for me. | ,811 | ,193 | ,114 | ,078 | ,066 | ,083 | ,042 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays are pleasant. | ,759 | ,080 | ,207 | ,194 | ,146 | ,214 | ,075 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays create positive feelings in me. | ,681 | ,111 | ,211 | ,257 | ,239 | -,010 | ,104 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays make me feel that although I am far from home, I can feel at home. | ,296 | ,776 | ,171 | ,049 | ,130 | -,005 | ,046 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays make me prolong my stay. | ,290 | ,714 | ,158 | ,010 | ,213 | ,227 | ,079 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays are enjoyable because of the relationship with my host. | -,059 | ,703 | ,090 | ,380 | ,081 | ,202 | -,017 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays are entertaining. | ,147 | ,099 | ,838 | ,129 | ,226 | ,120 | ,044 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays make me satisfied. | ,459 | ,243 | ,601 | ,125 | -,016 | ,306 | ,039 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays are comfortable. | ,367 | ,363 | ,594 | ,198 | ,007 | ,018 | ,097 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays have an appropriate price. | ,154 | ,135 | ,128 | ,834 | ,035 | ,066 | ,183 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays offer appropriate service for the paid price. | ,396 | ,135 | ,183 | ,639 | ,245 | ,125 | -,009 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|------|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays contribute to my personal development and the expansion of my knowledge. | ,163 | ,212 | ,086 | ,135 | ,790 | ,268 | ,086 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays are memorable. | ,499 | ,246 | ,247 | ,109 | ,605 | -,050 | ,110 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays are enjoyable because I can learn about the local culture. | ,040 | ,249 | ,223 | ,225 | ,249 | ,740 | ,094 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays show me how fascinating nature is. | ,555 | ,104 | ,063 | -,034 | ,042 | ,650 | ,153 |
| Based on my personal experience, my satisfaction with rural holidays depends on my gained experiences. | ,157 | -,001 | ,012 | ,143 | ,045 | ,104 | ,908 |
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays ensure that every minute of it is full of experiences. | -,017 | ,454 | ,341 | ,033 | ,292 | ,100 | ,514 |

Source: My own research

Having completed the analysis, I created the factors below:

- *F1. Offers pleasant relaxation:* according to guests, they have positive feelings about rural tourism altogether, it is pleasant and relaxing.
- *F2. Hospitality and homely atmosphere:* guests believe that in rural tourism friendly hospitality makes them feel at home, which encourages them to stay longer.
- *F3. Enjoyable:* on the whole, guests are satisfied with the received service, for them the holiday is comfortable and entertaining.
- *F4. Favourable price:* the guests are satisfied with the price paid for the services, for them the price-value ratio was appropriate.
- *F5. Contributes to personal development:* in rural tourism, guests gain knowledge and information for long-term use, which contribute to their personal development.
- *F6. Provides information on nature and local culture:* rural tourism gives the experience of the country to tourists, two major elements of which are the natural and cultural environments of the countryside.
- *F7. Ensures the experience of "flow":* tourists are satisfied with their holiday, because it provides them with the opportunity for a "flow"-like experience.

I ranked the factors created this way with the consent of the guests on a 6-point scale (Table 18). Based on their tourism-related experiences, the tourists mainly agreed with the fact that as a form of tourism, rural tourism *primarily offers pleasant relaxation, at a favourable price and is*

enjoyable. The pleasant relaxation category received the highest scores (average=5,548), followed by four factors in the order (favourable price, enjoyable, provides information on nature and local culture, contributes to personal development) with the average score of 5, showing the agreement of tourists. Guests also agreed with the following two factors (hospitality and homely atmosphere, ensures the experience of "flow"), but here many of them already chose the option of „I am indifferent“. From this I can conclude that rural tourism can provide guests with the chain of experiences, i.e. the opportunity to gain experiences continuously to a lesser extent.

Table 18: Characteristics of rural tourism based on guests experiences

| Ranking | Factors | | Number of indicators | Mean |
|---------|---|----|----------------------|-------|
| 1. | Pleasant relaxation | F1 | 3 indicators | 5,548 |
| 2. | Favourable price | F4 | 2 indicators | 5,170 |
| 3. | Enjoyable | F3 | 3 indicators | 5,134 |
| 4. | Information on nature and local culture | F6 | 2 indicators | 5,129 |
| 5. | Contribution to personal development | F5 | 2 indicators | 5,121 |
| 6. | Hospitality and homely atmosphere | F2 | 3 indicators | 4,949 |
| 7. | Ensures the "flow" experience | F7 | 2 indicators | 4,852 |

Source: My own research

Based on the results of the factor analysis and the ranking regarding value indicators and touristic experience indicators, I conclude that for the interviewed tourists in rural tourism *functional* (quality, price) value dimensions are of primary importance, they have a greater value than *affective* experience dimensions (recreation, human relations and activity, environment) (Table 19). My answer given to my major research question is that for the consumers who took part in the research the most important value dimension in rural tourism is quality, i.e. the functional arrangement of the accommodation and the host. These are followed by the option of peaceful relaxation, with the appropriate price in the third place, and experience through personal interactions and programs in the fourth position. The fifth value dimension is the experience in an authentic country environment.

Table 19: Order of importance of consumer value dimensions

| Ranking | Consumer value dimensions | Number of value factors | Mean |
|---------|---|-------------------------|------|
| 1. | Functional (Quality) | 5 value factors | 3,46 |
| 2. | Affective (Experience - recreation) | 1 value factor | 3,42 |
| 3. | Functional (Price) | 1 value factor | 3,17 |
| 4. | Affective (Experience – human interactions, activities) | 1 value factor | 2,98 |
| 5. | Affective (Experience - milieu) | 2 value factors | 2,77 |

Source: My own research

Conclusion

H8. For the consumers of rural tourism, affective value dimensions represent a bigger value than functional value dimensions. – I reject it.

6. SUMMARY

The primary aim of my research is to conduct a niche survey in rural tourism, which can contribute to the better understanding of the demand side and crystallise the factors with value to tourists, helping the better formation of development strategies and the high level matching of supply to expectations.

Although the logical arc of the research was presented by answering the research questions and the large sample testing of the hypotheses, I also compared Hungary with the international results in this topic. In the following sections I intend to summarise my main conclusions on these thoughts.

6.1. Findings of the hypothesis analysis

1. Today the characteristics of Hungarian rural tourists have slightly changed compared to what was seen almost 10 years ago (see Kiss [2001]). Earlier, regarding the segments, the participation of city intellectuals, mainly pensioners or families with small children was significant, but young people without children were also a major segment of demand. In my current study, the group of elderly intellectuals represents a smaller proportion, with mainly the middle-aged intellectuals making up the demand of rural tourism, who travel to seek the country atmosphere. The second most important segment is the group of young people wanting to escape from the city, who usually travel with their little children. They look for the safe and beautiful countryside, where they can show the flora and the fauna, the features of life outside the city, to their children. In my sample among people choosing rural tourism, young people who are attracted to the countryside by relaxation and entertainment facilities together, were under-represented.
2. Regarding the qualities of the clientele, I examined how significant is the ratio of materialistic tourists and those in favour of traditional values. We cannot say that rural tourism is mostly chosen by people in favour of traditional values, who do not want to keep up with the accelerated modernisation endeavours of our age or are not affected by the ideal of globalisation. Guests with progressive ideas but with less commitment to traditional values are also represented in a similar proportion in domestic rural tourism.

On the other hand I can declare that most guests consider themselves materialistic, so for them it is important to buy the service at the lowest possible price, although this does not count as a key value. My conclusions are affected on the one hand by the type of product, since compared to most touristic products, rural tourism offers its services at more favourable prices, but on the other hand we must not forget that recent unfavourable changes in world economy also had an impact on tourism.

3. In the sample the majority of the consumers of rural tourism travel in order to experience country lifestyle, culture, nature and authentic programs in its complexity, although for them the most important is to discover nature, spend time in the fresh air in a beautiful environment. Thus, the elements of the theoretical rural tourism model I set up will change places: nature-centeredness will shift to the internal, essential circle, while the complementary circle will include country lifestyle, culture and heritage. Therefore, my interpretation of the demand side rural tourism will be changed in accordance with sub-chapter 1.3 in the following way: *by the term rural tourism, I refer to a form of tourism, which provides catering, accommodation and programs for tourists in a way that besides offering the facilities for peaceful relaxation, leisure and sports activities in the natural environment, it also provides the opportunity to experience traditional country lifestyle and agriculture through personal relationships, as well as to learn about rural culture and heritage.* I need to remark here that today folk motives are becoming fashionable, and the strengthening Hungarian national feeling may also change the motivations of rural tourists, increasing the search for authenticity.
4. For the interviewed tourists it was not of major importance to have authentic accommodation, and that it represents folk style in its architecture or equipment. They prefer to stay in a house which is well-equipped according to the modern-day requirements of comfort. Having animals around the house is important for the segment where parents want to show them to their children. Authenticity is losing its significance, which is the reason for the spreading of global values, and the fact that today's tourists seek a high level of comfort.
5. For tourists the high quality standard of the accommodation and the destination is of key importance: its cleanliness, orderliness and aesthetic arrangement. This finding of my study is closely related to the fact that nowadays we tend to travel widely, thus gaining

more and more experience, so we make more conscious choices and if we want to have a relaxed holiday we are not happy with any standard of accommodation.

6. An interesting finding in my research was the fact that many guests did not consider outstandingly important the participation in or experiencing authentic adventures through programs and traditional food-tasting, as part of the local community, however, several respondents commented on the deficiencies in this field of supply.
7. For guests the personality of the host is very important. He should have a nice personality and professional expertise, he should be good at solving problems and must have great communication skills. Hungarian touristic entrepreneurs are soon facing a generational change. Many of them are old and tired, so they do not plan to develop their competence. Nevertheless, there is a strong need to develop competence and to involve the younger generations, so that service providers could meet the needs of the guests in the long run.
8. In my research it turned out that although getting the experience is important for rural tourists, in Hungary it does not outrun functional value dimensions. For the interviewed consumers, the most important value dimension was quality, that is, the functional arrangement of the accommodation and the personality of the host. It was followed by peaceful relaxation, then appropriate price in the third place, while in the fourth place we can find the need for experience through personal interactions and programs, and the fifth value dimension is experiencing the authentic environment. In my opinion, the results in this field were also influenced by the fact that so far only few really creative products have appeared in Hungary and the supply of experience industry is currently under development, so tourists could only see a very low number of thematic experience packages.

Out of my 8 hypotheses, altogether 4 were partly or completely approved, while I had to reject 4. The summarised evaluation of my hypotheses can be found in Table 20.

Table 20: Summarised evaluation of hypotheses

| Hypotheses | | Acceptance | Partially acceptance | Rejection |
|------------|--|------------|----------------------|-----------|
| H1 | Among the consumers of rural tourism, the city-dwelling middle class of intellectuals represents a larger ratio than the elderly or the younger generation | x | | |
| H2 | Rural tourism is primarily favoured by materialistic guests in favour of traditional values. | | x | |
| H3 | Among the tourists' motivations, getting to know the cultural values of country living is more important than the values of nature | | | x |
| H4 | For tourists the authentic atmosphere of the accommodation and the house is of outstanding importance. | | | x |
| H5 | For tourists the calm and peaceful environment of the accommodation and the destination is of outstanding importance | x | | |
| H6 | Country lifestyle and cultural elements to be experienced as part of the local community are of outstanding importance for tourists. | | | x |
| H7 | The competences and helpfulness of the host are of outstanding importance for tourists. | x | | |
| H8 | For the consumers of rural tourism, affective value dimensions represent a bigger value than functional value dimensions. | | | x |

Source: My own research

6.2 Hungarian and international comparison

Four earlier conducted international empirical studies were of key importance in the support of my empirical research.

- I analysed the research of Sánchez and his fellow researchers [2006] about the global consumer value (GLOVAL) in the market of tour organisers selling complex touristic packages. The researchers identified the functional, the emotional and the social consumer value dimensions.
- I also reviewed the research of Kim et al. [2010] about the measurability of touristic experience. The study has provided me with methodological guidance.
- I examined the research of Pesonen and his colleagues [2011] about the motivations of Finnish and Austrian rural tourism. For me the study was helpful in the creation of the list

of indicators and confirmed me that the identification of consumer motivations can serve as a great basis of value analyses.

- Regarding the logical structure of my dissertation, I was truly influenced by the research of Jamal and his fellow researchers [2011] who conducted a rural tourism research in Malaysia. Hereafter I compare my empirical results to the findings of this study (Table 21).

Table 21: International comparison of my research findings

| | International research | My own research |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Aim of research | Analysis of consumer value dimensions in rural tourism | Analysis of consumer value dimensions in rural tourism |
| Sample | Interviewing 353 English and Japanese tourists from 3 settlements by simple random sampling on a 7-point evaluation scale | Interviewing 132 tourists and conducting 220 online interviews (altogether 352 subjects) from 12 settlements by simple random sampling on a 4-point evaluation scale |
| Methodology | 1. creating indicators from secondary data, 2. testing indicators including experts (N=8), 3. measurement of consumer value based on 353 validly filled in questionnaires | 1. creating indicators from secondary data and from the results of consumer interviews (N=30) using the critical case technique, 2. testing indicators including experts (N=7), 3. measurement of consumer value based on 352 validly filled in questionnaires |
| Analytic tool | descriptive statistics, factor analysis (KMO=0.91, variance quotient=56%, p=0.001) | descriptive statistics, cross-tabs-analysis, IPA method, variance-analysis, factor analysis (KMO=0.85, variance quotient=69%, p=0.05) |
| Findings | 5 identified consumer value dimensions. Order: 1. Emotional value, 2. Experience value (guest-host relationship), 3. Experience value (activity, culture and knowledge), 4. Functional value (quality of facility), 5. Functional value (price) | 5 identified consumer value dimensions. Order: 1. Functional value (quality), 2. Experience value (recreation), 3. Functional value (price), 4. Experience value (human relationships, activity), 5. Experience value (environment) |

Source: Jamal et al. [2011] and my own research

In spite of the cultural and geographic differences, the two researches show several similarities. Both researches were seeking the answer for the possible dimensioning of consumer value. The methodological structure of the researches is also identical. The number of subjects in the sample is almost the same, although in my research, field work was completed with online interviews as well. In Malaysia the research was conducted on the field, including 3 settlements with a sample of 353 subjects. My own research was carried out on the one hand involving 12 accommodation from 12 settlements, with a sample of 132 subjects, and on the other hand with an online questionnaire-based survey with a sample of 220 subjects. I applied different types of analytical tools in my own study.

Comparing the findings of the researches, the accidental coincidence of two interesting factors is remarkable for me. On the one hand, the number of sample subjects is almost the same in the two researches, and on the other hand the number of identified value dimensions is identical, although they have different contents in certain cases. A similarity of the researches is the majority of affective (emotional and experience) dimensions as opposed to functional dimensions, but while in Malaysia these are more important for tourists, in Hungary – apart from the recreational experience – these are only secondary compared to functional value dimensions. In both countries, similar value dimensions are represented by experiences through human relationships, experiences through programs, and value which can be attached to functionally interpreted quality and price. In my research findings the difference is that the emotional value did not appear among the identified value dimensions, however, two aspects of the experience value turned up in Hungary, but not in Malaysia: recreation and country environment.

The reason for the differences may be that in Malaysia rural tourism is more community-dependent than in Hungary. There, learning about the traditions, culture and gaining knowledge is more significant for tourists than just relaxation in a peaceful and natural environment, or than the complex experience of the area's natural and cultural values.

In my opinion, in the rural tourism of Hungary, we should also strive to create these human relationships, through which the experiences could be more intensive and the demand for the product would also be higher. Instead of "accommodation only" service offered in order to decrease the prices, we must be pursued to offer all inclusive package services with high level of experience and high quality standard (Fotiadis [2009]). This could be the basis to welcome the

creative experience industries as well. Of course, in order to achieve it, we should first solve the problem of generational change which is critical in the Hungarian supply, then work out the marketing activity suitable for rural tourism. What should determine our professional endeavours is that we want to create a successful rural tourism which can produce value for the service provider and the consumer alike. Only those settlements or accommodation can be competitive which, quoting Tózsér [2012], are secure, hospitable characterised by appropriate price-value ratio, and which aim to meet the tourists' needs, providing high quality service and a complex experience for them.

6.3 The significance and the benefits of the research

Although my research findings can refer to particularly one special product of tourism, rural tourism, this study might become the starting point of other scientific researches, and it can be used for educational purposes or put into the practice of tourism management.

The theoretical summary and the empirical study of the current dissertation is a contribution to the theoretical and practical understanding of the consumer value concept, appearing in rural tourism.

Results of the summary of literature:

- The summary of the literature dealing with the definition and the content of rural tourism.
- Introducing the theoretical approaches of consumer value, and the detailed introduction of key approaches from the point of view of tourism management.
- The summary of literature dealing with the definition and the content of touristic experience.
- The summary of the methodology and the results of international and Hungarian researches in this field.

The results of empirical research:

- The characterisation of consumers who currently make up the demand for rural tourism and the identification of their motivations.
- Identification of the content components of rural tourism and defining its demand side in Hungary.

- The identification, grouping and ranking of factors which are valuable for guests during their holiday.
- The identification of differences between services expected by tourists and provided by hosts.
- Creating the consumer value dimensions of rural tourism.

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1. Scientific book chapter

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ANNEXES

Annex 1

The national interpretations of rural tourism, based on definitions registered by EuroGites¹¹ and Rural Tourism International - Training Network¹²

Italy can serve as a unique example for us, since while all the European countries use rural tourism and agro-tourism as synonyms, in Italy the two definitions are separated. For them, rural tourism includes activities, the aim of which is the preservation of the rural landscape, the local culture, gastronomy and traditions. As opposed to this, agro-tourism is regarded as a special type of rural tourism, referring to eating and accommodating services offered by people who make their living out of agriculture, thus tourism is only a supplement to their agricultural activities. (Dettori et al. [2004])

In *Ireland* and in the *United Kingdom* the definition of rural tourism has covered "green tourism" since its first appeared in the '70es. In the English terminology it is a type of tourism which offers visitors undisturbed relaxation far from the polluted and noisy cities, in an idyllic and peaceful environment. Visitors to a farm can choose to be self-suppliant, they can have a Bed & Breakfast service or stay in a camp. Leisure activities, among others, include golf, fishing, trekking, surfing and cycling. Moreover, the farmers are happy to speak to visitors about the country lifestyle and agriculture on the farm.

In *Finland* rural tourism is usually just renting a holiday house, often without a board, mainly focusing on sports programs, such as fishing, rowing, mountain-climbing, horse-riding or skiing. (Peters et al. [1994], In: Rátz – Puczkó [1998], Kiss [2001]).

In *Holland* and *Belgium* the definition refers to a holiday on a farm or in a nearby camp, where in the focus are horse-riding, walking and cycling, but interested visitors can have a look at the processes of livestock farming and gardening.

¹¹ European Federation of Farm and Village Tourism, <http://www.eurogites.org> (2011. 07. 27.)

¹² Rural Tourism International – Training Network, http://www.ruraltourisminternational.org/main.php?obj_id=447485471 (2011. 07. 27.)

The rural tourism of *Luxemburg* places the country's cultural and architectural heritage in the focus, also offering a wide range of different accommodation (farm, country house, holiday chalet, rest house).

Denmark has a policy of "open farms". Farm owners expect families from the city, who need some recreation, want to do some camping, fishing, picking mushrooms in the forest, and who are interested in cycling, mountaineering or organized bird-watching.

In *France* – where agriculture-based (wine and cheese culture) rural tourism was first launched in 1951 – farm-holders – similarly to previous examples – mostly provide accommodation, supplemented by offering other programs in the neighbourhood.

In *Portugal* there are four types of accommodation on offer to tourists: traditional village house, mansion, farms and holiday chalets. Here tourists can make use of complementary programs, such as fishing, hunting and doing sports, apart from gastronomic and accommodation service provision.

The concept of rural tourism in *Spain* is a great example for regional differences within a country. Due to the lack of uniformity, the general interpretation can be defined only in a broader context: touristic activity which can be carried out in rural environment, the motivations of which are related to country lifestyle and/or the nature, and its period is usually short, often one weekend. (Maestro et al. [2007]).

In *Latvia* and *Estonia* the major aim of the creation of rural tourism was region development. Its definition refers to a non-agricultural activity which provides the accessibility of the land through activities in nature, as well as the preservation of the Latvian/Estonian culture and the historical heritage (Zobena et al. [2005]).

In the case of *Lithuania* the role of eco-farms are significant, where service providers offer activities to preserve health and enhance curing, such as cycling, horse-riding or scuba-diving.

Using the definitions of both "agro-tourism" and "rural tourism", *Romania* regards rural tourism every form of tourism in the countryside, including holidays spent on a farm and any other activities starting from there (e.g. horse-riding, trekking, taking part in agricultural activities on the farm). The activity of receiving guests at the settlements also includes providing accommodation, catering and organisation of programs. They regard the terminology of rural tourism a generic term, a versatile touristic product. If the ecological aspect comes to the front, it may include eco-tourism as well, when the major motive of tourists is learning about nature and culture. If the culture, the customs and the traditions of the rural people enjoy priority, the definition approaches the term cultural tourism. If the touristic activity takes place on the territory of an agricultural farm, they use the term farm-tourism. If the guest wishes to take part in the agricultural work (harvesting, looking after the animals, fruit picking, etc.), it is called agro-tourism (Vofkori [2004]).

In *Norway* and *Sweden* the definition of rural tourism is closely linked to the beauties of nature, natural formations, and peaceful national parks. Accommodation can usually be found near them, encouraging tourists to learn more about the values of nature, the cultural and architectural heritage.

The uniquely built farms in *Switzerland* offer the experience of "Sleep in straw", where farm holders mainly focus on providing accommodation, but if required, they can complete it with catering service and other activities (cycling between farms, mountaineering, skating or canoeing).

In the rural tourism of *Slovakia* and the *Czech Republic* the major development directions include rural world heritage tourism and eco-touristic approach.

In *Poland* the "Green Lungs of Poland" concept has a great influence on the country's rural and agro-tourism as well, where environment conscious aspects enjoy priority in Bed & Breakfast accommodation and camp-sites as well. On farms tourists can take a look at the process of biological farming, taste local traditional foods, and take part in bird-watching or trekking. A nice experience for children is petting zoos.

A central element of *Slovenia's* rural tourism is holiday on a family farm, either on the host's premises or in a separate guesthouse, where visitors can be part of the farmer's life, and see life

in the country. Apart from cultural attractions, tourists are provided the opportunity to do water sports, skiing, cycling, etc.

In *Croatia's* country regions, agro-tourism is popular, and is in contact with bio-farms specialised in producing traditional local products (brandy, ham, cheese, olive oil, honey, wine, truffle, fig cake).

Ukraine also offers the facilities of agro-tourism, as well as the re-discovery of old traditions, and customs to visitors.

Owing to its excellent geographic features, *Moldova* offers holidays on its extensive farmlands during which tourists can get acquainted with the folk culture. Visitors can be put up in guest houses, in the same building with the host, in camp sites or village hotels.

In *Bulgaria* a major aspect of rural tourism is the active participation of tourists in the daily routine of the farm, and while eating the food typical of the region, they can admire the local architectural style.

In *Serbia* rural tourism was established mainly in regions with cultural and historical aspects. They also offer agro-touristic, sporting and trekking programs (to caves and waterfalls, forest walks and horse-riding) for tourists.

In *Greece* and *Cyprus* the key element of the experience offered by rural (agro-) tourism is that tourists are put up in traditional accommodation and while relaxing, they can enjoy the traditional foods (breakfast) of the region (Turner [1993], In: Rátz - Puczkó [1998]).

Belorussia is one of the developing touristic destinations of our times, where rural tourists are received by families, welcoming them with "open hearts and open doors", and giving them information on folklore traditions and local foods.

Bosnia-Herzegovina offers its home-made products and foods on peaceful and silent farms, while in the surrounding nature there are excellent opportunities for white-water rafting, collecting herbs and picking mushrooms, or mountaineering.

In *Iceland* – as opposed to the practice of previous countries -, rural tourism is different. While in most countries, the location and the appearance of the accommodation are major factors, in Iceland the different types of tours (rowing, horse-riding, mountaineering, whale-watching, visiting glaciers) and communal activities (bathing, fishing) provide the essence of rural tourism.

The rural tourism of *Germany* and *Austria* („Urlaub am Bauernhof“) is outstanding. In these countries, guests can enjoy the exemplary experience of precisely organized country lifestyle, in which accommodation is arranged in an authentic environment, the kitchen-culture is based on local traditions, rich and high quality programs are offered (for children, adults, disabled, on location on the farm or in the surrounding nature), but there is opportunity to buy the products of the organic farm as well.

In *Siberia* – although it is true that it is not a European destination, thus it does not directly belong to this list – by rural tourism they refer to ethnic tourism, which is a form of tourism to introduce the life of locals¹³.

¹³ International Seminar Sustainable Tourism Development: European Experiences. 2011. 05.19, Barnaul – Based on the Tomsk conference.

Annex 2

Control issue line for consumer semi-qualitative survey

Please think back to a memorable holidays, was spent in rural environment, and then answer the following questions!

1. Where and when did you spend your holiday?
.....
2. How far was the place of holiday from your residence?
.....
3. Who went with you for the vacation?
.....
4. What type of accommodation did you choose (e.g. separated apartman, room in host's house)?
.....
5. What kind of programs and optional activities did you participate in during the holiday?
.....
6. Why did you choose the rural tourism from the many forms of holiday?
.....
7. What is your most valued? Please identify the 3 things, why do you think it was worthwhile to participate in rural tourism!
a)
b)
c)
8. What was the most enjoyable experience for you during the holiday? Why?
.....
9. Would you happy to recommend to others the rural tourism holiday? Why? Why not?
.....

In the following, please underline the correct information for you!

Your gender: male/female

Your residence: village / township / city / capital city

Your age: 18-24 / 25-35 / 36-49 / 50-64 / over 64

Your highest level of education: primary school/ trade school/ high-school graduation/ college graduate, Master's degree/ PhD, DLA degree

Your e-mail address (not required!):

Annex 3

Large sample questionnaire-based survey

1. What was your main motivation when you chose the rural tourism as a holiday form?

(Please tick only one answer!)

1. relaxation in peaceful environment,
2. getting acquainted with folk traditions and local culture,
3. to discover the nature,
4. sport activities (e.g. cycling, horse riding, fishing, hunting),
5. nostalgia, to recall and revive memories linked village,
6. to experience sincere hospitality,
7. complex experience of rural way of life, culture, nature and programs,
8. to find cheap accommodation from where the attractions nearby are easily accessible,
9. others:

2. Please tick in which geographical region is located the village where you spent your last holiday!

1. Southern Great Plain 2. Northern Great Plain 3. Northern Hungary
4. Central Trans-Danubia 5. Western Trans-Danubia 6. Southern Trans-Danubia
7. Central Hungary

3. Have you ever spent rural tourism holiday in this village?

1. yes, once time 2. yes, several times 3. no

4. Considering the category how many sunflowers had your last rural accommodation?

1. 1 sunflower 2. 2 sunflowers 3. 3 sunflowers 4. 4 sunflowers
5. It was not classified 6. I don't know

5. How many nights did you spend at the accommodation?

1. 1 night 2. 2 nights 3. 3 nights 4. 4 nights
5. 5 nights 6. 6 nights 7. 7 nights or more

6. With whom did you spend the holiday together?

1. with my family (children under 18) 2. with my family (children over 18)
3. with my partner 4. with my friends 5. others:

7. In the last 3 years how many times have you had rural tourism vacation?

1. once time 2. two times 3. three times or more
4. others:

8. How could you define rural tourism? (Please tick only one answer!)

1. vacation in a village, in relaxing, peaceful natural environment,
2. vacation where I can getting acquainted with rural way of life and traditions,
3. vacation in a village at a local family's house, where I can enjoy the nature, getting acquainted with rural lifestyle, and I can participate in other enjoyable programs (e.g. spas, theme parks),
4. accommodation services in village,
5. others:.....

| <p>9. Based on your latest rural vacation, please mark the following statements 1-4 on the scale below, signalling how much you agree with the statements (Column 9.a) and how important are the statements for you (Columns 9.b)! Mark your answers with x!</p> | 9.a. How much you agree with the statements? | | | | 9.b. How important are the statements for you? | | | |
|---|--|--------------|---------|-----------------|--|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| | I disagree | I agree less | I agree | I totally agree | Not important | Less important | Important | Very important |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. The accommodation appearance is attractive. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. The accommodation has nice interior. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. The accommodation fits well with the surroundings of natural and/or built environment. | | | | | | | | |
| 4. The accommodation provides the high-quality equipment and tools. | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Attention is paid here to equipment maintenance. | | | | | | | | |
| 6. The accommodation is clean. | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Furniture and beds are comfortable at the accommodation. | | | | | | | | |
| 8. The internal temperature is pleasant at the accommodation. | | | | | | | | |
| 9. The accommodation's interior design wears signs of traditional folk architecture. | | | | | | | | |
| 10. The accommodation's exterior design wears signs of traditional folk architecture. | | | | | | | | |
| 11. The accommodation is located in a quiet and peaceful village. | | | | | | | | |
| 12. The accommodation is located in a clean and tidy village. | | | | | | | | |
| 13. The accommodation is close to a town and major tourist attractions. | | | | | | | | |
| 14. There are farm animals (e.g. poultry, horses, cows) at the host's place. | | | | | | | | |
| 15. There are pets (e.g. dogs, cats) at the host's place. | | | | | | | | |
| 16. The accommodation is cheap for me. | | | | | | | | |

| 10. Based on your latest rural vacation, please mark the following statements 1-4 on the scale below, signalling how much you agree with the statements (Column 10.a) and how important are the statements for you (Columns 10.b)! Mark your answers with x! | 10.a. How much you agree with the statements? | | | | 10.b. How important are the statements for you? | | | |
|---|---|--------------|---------|-----------------|---|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| | I disagree | I agree less | I agree | I totally agree | Not important | Less important | Important | Very important |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. The host is helpful. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. The host has a lot of information about the surrounding attractions. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. The host aspires to make the guest feel good. | | | | | | | | |
| 4. The host also organizes programs for guests at his own house. | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Special local dishes are available at the host. | | | | | | | | |
| 6. The host is adapting well to the guests' needs. | | | | | | | | |
| 7. The host shows respect towards the guests. | | | | | | | | |
| 8. The host is friendly. | | | | | | | | |
| 9. The host personality exudes confidence. | | | | | | | | |
| 10. The behavior of guests does not disturb other guests relaxation. | | | | | | | | |
| 11. The behavior of guests does not disturb local residents. | | | | | | | | |
| 12. The local residents are friendly. | | | | | | | | |
| 13. Guests like to make friends with other guests. | | | | | | | | |
| 14. Time spent at the accommodation is a good opportunity for me for family time. | | | | | | | | |
| 15. Time spent at the accommodation is a good opportunity for me to cultivate friendships. | | | | | | | | |
| 16. I can access the host online. | | | | | | | | |
| 17. The accommodation has well-designed and informative website. | | | | | | | | |

| 11. Based on your experiences related rural tourism, please rank the following statements from 1 to 6, signalling your preference order. | Ranking |
|---|----------------|
| 1. visiting festivals | |
| 2. hiking and discover the nature | |
| 3. active participation in traditional programs (e.g crafts, folk-dancing) | |
| 4. getting acquainted with farm activities around the house (e.g vintage, bread baking) | |
| 5. visiting the main attractions of the surrounding area | |
| 6. silent passive activities (e.g. reading, board games) | |

| 12. Based on your latest experiences at rural accommodation, please mark the following statements 1-5 on the scale below, signalling how much you agree with the statement! If you cannot choose a score, or you do not want to answer (NA), select 0! Mark your answers with x! | NA | I totally disagree | I disagree | I am indifferent | I agree | I totally agree |
|---|-----------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Based on my personal experience, on the whole, rural holidays... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. create positive feelings in me. | | | | | | |
| 2. create the feeling in me that time has slowed down. | | | | | | |
| 3. are relaxing for me. | | | | | | |
| 4. are pleasant. | | | | | | |
| 5. are entertaining. | | | | | | |
| 6. are comfortable. | | | | | | |
| 7. make me satisfied. | | | | | | |
| 8. create the sense of novelty. | | | | | | |
| 9. show me how fascinating nature is. | | | | | | |
| 10. make me feel that although I am far from home, I can feel at home. | | | | | | |
| 11. make me prolong my stay. | | | | | | |
| 12. are enjoyable because of the relationship with my host. | | | | | | |
| 13. are enjoyable because I can learn about the local culture. | | | | | | |
| 14. have an appropriate price. | | | | | | |
| 15. offer appropriate service for the paid price. | | | | | | |
| 16. My satisfaction with rural holidays depends on my mood. | | | | | | |
| 17. My satisfaction with rural holidays depends on my gained experiences. | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 18. ensure that every minute of it is full of experiences. | | | | | | |
| 19. ensure that I can be alone for a while with nobody disturbing me. | | | | | | |
| 20. make me feel that I am independent. | | | | | | |
| 21. make me feel secure. | | | | | | |
| 22. contribute to my personal development and the expansion of my knowledge. | | | | | | |
| 23. are memorable. | | | | | | |
| 24. I would choose rural holidays on other occasions as well. | | | | | | |
| 25. I would recommend rural holidays to others as well. | | | | | | |

13. Were you disappointed with anything in your last accommodation? (You can choose more answers!)

0. I wasn't disappointed (→ question 14.)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. poorly equipped accommodation | 2. uncomfortable furniture |
| 3. tasteless food | 4. disordered accommodation |
| 5. few local optional programs | 6. incorrect value for money |
| 7. inappropriate catering | 8. inhospitality |
| 9. lack of rural atmosphere | 10. others: |

Finally, please answer a few personal questions! Answering these questions your anonymity is not compromised, however, these questions are essential for a proper evaluation of the research.

| 14. In case of the following pairs of opposites, please, mark with x, which one comes closest to your personality! | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------------------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 1. | quiet | | | | | | talkative |
| 2. | tolerant | | | | | | critic |
| 3. | disorganised | | | | | | precise |
| 4. | tense | | | | | | calm |
| 5. | creative | | | | | | rational |
| 6. | materialistic | | | | | | spender |
| 7. | non-cooperative | | | | | | cooperative |
| 8. | unreliable | | | | | | reliable |
| 9. | modern | | | | | | preferring traditional values |
| 10. | social person | | | | | | loner |
| 11. | enthusiastic | | | | | | depressed |
| 12. | explorer | | | | | | prefer to stay at home |

15. What is your gender?

1. male 2. female

16. What is your age?

1. under 18 2. 18-24 3. 25-35 4. 36-49
5. 50-65 6. over 65

17. What is your highest level of education?

1. primary school 2. trade school 3. high-school graduation
4. ongoing higher education 5. college graduate, Master's degree
6. PhD, DLA degree

18. Your place of residence:

1. village 2. city 3. capital city

19. In which geographical region is your place of residence?

1. Southern Great Plain 2. Northern Great Plain 3. Northern Hungary
4. Central Trans-Danubia 5. Western Trans-Danubia 6. Southern Trans-Danubia
7. Central Hungary 8. Foreign country:

20. How far is rural holiday destination from your place of residence?

1. less than 50 km 2. 50-100 km 3. 100-150 km
4. 150-200 km 5. more than 200 km

21. Would you like to participate in our sweepstakes?

1. no 2. yes, my e-mail or mobile phone number:

22. If you would like to share further experiences related with rural tourism, please write on the dotted line!

.....
.....

Annex 4

The list of the 25 guesthouses were invited for field research, and the **12 guesthouses** participated in

Southern Great Plain

Békés County:

- ***Eszter Tanya, Csorvás***

Bács-Kiskun County:

- ***Gedeon farm, Jakabszállás***
- Kiskastély vendégház, Császártöltés

Csongrád County:

- Arany Turul Vendégház, Ruzsa

Northern Great Plain

Hajdú-Bihar County:

- ***Sinka Miska Vendégház, Pocsaj***

Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County:

- ***Gólyavár Porta, Kócsújfalu***

Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County:

- Nyugodt Hajlék Vendégház, Kömörő
- Székely Vendégház, Csaroda

Northern Hungary

Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County:

- Tornácos Vendégház, Golop

Heves County:

- ***König Vendégház, Parádsasvár***
- ***Gyüre Mariann, Egerszalók, Faluház***

Nógrád County:

- ***Nógrádi Kézművesház, Varsány***

Central Hungary

Pest County:

- Akác Tanya, Újlengyel

Central Trans-Danubia

Fejér County:

- ***Noll Tanya, Felcsút***

Komárom-Esztergom County:

- ***Horváth Vendégház, Nagyigmánd***

Veszprém County:

- ***Lila Akác Vendégház, Dabrony***
- Alsókúti Vendégház, Nemesvámos

Southern Trans-Danubia

Baranya County:

- Kemencés Vendégház, Kővágószőlős

Somogy County:

- Ágnes Vendégház, Szenna

Tolna County:

- Szintai Vendégház, Szálka

Western Trans-Danubia

Győr-Moson-Sopron County:

- Napvirág Vendégház, Zsira

Vas County:

- ***Kétvölgy Vendégház, Kétvölgy***
- Edit Vendégház Celldömölk-Izsákfa

Zala County:

- Fácánkert Vendégház, Kiskutas
- ***Faluszéli Tóthék Háza, Szentkozmadombja***

Annex 5

Main statistical tables showing the results of survey

I. Descriptive statistics

| What is your gender? | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Male | 100 | 28,4 | 28,4 | 28,4 |
| | Female | 252 | 71,6 | 71,6 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| What is your age? | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | under 18 | 3 | ,9 | ,9 | ,9 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | 17,3 | 17,3 | 18,2 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | 29,3 | 29,3 | 47,4 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | 33,5 | 33,5 | 81,0 |
| | 50-65 | 58 | 16,5 | 16,5 | 97,4 |
| | over 65 | 9 | 2,6 | 2,6 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| What is your highest level of education? | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Primary school | 5 | 1,4 | 1,4 | 1,4 |
| | Trade school | 17 | 4,8 | 4,8 | 6,3 |
| | High-school graduation | 84 | 23,9 | 23,9 | 30,1 |
| | Ongoing higher education | 52 | 14,8 | 14,8 | 44,9 |
| | College graduate/Master's degree | 186 | 52,8 | 52,8 | 97,7 |
| | PhD, DLA degree | 8 | 2,3 | 2,3 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| What is your place of residence? | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Village | 74 | 21,0 | 21,0 | 21,0 |
| | City | 164 | 46,6 | 46,6 | 67,6 |
| | Capital city | 114 | 32,4 | 32,4 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| In which geographical region is your place of residence? | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Southern Great Plain | 22 | 6,3 | 6,3 | 6,3 |
| | Northern Great Plain | 16 | 4,5 | 4,5 | 10,8 |
| | Northern Hungary | 34 | 9,7 | 9,7 | 20,5 |
| | Central Trans-Danubia | 42 | 11,9 | 11,9 | 32,4 |
| | Western Trans-Danubia | 37 | 10,5 | 10,5 | 42,9 |
| | Southern Trans-Danubia | 25 | 7,1 | 7,1 | 50,0 |
| | Central Hungary | 158 | 44,9 | 44,9 | 94,9 |
| | Foreign country | 18 | 5,1 | 5,1 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| How far is rural holiday destination from your place of residence? | | | | | |
|--|------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | less than 50 km | 22 | 6,3 | 6,3 | 6,3 |
| | 50-100 km | 46 | 13,1 | 13,1 | 19,3 |
| | 100-150 km | 64 | 18,2 | 18,2 | 37,5 |
| | 150-200 km | 65 | 18,5 | 18,5 | 56,0 |
| | more than 200 km | 155 | 44,0 | 44,0 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| What was your main motivation when you chose the rural tourism as a holiday form? | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Relaxation in peaceful environment | 92 | 26,1 | 26,1 | 26,1 |
| | Getting acquainted with folk traditions and local culture | 26 | 7,4 | 7,4 | 33,5 |
| | Discover the nature | 27 | 7,7 | 7,7 | 41,2 |
| | Sport activities | 28 | 8,0 | 8,0 | 49,1 |
| | Nostalgia | 28 | 8,0 | 8,0 | 57,1 |
| | Sincere hospitality | 21 | 6,0 | 6,0 | 63,1 |
| | Complex experience of rural way of life, culture, nature and programs | 98 | 27,8 | 27,8 | 90,9 |
| | Cheap accommodation, attraction nearby | 18 | 5,1 | 5,1 | 96,0 |
| | Others | 14 | 4,0 | 4,0 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| In which geographical region is located the village where you spent your last holiday? | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Southern Great Plain | 49 | 13,9 | 13,9 | 13,9 |
| | Northern Great Plain | 43 | 12,2 | 12,2 | 26,1 |
| | Northern Hungary | 102 | 29,0 | 29,0 | 55,1 |
| | Central Trans-Danubia | 49 | 13,9 | 13,9 | 69,0 |
| | Western Trans-Danubia | 65 | 18,5 | 18,5 | 87,5 |
| | Southern Trans-Danubia | 24 | 6,8 | 6,8 | 94,3 |
| | Central Hungary | 20 | 5,7 | 5,7 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| Have you ever spent rural tourism holiday in this village? | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Yes, once time | 54 | 15,3 | 15,3 | 15,3 |
| | Yes, several times | 90 | 25,6 | 25,6 | 40,9 |
| | No | 208 | 59,1 | 59,1 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| Considering the category how many sunflowers had your last rural accommodation? | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | 2 sunflowers | 6 | 1,7 | 1,7 | 1,7 |
| | 3 sunflowers | 75 | 21,3 | 21,3 | 23,0 |
| | 4 sunflowers | 104 | 29,5 | 29,5 | 52,6 |
| | It was not classified | 49 | 13,9 | 13,9 | 66,5 |
| | I don't know | 118 | 33,5 | 33,5 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| How many nights did you spend at the accommodation? | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | 1 | 35 | 9,9 | 9,9 | 9,9 |
| | 2 | 105 | 29,8 | 29,8 | 39,8 |
| | 3 | 99 | 28,1 | 28,1 | 67,9 |
| | 4 | 40 | 11,4 | 11,4 | 79,3 |
| | 5 | 26 | 7,4 | 7,4 | 86,6 |
| | 6 | 22 | 6,3 | 6,3 | 92,9 |
| | 7 or more | 25 | 7,1 | 7,1 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| With whom did you spend the holiday together? | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | with my family (children under 18) | 96 | 27,3 | 27,3 | 27,3 |
| | with my family (children over 18) | 29 | 8,2 | 8,2 | 35,5 |
| | with my partner | 109 | 31,0 | 31,0 | 66,5 |
| | with my friends | 89 | 25,3 | 25,3 | 91,8 |
| | Combination of previous | 29 | 8,2 | 8,2 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| In the last 3 years how many times have you had rural tourism vacation? | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | once time | 117 | 33,2 | 33,2 | 33,2 |
| | two times | 93 | 26,4 | 26,4 | 59,7 |
| | three times or more | 99 | 28,1 | 28,1 | 87,8 |
| | others: never | 43 | 12,2 | 12,2 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| How could you define rural tourism? | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | vacation in a village, in relaxing, peaceful natural environment | 112 | 31,8 | 31,8 | 31,8 |
| | vacation where I can getting acquainted with rural way of life and traditions | 71 | 20,2 | 20,2 | 52,0 |
| | vacation in a village at a local family's house, where I can enjoy the nature, getting acquainted with rural lifestyle, and I can participate in other enjoyable programs | 149 | 42,3 | 42,3 | 94,3 |
| | accommodation services in village | 13 | 3,7 | 3,7 | 98,0 |
| | others | 7 | 2,0 | 2,0 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

| Were you disappointed with anything in your last accommodation? I wasn't disappointed | | | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | I disagree | 60 | 17,0 | 17,0 | 17,0 |
| | I agree | 292 | 83,0 | 83,0 | 100,0 |
| | Total | 352 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

II. Applicability index-numbers of identified consumer value factors

| Total Variance Explained | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|--|
| Component | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Extraction Sums of Squared | | | Rotation Sums of Squared | | | |
| | Loadings | | | Loadings | | | Loadings | | | |
| | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | |
| 1 | 8,504 | 26,574 | 26,574 | 8,504 | 26,574 | 26,574 | 3,998 | 12,493 | 12,493 | |
| 2 | 2,942 | 9,195 | 35,769 | 2,942 | 9,195 | 35,769 | 2,374 | 7,418 | 19,911 | |
| 3 | 2,105 | 6,578 | 42,347 | 2,105 | 6,578 | 42,347 | 2,372 | 7,411 | 27,322 | |
| 4 | 1,621 | 5,066 | 47,413 | 1,621 | 5,066 | 47,413 | 2,334 | 7,294 | 34,616 | |
| 5 | 1,473 | 4,604 | 52,017 | 1,473 | 4,604 | 52,017 | 2,193 | 6,855 | 41,470 | |
| 6 | 1,288 | 4,025 | 56,041 | 1,288 | 4,025 | 56,041 | 2,176 | 6,801 | 48,271 | |
| 7 | 1,117 | 3,491 | 59,533 | 1,117 | 3,491 | 59,533 | 1,965 | 6,140 | 54,411 | |
| 8 | 1,078 | 3,367 | 62,900 | 1,078 | 3,367 | 62,900 | 1,633 | 5,102 | 59,513 | |
| 9 | 1,028 | 3,214 | 66,114 | 1,028 | 3,214 | 66,114 | 1,620 | 5,062 | 64,575 | |
| 10 | ,951 | 2,971 | 69,085 | ,951 | 2,971 | 69,085 | 1,443 | 4,510 | 69,085 | |
| 11 | ,849 | 2,652 | 71,738 | | | | | | | |
| 12 | ,802 | 2,507 | 74,245 | | | | | | | |
| 13 | ,764 | 2,389 | 76,634 | | | | | | | |
| 14 | ,750 | 2,343 | 78,977 | | | | | | | |
| 15 | ,666 | 2,080 | 81,057 | | | | | | | |
| 16 | ,589 | 1,840 | 82,897 | | | | | | | |
| 17 | ,538 | 1,682 | 84,579 | | | | | | | |
| 18 | ,522 | 1,633 | 86,211 | | | | | | | |
| 19 | ,513 | 1,603 | 87,814 | | | | | | | |
| 20 | ,446 | 1,394 | 89,208 | | | | | | | |
| 21 | ,422 | 1,320 | 90,528 | | | | | | | |
| 22 | ,411 | 1,285 | 91,813 | | | | | | | |
| 23 | ,391 | 1,223 | 93,036 | | | | | | | |
| 24 | ,357 | 1,116 | 94,152 | | | | | | | |
| 25 | ,340 | 1,061 | 95,213 | | | | | | | |
| 26 | ,320 | 1,001 | 96,214 | | | | | | | |
| 27 | ,275 | ,860 | 97,074 | | | | | | | |
| 28 | ,274 | ,856 | 97,930 | | | | | | | |
| 29 | ,217 | ,680 | 98,610 | | | | | | | |
| 30 | ,202 | ,631 | 99,240 | | | | | | | |
| 31 | ,133 | ,416 | 99,656 | | | | | | | |
| 32 | ,110 | ,344 | 100,000 | | | | | | | |
| Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. | | | | | | | | | | |

| KMO and Bartlett's Test | | |
|--|--------------------|----------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | ,848 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 5174,872 |
| | df | 496 |
| | Sig. | ,000 |

III. Importance by segments of value factors

| Descriptives | | | | | |
|---|----------|-----|-----------|----------------|------------|
| | | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error |
| Host attitude | under 18 | 3 | -,2932967 | ,74786003 | ,43177719 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | -,0434480 | ,95276857 | ,12198952 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | -,1159275 | 1,17735959 | ,11600869 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | ,1528601 | ,85932242 | ,07910704 |
| | 50-65 | 58 | -,0411785 | ,96898616 | ,12723412 |
| | over 65 | 9 | -,0198192 | 1,08930731 | ,36310244 |
| | Total | 352 | ,0000000 | 1,00000000 | ,05330018 |
| Attractive accommodation | under 18 | 3 | ,0040495 | ,59158301 | ,34155061 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | -,0142533 | 1,12444118 | ,14396994 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | ,0167807 | ,94599899 | ,09321205 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | ,1095122 | ,97031301 | ,08932455 |
| | 50-65 | 58 | -,2580484 | 1,06462217 | ,13979174 |
| | over 65 | 9 | ,1303628 | ,60453501 | ,20151167 |
| | Total | 352 | ,0000000 | 1,00000000 | ,05330018 |
| Clean, well-equipped accommodation | under 18 | 3 | ,3967608 | ,43819364 | ,25299122 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | ,0569324 | ,90037969 | ,11528181 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | -,2348282 | 1,16245828 | ,11454042 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | ,0591449 | ,90975857 | ,08375006 |
| | 50-65 | 58 | ,2314795 | ,91440852 | ,12006772 |
| | over 65 | 9 | -,0978621 | 1,10047491 | ,36682497 |
| | Total | 352 | ,0000000 | 1,00000000 | ,05330018 |
| Interaction and activity at the accommodation | under 18 | 3 | ,0535670 | 1,28060655 | ,73935853 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | ,2669555 | ,97550742 | ,12490093 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | -,0645862 | ,93640154 | ,09226639 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | -,0983229 | 1,04732906 | ,09641445 |
| | 50-65 | 58 | ,0970521 | ,93223884 | ,12240896 |
| | over 65 | 9 | -,4243912 | 1,37918577 | ,45972859 |
| | Total | 352 | ,0000000 | 1,00000000 | ,05330018 |
| Authentic accommodation | under 18 | 3 | -,3671770 | ,78690082 | ,45431740 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | -,1553644 | ,92486715 | ,11841710 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | -,0563764 | 1,05917741 | ,10436385 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | ,1634026 | ,98396311 | ,09058115 |

| | | | | | |
|--|----------|-----|-----------|------------|-----------|
| | 50-65 | 58 | -,0928045 | 1,03997572 | ,13655550 |
| | over 65 | 9 | ,2762972 | ,56371041 | ,18790347 |
| | Total | 352 | ,0000000 | 1,00000000 | ,05330018 |
| Peaceful relaxation | under 18 | 3 | ,3804378 | ,30610815 | ,17673162 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | -,0965582 | ,99033992 | ,12680003 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | -,0339870 | 1,04318707 | ,10278828 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | ,1415251 | 1,00917240 | ,09290185 |
| | 50-65 | 58 | ,0026844 | ,90731231 | ,11913594 |
| | over 65 | 9 | -,9562517 | ,62956138 | ,20985379 |
| | Total | 352 | ,0000000 | 1,00000000 | ,05330018 |
| Presence of animals | under 18 | 3 | ,9260268 | ,84138208 | ,48577217 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | -,0417598 | ,99201928 | ,12701505 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | ,0384999 | ,99080370 | ,09762679 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | -,0168529 | 1,01839778 | ,09375112 |
| | 50-65 | 58 | -,0369949 | 1,03502431 | ,13590535 |
| | over 65 | 9 | -,0068754 | ,79475745 | ,26491915 |
| | Total | 352 | ,0000000 | 1,00000000 | ,05330018 |
| Nicely arranged, clean settlement | under 18 | 3 | ,0790765 | 1,16508921 | ,67266457 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | ,0795373 | 1,22859043 | ,15730489 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | -,0941317 | 1,06280428 | ,10472122 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | -,0083748 | ,88226490 | ,08121907 |
| | 50-65 | 58 | ,0747455 | ,86836125 | ,11402142 |
| | over 65 | 9 | ,1399496 | ,91008589 | ,30336196 |
| | Total | 352 | ,0000000 | 1,00000000 | ,05330018 |
| Online availability | under 18 | 3 | -,1287861 | ,75250456 | ,43445871 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | -,3942537 | 1,05684804 | ,13531553 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | ,1237716 | 1,02364485 | ,10086272 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | ,0555281 | ,96722992 | ,08904073 |
| | 50-65 | 58 | ,0675976 | ,95076648 | ,12484176 |
| | over 65 | 9 | ,1349313 | ,62111488 | ,20703829 |
| | Total | 352 | ,0000000 | 1,00000000 | ,05330018 |
| Cheap accommodation close to major attractions | under 18 | 3 | 1,1961018 | ,52618285 | ,30379181 |
| | 18-24 | 61 | ,0846646 | ,93479882 | ,11968872 |
| | 25-35 | 103 | -,1664710 | 1,12268849 | ,11062178 |
| | 36-49 | 118 | -,0834597 | ,96133610 | ,08849816 |
| | 50-65 | 58 | ,2939905 | ,88648403 | ,11640106 |
| | over 65 | 9 | ,1322742 | ,60769140 | ,20256380 |
| | Total | 352 | ,0000000 | 1,00000000 | ,05330018 |

| Test of Homogeneity of Variances | | | | |
|--|------------------|-----|-----|------|
| | Levene Statistic | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
| Host attitude | 2,031 | 5 | 346 | ,074 |
| Attractive accommodation | 1,786 | 5 | 346 | ,115 |
| Clean, well-equipped accommodation | 1,087 | 5 | 346 | ,367 |
| Interaction and activity at the accommodation | ,826 | 5 | 346 | ,532 |
| Authentic accommodation | 1,418 | 5 | 346 | ,217 |
| Peaceful relaxation | 2,196 | 5 | 346 | ,054 |
| Presence of animals | ,282 | 5 | 346 | ,923 |
| Nicely arranged, clean settlement | 1,808 | 5 | 346 | ,111 |
| Online availability | ,594 | 5 | 346 | ,705 |
| Cheap accommodation close to major attractions | 1,492 | 5 | 346 | ,192 |

| ANOVA | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| Host attitude | Between Groups | 4,617 | 5 | ,923 | ,922 | ,467 |
| | Within Groups | 346,383 | 346 | 1,001 | | |
| | Total | 351,000 | 351 | | | |
| Attractive accommodation | Between Groups | 5,472 | 5 | 1,094 | 1,096 | ,362 |
| | Within Groups | 345,528 | 346 | ,999 | | |
| | Total | 351,000 | 351 | | | |
| Clean, well-equipped accommodation | Between Groups | 9,957 | 5 | 1,991 | 2,020 | ,075 |
| | Within Groups | 341,043 | 346 | ,986 | | |
| | Total | 351,000 | 351 | | | |
| Interaction and activity at the accommodation | Between Groups | 8,093 | 5 | 1,619 | 1,633 | ,150 |
| | Within Groups | 342,907 | 346 | ,991 | | |
| | Total | 351,000 | 351 | | | |
| Authentic accommodation | Between Groups | 6,541 | 5 | 1,308 | 1,314 | ,257 |
| | Within Groups | 344,459 | 346 | ,996 | | |
| | Total | 351,000 | 351 | | | |
| Peaceful relaxation | Between Groups | 11,716 | 5 | 2,343 | 2,389 | ,038 |
| | Within Groups | 339,284 | 346 | ,981 | | |
| | Total | 351,000 | 351 | | | |
| Presence of animals | Between Groups | 2,945 | 5 | ,589 | ,586 | ,711 |
| | Within Groups | 348,055 | 346 | 1,006 | | |
| | Total | 351,000 | 351 | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|---------|-----|-------|-------|------|
| Nicely arranged, clean settlement | Between Groups | 1,826 | 5 | ,365 | ,362 | ,874 |
| | Within Groups | 349,174 | 346 | 1,009 | | |
| | Total | 351,000 | 351 | | | |
| Online availability | Between Groups | 11,902 | 5 | 2,380 | 2,429 | ,035 |
| | Within Groups | 339,098 | 346 | ,980 | | |
| | Total | 351,000 | 351 | | | |
| Cheap accommodation close to major attractions | Between Groups | 13,576 | 5 | 2,715 | 2,784 | ,018 |
| | Within Groups | 337,424 | 346 | ,975 | | |
| | Total | 351,000 | 351 | | | |

IV. Applicability index-numbers of factors showing rural tourism characteristics

| KMO and Bartlett's Test | | |
|--|--------------------|----------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | ,906 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 2470,975 |
| | df | 136 |
| | Sig. | ,000 |

| Total Variance Explained | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Component | | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings | | | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1 | 1 | 6,846 | 40,268 | 40,268 | 6,846 | 40,268 | 40,268 | 3,029 | 17,818 | 17,818 |
| 2 | 2 | 1,410 | 8,292 | 48,560 | 1,410 | 8,292 | 48,560 | 2,284 | 13,437 | 31,255 |
| 3 | 3 | 1,065 | 6,262 | 54,822 | 1,065 | 6,262 | 54,822 | 1,869 | 10,993 | 42,249 |
| 4 | 4 | ,965 | 5,679 | 60,501 | ,965 | 5,679 | 60,501 | 1,536 | 9,037 | 51,286 |
| 5 | 5 | ,844 | 4,964 | 65,465 | ,844 | 4,964 | 65,465 | 1,406 | 8,272 | 59,558 |
| 6 | 6 | ,807 | 4,746 | 70,212 | ,807 | 4,746 | 70,212 | 1,338 | 7,870 | 67,428 |
| 7 | 7 | ,740 | 4,356 | 74,567 | ,740 | 4,356 | 74,567 | 1,214 | 7,140 | 74,567 |
| 8 | 8 | ,614 | 3,613 | 78,180 | | | | | | |
| 9 | 9 | ,590 | 3,470 | 81,650 | | | | | | |
| 10 | 10 | ,550 | 3,237 | 84,887 | | | | | | |
| 11 | 11 | ,487 | 2,862 | 87,749 | | | | | | |
| 12 | 12 | ,428 | 2,518 | 90,266 | | | | | | |
| 13 | 13 | ,421 | 2,477 | 92,743 | | | | | | |
| 14 | 14 | ,341 | 2,005 | 94,748 | | | | | | |
| 15 | 15 | ,335 | 1,969 | 96,717 | | | | | | |
| 16 | 16 | ,309 | 1,819 | 98,537 | | | | | | |
| 17 | 17 | ,249 | 1,463 | 100,000 | | | | | | |
| Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. | | | | | | | | | | |