

Mental Health Improvement and Rehabilitation Within Rural Green Tourism

Poprawa stanu psychicznego i rehabilitacja w warunkach agroturystyki

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SUMMARY

Introduction: Among mental health improvement and rehabilitation methods, we can distinguish recreation within “rural green tourism”. A growing worldwide demand for rural holidays, getting acquainted with rural traditions and culture, farming culture, unity with nature is justified owing to its positive impact on mental health and overall human health, addressing mental problems and meeting psychological needs, etc.

Aim: to demonstrate that mental health improvement and rehabilitation can be achieved within rural green tourism, to determine how rural green tourism can affect the level of human mental health and to specify how different types of tourism (wellness, rehabilitation, rural green tourism) are related.

Materials and Methods: international acts, data of international organizations and conclusions of scientists have been examined and used in the study. The article also summarizes information from scientific journals and monographs from a medical and legal point of view with scientific methods. This article is based on dialectical, comparative, analytic, synthetic and comprehensive research methods.

Conclusions: Mental health improvement and rehabilitation could be achieved within rural green tourism, which has a positive impact on mental health and overall human health. Such types of tourism as wellness, rehabilitation and rural green tourism are interlinked and complementary. The main disadvantage here is the lack of in-depth research of the rural green tourism’s impact on human mental health.

Key words: rural green tourism, human health, mental rehabilitation, health improvement

STRESZCZENIE

Wstęp: Wśród metod poprawy stanu zdrowia psychicznego i rehabilitacji możemy wyróżnić rekreację w warunkach agroturystyki. Rosnące światowe zapotrzebowanie na wiejskie wakacje, zapoznanie się z wiejskimi zwyczajami, kulturą i rolnictwem oraz jedność z naturą są zjawiskami uzasadnionymi, jeżeli weźmie się pod uwagę ich pozytywny wpływ na stan zdrowia ogólnego i psychicznego, podejście do problemów psychicznych i zaspokajanie potrzeb psychologicznych itp.

Cel: Wykazanie że cele takie jak poprawa stanu zdrowia psychicznego i rehabilitacja mogą zostać osiągnięte w warunkach agroturystyki; określenie w jaki sposób agroturystyka może wpływać na poziom ludzkiego zdrowia psychicznego oraz wyszczególnienie jak różne rodzaje turystyki (wellness, rehabilitacja, agroturystyka) są powiązane.

Materiały i metody: międzynarodowe prawodawstwo, dane międzynarodowych organizacji i wnioski naukowców zostały zbadane i wykorzystane w niniejszym opracowaniu. Artykuł również streszcza informacje z czasopism naukowych i monografii, z punktu widzenia medycznego i prawnego, z wykorzystaniem metod naukowych. Artykuł oparty jest na metodach badawczych dialektycznych, porównawczych, analitycznych, syntetycznych oraz kompleksowych.

Wnioski: Cele takie jak poprawa stanu zdrowia psychicznego i rehabilitacja mogą zostać osiągnięte w warunkach agroturystyki, która ma pozytywny wpływ na stan zdrowia ogólnego i psychicznego. Takie formy turystyki jak wellness, rehabilitacja i agroturystyka łączą się wzajemnie i uzupełniają. Główną przeszkodą jest tu brak dogłębnych badań wpływu agroturystyki na poziom ludzkiego zdrowia psychicznego.

Słowa kluczowe: agroturystyka, zdrowie psychiczne, rehabilitacja

INTRODUCTION

Various factors [1-5] significantly predetermine human health, among which a special place is occupied by the level of human mental health. Positive effects on human mental health can be found in staying in the countryside within rural green tourism. A growing worldwide demand for rural holidays, getting acquainted with rural traditions and culture, farming culture, unity with nature is justified owing to its positive impact on mental health and overall human health, addressing mental problems and meeting psychological needs, etc. Unfortunately, this method of mental health improvement and rehabilitation is neither sufficiently researched nor in demand.

AIM

To demonstrate that mental health improvement and rehabilitation can be achieved via rural green tourism, to determine how rural green tourism can affect the level of human mental health and to specify how different types of tourism (wellness, rehabilitation, rural green tourism) are related.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her/his community. The positive dimension of mental health is stressed in the WHO's definition of health as contained in its constitution: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" [6].

According to the World Health Organization's Mental Health Action Plan for Europe, mental health is defined as much more than the absence of a mental disorder, and this makes life pleasant, productive and fulfilling as well as contributes to the social capital and economic development of society [7].

Ten years ago, in report on mental health the US Surgeon General suggested important differences between the terms "mental health" and "mental illness". The Surgeon General stated that mental health is a state of successful fulfillment of a mental function as a result of productive activities, building relationships with other people and the ability to adapt to changes and cope with troubles [8].

In turn, a mental illness is a disease that causes mild to severe disturbances in thought and/or behavior, resulting in an inability to cope with life's ordinary demands and routines. There are more than 200 classified forms of mental illness. Some of the more common disorders are depression, bipolar disorder, dementia, schizophrenia and anxiety disorders. Symptoms may include changes in mood, personality, personal habits and/or social withdrawal [9].

Personal well-being, satisfaction of family and interpersonal relationships, as well as a positive contribution to society are predetermined by mental health. Mental health is an integral part of human health. Indeed, there is no health without mental health. When it comes to mental health promotion, it includes various actions such as creating an environment supporting mental health.

National mental health policies should focus on mental health promotion. Mental health promotion should be considered in government policies and programs. According to the WHO, specific ways to promote mental health may also include integrated rural development and rehabilitation [10].

The WHO supports governments in the goal of strengthening and promoting mental health. WHO has evaluated evidence for promoting mental health and is working with governments to disseminate this information and to integrate effective strategies into policies and plans.

In 2013, the World Health Assembly approved a "Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan for 2013-2020". The Plan is a commitment by all the WHO's Member States to take specific actions to improve mental health.

The Action Plan's overall goal is to promote mental well-being, prevent mental disorders, provide care, enhance recovery, promote human rights and reduce the mortality, morbidity and disability for persons with mental disorders [10].

With regard to the concept of mental rehabilitation and improvement, various sources contain different definitions of these terms and their essence, but they all are confined to one thing: recovery of health, impaired function and capacity of the sick or disabled persons.

The World Health Organization (WHO) provides the definition of rehabilitation as follows: "rehabilitation and habilitation are processes intended to enable people with disabilities to reach and maintain optimal physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological and/or social function. Rehabilitation encompasses a wide range of activities including rehabilitative medical care, physical, psychological, speech, and occupational therapy and support services. People with disabilities should have access to both general medical care and appropriate rehabilitation services" [11]. As we see, the WHO provides a comprehensive and broad definition of the concept. In this case, rehabilitation can also be considered in the context of health or wellness tourism, depending on the presence or absence of medical intervention.

In the Resolution of the Ninth Committee of Health Ministers of European countries (Prague, 1967), rehabilitation is defined as a system of state, socio-economic, medical, professional, pedagogical, psychological and other measures aimed at preventing pathological processes leading to temporary or permanent disability to enable effective and early integration of the sick and disabled into working life and society.

Scientists define rehabilitation as a process that allows people with movement disabilities and major or long-term illnesses to maintain optimal physical, intellectual, psychological and social condition. Access to rehabilitation is a basic human right, guaranteed by United Nations Charter (1993), 58th Resolution of the World Health Assembly (2005), national anti-discriminative legislation acts etc. [12].

The following types of rehabilitation can be distinguished: medical, physical, occupational, vocational, sports, social and psychological. Each of them has its own functional purpose.

According to the Law of Ukraine "On Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities in Ukraine" of 03.07.2019 No. 2740-VIII, mental rehabilitation is a system of measures aimed at

recovery, correction of mental functions, qualities, properties of a person, creation of favorable conditions for personal development and establishment. According to Art. 24 of the Law, types of rehabilitation measures include medical, physical, occupational, vocational, social, psychological-pedagogical, sports and psychological ones; they are aimed at psychocorrection of the qualities and functions of the disabled, their motivation for life and work, prevention of negative mental states, teaching techniques and methods of psychological self-adjustment. In addition, the Law of Ukraine "On Tourism" of September 15, 1995 No. 324/95-BP separates this type of tourism as wellness. In other words, if rehabilitation of a person is carried out outside the place of residence, then rehabilitation is also carried out within wellness tourism. And the legislation of most countries has included the above rule into their statutory regulations. However, in some countries' legislation the concept of rehabilitation measures subsumes only such a category of people as the disabled, which we believe is incorrect as it should be applied more widely.

Consequently, we support the position that mental rehabilitation should be provided not only in the inpatient setting and at the place of residence. An important component of mental rehabilitation process should be development of an individual program for each person which should be based on the person's specific rehabilitation potential and his needs and include individual, group, family, spouse psychotherapy and others with a clear definition of the way the program should be undertaken [13].

Regarding the concept of health improvement, it is also contained in the legislation of Ukraine, but applies exclusively to children's health improvement, in particular, in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On Rest and Recreation of Children" of 04.09.2018 No. 375-VI, recreation is a complex of special social, educational, medical, hygienic, sports measures aimed at improving and strengthening physical and mental health of children. However, health improvement does not involve medical intervention.

In foreign sources, the term "recovery of mental health" is often used. For many people recovery is about regaining control of their identity and life, having hope for their life and living a life that has meaning for them whether that be through work, relationships, community engagement or some or all of these [14]. By framing it in this way, recovery no longer means "being cured" or "being normal again". Instead, it is about gaining new meaning and purpose in life, being empowered to live a self-directed/determined and autonomous life, despite any emotional distress that a person may have lived through or is currently experiencing [14].

Among European documents on mental health, we should single out the Mental Health Declaration for Europe, which among the areas of application of this Declaration, in para. 6, denotes that many aspects of mental health policy and services are experiencing a transformation across the European Region. Services are being provided in a wide range of community-based settings and no longer exclusively in isolated and large institutions. We believe that this is the right and necessary approach [15].

Para. 11 of the Mental Health Declaration for Europe points out that people with mental disorders experience

disproportionately higher rates of disability and mortality. For example, persons with major depression and schizophrenia have a 40% to 60% greater chance of dying prematurely than the general population, owing to physical health problems that are often left unattended (such as cancers, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and HIV infection) and suicide [16].

Although the protection of the right to mental health directly by the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950) is not provided for among other rights, but recourse to protect the right to health, including mental health, is possible under a number of articles of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950). Furthermore, there are judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, in particular, concerning violation of the right to life (Art. 2 of the Convention), prohibition of torture (Art. 3), the right to liberty and security of person (Art. 5), the right to a fair trial (Art. 6), the right to respect for personal and family life, to inviolability of the home (Art. 8) [17]. From the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, we can conclude that the right to mental health is complex and intrinsically linked to such rights as the right to physical and moral integrity of the person, the right to information and confidentiality of health information, the right to receive reliable and timely information on factors affecting health, the right to medical and social assistance, the right to consent to treatment and medical intervention, the right to a favorable ecological environment affecting human health and others. However, in a number of its judgments, the European Court of Human Rights has drawn attention to the fact that the Convention (1950) does not guarantee socio-economic rights, including the right to free medical care, and that complaints about the quality of care are not a matter of dispute under the provisions of the Convention or the Protocols thereto.

In its judgment in the case of *Popov v. Russia* of 13 July 2006, the Court found that under Art. 3 of the Convention, the State must ensure that a person is detained in conditions which are compatible with respect for his human dignity, that the manner and method of execution of the measure do not subject him to distress or hardship of an intensity exceeding the unavoidable level of suffering inherent in detention and that, given the practical demands of imprisonment, his health and well-being are adequately secured by, among other things, providing him with the requisite medical assistance [18].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mental health and mental well-being are fundamental to the quality of life and productivity of individuals, families, communities and nations, enabling people to experience life as meaningful and to be creative and active citizens. According to the Preamble to the Mental Health Declaration for Europe, the primary aim of mental health activity is to enhance people's well-being and functioning by focusing on their strengths and resources, reinforcing resilience and enhancing protective external factors [15].

Among the methods of mental improvement, rehabilitation and recovery, we can distinguish recreation within "rural green tourism". A growing worldwide demand for rural holidays, getting

acquainted with rural traditions and culture, farming culture, unity with nature is justified owing to its positive impact on mental health and overall human health, addressing mental problems and meeting psychological needs, etc. The effectiveness of health improvement and rehabilitation only in a medical or health-care institution is much lower in comparison with a patient's stay in comfortable conditions, outside the usual place and conditions of residence, as it has a rather positive effect on the process of mental health improvement and rehabilitation.

There are different types of tourism, including ecotourism. The ecotourism system includes green tourism as one of its varieties. In green tourism, they distinguish rural tourism and agritourism, which have differences in the way of rest and recreation, though they are similar in form of using ecosystem resources.

If the natural potential of an agricultural complex is used to carry out tourism activities associated with working (animal care and feeding, participation in agricultural production), then the type of tourism should be classified as "agritourism". If activities related to temporary short-term recreation (fishing, mushroom picking, etc.) are carried out within a properly equipped infrastructure, then it is "rural tourism".

Having a rather rich natural-resource potential in recreation (land, forest, water, faunistic resources), the rural territories of Ukraine need its effective use for mental health improvement and rehabilitation. In the context of the financial and economic crisis, it is of great importance as small investments are needed for mental health improvement and rehabilitation within rural green tourism. Moreover, rural green tourism can be a viable alternative to the development of rural territories. People with mental problems receive healthy rest and recreation, health improvement and rehabilitation at reasonable prices, and rural residents have an opportunity to profit from the efficient use of housing and sale of agricultural products.

Nowadays, the tourism business is an integral part of the economy and broadly covers all regions of Ukraine. However, in some of them, it is more local in nature and in others, it is not only of national but also of international significance. However, it should be noted that it is possible to distinguish only an insignificant number of specialized types in the structure of Ukrainian tourism.

One can cite the example of green tourism in Japan which is currently practiced as a form of rural tourism in which tourists can experience rural life through engaging in "experience programs" or staying at "experience inns" [19].

Green tourism seems to be targeted specifically at urban dwellers by suggesting a style of spending one's holiday in country sides, placing an emphasis on recovering from the daily stress by staying close to the nature [18]. In 1994, a law to promote leisure activities in farm and fishing villages (rural areas) was established [19].

The recreational resources available in the area are the basis for the health improvement and rehabilitation effect of rural green tourism. They can be natural, socio-economic, historical and cultural. In addition, human mental health is positively affected by a variety of tourist activities, such as cognitive (learning about natural, cultural, historical, ethnographic values), entertaining (hunting, fishing, picking berries, mushrooms and herbs), wellness

(physical exercise, swimming) and others. Changing experiences and constant contact with nature enable rural green tourism to become one of the most effective types of mental health recreation, rehabilitation and wellness activities for tourists.

Consequently, taking into account their resource potential, in addition to the production, economic, environmental, social, economic and other functions, rural territories can also perform mental health improvement and recreation functions.

Today rural tourism as a recreational and wellness facility is in the process of development. Most of the tourists are interested in the villages located near rivers and lakes, by the sea, in the mountains, as well as near mud deposits and mineral springs, in places of great historical and cultural importance.

The main health improvement, recreational and rehabilitation effects are attributed to such qualities of the countryside as ecological cleanliness, natural products, beautiful landscape and picturesque environment, tranquility, fresh air, diversity of Ukrainian nature.

We cannot but agree that travelling for health and wellness is one of the most important tourist patterns of economic returns generated by the tourism industry, tourist destinations and the health sector [20].

In other words, it can be said that rural green tourism also has a wellness purpose, and it is one of the subspecies of wellness tourism. The fast pace of life, a significant number of stressful situations, increasing flow of information, unfavorable environmental conditions in most countries make people resort to wellness tourism to maintain their normal mental health. Wellness tourism is mentioned in scientific papers, in particular, it is viewed as travelling of healthy people to other places to maintain their physical and mental health sourcing certain medical services in specialized institutions [19]. Wellness tourism is aimed at preventing disease, rest, recreation and development of physical, mental and emotional stamina through tourist trips, tours and journeys on foot in any area having favorable natural climatic conditions for human health.

This type of tourism is associated with travel of apparently healthy persons who do not need medical care, supervision or assistance. The main therapeutic factors are natural, cultural, leisure activities, physical exercise, sports. The highlighting of wellness tourism also complies with the UNWTO (World Tourism Organization) classification.

Therefore, given the conditions of modern life that constantly create unfavorable, stressful situations that adversely affect the human body and mental health, it is necessary to apply all kinds of mental health improvement and rehabilitation measures, including those within rural green tourism.

In many developed countries, tourism is an important part of people's lives. As the objectives for traveling vary according to the individuals, tourism provides people an opportunity to recover from the stresses from their daily lives [19].

CONCLUSION

It can be noted that mental improvement and rehabilitation can and should be carried out within rural green tourism which has a positive impact on mental health and overall human health. Such types of tourism as wellness, rehabilitation and rural green

tourism are quite interconnected and complementary. In the context of rural green tourism, which can be considered as one of the subspecies of wellness tourism, rehabilitation can also be underway. In turn, wellness tourism can take the form of rural green tourism. Wellness tourism is viewed as travelling of healthy people to other places to maintain their physical and mental health. Wellness tourism is aimed at preventing disease, rest, recreation and development of physical, mental and emotional stamina through tourist trips, tours and journeys on foot in any area having favorable natural climatic conditions for human health. However, this type of tourism does not involve medical intervention. So, as a part of rehabilitation process and rural green tourism, a health improvement goal is realized. A purpose function of rehabilitation tourism is the treatment of certain diseases by tourism and, in fact, it involves medical intervention. That is, it actually refers to wellness tourism. It uses the necessary climatic conditions of different temporary tourist residence places, healing springs, graduated walking exercise, etc. herewith. Consequently, taking into account their resource potential, in addition to the production, social, environmental and other functions, rural territories can also perform mental health improvement and recreation functions. Rural green tourism should become one of the effective types of mental health improvement, rehabilitation and recreation activities. The main disadvantage here is the lack of in-depth research of rural green tourism impact on human mental health.

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