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THE EFFECT OF RURAL TOURISM EXPERIENCE ON OVERALL
SATISFACTION, HAPPINESS AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTIONS: INSIGHTS
FROM DALMATIA IN CROATIA

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Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank to my parents who made this all possible.
I am dedicating this thesis to them.

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Abstract

Rural tourism in Croatia is a niche tourism in its first steps. This dissertation presents a characterization of rural tourism in Croatia (Dalmatia) and analyze the specificities of rural experience. Therefore, the main objectives are understand the perspective of rural tourism experience from the point of view of the owners of establishments and explore the influence of the four rural tourism experience dimensions on Overall Satisfaction, happiness and behavioural intentions. From the point of view of rural lodgings owners or establishments owners, relaxation, contemplation and food are the main elements contributing to attract rural tourist to Dalmatia (Croatia). Rural tourists consider that Entertainment and Escapism do not influence significantly their Overall satisfaction. Moreover, Escapism does not contribute significantly to tourists' behavioural intentions (recommend to other and intentions to come again) and also does not contribute to happiness. Managers of rural place should provide different activities, show different cultural characteristics and way of living into the rural context that lead tourist really escape from reality. The current study also provides implications, limitation and further research.

Keywords: rural tourism experience, overall satisfaction, happiness, behavioural intentions, rural tourism in Dalmatia

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Resumo

O turismo rural na Croácia é um turismo de nicho em seus primeiros passos. Nesta dissertação apresenta-se uma caracterização do turismo rural na Croácia (Dalmácia) e analisam-se as especificidades da experiência rural. Portanto, os principais objectivos são compreender a perspectiva da experiência do turismo rural a partir do ponto de vista dos proprietários de estabelecimentos e explorar a influência das quatro dimensões de experiência turismo rural na satisfação geral, na felicidade e nas intenções comportamentais. Do ponto de vista dos proprietários de alojamentos e estabelecimentos rurais, o relaxamento, a contemplação e as refeições são os principais elementos que contribuem para atrair o turista rural para a Dalmácia (Croácia). Turistas rurais consideram que Entretenimento e Escapismo parecem não influenciar significativamente a sua Satisfação Geral. Além disso, Escapismo não contribui de forma significativa para as intenções comportamentais dos turistas (recomendar a outros e as intenções de vir de novo) e também não contribui para a felicidade. Gestores de alojamentos e destinos rurais devem proporcionar atividades diferentes, mostrar diferentes características culturais e modos de viver no contexto rural que levem os turistas realmente a escapar da realidade. Este estudo também propõe implicações, limitação e sugestões para investigações futuras.

Keywords: experiencia de turismo rural, satisfação global, felicidade, intenções de comportamento, turismo rural em Dalmatia

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Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Abstract.....	3
Resumo	4
Introduction	7
First Part: Literature Review	10
1. Conceptualization of rural tourism.....	10
2. Experience economy with the context of rural tourism.....	13
3. Tourism experience: positive emotions and behavioural intentions	16
4. Tourism experience: Place attachment	20
5. Satisfaction based on rural tourism	23
6. Rural tourism in Croatia: conceptualization and entrepreneurial.....	24
7. Rural tourism market in Croatia	32
Second part: empirical study	37
Main objectives of the study.....	37
8. Qualitative study: interviews with owners of rural establishments.....	38
8.1. Methodology: qualitative approach.....	38
8.2. Major findings	39
9. Quantitative study: tourist`s perceptions	40
9.1. Methodology: quantitative approach.....	40
9.2. Hypotheses and constructs	41
9.3. Tourist sample profile	42
9.4. Descriptive statistics.....	42
9.5. Structural results.....	45
Conclusions, implications and limitations.....	50
References	54
Annex	63

Index of figures

FIGURE 1. STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION.....	9
FIGURE 2. ISLAND PAG NATURE.....	13
FIGURE 3. AGRITOURISM ŠARIĆEVI DVORI	13
FIGURE 4. EXPERIENCE ECONOMY	14
FIGURE 5. AGRITOURISM BULJAN.....	16
FIGURE 6. TOURISTS WHO ARE COMING EVERY YEAR	18
FIGURE 7. NATURE NEARBY AGRITOURISM MARIJA LATINAC.....	20
FIGURE 8. AGRITOURISM ŠARIĆEVI DVORI	21
FIGURE 9. DONKEY AS A PET AT ŠARIĆEVI DVORI.....	21
FIGURE 10. MAP OF CROATIA	25
FIGURE 11. CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL TOURISTS	36

Index of Tables

TABLE 1. THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED TOURIST RURAL FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS IN THE PERIOD FROM 1998 TO 2007	27
TABLE 2. NUMBER OF REGISTERED TOURISTS RURAL FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS IN 2007.....	28
TABLE 3. NUMBER OF RURAL HOUSEHOLDS WITH ACCOMMODATION IN THE 2012	29
TABLE 4. NUMBER OF REGISTERED BEDS, AS PER COUNTRY IN 2007	30
TABLE 5. CLASSIFICATION OF RURAL AND URBAN AREAS	33
TABLE 6. SAMPLE PROFILE.....	42
TABLE 7. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: RURAL TOURISM EXPERIENCE.....	43
TABLE 8. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: OVERALL SATISFACTION, HAPPINESS AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTIONS.....	44
TABLE 9. MEASUREMENT MODEL	46
TABLE 10. MEASUREMENT MODEL (SECOND PART)	47
TABLE 11. DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY	48
TABLE 12. STRUCTURAL RESULTS.....	49

Introduction

Back in a few years rural and eco-tourism become very popular, probably regards for that are going to globalization. Today people are aware of possibilities and facts that everything is more-less available with a click of a mouse. That mainstream availability and world as a global village has stimulate and provoke a need of real nature, an idea of true vacation, a possibility that out here still exist something iconic, something that used to be normal but today can't be easily found, something that is still in the same way that was many years ago. Since humans beings are connected with nature since thousands of years ago and more and more people are starting to realize that and more and more of them are becoming attracted by idea that they can get 'experience' which died in many cases, but still exist. Rural and ecotourism are real examples.

Rural tourism is becoming more and more important as industry in every economy where it can be provided, developed or presented. The fact is that agriculture is more and more technology adapted and mechanized what leads to less manual labour. This is a current situation in many countries, and it is a fact like it or not. It can be called a trend, but the point is that this trend is causing an economic pressure forcing a young people to move to urban areas. Abandoning villages those people are helping to tradition and customs to die. In other hand rural tourism is helping prevent that happen. Rural tourism is basically giving a possibility to live up rural areas and start a good business. The chance for business exists because a segment of urban population is interested in visiting rural areas and understanding the rural lifestyle. As it was said before, people are searching for new experiences and new destinations that will blow their mind.

Tourists are becoming much more interested in this kind of tourism rather than classical sun, sea, sand, wellness and spa arrangements. It's a booming trend, becoming very important to study in order to recognize potential opportunities and adjust in time to customer needs. That is one of the reason why this segment in tourism industry has been rapidly growing, leading to the point where rural tourism is not only a good business but a genuine vacation trend.

Rural tourism experience and consequences in Croatia (Dalmatia) will be presented in this study through two main objectives:

- understanding the perspective of rural tourism experience from the point of view of the owners of establishments and

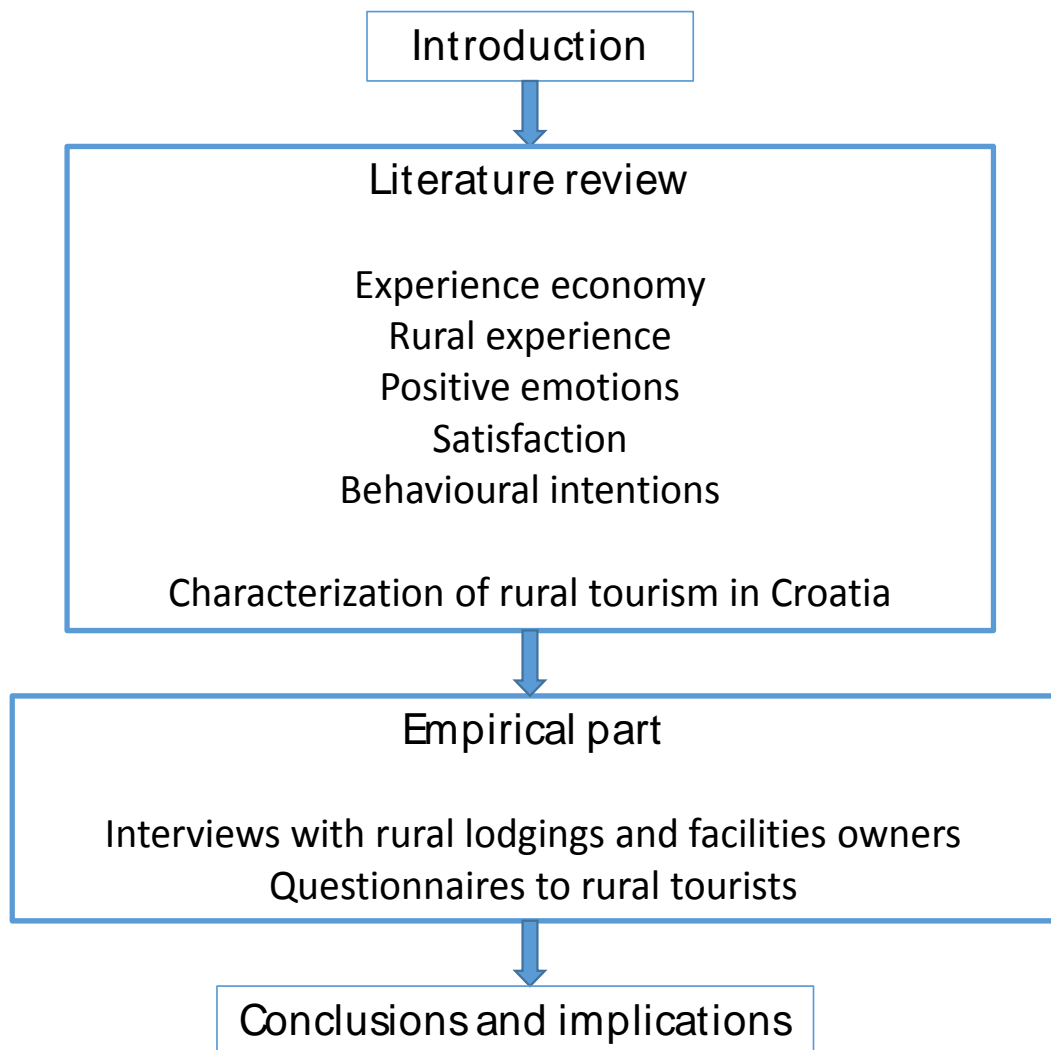
- explore the influence of the four rural tourism experience dimensions on overall satisfaction, happiness and behavioural intentions.

The methodology of this dissertation is based on surveys and interviews with owners that have been conducted during the months of August, September and October of 2014 in Central Dalmatia with Islands in Croatia. Rural lodging has been approached by researcher. The questionnaire has been elaborated in two languages, Croatian and English. The last part of the questionnaire is concerned on socio-demographic data: gender and age. More than hundred surveys and several interviews with owners have been conducted in order to give a picture of tourist's experience and view of related destination/lodging to understand the perspective of rural tourism experience from the point of view of the owners of establishments and explore the influence of the four rural tourism experience dimensions on overall satisfaction, happiness and behavioural intentions.

The structure of this dissertation is organized in two main parts. First part is devoted to Literature review and second part is devoted to Empirical part. Literature review is based on articles and books that are concern on rural tourism – conceptualization of rural tourism, experience economy with content in rural tourism, tourism experience with emotions and intentions, place attachment, satisfaction based on rural tourism and rural tourism in Croatia. Empirical part is based on objectives, methodology and sample, as well as the results of qualitative research with interviews of the owners and quantitative research with customer's perception about rural experience. At the end of the dissertation conclusions and implications are presented regarding the study.

Figure 1 shows the main parts and components of the current dissertation.

Figure 1. Structure of the dissertation



Source: Author elaboration

First Part: Literature Review

As it was said in introduction, the first part of the current dissertation is dedicated to literature review. Here we present the theoretical foundation of the conceptualization and characterization of rural tourism, as well as the main construct employed in the second part, such as experience and satisfaction by rural destination.

1. Conceptualization of rural tourism

Because of that ‘‘fresh’’ awareness and we could say trend, a need for rural and eco-tourism is evolving. People becoming more and more aware of need and want to connect and enjoy in the nature so rural tourism is increasing, but conceptualization and the relationships between concept and strategy are still poorly represented and not well understood. It is clear that need for such a critical understanding is particularly crucial as rural areas experience rapid change, and as tourism is viewed as a key element of development and regeneration in new economy.

Rural areas have a special attraction for tourists because of the distinct characteristics associated with mystical, cultural, historical, ethnic and geographical. For progress together with profit for those involved, it requires several components: attractions, investment, appropriate infrastructure, services and diversified hospitality promotion. To run this set of factors need to join entrepreneurs and public administrations. As we can imagine, collaboration between many stakeholders is more than mandatory, is needed not just to create a long term relationships, but also to make sustainability possible. The main priorities for having a sustainable development regarding the ecotourism concept means: promoting the concept and development of ecotourism for the support of nature conservation, promoting the ecotourism concept and principles at the local, regional and national, promoting ecotourism as a tool for nature conservation, promoting the natural and traditional values that respect nature, as tourism attract and involves local communities in ecotourism services and infrastructure development, promoting the ecotourism as a tool to generate income for local communities, encouraging tour operators to use local resources, developing and maintaining a quality service system in ecotourism (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012) .

Since its inception, eco-tourism has been applied only in protected natural areas, its action gradually expanded and on other forms of tourism. By its characteristics and propagated, eco-tourism differs from other forms of tourism by the proximity to nature, through a rational use of tourist resources. Eco-tourism is a form of tourism in which the main motivation of the tourist and observation of nature and local traditions connected with nature and that must satisfy the following conditions: contribute to the conservation and protection of nature; use local human resources; to have educational character, cultivate respect for nature – awareness of tourists and local communities; have minimum negative impact on the natural and socio-cultural environment (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012). It is defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.” (Ecotourism, 2012), while rural tourism according to Latvian website specialized for rural tourism is defined as tourism taking place in rural areas or settlements, providing employment and income to local population, and offering individual holiday products to consumers (Manson & Buckley, 2000).

Rural tourism is based on accommodation service which is complemented by additional services/facilities relying on the local social, cultural and natural resources, which are exploited according to the principles of sustainable development, (Country Holidays). Any form of tourism that showcases the rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching tourism experience can be termed as rural tourism. Rural tourism is essentially an activity which takes place in the countryside. It is multi-faceted and may entail farm/agricultural tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, and eco-tourism. As against conventional tourism (Rural tourism, 2014) tourism has certain typical characteristics like; it is experience oriented, the locations are sparsely populated, it is predominantly in natural environment, it meshes with seasonality and local events and is based on preservation of culture, heritage and traditions (Common definitions of terms rural tourism, agro tourism or farm holidays which would be accepted in all communities that develop tourism services, does not exist. Agro tourism is a type of farm holidays where the main business is agricultural production (farming) while tourism services, accommodation and catering (nutrition) are extra activity (Demonja, Baćac, 2011; Demonja, Ružić, 2010; Baćac, 2006).

The term rural development has appeared for the first time in the latter part of the 20th Century, a process based on the following principles: the need to ensure consistency between economic globalization and environment, sustainable development and analyses of the economic appraisal of the world process of sustainable development on a time horizon as long. Rural development aims to increase individual productivity, sustainable community and institutional, which can result in higher income for individuals. Rural areas should be so organized and directed as to allow improvement of the level of development of the national economy, by exploiting its potential and well-being of residents of rural areas. Rural areas still retain unspoiled traditional and spiritual values, especially the ethnographic, the socio-economic life and its environment, thus enabling the development of rural tourism, with a great future, being in a direct relationship with other forms of tourism (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012). What is also typically for rural tourism is a fact that they have a low capital base and function with limited skills and experience. Also, they may be too specialist or in the wrong location (Fleischer & Felsenstein, 2000). Every small town is a cultural destination. Each small town has history and traditions that make it unique that visitors looking for authentic experiences will love. If that small town is set in countryside or island it is already a great opportunity to develop a rural tourism.

Rural tourism is increasingly conceived and utilized as an instrument of socioeconomic development (Butler, 1992; Gannon, 1994; Greffe, 1994; Luloff, 1994; Shaw & Williams, 1994) what means that is a great opportunity to stimulate development. This is a part where government and private sector should be ready to work together in order to achieve something that won't be good only for entrepreneurs, but also for society. Linkage between all involved parts in channel is very important, as Greffe's (1994) proposal calls for establishment of networks of rural tourism providers, organized to maximize opportunity, offer a wide range of activities and encourage additional tourist spend. Rubies (2001) similarly alleges that the experiences sought by tourists are delivered in small geographical clusters that compete with other clusters for tourist custom and that strengthening the links between both public and private sector. Then, and only then a true success of this whole concept of rural tourism can be achieved.

Figures 2 (Island Pag nature) and 3 (Agritourism Šarićevi dvori) illustrate rural landscapes, rural places representing the kind of experience provided-

Figure 2. Island Pag nature



Source: www.pag.hr

Figure 3. Agritourism Šarićevi dvori



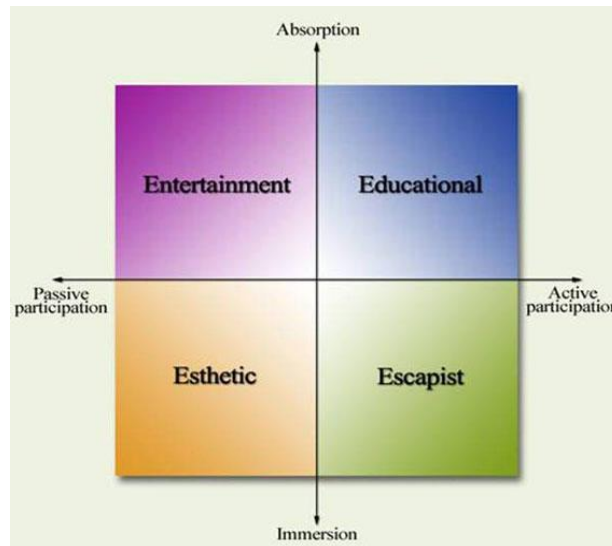
Source : www.saricevi-dvori.net

2. Experience economy with the context of rural tourism

Experience economy emerges with the work of Pine & Gilmore (1999). As we can see in Figure 4, consumer experience is consisted of four realms (4Es): educational, escapist, esthetic, and entertainment. These form quadrants that are positioned along

two matrices of experience are: the horizontally placed consumer participation (passive or active) and the vertically positioned consumer connection, (absorption or immersion) (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, 1999).

Figure 4. Experience economy



Source: Pine & Gilmore (1999)

Active participation is “where customers personally affect the performance or event that yields the experience,” and passive participation is “where customers do not directly affect or influence the performance” (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Connecting consumers on a continuum of immersion or absorption, immersion is described as becoming physically or virtually part of the event or performance itself while absorption is engaging the attention of the consumer’s mind (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). By integrating all four dimensions together experience is better and memory stronger. Tourism involves a “value system” that is a network of multiple interrelationships among stakeholders who can influence each other and the multidimensional environments within which they operate in different ways at various points during production, exchange and consumption (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008). Experience has served as a key construct in travel and tourism research as well as destination positioning. According to authors (Arnould & Price, 1993; Kim, 2010; Tung & Ritchie, 2011) memorable tourist experiences have been identified to be composed of positivity, engagement with others, and acquisition of new knowledge.

A great opportunity of rural tourism is right there, in joining nature with activities and new knowledge through natural products and experiences. People are in search of unique, memorable and extraordinary experiences like picking grapes and participating in making wine and its tasting, horseback riding, socializing with animals, rafting, experience the natural surroundings, help with the daily farm or countryside work, milking goats, picking fruit and a variety of other activities which can be different from country to country and from region to region. Ultimately, creating consistent customer experience becomes synonymous with the brand (Chang & Chieng, 2006). While creating a brand, we create an experience. But the purpose is not only to create an experience to customer, the purpose is also, of course, to make a profit by charging more. This is not the case where price can be putted which no matter is it reasonable or not, the word is about a case when it can be charged more because it has been provided more in terms of service, ambiance, atmosphere and quality – seen at Figure 5 at Agritourism Buljan. Since there is sufficient empirical evidence to suggest that these factors are associated with increase guest satisfaction, repeat visitation and most importantly willingness to pay higher prices, everyone in the industry is trying to adopt them and emphasize their presence (Pizam, 2010; Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004).

From a standpoint of the tourist decision-making process, the way tourists perceive a destination experience may be linked to pre purchase decision parameters such as values, motives and attitudes. Experience of a destination involves all events, and activities offered to tourists become the source of value and evaluations for the destination. The experience staged at a destination is likely to result in strong (positive) memories, corresponding psychological arousal, positive perceptions of overall destination quality, and eventually tourist satisfaction (Oh, Fiore & Jeoung, 2007.). Rural tourism together with ecotourism has extremely great qualities which can make it really successful in experience economy. Different as it is, can contribute to true goal of experience economy which is generating better quality of life – making the difference.

Figure 5. Agritourism Buljan



Source : www.facebook.com/sportskaudruga.bublin

3. Tourism experience: positive emotions and behavioural intentions

The Loureiro's (2014) study is the first attempt to prove the influence of a good experience in positive emotions (pleasure, arousal and eventually emotional satisfaction) and memory into the context of rural tourism. Experience in tourism is closely related with satisfaction. As it was said before, the bigger the experience the bigger is satisfaction and inversely. Conclusion is that happiness can also emerge from a good experience (Van Boven & Gilovich, 2003) in tourism context. "There is no single theory that defines the meaning and extent of tourist experiences, a number of authors have made attempts to formulate models by generalizing and aggregating information" (Chhetri, Arrowsmith, & Jackson, 2004, p. 34, as cited by Volo, 2009). As well as other travel experiences, rural tourism is a set of separately or collectively consuming activities carried out by a collection of various individual or business entities. It could be said that a rural tourist seek an experience that is a complex interaction of natural setting, activities, wine, food, cultural, and historical inputs and people who interact with them. Behavioural intention is regarded as the motivation necessary to engage in a particular behaviour (Lam & Hsu, 2004). In some theories, as the Theory of Planned

Behaviour, it is considered the “only immediate precursor of behavior” (Ajzen, 1991, p. 203) and provides the best predictor of behaviour (Quadri, 2012; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In this study, behavioural intentions are separate and two-fold, defined as the visitor’s (a) intention to return to the destination, and (b) the intention to recommend the destination to others. "To understand and influence travellers’ decision-making processes, researchers have made substantial efforts to examine the consumer behaviour of tourists (Pizam & Mansfeld, 1999; Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). Studies have applied various consumer behaviour models to overall tourist motivations, creating various theoretical frameworks both competing with and complementing one another (Holbrook, 2000; Huang & Hsu, 2010; Pizam & Mansfeld, 1999). What these variable models seek to explain is travellers’ future behavioural intentions. Intention is regarded as the motivation necessary to engage in a particular behaviour (Lam & Hsu, 2004). Consumer intentions are important predictors to forecast sales and consumer loyalty (Luo & Homburg, 2007; March & Woodside, 2005), while demographic characteristics assist marketers in communicating effectively to their potential consumers (Weaver & Lawton, 2002; Quadri, 2012).

Consumer behaviour depends on previous experience, if tourists were satisfied with previous experience, in this case regarded with rural tourism, it is relatively more likely that their future behavioural intentions will be repeated in rural place. Figure 6 shows tourists who are coming every year to the same place. It is confirmed that past behaviour (past visits to a destination) has demonstrated to be significant in predicting future intentions in tourism (Bamberg et al., 2003; Jang et al., 2011; Lam and Hsu, 2004; Sparks, 2007; Weaver et al., 2007). According to Quadri (2012) recently tourism and hospitality researchers have employed emergent experiential or hedonic consumption theories to understand the complexity of the tourist’s experience (Hall & Sharples, 2008; Knutson, Beck, Kim, & Cha, 2006; McIntosh & Siggs, 2005; Williams, 2006). Also perhaps rural and hedonic doesn't work together at first, if think about preferences as subjective perception it can be easily understand. Hedonic consumption provides satisfaction in itself, deriving pleasure through the intrinsic value from feelings, fantasy, and fun (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Williams, 2006). Focusing on the sensory and emotional aspects of consumption, it has been viewed as a more holistic approach than some (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). The literature on the experiential view of hedonic consumption signifies the relevance of its theoretical framework as

describing the memorable, immersive experiences the customer seeks (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Palmer, 2010; Pine & Gilmore, 1999) in an ever increasingly competitive environment (Christensen, 2009) and therefore rural place in terms of rural tourism can found its position and market.

Figure 6. Tourists who are coming every year



Source : http://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurant_Review-g787974-d4880480-Reviews-Saricevi_dvori

As is it has been said in the book chapter of Loureiro (2012); *Tourism in Rural Areas: Foundation, Quality and Experience*, like urban or seaside tourism, the appeal of rural tourism also lies in the range and quality of attractions and facilities. Rural tourism should correspondingly adapt to current market mechanisms, which are becoming extremely competitive and are dominated by powerful communication techniques, in a context of strategically developed marketing action (Moutinho, 1991; Gannon, 1994). All this actions are calling on stronger intentions and experiences. Consumers feel, think, do, and act and emotions play a role in choosing a brand, a store, or a product (Loureiro, 2012).

Customer experience originates from interactions between a customer and a good/service, a company, or part of its organization (LaSalle & Britton, 2003; Shaw &

Ivens, 2005) or even a brand. However, customers can relate with other customers during the consumption experience. Therefore, the evaluation depends on the comparison between a customer's expectations and the stimuli provided by previously mentioned interactions (Loureiro, 2012). Here can be seen an importance of different activities in rural destination. Tourists like to interact one with each other at rural destination, especially in activities which can connect them. Emotions can be developed from activities or interaction, depend which has better stimuli on user – tourist. Feeling of usefulness can provoke happiness and satisfaction what lead to unforgettable experience and intention of repeating the action, in this case returning to the same or similar rural place/destination.

As regards the tourism field, Otto and Ritchie (1995) state that the tourist experience “can be described as the subjective mental state felt by participants” implying holistic evaluations of affective expressions and representations of experiential, hedonic and symbolic benefits. The rural tourism experience can be regarded in the light of this perspective. Rural tourists come to the countryside to escape urban areas and mass tourism. Thus, the rural experience is the subjective and emotional mental state lived by rural tourists in their interaction with people (friends, family, couple, inhabitants, and service providers) rural places, rural resources, facilities, and rural activities and festivals (Loureiro, 2012).

Rural tourism has one advantage that other branches of tourism don't, and that's the making of original attraction and experience for guest. Every rural micro (agro tourist) destination (agro tourist householders) can by choose create their tourist supply with additional contents. Regarding to this, for example, agro tourist farm offer possibility to participating in agriculture cultivation, especially in Croatia when is the season of grape gathering, than in preparation traditional meals (gastro school), meeting with old handicraft, riding, participating in popular festivity. Also this is the best way for active holidays directly connected with nature and with come back to nature and natural life. This kind of experience is memorable and has influence on tourists and their perception, what later on cause a word of mouth and intention of repeating an experience. Past experience memories, word-of-mouth, marketing communications (statements, pictures, advertisements posted in destination and lodgings websites; communications in travel agencies, advertisements in newspapers, the radio, TV and so on), and expectations are factors that influence the rural experience. In other words they

are precursors of the experience, the pre-experience. In addition, self-expression, attachment to rural tourism experience and rural place identity are other constructs that play the role of antecedents of the rural tourism experience and perceived quality (Loureiro, 2012).

4. Tourism experience: Place attachment

Rural tourism depends on a wide range of publicly and privately owned natural and cultural resources, associated infrastructure, and interpretative facilities, as well as provision of accommodation, food, beverages, and goods. Some of them can be seen at Figure 7 (Agritourism Marija Latinac), and Figure 8 (Agritourism Šarićevi dvori) and even rural animal in Figure 9. Unless appropriately regulated, threats can arise to the quality of the physical environment, social structures, and cultures arising from the types and scale of development and the numbers of tourists attracted (Garrod, Wornell & Youell 2006; Holden 2005; Lane 1994; MacDonald & Jolliffe 2003; Cawley & Gillmor, 2008).

Figure 7. Nature nearby Agritourism Marija Latinac



Source : www.tripadvisor.com

Figure 8. Agritourism Šarićevi dvori



Source : www.saricevi-dvori.net

Figure 9. Donkey as a pet at Šarićevi dvori



Source : www.saricevi-dvori.net

Place attachment and meaning are underlying human experiences that shape urban development and community building. Attachment and meaning can emerge from a variety of experiences and situations. Nature is a key aspect of many places that are important to people. The experience of place is part of our sense of self, of community, and a connectedness to everyday life (Place Attachment & Meaning. (2010, January 1). Place attachment and meaning are person-place bonds that evolve through emotion and cognition to a specific place and/or features of a place, as more as are emotion and cognition intensive the place attachment will be stronger. Place attachment comes through memories, through smells, sounds and pictures. Experience of all mentioned factors helps to create an attachment, but not just attachment well relationship between place and person.

Rural tourism by itself creates an experience that is worth a memory. Most of the tourists who participate in rural tourism in any way have many impressions which create emotions, and if we think about place attachment as a concept of emotional bond between person and place, we can conclude that rural tourism and place attachment goes easily with each other and can't be separated. It is very easy to understand it if we think about concepts of rural tourism mentioned before with experience that comes in same package, it is normal that something that is not usual, that we can't find everywhere but when we find it, we can feel unforgettable. All that nature, mores, existence and everything else that comes with association with rural help to give a felling and emotion of unique place and unique connection that will last for a long time.

According to Loureiro (2014), attachment is formed between human beings and animals, special objects, brands (e.g., Richins, 1994; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995; Price et al., 2000) human brands or celebrities; destinations and places (e.g., Bricker and Kerstetter, 2000; Warzecha and Lime, 2001; Lee et al., 2001; Hwang et al., 2005; Gross et al., 2008; Ednie et al., 2010; Yuksel et al., 2010). Attachment to animals can be seen at Figure 8. Donkey as a pet at Šarićevi dvori. Place attachment is under the action of social relationship and psychical elements, but to what extent we can't say. Therefore, more research is needed to understand and answer to that question. Place attachment as the three P's: Person, Process, and Place could explain more in details who is attached, how does attachment exist and what is attached but the conclusion is the same and we can see it from previous text. Conclusion from place attachment and rural tourism can

be summed into rural attachment - a kind of consequence that most of the people have after experiencing rural, and that is the most important finding in this type of relation.

5. Satisfaction based on rural tourism

According to Kumar and Olshavsky (2007), customer satisfaction is associated with meeting expectations (through the perception of a fair service and the resulting good feeling), while customer delight is associated with overcoming expectations leading to feelings of happiness, euphoria, victory, intense satisfaction or optimism (Loureiro & Kastenholz, 2011). One step beyond satisfaction is delight- a pinnacle of satisfaction. Rust and Oliver (2000) suggest that delight is more relevant in the following circumstances: (1) when satisfaction has a strong influence on behaviour intentions; (2) when customer satisfaction with competition has a strong impact on the company's capacity of customer retention; (3) when a significant attention is paid to future benefits; and (4) when the organization is able to capitalize on unsatisfied clients of competitors. The definition of the elements of the system depends on two key issues: the concept of sustainable tourism that is measured, and the set of destinations that are evaluated. What also shouldn't be forgotten is that most sustainable rural zones generate high levels of tourist satisfaction and regular tourist demand. Their transport infrastructures count because they can guarantee rapid access to destinations (Blancas, Lozano-Oyola, González, Guerrero & Caballero, 2011).

When want to say something concrete about satisfaction and tourism, based on empirical research it is needed to use some analytic tools and data basis conducted from different factors and surveys. Satisfaction can be also some kind of feedback, a guidepost to know what has been done right and what can be improved, what should be changed and what should be kept. Sometimes is hard to maintain loyalty in tourism just because a motivation for tourism in general is some kind of novelty and want for something different, yet unexperienced. Satisfaction is one of the last steps in term of success and service, it is a final indicator of business and can be easily connected with long term relationship and profit.

The best way to measure satisfaction in case of rural tourism is probably after they leave the unit of staying or after they experience some kind of provided activity there. The reasons are simple, the arousal and impressions are most fresh then and that

is the moment when their first and true impression will outcome. First impressions are important because they are usually the most honest ones. Surveys are important here in order to show the connection between satisfaction and most influential factors for satisfaction. There are a lot of factors, like lodging quality, activities, location, new acquired knowledge, food, host approach and many others. Year by year interest in rural and eco-tourism is growing, and with that interest factors that matter are also growing. Satisfaction should not be only perceived as a result, it should be also perceived as a tool and rural tourism has a chance to use it. Satisfaction is affecting human behaviour, being aware of that can provide a competitive advantage.

There have been studies developed about tourism satisfaction, however, a main conclusion is that satisfaction stems from travelling and tourism, especially if tourist is lucky enough to collect and memorize different- yet unexperienced, unforgettable experiences.

6. Rural tourism in Croatia: conceptualization and entrepreneurial

Rural tourism is a relatively new tourist movement that humans of information society return to traditional values and nature. Primarily is strongly associated with farms and production of traditional agricultural products. The aim of the rural tourism is exploitation of all existing resources of one farm regardless of whether it is traditional architecture, traditional activities (traditional crafts), agricultural production or presentation of the rural way of life. In addition, rural tourism is a generator of additional revenue and achieves full employment of the farm which enables to integrate all the potentials and diversification of activities (Demonja & Bacac, 2012).

Rural tourism in Croatia is still in its initial phase, it represents a great potential which has not been given enough attention so far. It is therefore necessary to encourage stronger collaboration of all relevant institutions in order to develop rural tourism which will make Croatian tourism much more competitive (Vucetic, 2012).

In rural areas of Croatia, which make up 91.6% of its surface, 44.4% of the population is directly or indirectly related to agriculture (see the map in Figure 10). Taking into account the natural and cultural diversity of Croatian regions, a rich resource base of tourist attractions, preserved environment and 352 registered rural

households, Croatia has all prerequisites for the development of rural tourism and all special forms of tourism related to the rural area (Demonja, 2014).

Figure 10. Map of Croatia



Source: Retrieved from <http://croatiawineexport.com/>

The problem is that rural area in Croatia is still insufficiently exploited in terms of tourism. Rural tourism in Croatia can become one of the main determinants of development in areas where it has so far been marginalized. Development of the rural tourism offer, which is attractive to investors and uses the unique local potential, will have a significant impact on the gross domestic product growth rate and employment (Demonja, 2014). Rural area in Croatia is determined by the territorial division according to which small administrative units, municipalities, are considered as rural areas, and cities as the urban ones. Based on such administrative criteria, from 4,437,460 inhabitants in Croatia, 44.4% (1,971,005) is considered a rural population and 55.6% (2,466,455) urban (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development of the Republic of Croatia, 2008) (Demonja, 2014). The Overview and Analysis of the State of Rural Tourism in Croatia. *Institute for Social Research in Zagreb*, (52), 69-90.)

Considering the diversity of the natural resource base and characteristics of rural architecture and traditions in Croatia, it is possible to distinguish seven rural areas:

- 1) Slavonija, Baranja and Srijem,
- 2) Hrvatsko Zagorje, Prigorje, Međimurje and Podravina,
- 3) Posavina, Pokuplje, Moslavina,
- 4) Gorski Kotar and Žumberak,
- 5) Lika and Kordun,
- 6) Istria and Hrvatsko primorje, and
- 7) Dalmatia

(Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Croatia, 2003).

In these rural areas, there are conditions for the development of 19 forms of tourism, namely: agritourism or farm tourism, residential, native, sport and recreational, adventure, educational, transit, camping, nautical, rural, cultural, religious, hunting, fishing, wine, gastronomic/culinary, nature-friendly, eco-tourism, and mixed and other forms of rural tourism (Demonja, 2014).

Development of rural tourism in the Republic of Croatia has started sporadically in early 1990's. Since year 1995, when the Croatian Ministry of Tourism began with its development initiatives and the first activities such as site visits, information gathering, education initiator and create conditions for their development. Shortly thereafter was established the "Alliance for Rural Tourism", which later evolved into the "Council for the Development of SMEs in tourism", with an emphasis on rural tourism (Vucetic, 2012).

Systematic development of rural tourism in the Republic of Croatia can be divided into two significant periods. The first period started in 1995 and lasted until the end of 1999, when the Croatian Government adopted the National Program for the Development of Small and Medium Entrepreneurship in Tourism, with an emphasis on sustainable development of tourism in rural areas (Cetinski, Katica & Nušinić, 1998). Following this, several years of pausing activities ensued, during which period individual initiatives occurred while subsidies by the ministry in charge were lacking. The second period, which witnessed visible improvement in developing this kind of tourism, started by the end of 2003, that is, at the start of 2004, when the new Government of the Republic of Croatia, through its ministries of tourism and

agriculture, started taking more significant care of rural areas and economic activities taking place in rural areas.

Current status of tourism in Croatian rural areas can be objectively presented by analysing very few publicly available data previously conducted research, and new ones, are available mainly from the annual statistical reports conducted by the Croatian Central Bureau of Statistics. The latter data, as well as those who collect government institutions like ministries, are not segmented and generally do not take into account the complexity and diversity of rural tourism. Also, the problem is the fact that the existing data of the research is difficult to get through the official channels for use in scientific and professional purposes. The last available official data regarding state of rural tourism in Croatia were collected on the year 2007, other data used in this dissertation are collected through personal contacts with the relevant institutions involved in rural tourism in Croatia. In March 2007, the Croatian Chamber of Economy, Tourism Department conducted a survey using a sample of 88 registered tourist rural family households, which encompasses about 25% out of 352 registered households in Croatia in 2007 (Mišćin & Mađer, 2008).

Table 1 and 2 shows the figures of registered tourist rural family households in the period from 1998 to 2007 and of registered tourists rural family households in 2007.

Table 1. The number of registered tourist rural family households in the period from 1998 to 2007

The number of registered tourist rural family households in the period from 1998 to 2007

Year	The total number of registered tourist rural family households in Croatia
1998	32
1999	65
2000	151
2001	175
2002	269
2003	269
2004	254
2005	310
2006	330
2007	352

Source: Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Croatia, Zagreb, 2007

Table 2. Number of registered tourists rural family households in 2007

County	Number of registered tourist rural family households in Croatia*	Number of beds in households	Nutrition services	Wine/brandy tasting facilities/ rooms
Bjelovar-Bilogora	2	16	2	2
Brod-Posavina	0	0	0	0
Dubrovnik-Neretva	70	23	70	70
Istria	64	253	47	35
Karlovac	0	0	0	0
Koprivnica-Križevci	6	22	5	3
Krapina-Zagorje	7	20	6	6
Lika-Senj	0	0	0	0
Međimurje	8	10	8	8
Osijek-Baranja	56	192	47	3
Požega-Slavonija	0	0	0	0
Primorje-Gorski Kotar	0	0	0	0
Sisak-Moslavina	8	27	7	3
Split-Dalmatia	31	12	31	16
Šibenik-Knin	21	16	21	21
Varaždin	6	6	3	5
Virovitica-Podravina	0	0	0	0
Vukovar-Srijem	2	0	2	2
Zadar	41	248	11	10
Zagreb	30	41	28	23
Total	352	886	288	207

Source: Croatian Chamber of Economy, Tourism Department, Zagreb, 2007

According to data from the year 2007, in the Republic of Croatia are 352 registered tourist rural family households with a total of 886 beds. Of the total number of tourist rural family households, 288 of them or 81% offering nutrition services, while 207 or 59% have tasting room (wine, brandy and other). On the coast, i.e. east and coastal area of the Adriatic should be pointed out Zadar County with 41 tourist rural households or 12%, and 248 beds or 28%, then the Split-Dalmatia with 31 tourist rural households and the Šibenik-Knin with 21. Data from 2012 is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Number of rural households with accommodation in the 2012

Number of rural households with accommodation service in the 2012

County	Number of rural households with accommodation service
Zagreb	3
Lika-Senj	1
Šibenik-Knin	3
Istria	5
Dubrovnik-Neretva	2
Krapina-Zagorje	2
Sisak-Moslavina	9
Karlovac	1
Koprivnica-Križevci	4
Bjelovar-Bilogora	3
Osijek-Baranja	23
Vukovar-Srijem	4
Međimurje	1
Total Croatia	61

Source: Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Croatia, January 2013

Tourist rural family households, besides tourism offer, also attract guests by design/ appearance, i.e. attractiveness of the households or buildings where guests are offered different catering and tourist services. Basic activities in rural tourism are catering (food preparation and catering services, preparing and serving drinks and providing accommodation services) and tourism services (provision of services in tourism). In the case of the attractiveness of tourist rural family households, a crucial importance has traditional architecture and the manner of construction. Most of those surveyed classified their facilities in a group of traditional (indigenous) or partly traditional buildings. There are few new facilities; only 17 in total, and 8 of them were built in the traditional style. There are more reconstructed or partly reconstructed buildings in the traditional style (34 households), and partly traditional facilities (also 34). In further development of tourist rural family households, attention should be given to traditional appearance of the family households and support reconstruction and restoration of old traditional estates i.e. villages and hamlets, and to make the existing ones as traditional as possible (Demonja, 2014).

Table 4. Number of registered beds, as per country in 2007

Number of registered beds, as per county, in 2007

County	Number of beds
Bjelovar-Bilogora	16
Dubrovnik-Neretva	23
Istria	253
Koprivnica-Križevci	22
Krapina-Zagorje	20
Međimurje	10
Osijek-Baranja	192
Sisak-Moslavina	27
Split-Dalmatia	12
Šibenik-Knin	16
Varaždin	6
Vukovar-Srijem	0
Zadar	248
Zagreb	41
Total	886

Source: Croatian Chamber of Economy, Tourism Department, Zagreb, 2007

It is not unusual that a large number of registered tourist rural family households dominate, with mostly half-day and single-day excursion tourism, with nutrition services in excursion facilities, wine facilities and theme tasting facilities (wine, olive oil, cheese, honey and other indigenous products of tourist rural family households).

As for working hours of tourist rural family households, these are not defined by law and this very fact leaves working hours to individual households. Most tourist rural family households opted for working during the whole week, prior telephone reservation provided (56 out of 88 surveyed). Without reservation, 18 households are open every day, while the rest has some other working hours. Seasonal tourist rural family households are few, and these are mostly found along the Croatian coast. The biggest problem as far as working hours of the households are concerned, in most cases, is the obligatory reservation, which is understandable for tourism is mostly an additional activity to hosts, who spend most of their time doing agriculture. Such working hours, on the other hand, limit the guests, because spontaneity and the spirit of adventure travelling or excursion are lost. It would, therefore, be desirable to find a solution acceptable to all, which would be obligatory for all tourist rural family households (Demonja, 2014).

When discussing labour at tourist rural family households, survey conducted by the Croatian Chamber of Economy, Tourism Department, results have shown that, in most cases, the households employ mainly family members. The households surveyed, employ 382 persons in total, out of which 348 (91%) are family members and 34 (9%) additional labour. Out of the total number of households surveyed, 16 of them (19%) employ additional labour. In average, 4 family members and 0.4 additional labourers are employed by one household.

As far as marketing is concerned, it has been determined there is no organized, joint marketing of tourist rural family households at the country level. Certain forms of marketing do exist at the level of individual counties (this mostly includes county catalogues or web pages in rare cases). Most households surveyed have own marketing materials, flyers or catalogues, postcards or web pages. Almost all surveyed tourist rural family households, 72 of them, state friends or acquaintances, i.e. word-of-mouth transfer of information and impressions as the most frequent form of marketing. Sixty tourist rural family households advertise through own flyers, more than a half via tourist boards, and slightly less than half cooperate with tourist agencies. It is one third of households that advertise through radio, TV, newspapers and fairs (presentation). A national catalogue of rural tourism in Croatia is required for future marketing and development of tourist rural family households, as well as increased advertising in home and international fairs (Demonja, 2014). Within marketing activities of tourist rural family households, a crucial role is played by sales of indigenous souvenirs. It is, unfortunate, slightly above one half of surveyed households that have souvenirs as part of their offer. It is, therefore, necessary to increase networking in this segment, and cooperation with traditional crafts and tourist boards. (Demonja, 2014).

One half of tourist rural family households surveyed participated in some form of training or seminars organized in order to acquaint members of households with legal regulations, taxes, subsidies, rights and duties, and other specific know-how and skills required for managing and running a tourist rural family household. All those surveyed participated in some form of training, given high marks for the same, and emphasizing the need to continue their organization.

Considering that there are no segmented data on tourist arrivals and overnight stays by type of catering facilities in rural areas in Croatia, especially in Dalmatian

region, the available data provide only overall picture. According to the official classification of types of catering facilities that is used in the annual statistical yearbooks, rural households were listed in the category of Private Accommodation Facilities, in the group of Households, which also includes Rooms, Apartments and Holiday Houses, so it is not possible to give an exact number of arrivals and overnight stays just for rural households. These data indicate the necessity of change and extend the types of catering facilities for that will be kept record of tourist traffic in order to obtain more precise picture of this segment of tourism research. Within marketing activities of tourist rural family households, a crucial role is played by sales of indigenous souvenirs. It is, unfortunate, slightly above one half of surveyed households that have souvenirs as part of their offer. It is, therefore, necessary to increase networking in this segment, and cooperation with traditional crafts and tourist boards. (Demonja, 2014).

7. Rural tourism market in Croatia

Rural tourism is the widest term that encompasses all tourism forms/services of tourism in rural areas including, for example, hunting tourism, fishing tourism, ecotourism, health tourism, cultural tourism, and others. Rural tourism is not necessarily complementary activity that generates additional income, but may be professional activity (rural family hotel, equestrian centre, winery with wine basement, etc.). The concept of rural areas is not strictly defined, and this term includes areas dominated by the natural environment, rural environment, small settlements and villages, isolated farms with agriculture and forestry as main economic sectors, and others. There should be mentioned that exists the official criteria for the definition of rural areas. According to the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) criteria, rural areas are those where the population density is below 150 inhabitants per km². Regarding the European Union methodology, rural areas are considered to be those where the population density is 100 inhabitants per km², according to which 91.6% of the total Croatian territory belongs to the rural areas, 88.7% of the settlements is situated in rural areas, 47.6% of total population lives in rural areas and 52.4% of them in urban areas (Demonja, Ružić, 2010, p. 45-46).

Many rural communities in developing areas around the world face the challenge of finding adequate income generating activities. Young people in particular leave rural areas for lack of opportunities. Traditional agricultural-based rural economies do not offer sufficient employment opportunities. Many in the development community turn to rural tourism as one solution to alleviate poverty, slow the exodus of youth, and invigorate small farms in declining rural areas (Vucetic, 2012.).

Table 5. Classification of rural and urban areas

Classification	Km²	%	Number of settlements	%	Population	%
Rural area*	51.872	91,6	6.001	88,7	2.110.988	47,6
Urban area	4.731	8,4	763	11,3	2.326.472	52,4
In total	56.603	100	6.751	100	4.437.460	100

Source: Central Bureau of statistics, 2001

Strategies to use tourism as a motor of growth in rural areas emerge in different contexts. In Eastern Europe, the emphasis has been more on tourism as a tool for rural regeneration following agricultural collapse, while in Africa, the emphasis is more on diversification of under-developed areas. (Holland et al., 2003, p. 8).

Connecting with the market can be defined as one of the most important steps in the business operations of farm holidays since on previous communication with potential guests depends whether the guest get the relevant information about a specific offer and decide to stay at a farm holidays (Demonja & Ružić, 2010, p. 176-191). In devising and implementation of promotion, it is necessary to define who is the target group or guests who might be interested in a particular tourism offer of farm holidays, where those guests are, and how to reach them (Demonja & Ružić, 2011, p. 178-184). Also, very important is to define the target group of guests wanted on the farm (Demonja & Ružić, 2010, p. 186-191).

Croatia is a tourist country mainly focused on marine tourism. The focus on this type of tourism can be traced back to its appearance from 80's and 90's of the 19th century till today. In the period from 1950's, Croatian tourist offer was diversified, while the rural area was a destination of tourists. Hiking, cultural and pilgrim tourism and visits to their homeland in the country attracted many tourists. Rural tourism in the

50s of the last century, and later existed, but it was not focused at foreigners. In places near the attractive tourist spots on the coast, family farms offered accommodation services to tourists (Vucetic, 2012).

Analysis of market demand preferences allows, "detecting" several types of tourism that are interesting for rural areas in Croatia. There are primarily: agritourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism, health tourism and others. These forms of tourism in rural areas are organized in the facilities and capacities, with numbers: 379 agricultural tourism farms with 933 beds, 10 SPAs with 4060 beds, 8 camps with approximately 1 600 camping units and a number of hotels and resorts with over 21 188 beds. Demand for rural tourism Croatian market is small, but growing steadily. By type of visit of tourists to rural areas in Croatia is estimated that the demand is now at a level of 838 000 arrive from, visiting agro tourism, spas, a mountain village and the natural and cultural attractions of the Croatian. By type of visits to domestic and foreign tourists to rural areas in Croatia can be assumed that the total demand of Croatian rural tourism product amounts 42% of domestic tourists and 58% on foreign tourists. At the annual level of rural counties in Croatia accounts for 7.4% of total visitors (arrivals) and 2.9% of total overnight stays. (Demonja & Ružić, 2010, p. 72-73)

It is important to note that demand, when visiting rural tourist destination in Croatia among other factors, motives are intense pleasure, outdoor activities, increased need for adventure, recreation and health. Special motivation is demand innovation and pageant, which in addition to the basic standards brings unusual experiences and surprise. Tourists receive a mood or emotional added value (atmosphere, experience, fun, adventure, contact with other guests and other). In response to the fast rhythm of modern life, tourists demand for ecologically Croatian parts of the country. Finally it should be noted that personal safety, which is becoming one of the main criteria, and increasing concern for their own health are also important. (Demonja & Ružić, 2010, p.73; Vucetic, 2012).

In order to achieve the best possible tourism impacts for the tourists and the tourist economy, we should devise policies which include driver in tourism and a variety of economic factors, and non-economic activities. Tourism policy is incomplete if it does not establish adequate coordination among the factors that triggered it. This establishment assumes the formation of a unified organizational system which consists

of organizations and services in order to achieve tourism development. (Demonja & Ružić, 2010, p. 94) If we want from tourism industry to maximize the impact we need to involve all relevant parts, as well as various economic and non-economic subjects. When they engage in the process of tourism development it is necessary to coordinate their tasks and relations, which can be achieved with a good organization of work in tourism. (Vucetic, 2012).

Rural tourism in Croatia is not given the necessary importance so far. The creation of new values in rural areas increased the interest of public administration, local governments, institutions and individual entrepreneurs in rural areas for the development and promotion of that activity in South Central Croatia. It is important to stimulate further development, education, financing, promotion and cooperation on different levels of all relevant institutions in the Dalmatia in order to make good business terms and conditions for rural tourism. Rural tourism is a good opportunity for agricultural based communities but the setting of objectives and the final tourism development plan needs caution. For better results the whole range of the stakeholders needs to participate in the planning stage. Slow and stable steps needs for this kind of planning in order conflicts and mistakes to be avoided. (Sillignaki, 2014, p.11)

In Croatia rural tourism is a significant factor in activation and sustainable development of rural areas, which also helps in preserving local identities, traditions and customs, protects the environment, strengthens indigenous, traditional and ecological production, and develops rural areas based on sustainable development. The Croatian rural tourism hides enormous potential that is not given sufficient attention.

Guidelines for the further development of tourism in rural areas in Croatia would be following:

- achieve competitiveness of the whole Croatia in international markets,
- encourage self-employment and motivate young people to stay in rural areas,
- raise the quality level of accommodation, catering and tourism services,
- actively work on specific programs connecting two strategic sectors for development of rural areas: tourism and agriculture, - encourage the production of organic food and indigenous products, and their sale through tourism infrastructure,

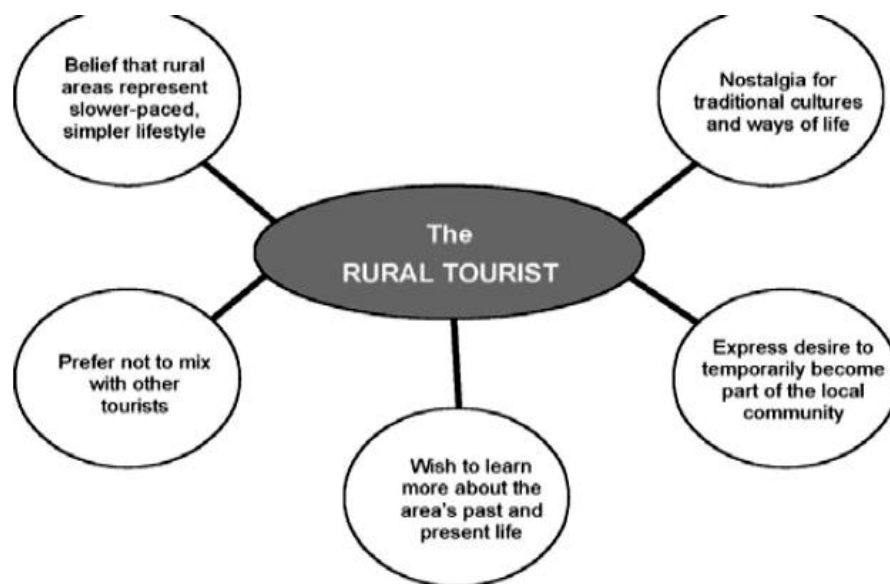
- harmonize the supports and subsidies programs at all levels in order to achieve balanced regional development,
- systematically educate all participants and employees in rural tourism by adopting the theoretical and practical skills, and
- enrich overall tourism offer in rural areas because it directly stimulates the development of rural tourism destinations.

The main objective of tourism in rural areas in Croatia must be improving the quality of life and preventing depopulation, and future development policy for all rural regions in Croatia should determine the concept of development with the condition of preserving its original characteristics, nature and cultural heritage. (Demonja, 2014).

Regarding the Swarbrooke (1996) rural tourist is identified by the salient elements of rural tourist psychographics on Figure 10. (see Figure 11). Knowd (2011) also recognized that there were basically two types of rural tourist:

- tourists who see the main attraction as culture and lifestyle
- tourists who see the main attraction as physical environment and opportunities for activities (Swarbrooke,1996, p. 453)

Figure 11. Characteristics of rural tourists



Source: Knowd (2001)

Second part: empirical study

The second part of this dissertation is devoted to the empirical study. In this part there are presented objectives, methodology and sample, as well as the results of the qualitative research as interviews with owners and quantitative study as customers' perceptions about rural experience.

This master dissertation employs both, primary and secondary data to achieve the proposed objectives. The primary data was gathered through interviews and questionnaire. Interviews were conducted with owners of rural establishments and questionnaires were conducted with guests and tourists of those establishments. As a complement, it was also employed secondary data, a set of different scientific papers, articles, journals, books, websites related to the topics, blogs, specialized online magazines, etc.

Main objectives of the study

According to several studies, development of rural tourism can lead to revitalization of local crafts. Sustainability can be only achieved by curtailing tourists members –‘an emphasis on quality and diversity as opposed to scale, an approach apposite to Wheller’s (1994) assertion that sustainability can only be achieved by curtailing tourists number.’’ Greffe’s (1994) proposal calls for establishment of networks of rural tourism providers, organized to maximize opportunity, offer a wide range of activities and encourage additional tourist spend. Rubies (2001) similarly alleges that the experiences sought by tourists are delivered in small geographical clusters that compete with other clusters for tourist custom and that strengthening the links between value chains(all suppliers , both public and private sector, of the composite tourist experience).

The main objectives of the current study are:

- Understand the perspective of rural tourism experience from the point of view of the owners of establishments:
- Explore the influence of the four rural tourism experience dimensions on overall satisfaction, happiness and behavioural intentions.

In order to achieve the objectives a qualitative and a quantitative approach are employed. The method, the sample and the findings are described and presented in the following chapters.

8. Qualitative study: interviews with owners of rural establishments

8.1. Methodology: qualitative approach

The qualitative research is commonly based on small samples; its main aim is to obtain information to help the interviewer to know about the nature and "quality" of the behaviour of a certain person or group, as well as their motivations that moves that behaviour (what, how and why), (Rafasampetro, 2008).

As the title of the dissertation highlights, this is a study about the rural tourism in Croatia and tourist' perceptions concerning their experience there. It is also about future potential, what will be developed more in conclusion. With this kind of interview it was easier to know about the motivations, attitudes and beliefs of the respondents about what they do and how regarding their establishments. According to Croatian Chamber of economics in middle- Central Dalmatia, where this study took place, there are 32 rural lodging places. From these 10 were randomly selected to be approach for both interviews and survey. The researcher explained the intention of the study and asked permission to approach rural tourists when they are leaving the lodging and the region (after living the rural experience). Interviews were conducted with four owners of establishments – Agritourism Marija Latinac, Agritourism Donja Banda, Agritourism Šarićevi dvori and Agritourism Buljan. The technique used in interviews is direct. This means that the interviewed person knows before beginning the interview, what it is going to be about and the objective of the study (Kvale, 1996).

Five main questions were conducted to all these respondents, using face to face. These questions were developed in order to go more depth because of the objectives of the dissertation, to help understand owners side, not just tourist' perception and their experience. Important to mention is the fact that all owners are from Croatia, but most of them also had some direct or indirect tourism/international experience before such a bus driver or skipper. That experience helped them to start up their business from their

tradition. Working with tourist they had an opportunity to see what tourists want and what they need. The questions that were asked to the interviewed owners are the followings:

- 1) Why did you open this in first place? Where from is your idea?
- 2) Characterize the experience that you provide to your customers? (lodging, food, possibility to participate in rural activities, visiting places, events, visiting local museums...)
- 3) In your opinion, what customers most enjoy to do? (just rest, actively participate in activities (activities related to agriculture, handcraft, other) or passively observes others doing rural activities)
- 4) Do you plan to expand or do something more with this establishment?
- 5) When (year) did you open your establishment (this rural lodging)?

8.2. Major findings

As it is possible to see all the questions are open, so it requires a constructed response that has to be developed by the interviewed in his/her own words. The advantages are that it is possible to collect more information with more detail and sometimes unexpected information. But there are also some limitations as for example the difficulty of the interpretation of the answers, and usually requires more time to analyse the results (Shukla, 2008).

Having all the methodology well described, it is possible to analyse the results from the 4 participants about the 5 main questions presented before. At first question everybody had different answer, but all in all with the same conclusion.

They started business with their establishment because they wanted to offer to tourists a Dalmatian tradition – something old in a new way, with one word explained something different. Second question refer on experience that they provide to tourists and number one experience for tourist, by owners' opinion, is food. Domestic food is an experience that is matchless. Domestic food is like trademark in Croatia. Good food prepared in traditional way leave tourists speechless. Experience for itself depend also about establishment and possibilities that destination offers. For example, establishment

Šarićevi dvori offers picking fruits and olives, as well as wine yard experience. Lodging looks the same as it was a 100 years ago. It is needless to mention that experience when tourists stay there. As one owner, Mr. Matijaš, said “ *Being here for them is like they are on the other planet not in other country*”. Third question is focused in which activities tourists are enjoying most, although it is not an activity, the answer is food again.

Beside food, tourists desire leisure and relaxation. A vacation at rural destination is in one hand an escape from reality. Rural destinations usually are not in urban areas, being far from noise, jams and throng provide an opportunity to rest and enjoy in nature. Those who do not like to do leisure (too much) always have an alternative such as riding horse or a bike, or perhaps working in fruit yards, wine yards or olive yards. Interesting is that in fourth question all owners answered the same – they don’t have intentions to expand or develop something more regarding the establishment.

In the last question could be seen how many years these owners are working with their establishment, and it can be seen through the interviews that those who work longer normally have more experience and more comments to say.

9. Quantitative study: tourist`s perceptions

9.1. Methodology: quantitative approach

The survey was conducted during the months of July to November of 2014 in Croatia: (Dalmatia). Five lodgings were approached by the researcher, same as were tourists. The goals of this study were explained to the owners and/or managers of the rural lodging units and only guests that were going to leave the region were invited to complete the questionnaire. From two hundred distributed, 117 questionnaires were usable (fully fulfilled) for validating the hypotheses. The questionnaire was elaborated in two languages, Croatian and English. Back translation was used to ensure that both questionnaires communicated the same information. A pilot sample with five tourists and owners of lodgings was used to ensure that the wording of the questionnaire was clear and only a few adjustments were made. The last part of the questionnaire concerned socio-demographic data: gender, age, nationality and even profession (see the questionnaire in annex).

9.2. Hypotheses and constructs

Based on literature review and the findings from the interviews, several hypotheses are formulated:

H1: The dimensions of rural tourism experience have a positive influence on overall satisfaction

H2: The dimensions of rural tourism experience have a positive influence on behavioural intentions

H3: Overall satisfaction has positive influence on behavioural intentions

H4: The dimensions of rural tourism experience have a positive influence on tourist happiness

Regarding the constructs employed, the four dimensions of experience economy were adapted from Oh et al. (2007); the overall satisfaction and behavioural intentions were adapted from Loureiro and Kastenholtz (2011); finally, happiness was adapted from Van Boven and Gilovich (2003).

9.3. Tourist sample profile

Table 6 shows the sample profile regarding age and gender.

Table 6. Sample profile

Gender	Age
Female: 42%	<21 4%
Male: 58%	21<30 21%
	31<40 32%
	41<50 28%
	51<60 28%
	>60 3%

Source: Author elaboration

Most of the tourists come from Croatian (25%), but we found several other nationalities, such as: Austrian, Belgian, Republic Czech, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Norwegian, Russian, Slovenian and Swedish. The tourists have several different professions, such as photographer, professor, doctor, nurse, journalist, secretary or psychologist, there are also several entrepreneurs, sailors and students as well. Most of the tourists were males, and most 'popular' age for tourists was between 31 and 40 years.

9.4. Descriptive statistics

In this part the mean and standard deviation of each item are presented and analysed (see Tables 7. and Table 8.).

Table 7. Descriptive statistics: Rural tourism experience

Rural experience dimensions	Code	Item	Mean	Standard deviation
Education	E1	I learned a lot about this rural place	3.7	1.084
	E2	The experience stimulated my curiosity to learn new things	3.6	0.949
	E3	It was a real learning experience	3.7	1.010
	E4	The experience has made me more knowledgeable.	3.6	0.952
Entertainment	E5	Activities of others were fun to watch	3.5	1.063
	E6	I enjoyed watching what others were doing	3.5	1.063
	E7	Activities of others were amusing (pleasing) to watch	3.6	1.058
	E8	Watching others perform was captivating	3.8	0.897
Escapism	E9	I felt I played a different character there.	3.4	1.092
	E10	The experience there let me imagine being someone else	3.3	1.137
	E11	I completely escaped from reality	3.7	1.134
	E12	I felt I played a different character there.	3.1	1.224
Esthetics	E13	The setting was very pleasant	3.9	0.966
	E14	The setting was very attractive	4.0	0.776
	E15	I felt a real sense of harmony	3.8	0.810
	E16	Just being there was very pleasant	4.0	0.885

Source: Author elaboration

Items regarding the Rural experience with generally highest mean were E14: The setting was very attractive, and E16: Just being there was very pleasant, while item E12: I completely escaped from reality, got the generally lowest mean. It is interesting that both, highest and lowest mean come from ‘‘Esthetics’’, so it can be concluded that esthetics is pretty much important. Why this is so important for people is discussable, but probably it has something to do with the fact that people are getting their first impression by eye, and of course it’s known that sometimes there is no time for second impression, so the one you got in the first few seconds is the one that matter.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics: Overall satisfaction, happiness and behavioural intentions

Construct	Code	Item	Mean	Standard deviation
Overall satisfaction	S	Globally I am satisfied with this rural place.	4.2	0.876
Happiness	H1	The experience at this rural place contributed very much to my happiness in life	3.6	1.069
	H2	The experience at this rural place was very meaningful	3.8	0.934
	H3	The experience at this rural place was personally very fulfilling	3.8	1.014
Behavioural intentions	B1	I will speak well about this rural place to other people.	4.3	0.843
	B2	I will recommend this rural place if someone asks for my advice.	4.3	0.865
	B3	I will encourage my friends and relatives to visit this rural place.	4.2	0.915
	B4	In next vacations I intend to return to this rural place.	4.0	0.933

Source: Author elaboration

As it can be seen from Table 8, the highest mean is coming from Behavioural intentions section where B1 and B2 are sharing first place, while in Happiness section H2 and H3 are sharing first place. In section about Overall satisfaction there is just one mean, but still is pretty high considering the whole table in general.

9.5. Structural results

PLS (Partial Least Squares) was chosen as an effective analytical tool (for this study) to test interactions by reducing type II error. PLS models are prediction-oriented, not based on covariance fit. PLS requires at least 10 times the number of items used for the most complex construct, or at least 10 times the number of predictors of the dependent variable with the highest number of predictors, while LISREL requires at least 100–150 cases (Gefen et al., 2000). Therefore, PLS is adequate to small samples (Rural tourism is a niche tourism).

A PLS model is analysed and interpreted in two stages. First, the measurement model is assessed by evaluating the reliability of the individual measures, the convergent validity, and the discriminant validity of the constructs. Then, the structural model is evaluated.

The item reliability is assessed by examining the loadings of the measures on their corresponding construct. In this study all item loadings are above 0.707, All Cronbach's alpha values are above 0.7 and all composite reliability values in Table 9. are above 0.8. All constructs are reliable since the composite reliability values exceed the threshold value 0.7. The measures demonstrate convergent validity as the average variance of manifest variables extracted by constructs (AVE) are above 0.5, indicating that more variance of each indicators are explained by their own construct.

Table 9. Measurement model

<i>Construct/item</i>	Item loading	Mean	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
<i>Esthetics</i>		3.9	0.623	0.869	0.798
The setting was very pleasant	0.808				
The setting was very attractive	0.735				
I felt a real sense of harmony	0.853				
Just being there was very pleasant	0.756				
<i>Education</i>		3.7	0.567	0.838	0.745
I learned a lot about this rural place	0.735				
The experience stimulated my curiosity to learn new things	0.789				
It was a real learning experience	0.840				
The experience has made me more knowledgeable.	0.708				
<i>Entertainment</i>		3.5	0.715	0.882	0.805
Activities of others were fun to watch	0.767				
I enjoyed watching what others were doing	0.808				
Activities of others were amusing (pleasing) to watch	0.708				
Watching others perform was captivating	0.876				
<i>Escapism</i>		3.4	0.627	0.834	0.712
I felt I played a different character there.	0.720				
The experience there let me imagine being someone else	0.893				
I completely escaped from reality	0.731				
I felt I played a different character there.	0.709				

Note: a only one item.

Source: Author elaboration

Table 10. Measurement model (second part)

<i>Construct/item</i>	Item loading	Mean	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
<i>Happiness</i>		3.7	0.661	0.854	0.744
The experience at this rural place contributed very much to my happiness in life	0,756				
The experience at this rural place was very meaningful	0.791				
The experience at this rural place was personally very fulfilling	0.793				
<i>Overall satisfaction</i>	1.000 a	4.2	1.000 a	1.000 a	1.000 a
<i>Behavioural intentions</i>		4.2	0.742	0.920	0.883
I will speak well about this rural place to other people.	0.823				
I will recommend this rural place if someone asks for my advice.	0.889				
I will encourage my friends and relatives to visit this rural place.	0.917				
In next vacations I intend to return to this rural place.	0.812				

Source: Author elaboration

In order to analyse the discriminant validity, the square root of AVE should be greater than the correlation between the construct and other constructs in the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 10 shows that this criterion has been met.

Table 11. Discriminant validity

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.Esthetics	1.000						
2.Behavioural intentions	0.681	1.000					
3.Education	0.533	0.678	1.000				
4.Entertainment	0.237	0.244	0.598	1.000			
5.Escapism	0.326	0.382	0.643	0.690	1.000		
6.Happiness	0.641	0.631	0.660	0.572	0.603	1.000	
7.Overall satisfaction	0.607	0.680	0.558	0.304	0.295	0.498	1.000
AVE ^{1/2}	0.789	0.862	0.753	0.845	0.792	0.813	1.000

Source: Author elaboration

The overall structural results are presented in Table 11. All path coefficients are found to be significant at the 0.001, 0.01 or 0.05 levels, except for following relationships: Entertainment -> O. satisfaction, Escapism -> O. satisfaction, Escapism-> Behavioural intentions and Escapism-> Happiness. Thereby, the hypothesis H3 is fully supported and the hypotheses H1, H2 and H4 are partially supported.

All values of Q^2 are positive, so the relations in the model have predictive relevance. The model also demonstrated a good level of predictive power (R^2). Overall, the values of GoF statistics reveal that the model has a good fit to the data collected.

Table 12. Structural results

Path	Beta model without happiness	Beta model with happiness	Hypothesis
Esthetics -> O. satisfaction	0.443***	0.438***	H1: partially supported
Education -> O. satisfaction	0.359**	0.366**	
Entertainment -> O. satisfaction	0.070 ns	0.079 ns	
Escapism -> O. satisfaction	-0.122 ns	-0,139 ns	
Esthetics -> Behavioural intentions	0.446***	0.444***	H2: partially supported
Education -> Behavioural intentions	0.374***	0.372***	
Entertainment -> Behavioural intentions	-0.209**	-0.219**	
Escapism -> Behavioural intentions	0.063 ns	0.072 ns	
O. satisfaction -> Behavioural intentions	0.271**	0.276**	H3: fully supported
Esthetics -> Happiness	-	0.396***	H4: partially supported
Education -> Happiness	-	0,274**	
Entertainment -> Happiness	-	0.206*	
Escapism -> Happiness	-	0.152 ns	
R ² O satisfaction	45.4%	45.3%	
R ² Behavioural intentions	76.8%	76.8%	
R ² Happiness	-	66.7%	
Q ² O satisfaction	0.45	0.45	
Q ² Behavioural intentions	0.55	0.55	
Q ² Happiness	-	0.42	
GoF	0.65	0.66	

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001; ns-not significant

Source: Author elaboration

Conclusions, implications and limitations

Croatia and particularly Dalmatia has not been a rural place of extensive study and so this dissertation intended to contribute to better understand rural tourism in such place. Even so the main objectives of the study, presented in introduction and methodology were achieved. The methodology, qualitative and quantitative, was adequate for such achievement.

Regarding the qualitative approach, which the findings help to adapt the items for rural tourism experience employed in the quantitative approach, rural lodging owners or establishments' owners consider relaxation, contemplation and food as the main elements contributing to attract rural tourist to Dalmatia (Croatia). The perception of the owners is that consumers want to have rural vacations to see the landscape, have some kind of contact with smells, colours, tastes in the memory of some tourists (remember the past) and as a something new, a new experience to other tourists (younger tourists). Positive emotions, such as relaxation, the pleasure of the food and the sweetness of doing nothing. These findings are in agreement with previous studies, such as: Loureiro (2014), Loureiro and Kastenholz (2011), Demonja and Bacac (2012), or Pizam (2010).

Based on the findings from quantitative approach we can see that Entertainment and Escapism seem do not influence significantly the Overall satisfaction of rural tourists. Moreover, Escapism does not contribute significantly to tourists' behavioural intentions (recommend to other and intentions to come again) and also does not contribute to happiness. These seem to mean that rural tourists in Croatian do not feel to play a different character there, do not imagine being someone else, do not feel to be completely escaped from reality and do not feel like they were living in a different time or place. Managers of rural place should be aware that they should provide different activities, show different cultural characteristics and way of living into the rural context that lead tourist really escape from reality.

In Croatia rural tourism is a significant factor in activation and sustainable development of rural areas, which also helps in preserving local identities, traditions and customs, protects the environment, strengthens indigenous, traditional and ecologi-

cal production, and develops rural areas based on sustainable development. The Croatian rural tourism hides enormous potential that is not given sufficient attention.

Regarding the findings based on primary and secondary data, it is possible to point out several guidelines for the further development of tourism in rural areas in Croatia would be following:

- achieve competitiveness of the whole Croatia in international markets,
- encourage self-employment and motivate young people to stay in rural areas,
- raise the quality level of accommodation, catering and tourism services,
- actively work on specific programs connecting two strategic sectors for development of rural areas: tourism and agriculture,
- encourage the production of organic food and indigenous products, and their sale through tourism infrastructure,
- harmonize the supports and subsidies programs at all levels in order to achieve balanced regional development,
- systematically educate all participants and employees in rural tourism by adopting the theoretical and practical skills, and
- enrich overall tourism offer in rural areas because it directly stimulates the development of rural tourism destinations.

Following the same perspective as Demonja (2014), the main objective of tourism in rural areas in Croatia must be improving the quality of life and preventing depopulation, and future development policy for all rural regions in Croatia should determine the concept of development with the condition of preserving its original characteristics, nature and cultural heritage.

A certain accent should be given to education, too. Education is important in order to know how to apply, how to get and at the end how to use European fund and subsidies for agriculture and agro tourism. If destination managers together with owners

of rural lodgings and establishments start to work on that problem, there is a high potential that progress and development will appear.

Managers and owners of rural destination and lodgings should also be aware of the findings provided by the quantitative approach. Rural tourists enjoy learn about rural activities. Although rural tourist seeks the pleasure of relaxation and contemplation, they also want to learn more about the places and rural activities, they want information and have curiosity to see ancestral practices. Therefore managers should be more active in providing this experiences and not only the taste of the food. Several passive activities are possible, such as, allow the tourists to see how the food is prepared, storytelling about the uniqueness of the food ingredients, how to plant and harvest vegetables or how to create the animals and in a broader sense the history of the local heritage.

In what concern to limitations. The sample sizes for both quantitative and qualitative approach could be larger. However, we cannot forget that rural tourism is a niche tourism. The interviews have the purpose of get the main perceptions about rural tourism provided by rural owners. The sample size of the convenience sample of the quantitative approach is adequate to the research in this field of research due to the very small number of tourists in the very small rural lodgings unities. Limitations are also opportunities for further research. Therefore, next, we give several suggestions that could help to generalize the findings.

In further research,

- the proposed hypotheses should be tested in other rural regions of Croatia and other counties;

- the current study should be done in whole country (Croatia) and then compare between the regions in order to find strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and potential treats – kind of SWOT analysis. Every region has something that is doing great and something that could be better, high potential lies in agro tourism, especially in country that has all predispositions for its success;

-other constructs may be considered, such as traits of personality of rural tourists, nostalgia, melancholy,

-carry out cross-cultural studies, analyse with the findings of other rural places in other countries, taking in consideration cultural and religion differences;

-compare the perceptions of different age groups and analyse the effect of other socio-demographic variables as moderators.

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Annex

Interviews with the owners :

Agritourism Marija Latinac

1. Location: - Trilj
2. Why did you open this in first place? Where from is your idea?

- I was travelling a lot and I saw in Toscana and Provanse a lot of similar agrotourism places and I realize that we in Croatia also have a good horse for a race. And we started...

3. Characterize the experience that you provide to your customers? (lodging , food, possibility to participate in rural activities, visiting places, events, visiting local museums...)

- Well, if you look at our house maybe at first you couldn't say it's a place for agro tourism , but I can assure you you'll be wrong. Me and my wife are in this business for years and we are really trying to show a people a true essence of this place. If you come in this area around Cetina river, everybody knows for us, we are famous for our food. Everybody , and I really mean everybody loves it! And how they actually can resist, they don't have such a thing in their homelands. To be truth, most of our guests are coming during the summer either we are open a whole year, I mean I live in this house, of course we are open but situation is like this... I usually show them our little vineyard, tell them few stories, name a places they need to see and that's it more less...

4. In your opinion, what customers most enjoy to do? (just rest , actively participate in activities (activities related to agriculture, handcraft, other) or passively observes others doing rural activities)

- Usually most of my guests are French or Belgium people, there are also Slovenians and people from Norway, but usually French spoken tourists. They are explorers so they are not interested just in sea and resting. A lot of them like to hike around this area or fishing in Cetina river, yeah, a lot of them enjoy it. And as I said before – food. Oh , they love the food we prepare. I think that is a number one.

5. Do you plan to expand or do something more with this establishment?

-It's a tuff question...I don't know, I don't think so for now... I have a loan in CHF and its hard you know... We have 5 kids also so expanding is not a priority at the moment.

6. Finally could you please tell me when (year) you open your establishment (this rural

lodging)?

-Oh... Ten years ago I think... Yeah yeah, around 10 years ago.

Agritourism Donja Banda

1. Location: Vrsine
2. Why did you open this in first place? Where from is your idea?
 - After war I was bringing my friends here, and then I started bringing friends of their friends and then tourists and there is it... Step by step...
3. Characterize the experience that you provide to your customers? (lodging , food, possibility to participate in rural activities, visiting places, events, visiting local museums...)
 - This lodging is an experience for tourist, even I forget sometimes how old is it... Being here for them is like they are on the other planet not in other country. Most of the people who come here like to eat a domestic food, and they like to see how is prepared. The point is I can provide them more less everything they want if they have a will for it of course. But most of them just want to rest and have a good meals.
4. In your opinion, what customers most enjoy to do? (just rest , actively participate in activities (activities related to agriculture, handcraft, other) or passively observes others doing rural activities)
 - As I already said they mostly enjoy in food and peace they have here. Its perfect place to rest and escape for today's life. They like observe what am I doing too, around house, olives, fruits, grapes...
5. Do you plan to expand or do something more with this establishment?
 - What I have done I've done. Soon I am going in retirement and I am leaving this to my kids, so if they want to expand or improve something, let they be free to do it, but I, I am not even thinking about it.
6. Finally could you please tell me when (year) you open your establishment (this rural lodging)?

Officially 15 years.

Seosko domacinstvo Buljan

1. Location: Zmijavci
2. Why did you open this in first place? Where from is your idea?
 - I had my vineyard and my fruits so step by step... I also saw lately that a lot of people here want to do something similar cause its in our surrounding, everything that people

want today, change you know, something different.

3. Characterize the experience that you provide to your customers? (lodging , food, possibility to participate in rural activities, visiting places, events, visiting local museums...)
 - I am here a beginner, I provide food and tasting. We also do an events for families like weddings and so... But not that much... Anyway its nice...
4. In your opinion, what customers most enjoy to do? (just rest , actively participate in activities (activities related to agriculture, handcraft, other) or passively observes others doing rural activities)
 - They like food that I am preparing and they like to taste wine. If there are tourists during September or early October, they like to help in vineyard also.
5. Do you plan to expand or do something more with this establishment?
 - For now no, in future who knows... The problem is that tourists are here just during the season...
6. Finally could you please tell me when (year) you open your establishment (this rural lodging)?
 - 2 years

Agritourism Šarićevi dvori

1. Location : Primosten
2. Why did you open this in first place? Where from is your idea?
 - Well this is place is a grandfathers legacy. I always wanted to live it up. My grandparent lived here, my father lived here and I lived here as a young boy before I moved in the village (Primosten). I grow up here and I have wonderful memories regarding this place. All this that you can see around you is at least five times older than you are. Donkeys, olives, fruit yard and this tables... so old... so many story could be told by this walls... this is a living history. It is sad, but sometimes foreign people appreciate it more than domestic ones. I know that because I was a skipper, I saw whole Mediteran and our beautiful cost. I met a lot of people, and by that I mean people's tastes, preferences, habits... so when my kids were born I decided to start with this "business", for me it was important that is tourism because I knew a lot about it and in combination with this legacy it was perfect for me. What more can person wish? So it started like that...
3. Characterize the experience that you provide to your customers? (lodging , food, possibility to participate in rural activities, visiting places, events, visiting local museums...)

- This legacy is story for itself. Everybody who comes here are fascinating by it. Possibility to participate in rural activities is open only in season of olives and wine. People also like to walk around and explore everything by foot and then eat a good meal. But I can provide them anything they want, if they want a leisure they'll have it, if they want to work and put some swat in they'll have it, or if they want a good meal they'll have it too...

4. In your opinion, what customers most enjoy to do? (just rest , actively participate in activities (activities related to agriculture, handcraft, other) or passively observes others doing rural activities)

- You must understand that there are different kind of people, put in general the ones that comes here like to participate in everything, except maybe in killing their meal hahaha, it's a joke of course, but all in all I would say that they enjoy in nature most, picking olives and making grappa are probably most interesting parts. If we don't include food there, cause every decent man enjoy in food of course.

5. Do you plan to expand or do something more with this establishment?

-I am too old for expanding, but maybe some activity more could be a good idea...

6. Finally could you please tell me when (year) you open your establishment (this rural lodging)?

- I don't remember when exactly , it was around 1990.

Questionnaire:

We have drawn up this questionnaire in such a way that it will take only 7 minutes to answer it. All information given to us will be treated confidentially and anonymously, analyzed statistically with the rest of surveys in a global way. This is part of a master dissertation at ISCTE-IUL Business School in Lisbon, Portugal. Please, answer all the questions marking with a X your opinion.

There are no correct answers, we would only like to know your opinion.

Thank you for your cooperation

Place your grade of agreement or disagreement in each of the following statements about the experience at this rural place and yourself (1-Strongly Disagree; 5-Strongly Agree)	1	2	3	4	5
The experience at this rural place contributed very much to my happiness in life					
I learned a lot about this rural place					
The experience at this rural place was very meaningful					
The setting was very attractive					
The setting was very pleasant					
The experience at this rural place was very fulfilling					
I felt like I was living in a different time or place.					
Activities of others were fun to watch					
This experience let me imagine being someone else					
This experience has made me more knowledgeable					
I enjoyed watching what others were doing					
I felt a real sense of harmony					
I am very creative					
I can behave in many different ways for a given situation.					
I completely escaped from reality					
The experience stimulated my curiosity to learn new things					
Activities of others were amusing to watch					
I felt I played a different character there.					
It was a real learning experience					
Just being there was very pleasant					
Watching others perform (e.g., handicraft, farming, cooking traditional food) was captivating					
Globally I am satisfied with this rural place.					

Place your grade of agreement or disagreement in each of the following statements regarding your intentions (1-Strongly Disagree; 5-Strongly Agree)	1	2	3	4	5
I will speak well about this rural place to other people.					
I will recommend this rural place if someone asks for my advice.					
I will encourage my friends and relatives to visit this rural place.					
In next vacations I intend to return to this rural place.					

Gender Male Female

Age Under 21 years 21 to 30 years 31 to 40 years 41 to 50 years 51 to 60 years More than 60 years

Profession _____

Nationality _____