

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

The recreation activity profiles of vacation home users in Finland

Sievänen¹, Tuija, Pouta², Eija and Neuvonen¹, Marjo

¹Finnish Forest Research Institute, Vantaa Research Centre, ²University of Helsinki, Department of Forest Economics

Tuija Sievänen
Finnish Forest Research Institute
Vantaa Research Centre, Helsinki Research Unit
Unioninkatu 40 A
FIN 00170 Helsinki
Finland
tel: +358 10211 2246
fax: +358 10211 2104
email: tuija.sievanen@metla.fi

Julkaistu/published

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004, Glasgow, UK. The Scottish Hotel School, University of Strathclyde. CD-rom. 14 p.

Abstract

For generations, spending time in a vacation home or summer cottage has brought Finns close to nature. Today, almost half of the population has regular access to such a place. In this study, participation in outdoor activities and vacation home use is seen as an integral part of the Finnish 'way of life' and 'life course'. This study produces information on leisure activity profiles of vacation home users and well-being benefits related to the use of a vacation home. Its findings are based on data gathered in a broad-based population survey conducted in 1998-2000 in the form of telephone interviews and mail questionnaires. The best predictors of vacation home use were age, socio-economic status, education, size of home municipality, region and a general inclination to participate in outdoor recreation activities. Active users of vacation homes differed distinctively from occasional users in terms of the patterns of their participation in outdoor activities. Access to the countryside on a regular basis allows committed vacation home

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation home owners and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

users to participate in traditional rural recreation activities, such as berry and mushroom picking and fishing.

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). *Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II*, 27-30 June 2004

INTRODUCTION

An essential element of a vacation home or summer cottage in Finland is its proximity to a forest and water, be it a lake, a river or the sea. While staying at such a place it is easy to engage in a variety of outdoor activities such as swimming, boating, fishing and berry and mushroom picking. About one half of the Finnish population has the opportunity to enjoy the cottage life on a regular basis. Every seventh Finnish household owns a vacation home, and almost one seventh of Finland's population of over 5 million belong to such a household (Free-time residences..., 2001). Although the average size of a family with a vacation home is just two people, typically a middle-aged couple, the cottage is used by an extended family, i.e. by the owner's family and their adult children or by siblings with their families. Two thirds of the vacation homes are located in the same province as the primary residence, with one third being located in the same municipality as the primary residence. Owning a vacation home is common among people who live in towns or cities as well as among people whose primary residence is in the countryside (Free-time residences..., 2001).

In 2000 Finns made some three million trips to their own vacation homes (Finnish Travel..., 2001) and additional trips were made to those of relatives and friends as well as to rented cottages. A member of a family that owns a vacation home makes an average of 3 to 4 trips to it each year. Most of these trips are short, lasting 1 to 3 days. Spending part of the summer at a vacation home has been a central part of the Finnish way of life for several decades, but this use is no longer generally restricted to summers and is gradually becoming a year-round activity.

There are only a few studies on vacation home use in Finland (Vuorela, 1968; Venäläinen, 1989; Free-time residences..., 2001). Understanding vacation home users and use patterns is important for rural development, as many municipalities are now aware of the increasing importance of the economic impacts of this activity. For policy purposes it is more beneficial to understand the differences between various types of vacation home users and to observe the differences in their activities and motives rather than to study them as a one homogeneous group.

The aim of this study is to approach vacation home use with a 'way of life' framework. We characterise Finnish vacation home users on the basis of population survey data (Sievänen, 2001). We compare recreation activity patterns between groups of vacation home users on the basis of their keenness to spend time there. The study discusses on how spending a lot of time at a vacation home and participating there in recreation activities is part of a lifestyle, and how that activity contributes to a feeling of well-being.

THE 'WAY OF LIFE' APPROACH AND VACATION HOME USE

The concept 'way of life' refers to a way of looking at people's life as a whole. It covers all aspects of life, e.g. work, family, housing, social activities and leisure, to name the most important (Roos and Sicinski, 1987). Roos (1981) has used the concept of 'way of life' as an approach to study the essential features of daily activities in Finland. One's way of life refers not

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). *Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II*, 27-30 June 2004

only to one's life conditions but to the whole of human life: the production of material and nonmaterial products, social activity, activity at home and with family, intellectual life as well as vacation activities. One's way of life is not only a sum of these but a network of interactional relationships. The resulting system has many factors, especially those describing social status and value orientations.

As a construct, way of life also includes subjective actions of people, based on their own choices (see also Kasvio, 1982). According to Roos, one's way of life refers to the 'totality of the individual or family life cycle, living conditions, daily life activities and interaction, which is constructed by his subjectivity'. Subjectivity refers to the 'human values, appreciation of one's life and the important life projects (orientations)'. The concept refers especially to 'a subjective combination of the activities of the individual, family and social group within the framework of the subject's life history and living conditions' (Roos, 1983). The generational perspective helps to understand some of the features of vacation home users' recreational behaviour in our study (Roos, 2002).

Here our aim is to focus on the sphere of leisure and outdoor recreation as a part of the way of life construct. We are interested in seeing what role of a vacation home plays in people's lives and for whom that role is of central importance. We also wanted to see how having access to and using a vacation home affect the choices people make in the use of their leisure. The 'way of life' approach facilitates the interpretation of the choices people make in spending their free time and also how choices of different outdoor activities may reflect not only their values and attitudes but also their social and economic position in society. The way of life approach also offers an opportunity to use socio-economic factors to create a comprehensive view of the population groups that are distinctive according to their leisure behaviour patterns.

Here, the concept of life course is used to interpret the different vacation home user groups and their outdoor activity patterns. The term 'life course' refers not only to chronological age but also to situations and conditions of family life or work career and other factors that shape people lives in certain points in life (Elder, 1975).

Vacation home use can extend to include many aspects of life. It can refer to major time-consuming activity alongside the time we use for work and obligatory social and home activities. A vacation home can also be the most important investment of a household, perhaps even more important than the primary residence. In addition, many people become emotionally attached to their vacation home (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001). It may represent some sort of dream life or at least a life that reflects one's own aspirations and interests in life to the greatest possible extent. One's vacation home and living there may represent one's life orientation to a great extent.

Only a few studies on vacation home life have addressed the motives for spending time there, i.e. why people spend time at a vacation home or why spending time there is so popular. Among the most frequently mentioned leisure activities pursued at a vacation home are rest, working with one's own hands, hobbies, outdoor activities, nature observation, spending time with the family, solitude, and meeting relatives. In a qualitative study of vacation home users, Venäläinen (1989) listed the following outdoor activities pursued there: swimming, fishing, angling, berry and mushroom picking, hiking, walking, sunbathing, nature trips to a nearby surrounding forest,

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation home users and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). *Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II*, 27-30 June 2004

biking, jogging, elk and other hunting, clearing brushwood, chopping firewood and gardening. Activities themselves are rarely the main attraction, though.

Experiences offered by the natural environment are often mentioned by vacation home users as an important part of the life there (Venäläinen, 1989). These experiences were described in many ways either as observations or sense perceptions (vicinity of water, sunrises and sunsets, bird song, fresh air, silence) or otherwise as an overall experience (natural environment, own space, spontaneous contact with the open air, nostalgic landscape, tranquillity of nature). These experiences were associated with the natural environment and nature observation and were associated with a certain place.

The concept of the well-being effect is used here to refer to the benefits that people relate to their participation in leisure activities. The significance of a vacation residence has been found to be three-dimensional (Williams and Kaltenborn, 1998). The first dimension describes factors under the rubric group 'Back to nature', which includes experiences at the vacation home that are associated with the natural environment and its observation, nature activities and hiking, recreation and other activities in the natural environment. This group also includes conscious striving for a primitive and simple way of life at the vacation home, involving also a feeling of freedom. The other two dimensions are related to sense of place and to the change of environment and daily routines compared to 'normal' life in the primary residence (also Chaplin, 1999). One very important dimension of vacation home use is socializing, as is emphasized in Venäläinen's (1989) study.

The measures used in this study are based on motivation and benefit scales for outdoor recreation developed by Driver and others (Driver, 1983; Paronen, 2001).

DATA AND METHODS

Data of the study

The statistics used here are based on the population-based data collected in the context of a national outdoor recreation demand and supply inventory, that was conducted between August 1998 and May 2000. The data was gathered in two phases through a telephone interview and a mail questionnaire. These surveys were targeted at Finns in the age range of 15 to 74 (Virtanen et al., 2001). The total sample size was over 12,649 persons. Interview data were gathered from 10,651 respondents (84% of those sampled). Information relating to participation in spending time at a vacation home and number of days spent there is based on this data. Information about the respondents' other outdoor activities was also obtained from this data.

The mail questionnaire was sent to the respondents who had indicated in the interview that they were willing to answer it. Two thirds (65%) of these, 5,535 persons, responded to the questionnaire. In 700 cases, this data included information about a trip to a vacation home.

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

All questions in the survey concerned activities during leisure time away from the permanent residence, and the concept 'spending time at a vacation home' was not strictly defined. The question was: 'Have you spent time at a summer cottage or a farm or a vacation home in the countryside during the past 12 months'. Camping was excluded from the concept 'spending time at a vacation home' by asking about it separately. Those who responded 'no' to this question are referred to below as 'non-participants'. We use the term 'vacation home' to refer to a number of different types of dwelling that are in the countryside and are suitable for regular use for recreational purposes. In addition, the respondents who said that they spent time at a vacation home were asked how many days per year they spent there. The concept 'vacation home trip' was defined as a nature trip whose main purpose was to stay at a vacation home and which entailed staying there overnight. Questions concerning well-being factors were focused to the respondent's most recent trip to a vacation home. Responses to these items were received from 72 respondents.

Categories of vacation home users

In addition to creating the category of 'non-participant' (NP), we placed vacation home users (VHU) into three categories based on number of days spent annually at the vacation home. 'Infrequent users' (IU) spent less than six days during the year at the vacation home, 'ordinary users' (OU) spent 6–30 days and the 'active users' (AU) spent more than 30 days per year there.

Analysis

First, logistic regression analysis (e.g. Hosmer and Lemeshow, 2000) has been used to explain participation and non-participation in vacation home use. Second, associations between participation in recreational activities in general and vacation home use and between background characteristics and vacation home use were analysed by χ^2 -test. In addition, multiple correspondence analysis (e.g. Greenacre, 1984) was used to create a general activity profile of the vacation home users. Third, analysis of variance and Tukey's multiple comparison tests were used to describe the differences of the well-being effects between the three categories.

RESULTS

Frequency of vacation home use

Fifty-six percent of Finns spend time at a vacation home. Almost half (45%) of the Finnish population have regular access to a vacation home (Pouta and Sievänen, 2001). Almost all people (86%) who had regular access to a vacation home also spent time there. Even 44% of people who did not have regular access to a vacation home spent time at one. A relatively large number of people visited the vacation home of a relative or a friend or rented a vacation home.

Factors affecting the use or non-use (non-participation) of a vacation home can be described with the help of a logistic regression model. The model in Table 1 shows that proportionally more

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

young people participated in vacation home use than middle-aged people. Participation in vacation home use increases with the level of education. As regards occupational status, the most active group of vacation home users consisted of administrative and clerical employees (over 60%), and the least active groups were farmers, entrepreneurs and students. A higher percentage of those who lived in bigger cities spent time at vacation home than of those who lived in the country. Spending time at a vacation home was more typical in southern Finland than elsewhere. Participation was more typical among those who had participated in many recreation activities.

Table 1. Logistic regression model for participation in vacation home use.

Variables	Coefficient	P-value	Odds Ratio
Constant	-2.314	0.000	
Age (reference category: under 35 years of age)			
Age 35–64	-0.159	0.006	0.853
Age 65–74	0.016	0.891	1.016
Socio-economic status (reference category: administrative and clerical employee)			
Pensioner	-0.149	0.107	0.862
Unemployed, domestic assistant or other	-0.211	0.009	0.810
Entrepreneur, farmer	-0.275	0.003	0.760
Labourer	-0.030	0.654	0.971
Student	-0.233	0.011	0.792
Education (reference category: lower university/polytechnic degree or upper university degree)			
Lower and upper secondary general	-0.263	0.015	0.769
Upper secondary vocational or vocational college	-0.126	0.209	0.882
Size of municipality of residence (reference category: $\geq 100\ 000$)			
<10 000	-0.854	0.000	0.426
10 000-99 999	-0.209	0.000	0.811
Recreational regions (reference category: southern Finland)			
eastern Finland	-0.250	0.000	0.779
western Finland	-0.021	0.748	0.979
northern Finland	-0.284	0.005	0.753
Number of hobbies * (reference category: ≥ 16)			
1–5	-2.796	0.000	0.061
6–10	-1.459	0.000	0.232
11–15	-0.757	0.000	0.469
N	10217		
Participation rate (%)	56.7		
Correctly classified (%; cut point 0.50)	70.2		
Log likelihood (model)	-5836.14		
Log likelihood (constant only)	-6937.51		
Likelihood ratio test (χ^2)	2202.75		
P-value	0.000		
Pseudo R ²	0.157		

*) Number of outdoor activities in which the informant had participated during the 12 months before the interview.

Finns spent on average 31 days per year at a vacation home. Half of the people who spent time at a vacation home spent more than two weeks there. According to the data, number of days spent at

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

a vacation home was related to respondents' age (F-test 320.97, p-value ≤ 0.000). Young people who spent time at a vacation home spent on average only 19 days per year, while middle-aged persons spent on average of 35 days per year at a vacation home. The oldest age group spent on average 63 days a year at a vacation home.

In the following section, vacation home users are classified into three groups according to the number of days spent at the vacation home during last 12 months. Of the respondents 10% were infrequent users (IU), 32% were ordinary users (OU) and 15% were active users (AU). In addition, the group of 43% non-participants (NP) was included in the following analysis.

Outdoor recreation activity profiles and vacation home use

Non-participants and the three groups of VHU differed distinctively in terms of their outdoor recreation participation patterns (Table 2). The most active group of VHU, the AU group, tended to prefer nature-based outdoor activities. The AU group was particularly active in picking wild berries and mushrooms, enjoying nature, boating in a small boat, forest work in leisure time, cross-country skiing and walking for pleasure. The activities in which the OU group participated most actively were swimming in natural waters, sunbathing, playing with children outdoors and snowmobiling. The IU group was most active in hunting, but also in many physically oriented sports such as running, bicycling, skating and downhill skiing. Non-participants represented the most passive outdoor recreationists compared to the three groups of VHU. The results of the correspondence analysis (figure 1) indicate the IU and OU groups were largely similar to each other in their outdoor activity interests, and that the AU group differed from the other two. An interpretation of the dimensions in the graph suggests that the characteristics of the activities in a scale 'sport or nature orientation' is seen vertically, and the horizontal dimension describes best the frequency of participation in outdoor activities.

Table 2. Participation in outdoor activities related to vacation home user groups.

	NP	IU	OU	AU	χ^2 -test statistic degrees of freedom 3	P-value
Activity	Participation rates in some outdoor activities %					
Hunting	6.8	9.0	8.46	7.75	10.06	0.018
Camping	6.9	16.4	18.4	9.0	281.82	0.000
Downhill skiing	10.6	21.1	23.3	15.1	249.05	0.000
Skating	14.2	24.1	27.4	16.7	237.69	0.000
Bicycling	50.0	60.7	60.3	54.2	100.20	0.000
Jogging	12.0	21.8	21.9	14.3	166.67	0.000
Sunbathing, picnicking etc.	40.9	58.9	62.3	48.7	392.07	0.000
Swimming	51.7	74.2	82.3	80.9	1019.89	0.000
Playing with children outdoors	8.2	16.0	18.6	14.9	196.36	0.000
Nature management work *)	27.2	32.8	40.8	61.7	631.99	0.000
Berry picking	48.8	51.9	57.4	73.4	298.21	0.000
Mushroom picking	31.8	30.2	39.6	59.0	399.54	0.000
Boating with small boat	23.7	44.0	54.8	64.4	1193.18	0.000
Enjoying nature	39.1	48.8	55.0	60.6	312.25	0.000
Fishing	31.8	45.9	55.9	64.2	721.19	0.000
Cross-country skiing	31.2	41.6	44.7	52.0	273.86	0.000
Walking for pleasure	62.5	68.3	72.3	77.4	156.22	0.000

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacationhomers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

*) Collecting small wood, forest work in leisure time, game management, management of meadows, growing plants in leisure time for domestic use, caring for domestic animals in nature.

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

Table 3. Socio-economic background characteristics of vacation home user groups and non-participants.

	NP	IU	OU	AU	χ^2 -test, degrees of freedom	P-value
Descriptive background characteristics in groups						
Age	middle aged, old	young	young, middle aged	middle aged, old	661.19, 6	0.000
Educational level	low	middle	middle, high	low, high	237.27, 6	0.000
Stage of life	later stages	earlier stages	earlier stages	later stages: older couples	454.02, 18	0.000
Type of municipality of residence	rural, suburban	rural	urban	urban	420.14, 6	0.000
Childhood residential environment	rural	rural, suburban	suburban	rural, urban	108.92, 15	0.000
Socio-economical status	pensioner, entrepreneur farmer	student	employee	pensioner employee	610.30, 15	0.000

The socio-economic background factors indicate that those in the AU group were older than other vacation home users on average, having either a high level of education or the lowest level of education compared to others (Table 3). They were more likely to be pensioners or employees, to belong to a family consisting of a couple aged 45 or over, and to have a primary residence in a city. It is noteworthy that those in the AU group were more likely to have spent their childhood either in the city or in a rural area compared to the other vacation home users. The IU group was in many ways quite different. The IU group were the youngest group of vacation home users. They had completed an upper secondary general education and were often still students. Many belonged to a family of small children or were singles or young couples. Many of them lived in the countryside and their childhood environment had been rural or suburban. The OU group were more likely to be young or middle-aged, to belong to a family with small children, to be employed and to have had a suburban childhood environment.

From the point of view of the socio-economic background factors typical of each vacation home group and the outdoor activities that were most common for those groups, the results of the study offer a clear picture. Infrequent users (IU) tended to be young people interested more in physically oriented outdoor activities, but also in some nature-oriented activities, such as camping. The OA group typically consisted of young or middle-aged people who have children in their families, as reflected in their outdoor activity preferences, such as sun bathing, swimming in natural waters and playing with children outdoors. They were most likely to spend most of their summer holidays at the vacation home with the family. Those in the AU group were generally pensioners or older couples with a lot of free time or long holidays, and they liked to spend a lot time there pursuing a variety of nature-related outdoor activities.

Well-being impacts of vacation home trip

All three groups of vacation home users had the same general perceptions of the well-being effects of a trip to a vacation home (Table 4). Active users placed more emphasis on health benefits and challenges, both emotional and physical, that they experience while staying at a the

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

vacation home. But it is also remarkable that the experiences related to being close to nature, to enjoying scenery, relaxation and to being together with others received similarly high ratings from all users, regardless of category.

Table 4. Perceived effects of well-being derived from a trip to vacation home.

	IU	OU	AU	F-test, p-value
Effects of well-being *)				
Chance to get close to nature	4.9	4.6	4.9	2.79, 0.069
Chance to enjoy the scenery	4.8	4.6	4.7	0.36, 0.701
Chance to escape noise and pollution	4.7	4.1	4.2	0.90, 0.411
Calmed, relaxed, served as a counterbalance to work	4.5	4.5	4.8	1.49, 0.234
Chance to exert and strain myself	2.5 A**	2.8 A	3.9 B	4.26, 0.018
Helped keep fit and healthy	3.0 A	3.4 A	4.3 B	4.73, 0.012
Helped escape the pressures of everyday life	4.3	4.2	3.8	0.88, 0.421
Offered a challenge and excitement	1.9 A	2.1 A	3.0 B	4.70, 0.012
Chance to be alone and in peace	2.4	2.6	3.4	2.26, 0.112
Got to be together with other people	4.6	4.1	3.7	1.82, 0.171
n	8	49	15	72

Range of measurement: 1=did not affect at all, ..., 5=had a strong effect

*) measurements, see Paronen, 2001.

**) Tukey's test: Different symbols (A and B) indicate that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5% risk level.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Spending time at a vacation home is an essential part of life both for many people who live in towns or cities and for many who live in the countryside. But, people living in cities, people with higher education and clerical and administrative employees are more likely to spend their holiday at a vacation home. As regards age, spending time at vacation home at least once a year is most typical among young people and least typical among those in the oldest age group. However, if older people participate, they tend to spend more time there.

Our goal here was to look at how vacation home users differ in terms of their outdoor activity patterns when the number of days spent at a vacation home annually is considered. Vacation home users were divided into infrequent users (IU), ordinary users (OU) and active users (AU).

Our results corresponded the general picture given of the activities and well-being effects of associated with vacation home use in previous studies (Venäläinen, 1989; Williams and Kaltenborn, 1999). In addition, however, some differences emerged between the user groups. Active users participated in many nature-based outdoor activities. These users were typically from a family of an older couple of employees with relatively high education and income level, although a noteworthy percentage of those in this category were among those with the least education. Many in the active users group seem to be people who are taking advantage of an opportunity to take time for their 'dream life' in the later stage of their lives. It is also remarkable that using a vacation home is not the exclusive privilege of wealthy people; many working class people also have access to a vacation home, which often can be an abandoned farmhouse, that is still suitable for use as a vacation home.

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation home users and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

Both of the subcategories belong to a generation that learned as children to pick berries and maintain vegetable gardens. In addition, such well-being effects as having challenging experiences and opportunities to engage in physical exertion as reported by this group are understandable, for many of these people reported that they engage in physically demanding activities at the vacation home, and that is perhaps the only time and the only place these older people do such things. The long time spent at the vacation home also seems to have an impact on their perceptions of health benefits.

Ordinary users participate actively in sports and nature-based outdoor activities, but they also engage in family-oriented outdoor activities as parents of children still at home. They are younger than the active users and are typically well-educated employees who are aware of their social status. They report many strong well-being effects of their visits to a vacation home, one of the most important being to escape from everyday life. They belong to the generation that is raising a family and establishing a career, but which also places a lot of value on leisure activities. They are to great extent people who may become active users in later life.

Infrequent users are typically young people, often students and singles, but many are also parents with small children. Their participation in outdoor activities is sports-oriented. Those of urban background may become active users later, but the rural youngsters may keep their habit of visiting vacation homes owned by friends or relatives, or just having a place to visit on day trips, as many rural people do.

This study suggests that a vacation home offers those who want to participate in nature-related outdoor activities a means to do so. Although white collar employees and their families constitute a large proportion of vacation home users, they are joined by others from different socio-economic backgrounds. It is obvious from this study that stage of life has a strong effect on how much time a person spends at the vacation home and that it plays an important role in the whole profile of outdoor activities and personal lifestyles.

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

REFERENCES

- Chaplin, D. (1999) 'Consuming work/productive vacation: the consumption patterns of second home environment', *Leisure Studies*, 18, 1, 41–55.
- Driver, B. (1983) 'Master list of Items for Recreation Experience Preference and Domains', Unpublished paper on file at the Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, U.S. Forest Service, Fort Collins, CO.
- Elder, G. H. Jr. (1975) 'Age Differentiation and the Life Course', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1, 165–190.
- Finnish Travel 2000 (2001), *Transport and Travel 2001:9*, Statistics Finland, 59 p.
- Free-time residences 2000 (2001). *Housing 2001:5*, Statistics Finland, 46 p.
- Greenacre, M. (1984) *Theory and applications of correspondence analysis*, London: Academic Press, 364 p.
- Hosmer, D. and Lemeshow, S. (2000) *Applied logistic regression*, 2nd edition, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 375 p.
- Jorgensen, B. and Stedman, R. (2001) 'Sense of place as an attitude: lakeshore owner's attitudes toward their properties', *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 21, 3, 233–248.
- Kasvio, A. (1982) 'Teollisuustyö ja elämäntapa (English summary: Industrial Work and Way of life)', *Acta Universitatis Tamperensis ser. A*, 134, 655 p.
- Paronen, O. (2001) 'Ulkoilun hyvinvointikokemukset ja esteet', in T. Sievänen (ed.) Luonnon virkistyskäyttö 2000 (Summary: Outdoor recreation 2000), *Metsäntutkimuslaitoksen tiedonantoja* 802, 100–111.
- Pouta, E. and Sievänen, T. (2001) 'Ulkoilutilastot' (Outdoor recreation statistics). in T. Sievänen (ed.) Luonnon virkistyskäyttö 2000 (Summary: Outdoor recreation 2000), *Metsäntutkimuslaitoksen tiedonantoja* 802, 207–335.
- Roos, J-P. (1981) 'Elämäntapojen tyypeistä elämänkertojen valossa', *Sosiologia*, 4, 297–306.
- Roos, J-P. (1983) 'Työaikakysymys, yhteiskunnan muutos ja elämäntapa', Työaikakomitean 1980:n mietinnössä liite 6, *Komiteanmietintö*, 69.
- Roos J-P. (2002) 'Life's turning points and generational consciousness', in G. Burkart- J. Wolf (eds.) *Lebenszeiten Erkundungen zur Soziologie der Generationen*, Leske und Budrich, 119–134.
- Roos, J-P. and Sicinski, A. (eds.) (1987) *Ways of Life in Finland and Poland*, Aldershot: Aveburg, 203 p.
- Sievänen, T. (ed.) (2001) Luonnon virkistyskäyttö 2000 (Summary: Outdoor recreation 2000), *Metsäntutkimuslaitoksen tiedonantoja* 802, 204 p. + appendices.

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). *Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II*, 27-30 June 2004

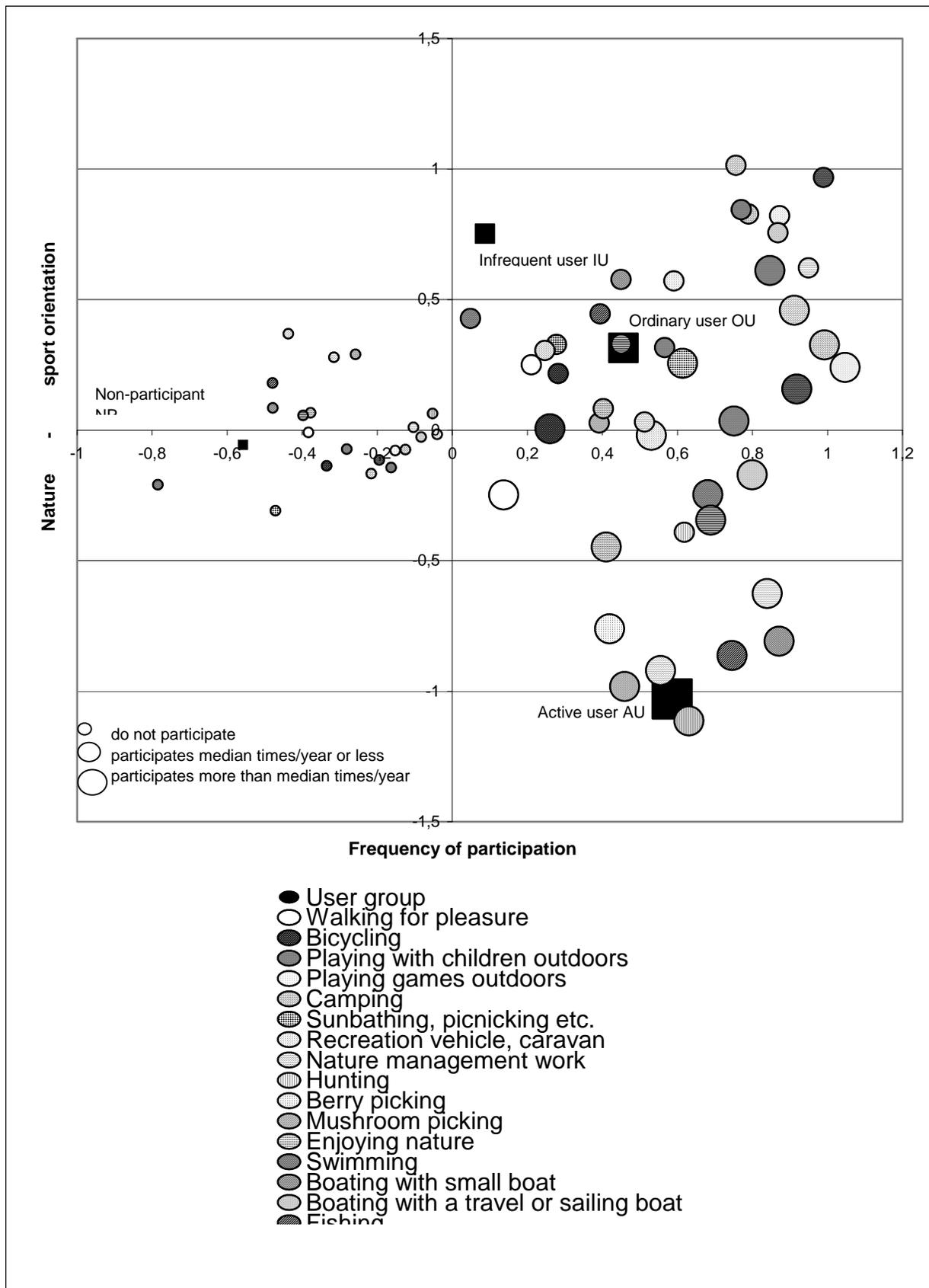
Williams, D. R., and Kaltenborn, B. P. (1999) 'Vacation places and modernity: The use and meaning of recreational cottages in Norway and the USA', in D. Crouch (ed.), *Leisure practices and geographic knowledge*, London: Routledge, 214–230.

Venäläinen, E. (1989) 'Onnelaan, kulisseihin, luontoon. Näytöksiä suomalaisesta kesämökkielämästä' (Scenes of Finnish Summer Cottage Life), *Department of Social Policy, University of Jyväskylä, Working Papers* n:o 57, 129 p.

Virtanen, V., Pouta, E., Sievänen, T. and Laaksonen, S. (2001) 'Luonnon virkistyskäytön kysyntätutkimuksen aineistot ja menetelmät' (The Data and the Methods), in T. Sievänen (ed.) *Luonnon virkistyskäyttö 2000* (Summary: Outdoor recreation 2000), *Metsäntutkimuslaitoksen tiedonantoja* 802, 19–31.

Vuorela, P. (1968) 'Sosiologinen huvilatutkimus Uudeltamaalta', (A Sociological Study of Villas in Uusimaa Province), *Department of Sociology, University of Helsinki, Research Papers* 114, 130 p.

Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation homers and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004



Sievänen, T., Pouta, E. & Neuvonen, M. 2004. Vacation home users and their recreation activity profiles. In: MacLellan, R., Baum, T., Goldsmith, A., Kokkranikal, J., Losekoot, E., Miller, S., Morrison, A., Nickson, D., Taylor, S. & Thopson, K. (eds.). Proceedings of Tourism: State of the Art II, 27-30 June 2004

Figure 1. Correspondence analysis of vacation home users and outdoor activities. The size of the circle describing different outdoor activities reflects frequency of participation.