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Quality-of-life Research in Tourism and Hospitality

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Introduction

The enterprise of tourism and hospitality has become a major global force because of its socio-economic and development implications. The nature of tourism research for both practical and theoretical reasons embodies the interplay of such constructs as sustainability, destination competitiveness and attractiveness, and the quality of life (QoL) of stakeholders as they are impacted by tourism (Uysal and Modica, 2017). Both the explicit and implicit assumptions of tourism have always been that tourism, as an industry, provides significant benefits to its stakeholders. The nature of these benefits, tangible and intangible, vary depending on the level of destination life cycle and its infrastructure development. Tourism activities also provide benefits for those who are not necessarily part of the production and consumption system of the tourism and hospitality enterprise in the form of economic benefits (e.g. tax, investment into improved infrastructure, education and health systems) to the host communities. In recent years, there has been accelerated research examining the assumed benefits and cost of tourism on the well-being of the different stakeholders (McCabe *et al.*, 2010; Uysal *et al.*, 2012a, 2012b, 2015, 2016; Woo *et al.*, 2018). This area of research in tourism is gaining momentum and is likely to receive more systematic attention in the years to come. Our scholarly research has long attempted to shed light on how to attract more visitors, how to get more people to stay at our hotels, dine at our restaurants, and influence the attitude and behaviour of our customers in general. Still, the critical research question that needs to be fully examined from both demand and supply sides of tourism is how tourism experiences relate to QoL of consumers and community residents – tourists are consumers of different tourism and hospitality goods and services at a destination, and community residents are people residing in local areas serving tourists (Jennings and Nickerson, 2006; Pearce *et al.*, 2010).

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Uysal *et al.* (2012b) argued that there are two models capturing the interplays of the tourism system. The first model examines the impact of tourist-related factors on the well-being of the tourist participants. The second model examines the impact of tourism-related factors on the well-being of residents of the host community and its different stakeholders, including providers of tourism goods and services. In these two nested models of the tourism system, tourists as consumers, service providers and community residents become the core components of the system, with reciprocal interactions between supply and demand. These interactions play a significant role on the total vacation experience. The models described by Uysal *et al.* (2012b) are helpful in understanding how the tourism system works, what benefits it has, how resources are allocated, and how marketing and management plans are developed and implemented.

QoL from the Perspective of Tourists

The first model addresses questions such as how tourists' experiences contribute to QoL, what are the tourists' characteristics mostly associated with tourists' well-being, what are trip characteristics that are likely to play a significant role in tourists' well-being, and what are the moderators and mediators involved in the abovementioned relationships (Uysal *et al.*, 2012a). Tourism characteristics refer to factors directly affecting the tourists. Research in this area tries to uncover individual differences in the way tourism affects QoL. Trip characteristics are factors directly related to trips, and can affect QoL either directly or indirectly. Both characteristics interact and help link tourist satisfaction with particular life domains or satisfaction with life in general (Uysal *et al.*, 2016). The main thrust of this model is incorporating tourist motivation with profile variables, QoL domains and overall QoL. Satisfaction with life domains and life overall are essentially the outcome variables. Much of the research in QoL treats QoL as the ultimate dependent variable (Sirgy, 2012). Our focus here is to identify tourism factors most likely to impact this dependent variable.

QoL from the Perspectives of Residents and Stakeholders

The second model deals with tourism research from the perspectives of host community residents. This model focuses on how residents see their living conditions (as a destination attraction) and how these living conditions impact their QoL (Uysal *et al.*, 2012b; Woo *et al.*, 2018). The nature of existing resources allocated for tourism also impacts community residents by influencing the economic conditions and infrastructure of the community. Community resources and infrastructure are key elements of tourism development. Thus an important research question is how to utilize and develop community resources for tourism development. Another key research question is how to manage these resources over time, once they are allocated. The answers to these questions have to involve the community stakeholders. Stakeholders are affected in different ways by tourists and therefore the challenge is to match stakeholder goals and objectives with planning and development of tourism projects. The model also takes into account the reciprocal interactions between perceived

living conditions and perceived impact of tourism among community residents. Research on tourism impact has a greater focus today on sustainability issues than ever. This is an intergenerational shift of theoretical perspective, from the perspective of how we utilize resources today to a perspective of how we can use our resources carefully and sustainably. Support from community residents is quintessential in this regard. This type of research should be well grounded in behavioural, socio-economic and development theories.

Recent Studies on Different Aspects of QoL

The accumulation of knowledge as reflected in academic journals and recent books supports the notion that there is a heightened interest in the study of QoL research in tourism and hospitality. Mainstream and aligned journals in the field of tourism and hospitality have witnessed an increased number of conceptual and empirical studies examining some aspect of QoL, further attesting to the increasing popularity and importance of this line of research. QoL research in tourism and hospitality has significant practical implications for policy and decision making (e.g. Richards, 1999; Andereck and Jurowski, 2006; Moscardo, 2009; McCabe *et al.*, 2010; McCabe *et al.*, 2011; Croes, 2012; Deery *et al.*, 2012; Kim *et al.*, 2013; McCabe and Johnson, 2013; Björk, 2014; Tuo *et al.*, 2014; Woo *et al.*, 2015; Uysal *et al.*, 2015; Filep *et al.*, 2016; Uysal *et al.*, 2016; Woo *et al.*, 2016; Sirgy *et al.*, 2017; Smith and Diekmann, 2017). Practitioners are becoming increasingly interested in understanding the science of QoL to help them develop better marketing and managerial policies and programmes designed to enhance QoL of their customers and employees as well as community residents.

From the perspective of tourism marketing, there is also shift away from emphasizing profit to emphasizing sustainability. The sustainability approach is a holistic, integrative view of marketing, taking into account social equity, environmental protection, and economic liveability (Jamrozy, 2007). While acknowledging the economic significance of QoL research, Sirgy and Uysal (2016) highlighted the value of such research in non-economic terms, such as QoL of a variety of stakeholders – wellness and happiness of tourists and patrons, conservation and environmental protection, well-being of host community residents, well-being of employees, to name a few. As destinations go through structural changes over time, the nature of behavioural responses of stakeholder groups to those changes also impacts management decision making and planning to mitigate possible adverse consequences arising from those changes and reinforce positive outcomes (Uysal *et al.*, 2012a). It is now well substantiated that tourism development and activities as an economic tool have the potential to enhance and improve the liveability and amenities of communities as destinations. QoL enhancement is the direct and indirect result of tourism activities.

Recently, we have also seen some case studies and best practices dealing with some aspects of tourism QoL research that have made their way into the academic arena. Examples include:

- tourist satisfaction and subjective well-being index (Saayman *et al.*, 2018);

- impact of festival and event attendance upon family QoL (Jepson and Stadler, 2017);
- place attachment and QoL in a national park setting (Ramkissoon *et al.*, 2017);
- impact of festivals and events on residents' well-being (Yolal *et al.*, 2016);
- effects of the wellness tourism experience (Luo *et al.*, 2017);
- leisure satisfaction of residents and quality-of-life perceptions for a fast-growing tourism destination: Macao (Liao *et al.*, 2016);
- happiness from the perspective of positive psychology and Chinese traditional culture (Liu, 2016);
- tourism participation and improvement in self-reported health among older people (Ferrer *et al.*, 2016);
- QoL and competitiveness within the framework of sustainability with respect to island destinations (Modica and Uysal, 2016, pp. 3–18);
- tourism area life cycle of Cuba and QoL (Beardsley, 2016);
- practice of responsible tourism and its contribution towards a better QoL in the case of the Langkawi Island communities (Hanafiah *et al.*, 2016);
- effects of destination social responsibility on residents' support for tourism development and QoL (Su *et al.*, 2016);
- satisfaction with life in the context of seasonal migrants in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas (Simpson *et al.*, 2016);
- linkages between tourism development and QoL and economic growth for the island of Aruba (Ridderstaat *et al.*, 2016);
- the relation between pathological gamblers as compared with non-gamblers and QoL in physical health, psychological well-being, social relationships and environment life domains in the case of participants from Macao and Australia (Loo *et al.*, 2016);
- residents' perceived QoL in a cultural-heritage tourism destination (Jeon *et al.*, 2016);
- holiday recovery experiences, tourism satisfaction and life satisfaction (Chen *et al.*, 2016);
- tourism development and happiness (Rivera *et al.*, 2016);
- how to improve QoL of residents and visitor experiences in 'Cittaslow' cities in Turkey (Hatipoglu, 2015);
- how participating in appreciative activities may influence life satisfaction (Bimonte and Faralla, 2015);
- enterprise growth and a good work–life relationship (Peters and Schuckert, 2014);
- QoL segmentation of youth market (Eusébio and Carneiro, 2014);
- healthy-living market segment and its motivational behaviour to spa-wellness facilities in Slovenia (Rančič *et al.*, 2014);
- the wine festival experience on tourists' QoL in Robertson, South Africa (Kruger *et al.*, 2013);
- vacation and well-being: a study of Chinese tourists (Chen *et al.*, 2013);
- leisure benefit systems and frontline employees' QoL and work-to-leisure conflicts (Lin *et al.*, 2013);
- alternative forms of tourism and the economics of happiness (Bimonte and Faralla, 2012);

- best practice in accessible tourism – inclusion, disability and an ageing population (Buhalis *et al.*, 2012);
- residents' QoL in Saudi Arabia (Khizindar, 2012);
- the effect of tourism upon QoL in Shiraz, Iran (Aref, 2011);
- segmentation of visitors based on perceptions of tourism impact on their QoL (João and Eusébio, 2011);
- the effects of tourism impacts on resident QoL – rural Midwestern communities in the USA (Chancellor *et al.*, 2011);
- vacation and happiness (Nawijn, 2011);
- community development and QoL (Yu *et al.*, 2016);
- the influence of tourism on Hungarian society perception of well-being and welfare (Ratz and Michalko, 2011);
- cultural tourism and QoL (Cecil *et al.*, 2010);
- lake wellness experience in the Finnish context, (Konu, 2010);
- tourism development and regional QoL in China (Meng *et al.*, 2010);
- hotel companies' contributions to improving the QoL in host communities and the well-being of their employees (Bohdanowicz and Zientara, 2009);
- QoL and social exchange paradigm in casino settings (Chhabra and Gursoy, 2009);
- measuring tourist satisfaction with QoL issues at an arts festival – the Aardklop National Arts Festival in Potchefstroom, South Africa (Kruger and Petzer, 2008);
- cultural tourism and QoL (Wang *et al.*, 2006);
- the influence of Lake Balaton's tourist milieu on visitors' QoL in Hungary (Rátz *et al.*, 2008);
- holiday taking and the sense of well-being (Gilbert and Abdullah, 2004);
- frequent-flyer relationship programmes and business travellers' QoL (Long *et al.*, 2003).

Why This Book?

As indicated, we have seen a significant number of empirical and conceptual studies that examine the assumed link between engaging in tourism activities and the well-being of stakeholders that are in the centre of the production and consumption of tourism goods and services. This line of research as reflected in both journals, books and research reports has brought the topic to the forefront of our research agenda to the point where we as researchers and practitioners of tourism providers would also benefit from examples of best practice managing QoL in tourism and hospitality.

Why is this important? As we make further progress toward our understanding of the assumed link between tourism/hospitality and the well-being of participants with differing roles, we also need to provide examples and solutions in terms of case studies and best practices. These examples and solutions can be transferred to similar settings, thus enabling practitioners to design, develop, and also practice and monitor appropriate plans of action in space and over time. The enterprise of tourism and hospitality is multifaceted with complex offerings and experience settings. And

tourism activities take place in different spheres of experience and are designed with different goals, targets and groups in mind. Thus, we believe that there is still ample opportunity to further generate knowledge on how QoL research is applied in different tourism and hospitality settings. The scope of such opportunities is huge. These opportunities translate to best practices and case studies encouraging emulation and replication. The current book attempts to do just that; namely, provide a vehicle to publish best practices and case studies for others to emulate and replicate.

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