



## Progress in Tourism Management

## Quality of life (QOL) and well-being research in tourism

Muzaffer Uysal <sup>a,\*</sup>, M. Joseph Sirgy <sup>b</sup>, Eunju Woo <sup>c</sup>, Hyelin (Lina) Kim <sup>d</sup><sup>a</sup> Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Pamplin College of Business, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, USA<sup>b</sup> Department of Marketing, Pamplin College of Business, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, USA<sup>c</sup> Department of Tourism Administration, College of Business Administration, Kangwon National University, Republic of Korea<sup>d</sup> William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV 89154-6021, United States

## H I G H L I G H T S

- Quality of life (qol) and well-being research in tourism.
- A short history of qol and tourism.
- Tourism and qol from the perspective of community residents.
- Tourism and qol from the perspective of community tourists.
- Future research direction and areas.

## A R T I C L E I N F O

## Article history:

Received 22 February 2015

Received in revised form

30 June 2015

Accepted 24 July 2015

Available online 24 August 2015

## Keywords:

Quality of life

Well-being

Tourism

Tourists' quality-of-life

Quality of life of community residents

## A B S T R A C T

Given the recent proliferation of the research on quality of life and wellbeing in tourism, we review this literature and provide guidance to spur future research. The review focuses on two major constituencies: residents of host communities and tourists. Specifically, the goals of this paper are (1) describe study findings, (2) highlight sampling and data collection methods, and (3) discuss issues of construct measurement. The vast majority of the studies related to these two constituencies show that tourism experiences and activities have a significant effect on both tourists' overall life satisfaction and wellbeing of residents. That is, tourists' experiences and tourism activities tend to contribute to positive affect in a variety of life domains such as family life, social life, leisure life, cultural life, among others. Future research is discussed in relation to these two constituencies.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Introduction

Tourism as an industry has become a major socioeconomic force in both developing and developed markets. Its potency as a source of economic development has made it essential to the strategic planning efforts in nearly every country in the world. There are few industries that transverse the entire globe bringing together many cultures. Today, the tourism industry is also faced with a plethora of challenges such as economic instability, recession and stagnation, social instability, war/terrorism, information technology and social media, environmental and sustainability issues, distribution of tourism benefits, and non-economic value of

tourism. There are evident ramifications of these challenges to the tourism industry, and we have seen a rich stream of research examining some aspects of these challenges. One of the research areas gaining momentum and increased attention is the link between tourism activities, its consequences, and the quality of life (QOL) of those involved in the production or consumption of tourism goods and services.

The link between tourism activities and their consequences is uniquely imbedded in the fully functioning tourism system. The nature of tourism research for both practical and theoretical reasons embody the interplay between such constructs as sustainability (Weaver, 2012), destination competitiveness and attractiveness (Boley & Perdue 2012; Crouch & Ritchie, 2012), and quality of life of stakeholders as they are affected by tourism (Chase, Amsde, & Phillips, 2012; Weiremaier & Peters, 2012). Although both the explicit and implicit assumption of tourism has been that tourism as an industry provides significant benefits to

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [samil@vt.edu](mailto:samil@vt.edu) (M. Uysal), [sirgy@vt.edu](mailto:sirgy@vt.edu) (M.J. Sirgy), [eunjuw3@vt.edu](mailto:eunjuw3@vt.edu) (E. Woo), [hyelin.kim@unlv.edu](mailto:hyelin.kim@unlv.edu) (H. Kim).

its stakeholders, there has been sporadic research that closely examines these assumed benefits and costs (e.g., Chase et al., 2012; Weiermair & Peters, 2012). This QOL research stream in tourism is gaining momentum and is likely to receive more attention in the years to come. For a long time, our scholarly research activities have attempted to shed light on how to attract more visitors and how to get more people to stay at our hotels and dine at our restaurants. In doing so, we have delved much into the study of consumer behavior to provide tangible answers to the practitioners. 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 one's quality of life. To address this issue, we make an attempt in this paper to develop an integrated theoretical framework to link tourists (who are consumers of different tourism and hospitality goods and services at a destination) and the community (with its different providers and stakeholders serving as a host to tourists). The paper ends with future research implications.

## 2. A short history of research on QOL and tourism

QOL research is an emerging field of study in the social, behavioral, environmental, and policy sciences over the last few decades. It is considered an offshoot of the social indicators movement first originated in economics and sociology. The impetus behind the social indicators movement is based on the premise that the traditional economic measures of societal development (e.g., GNP) cannot be equated with the more important indicators of development that capture subjective well-being (i.e., need satisfaction, life satisfaction, perceived QOL, happiness, or life fulfillment) (Sirgy, 2002). With the proliferation of social indicators research, a social science journal, *Social Indicators Research*, was established to fill this niche (now 35 years old and is multidisciplinary in its orientation). In the past two decades we have seen several major journals appearing in the field of quality of life studies: *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, *Quality of Life Research*, the *Journal of Positive Psychology*, and most recently, *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being*, *Health and QOL Outcomes*, *Psychology of Well-Being*, and the *Journal of Happiness & Well-Being*. The foundation of the International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies (ISQOLS; [www.isqols.org](http://www.isqols.org)), the International Society for Quality-of-Life Research (ISOQOL; [www.isoqol.org](http://www.isoqol.org)), and the International Positive Psychology Association (IPPA; [www.ippanetwork.org](http://www.ippanetwork.org)) were the propelling force for the introduction and success of these recent journals. Furthermore, Springer Publishers has developed an impressive array of book series related to QOL research. These include Social Indicators Research, Community Quality-of-Life Indicators, Handbooks of QOL Research, Best Practices in QOL, and Springer Briefs in QOL and Well-Being Research. In the area of leisure, recreation, and therapeutic recreation we have seen a number of studies that have explored some aspects of leisure life on well-being and life satisfaction (e.g., Driver, Brown, & Peterson, 1991; Eriksson, Rice, & Goodin, 2007; Ibrahim, 2008; Kaplan, 1979; Kleiber, 1999; Manning, 2010; Neulinger, 1981; Wang & Wong, 2014).

It should be noted that scholars working in this area use “QOL” and “well-being” interchangeably. There are objective and subjective dimensions of QOL or well-being. When scholars make reference to either QOL or well-being, they tend to allude to some objective dimension. For example, a community QOL or well-being is typically captured by objective measures of economic well-being (e.g., household income), leisure well-being (e.g., number of parks and recreational facilities per thousand inhabitants), environmental well-being (e.g., CO2 emissions), and health well-being (e.g., average life expectancy). However, when

researchers make specific reference to subjective aspects of QOL or well-being, they use specific psychological constructs such as subjective well-being, happiness, life satisfaction, perceived QOL, domain satisfaction, hedonic well-being, positive and negative affect, to name a few.

However, the first concerted effort related to QOL in tourism was the special issue of *Journal of Business Research* (vol. 44, issue 3, 1999) which was guest edited by Professor Kaye Chon covering a variety of topics on both tourists- and community-QOL issues. Since then we have seen a tremendous growth in QOL research in tourism journals, and some books, dissertations and theses that also addressed QOL issues in tourism and hospitality management.

One of the first books that exclusively dealt with wellness and QOL issues in tourism (hospitality) is the book, *Health and Wellness Tourism*, authored by Smith & Puczko (2009). The same authors released their second edition in 2014 with an expanded version of the book titled *Health, Tourism and Hospitality: Spas, Wellness and Medical Travel*. The most comprehensive book on QOL and tourism to date, edited by Uysal, Perdue, and Sirgy, is *Handbook of Tourism and Quality-of-Life Research: Enhancing the Lives of Tourists and Residents of Host Communities*, published by Springer in 2012. There are some other books that also touch on some aspects of QOL issues and tourism experiences. Examples include the book by Budruk & Phillips (2011), *Quality of Life Community Indicators for Parks Recreation and Tourism Management*; Bushell & Sheldon (2009), *Wellness and Tourism: Mind, Body, Spirit, Place*; Jennings & Nickerson (2006), *Quality Tourism Experiences*; Payne, Ainsworth, & Godbey (2010), *Leisure, Health, and Wellness: Making the Connections*; Pearce, Filep, & Ross (2010), *Tourists, Tourism and the Good Life*; and Prebensen, Chen, and Uysal (2014), *Creating Experience Value in Tourism*. The recent appearances of these works signal and support the notion that QOL research has made significant inroads in the scholarly tourism literature and is gaining increasing momentum.

### 2.1. Setting the stage

If we trace the product concept from the early 1950s to the service concept in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and the experience economy in the 1990s, it seems that there is a natural progression from the experience economy to extraordinary, meaningful, and co-creation of experiences. How that progression affects both the conception of tourism and individual well-being and overall life satisfaction is an important, but relatively under researched, research question (Uysal, Perdue, & Sirgy, 2012; Uysal, Sirgy, & Perdue, 2012; Uysal, Woo, & Singal, 2012). Furthermore, there is an increasing focus on the value of tourism as a tool for social and economic policy. Perdue, Tyrrell and Uysal (2010) argue that the value of tourism has transitioned to focus more on non-economic measures such as QOL and satisfaction, and that there has recently been an increased focus on abstract forms of value such as perceived QOL, wellness, sense of well-being, and sustainability. The effectiveness of tourism to facilitate and support QOL policy imperatives such as poverty reduction in host communities, revitalization of community heritage and culture, preservation and protection of cultural and natural resources, and sustainability is an increasingly important research agenda. The long-term objective is to both provide for quality touristic experiences, avoid excessive exploitation of resources, and promote preservation for future generations. This implies that QOL research must focus on the QOL of both current and future generations. It is clear that we are at the juncture of tourism research that requires innovation and creation in the way we examine issues, provide experiences, and develop policy implications.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1011830>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1011830>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)