

International Handbooks of Quality-of-Life
Series Editor: M.J. Sirgy

Muzaffer Uysal
Richard R. Perdue
M. Joseph Sirgy *Editors*

Handbook of Tourism and Quality-of-Life Research

Enhancing the Lives of Tourists and
Residents of Host Communities

 Springer

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Editors

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and Residents of Host Communities

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Editors

Muzaffer Uysal
Department of Hospitality and
Tourism Management
Pamplin College of Business
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Blacksburg, VA 24061
USA
samil@vt.edu

Richard R. Perdue
Department of Hospitality and
Tourism Management
Pamplin College of Business
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Blacksburg, VA 24061
USA
perduer@vt.edu

M. Joseph Sirgy
Department of Marketing
Pamplin College of Business
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Blacksburg, VA 24061
USA
sirgy@vt.edu

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Foreword

A Nice Place to Live is a Nice Place to Visit

Of journeying the benefits are many: the freshness it bringeth to the heart,.... (Persian poet Saadi). Every now and then go away, have a little relaxation,...[when back], your judgment will be surer... (Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci). You will come back from your trip, measuring it not in hours or in miles traveled, but in its happiness-value (American poet T. S. Eliot)

Through time, past savants of both East and West have written eloquently on travel and its many benefits, all enriching one's quality-of-life. Meanwhile commoners, in millions, (knowingly or not) have been experiencing these acclaimed values, as is apparent from their globe-trotting patterns. With this vast spreading, travel became tourism – indeed, a giant industry worldwide – and later its practice a popular field of investigation. Significantly, this growth and shifting pattern took place mainly recently: the amassing of tourism after World War II and its scientification during the last two decades. Within the latter period, countless studies on tourism's structure and function poured out. Now, libraries of articles, books, and references later, with over 100 academic journals continuously publishing the latest, along with thousands of universities everywhere offering bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. degrees in tourism, still the age-old claims of the savants about the benefits of travel are unsubstantiated. While financial gains from tourism are known, its sociocultural values to the host and guest populations and its contributions to their quality-of-life are only among emerging questions, with many still unasked.

This academic volume, *Handbook of Tourism and Quality-of-Life Research*, with its appropriate subtitle, *Enhancing the Lives of Tourists and Residents of Host Communities*, is edited by three well-established scholars in our field: Muzaffer Uysal, Richard R. Perdue, and Joseph Sirgy. Featuring contributions submitted by authors ranging from iconic to emerging, it takes important strides in claiming and advancing our knowledge on this new research theme. It surveys what is known about tourism and quality-of-life and, significantly, signals what lies ahead. This contribution is both timely and important.

Generally speaking, in the past, one lived to work, while today people work to live. Also, until some years ago, when people got old, the rest was used to prepare for dying. Today, they want to live and live it up. These two practice and behavior shifts connect directly with tourism in at least two ways. One, people in addition to seeking better quality-of-life at home, expect the same – if not more – when on the move, seeking enriched experience, with “experience” becoming a popular research and practice focus in itself. Two, residents of host destinations expect better quality-of-life also through tourism nested in their communities.

For me the subject of quality-of-life and tourism goes back to the 1980s. First, along with several other colleagues, I was engaged in a longitudinal project studying the relationship between tourism and host communities in several countries. This so-called Vienna Center survey was carried out twice within 5 years. The study sought, among other things, to determine the attitude of the host communities in almost all European countries. The findings of the first round indicated that the relationship was unsettled, with the second round suggesting that their attitude had shifted in favor of tourism. In general, the host communities appeared more receptive to tourism due to its socioeconomic qualities, but without connecting these to what is called quality-of-life today. Somewhat independent from this study, toward the end of the decade, I chaired the plenary session of a conference, held in Poland, which dealt with tourism and lifestyle. Again, “quality-of-life” was not used then; but the idea that tourism enriches the lives of those who participate in it was in focus. Later, in the 2000s, I was one of the organizers of a conference on tourism and wellness, held in Mallorca, Spain. Its coverage more closely connected to the context of the ongoing discourse. This conference was followed with another in Mallorca; this one focusing on community-based branding, with the host’s quality-of-life brought to the surface. Both conferences resulted in books covering their respective subject areas. Based on these four examples, the topic has certainly evolved. But past attempts across the field have been narrow and sporadic. This handbook marks a change in favor of engaged systematic and cumulative treatment of the quality-of-life subject, for all tourism stakeholders (not tourists only), as well as for the diverse theoretical and practical ramifications it can offer.

As the handbook states, it has two principal goals. First, it aims to provide a platform for scholars to explore the linkage between tourism activities and quality-of-life for tourists and, significantly, residents of host communities, as well as the well-being of the workforce engaged in this industry. Its second aim is to lead the relationship between tourism and quality-of-life to new research questions, to plant seeds in fertile scholarly grounds, and to direct the subject to new frontiers of understanding. In this fashion, the handbook initiates and maps new paradigms of research and scholarship on the topic and in the field of tourism in general.

Subjects and dimensions explored in this 38-chapter volume are all important, but as a cultural anthropologist I pick one: the relationship between tourism and the quality-of-life of its host community. While the host community focus goes back to the early 1970s, sparked by anthropologist Valene Smith, the mainstream topics have dealt with impacts of tourism on culture and heritage mainly, including attitudes of host communities. The question of the relationship between quality-of-life and tourism is of more recent vintage. And this is precisely one of the strong footholds and the advocating strength of this handbook: taking the lead in promoting a major shift in tourism studies.

The bulk of past investigations, particularly those springing from business, management, and marketing perspectives, were tourist-centered: what tourists want to see and do, how to attract them, how to satisfy them, how to retain them, how to adjust tourism products to their liking, and the like. Tourists have been in the center, as the king, with all else in place to respond to the guest (“who is always right”), to be understood and satisfied. Recognizing that the throne is lodged in someone else’s territory has typically been alien to most studies, but not so to the present handbook. What an appraisal on behalf of the silenced host population, their culture and heritage, their environment, their quality-of-life! This is actually the way tourism should have been viewed and treated all along: home-inspired, home-based, home-grown, and home-delivered. This has been a position promoted by some socioculturally inclined scholars since the early 1970s, but now is orchestrated by the same and other researchers in this landmark publication.

With this extensive volume, the above perspectives find a grounded foundation or platform. Yes, tourism should, among other things, improve the quality-of-life of all its stakeholders; and now gears shift, firmly placing the host community and its quality-of-life into a thematic focus. “A nice place to live is a nice place to visit” is a theme that I have been advocating in recent

conferences. A community which is enriched and satisfied attracts tourists who in turn are satisfied with their visits, catered by satisfied people serving them, for improved quality-of-life for all stakeholders. Participation and cooperation of the private and public is the key, starting with the willingness of the host to become host. A destination which delivers poor quality-of-life to its own residents cannot sustain offering high-quality tourism experience. A destination which is concerned with per capita happiness of its residents has a better chance to increase tourists' per capita expenditure, while providing them with valued experience, something that today's tourists seek – something that can spring only from the local hospitality which the tourism industry “packages” in the name of the community. With informed public/private community-based policies and with locally supported/empowered hospitality experience, quality-of-life for all can be advanced – for the present and future generations of the host and guest populations.

While I have singled out the host community and its quality-of-life as a theme, this should not be understood out of context. Indeed the book covers economic, sociocultural, health, environmental, as well as quality-of-life effects. These and other aspects discussed within its covers are significant, as no dimension of tourism can be viewed in isolation. It is this diachronic and holistic treatment which has led tourism to its present frontiers of knowledge and will continue to be its driving force as the search reaches for inner layers, in themselves and in relation to the total environments in which tourism is sustained. And it is this broader and deeper perspective which 68 multidisciplinary authors from around the world have brought to life in this landmark tome – signaling tourism's homecoming.

Founding President
Department of Hospitality and Tourism, School of Home Economics
University of Wisconsin at Stout
113 Heritage Hall, Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751 USA
Jafari@uwstout.edu

Jafar Jafari

Contents

1 Prologue: Tourism and Quality-of-Life (QOL) Research: The Missing Links	1
Muzaffer Uysal, Richard R. Perdue, and M. Joseph Sirgy	
Part I Tourism and QOL	
2 Relationships and the Tourism Experience: Challenges for Quality-of-Life Assessments	9
Philip L. Pearce	
3 Positive Psychology and Tourism	31
Sebastian Filep	
4 The Role of Qualitative Methods in Tourism QOL Research: A Critique and Future Agenda	51
Vincent P. Magnini, John B. Ford, and Michael S. LaTour	
5 Poverty Elimination Through Tourism Dynamics	65
Manuel Vanegas, Sr.	
6 Tourism, Poverty Relief, and the Quality-of-Life in Developing Countries	85
Robertico Croes	
7 Tourism and Quality-of-Life: How Does Tourism Measure Up?	105
Janne J. Liburd, Pierre Benckendorff, and Jack Carlsen	
Part II QOL from the Perspectives of Tourists	
8 Tourist Consumption Behavior and Quality-of-Life	135
Ruhet Genç	
9 Subjective Aspects of Tourists' Quality-of-Life (QOL)	149
Ruhet Genç	
10 Medical Travel and the Quality-of-Life	169
Erik Cohen	

11	Physical, Psychological, and Social Aspects of QOL Medical Tourism	193
	Ruhet Genç	
12	Place Affinities, Lifestyle Mobilities, and Quality-of-Life	209
	Daniel R. Williams and Norman McIntyre	
13	Tourist Motivation and Quality-of-Life: In Search of the Missing Link	233
	Graham M.S. Dann	
14	Understanding the Antecedents of Destination Identification: Linkage Between Perceived Quality-of-Life, Self-Congruity, and Destination Identification	251
	M. Mithat Üner and Can Armutlu	
15	An Analysis of Tourism QOL Domains from the Demand Side	263
	László Puczkó and Melanie Smith	
16	Perceptions of Tourism Impacts and Satisfaction with Particular Life Domains	279
	Philippus Stephanes (Stefan) Kruger	
17	Quality-of-Life and Travel Motivations: Integrating the Two Concepts in the Grevillea Model	293
	Sara Dolnicar, Katie Lazarevski, and Venkata Yanamandram	
18	Relational Tourism: Observations on Families and Travel	309
	Jay A. Mancini, Deepu V. George, and Bryce L. Jorgensen	
19	Impacts of the Internet on Travel Satisfaction and Overall Life Satisfaction	321
	Soo Hyun Jun, Heather J. Hartwell, and Dimitrios Buhalis	
Part III QOL from the Perspectives of Residents		
20	Cultural Tourism and the Enhancement of Quality-of-Life	341
	Bob McKercher and Pamela Ho	
21	Heritage, Tourism and Quality-of-Life	359
	Gregory J. Ashworth and John E. Tunbridge	
22	Ethnic Tourism and Resident Quality-of-Life	373
	Li Yang and Xiang (Robert) Li	
23	Alternative Tourism as a Contestable Quality-of-Life Facilitator	389
	David Weaver	
24	Building Social Capital to Enhance the Quality-of-Life of Destination Residents	403
	Gianna Moscardo	
25	The Tourist Area Life Cycle (TALC) and Its Effect on the Quality-of-Life (QOL) of Destination Community	423
	Muzaffer Uysal, Eunju Woo, and Manisha Singal	
26	Relationship Between Carrying Capacity of Small Island Tourism Destinations and Quality-of-Life	445
	Deborah L. Kerstetter and Kelly S. Bricker	

27	Quality-of-Life Values Among Stakeholders in Tourism Destinations: A Tale of Converging and Diverging Interests and Conflicts	463
	Klaus Weiermair and Mike Peters	
28	Stakeholder Engagement in Tourism Planning and Development	475
	Lisa C. Chase, Benoni Amsden, and Rhonda G. Phillips	
29	Destination Competitiveness and Its Implications for Host-Community QOL	491
	Geoffrey I. Crouch and J.R. Brent Ritchie	
30	Destination Management, Competitiveness, and Quality-of-Life: A Review of Literature and Research Agenda	515
	B. Bynum Boley and Richard R. Perdue	
31	Destination Management and Quality-of-Life	529
	Ige Pirnar and Ebru Günlü	
32	Community Participation in Tourism Planning and Development	547
	Amir Shani and Abraham Pizam	
33	The Role of Tourism in Sustainable Communities	565
	Timothy J. Tyrrell and Robert J. Johnston	
34	Exploring the Causal Nexus of Tourism Impacts on Quality-of-Life	583
	Jeffrey Michael Rempel	
35	Rural Tourism and Second Home Development: The Case of Colorado	607
	Patrick Long, Mick Ireland, Derek Alderman, and Huili Hao	
36	The Effect of Tourism on the Housing Market	635
	Bianca Biagi, Dionysia Lambiri, and Alessandra Faggian	
37	Resident Quality-of-Life in Gaming Communities	653
	Patricia A. Stokowski and Minkyung Park	
 Part IV Epilogue		
38	The Missing Links and Future Research Directions	669
	Muzaffer Uysal, M. Joseph Sirgy, and Richard R. Perdue	
Index		685

Editors

Muzaffer Uysal

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, USA



Muzaffer Uysal is a professor of tourism (Ph.D., Texas A&M University), Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech). He has extensive experience in the travel and tourism field, authoring or co-authoring a significant number of articles in tourism, hospitality, and recreation journals, proceedings, book chapters, and four monographs, and four books related to tourism research methods, tourist service satisfaction, tourism and quality-of-life, and consumer psychology in tourism and hospitality settings. He also has conducted workshops and seminars on similar topics and field research in several countries. He is a member of *International Academy for the Study of Tourism*, *the Academy of Leisure Sciences*, and serves as co-editor of *Tourism Analysis: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. In addition, he sits on the editorial boards of several journals, including *Journal of Travel Research*, and *Annals of Tourism Research* as resource editor. He also received a number of awards for Research, Excellence in International Education, and Teaching Excellence. His current research interests center on tourism demand/supply interaction, tourism development, and QOL research in tourism.

Richard R. Perdue

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, USA



Richard R. Perdue is a professor of tourism (Ph.D., Texas A&M University), and head of the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech). He is an elected fellow, board chair, and past president of the International Academy for the Study of Tourism. Additionally, he currently serves as editor of the *Journal of Travel Research* which is widely recognized as one of the premier scholarly journals in tourism. He is also currently on the board of directors of the Travel and Tourism Research Association and on the editorial boards of three other tourism research journals. He has published extensively in the tourism scholarly literature, including numerous articles, proceedings, book chapters, and one book examining consumer psychology in tourism and hospitality settings. Over the past three decades, much of his research has focused on the effects of tourism development. His current research focuses on consumer behavior and sustainable development of tourism in rural, resort settings.