

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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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.

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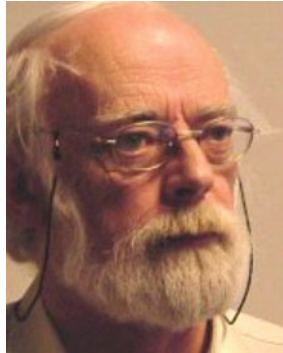
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Ruhet Genç is chairman and associate professor at Istanbul Bilgi University, Laureate Universities in İstanbul. He is also a director of three predominant touristic entities and the advisor of some major logistics companies in Turkey. He has three books in Turkish namely, *International Hotel & Restaurant Management in Relation with Human*, *Concepts and Methods of Professional Manager*, and *Concepts and Methods in Logistics and Supply Chain Management*. His business and international connections make him to live and work in three different continents, namely Asia (China, South Korea, and Taiwan), Europe (Turkey and Germany), and North America (Canada and the USA). By doing so, he is able to look at the tourism and logistics sectors from different angles. He values very much cultures where he can discover new synergies with the business and academic arena. His research interests include cross-cultural values of tourism and different aspects of tourist behavior.