

Community based sustainable tourism: Quality of life as perceived by residents in tourism destinations

Yvette Reisinger & Kwang-Soo Park °*

* Temple University, USA, yvette.reisinger@temple.edu

° Temple University, USA, kspark@temple.edu

Introduction

This paper explores the concept of quality of life (QOL) as perceived by residents in tourism destinations and examines differences in perceptions of QOL among culturally different destinations. The perceived QOL of local community is an important factor that should be considered in planning, developing and managing tourism in order to achieve long run prosperity and sustainability of the industry (Ritchie & Inkari, 2006). The industry must take into account the residents' perceptions of QOL when developing sustainable tourism practices (Mattson, 1990). Carefully planned and well-developed and organized tourist destinations can benefit area residents, add to the richness of their experiences and make their life more meaningful. Sustainable tourism can provide local people and businesses with quality life and growth.

The paper draws on theories of QOL to develop a conceptual framework and research approach for examining the perceived QOL of residents in tourism destinations and its relationship to support for tourism. The paper begins with a discussion of the concept of QOL, and then examines the factors that contribute to QOL, the impacts of the perceived benefits and costs of tourism development on residents' perceptions of QOL and support for tourism. The paper also examines differences in the perceived QOL of residents and support for tourism development among culturally different destinations. The authors argue that QOL and support for tourism vary depending on different importance attached by residents to socio-cultural, historic, environmental, and economic values. These discussions are offered to establish the need for systematic enquiry in this area, and are followed by a detailed presentation of a research rationale and conceptual model in which key variables and proposed relationships are discussed, measurement issues are addressed, and implications for research are given.