



## Tourism and wellbeing

Melanie Kay Smith<sup>a,b,c,\*</sup>, Anya Diekmann<sup>d</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Budapest Metropolitan University, School of Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality, Nagy Lajos kiraly utja 1-9, 1148 Budapest, Hungary

<sup>b</sup> Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Sociology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary

<sup>c</sup> University of Tartu Pärnu College, Estonia

<sup>d</sup> Université libre de Bruxelles, av. Franklin Roosevelt 50, CP 130/02, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 13 December 2016

Revised 10 May 2017

Accepted 18 May 2017

#### Keywords:

Wellbeing

Happiness

Hedonic

Eudaimonic

Self

Tourist experience

### ABSTRACT

Wellbeing has been a philosophical and sociological concern since the beginning of time, and research has extended over time to disciplines such as psychology, health sciences and economics to name just a few. Tourism studies has also become more focused on wellbeing in the last few decades, both from a theoretical and methodological perspective. After examining the philosophical background of wellbeing from different perspectives, the paper takes a closer look at how these frameworks can inform tourism research and practices. It explores the relationship between diverse terminologies and perspectives as well as the ways in which hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing can be derived through tourism experiences. A spectrum and a model are proposed which outline the relationship between various types of wellbeing, tourism and activities.

© 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## Introduction

Wellbeing is one of the buzzwords of the decade and is omnipresent in almost all discourse relating to human daily life and activities. A keyword search for the word wellbeing will generate over a million articles in any common academic search engine. Alexandrova (2012) estimated that wellbeing has become one of the most popular keywords in all psychological articles, not to mention being thoroughly entrenched in social and medical science. Wellbeing has been a philosophical and sociological concern since the beginning of time, especially for key thinkers and academics. Philosophers throughout history have examined human life satisfaction and the meaning of happiness. This search for an understanding of human wellbeing has extended over time to disciplines such as psychology, health sciences and economics to name just a few. Being by nature multidisciplinary, tourism studies has also become more focused on wellbeing in the last few decades, both from a theoretical and methodological perspective.

Tourism studies began to focus on wellbeing through a broad range of terms partially inspired by philosophy as well as psychology, such as 'quality of life' and 'life satisfaction' (e.g. de Bloom et al., 2010; Dolnicar, Yanamandram, & Cliff, 2012; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Hoopes & Lounsbury, 1989; Neal, Sirgy, & Uysal, 1999; Neal, Sirgy, & Uysal, 2004; Neal, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2007; Pearce, Filep, & Ross, 2010; Richards, 1999; Sirgy, 2010; Sirgy, Kruger, Lee, & Yu, 2011; Uysal, Perdue, & Sirgy, 2012), 'happiness' (e.g. Filep & Deery, 2010; Nawijn, Marchand, Veenhoven, & Vingerhoets, 2010, and Nawijn, 2011a; 2011b),

\* Corresponding author at: Budapest Metropolitan University, School of Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality, Nagy Lajos kiraly utja 1-9, 1148 Budapest, Hungary.

E-mail addresses: [msmith@metropolitan.hu](mailto:msmith@metropolitan.hu) (M. Kay Smith), [anya.diekmann@ulb.ac.be](mailto:anya.diekmann@ulb.ac.be) (A. Diekmann).

and 'wellness' (Bushell & Sheldon, 2009; Kelly, 2010; Kelly, 2012; Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczkó, 2009; Voigt, Brown, & Howat, 2011; Voigt & Pforr, 2013). However, research in this field is still in its relative infancy. For example, in their extensive literature review of the health and wellness benefits of travel experiences, Chen and Petrick (2013) identified only 98 resources which were considered theoretically, empirically and practically relevant, and the majority of these were fairly recent. Pyke, Hartwell, Blake, and Hemingway (2016) note that the concept of wellbeing has been used sparsely in relation to tourism. Debates are still ongoing about how best to define the ways in which tourism contributes to the positive experience of both tourists and local residents alike. An examination of the philosophical understandings underpinning wellbeing can contribute to a deeper understanding of tourism as a phenomenon, especially insofar as it relates to motivation for, and participation in more meaningful, transformational or eudaimonic tourist experiences.

The aim of the paper is to look critically at the different concepts of wellbeing and how they inform tourism research and practices without however, pretending to be exhaustive. For example, this study does not integrate extensive research from public health and medical sciences which examine the benefits of travel for people with health problems (e.g. Gump & Matthews, 2000; Pols & Kroon, 2007; Strauss-Blasche, Reithofer, Schobersberger, Ekmekcioglu, & Marktl, 2005). Pyke et al. (2016) already explored in some detail the relationship between wellbeing and public health in the context of tourism.

Recognising the complexity and the various perspectives and approaches of wellbeing, the authors choose to focus in this paper on the impacts of tourist experiences on both the short-term and long-term mental or physical wellbeing of tourists. Other relevant topics such as the impacts of tourism on the wellbeing of local residents has been explored far more extensively in the tourism field. Sharpley (2014) dates the 'host-guest' literature back to the 1960s and suggests that it has been one of the most researched subjects in tourism studies, and more recently, authors have placed emphasis on the 'host gaze' and 'happy hosts' (e.g. Deery, Jago, & Fredline, 2012; Ivlevs, 2016; Moufakkir & Reisinger, 2012; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Reisinger, 2015; Sharpley, 2014; Woo, Kim, & Uysal, 2015).

Moreover, the extensive literature on sustainable tourism and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) has not been included, despite recognising their great significance for developing ethical and responsible forms of tourism which enhance the wellbeing of destinations and their residents. It is also acknowledged that there is an emerging body of literature on (Cultural) Ecosystem Services which is partly focused on human wellbeing, but the connections to tourism have so far been under-explored with a couple of exceptions (e.g. Smith & Ram, 2016; Willis, 2015).

It is also important to note that the approach to wellbeing studies in this paper is predominantly western-centric. It traces theories of wellbeing back to Ancient Greek and European philosophy and American humanistic and positive psychology. This is perhaps inevitable given the (still) essentially western-centric nature of tourism, but it is recognised that wellbeing could, for example, also be approached through the notions of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Sufism as discussed by Joshanloo (2014). In the future, research may focus more on the tourism experiences of Asian travellers with regard to wellbeing generating very different perspectives and approaches. At present, the emphasis in wellness tourism, for example, is still very much centred on western tourists' experience of Eastern holistic (body, mind, spirit) experiences (e.g. Kelly, 2012; Kelly & Smith, 2016; Reisinger, 2013; Smith, 2013; Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczkó, 2013).

In summary, the paper examines the inter-relationships between wellbeing and tourism including philosophical and psychological approaches drawing on multi-disciplinary literature, definitional and research challenges, and proposes a spectrum and a model which outline the relationship between various types of wellbeing, destinations and tourism experiences.

### *The philosophy of wellbeing and its relationship to tourism*

Although there exists something like a science of wellbeing, which is mainly informed by research in psychology and economics, there is no unanimous definition of wellbeing (Carlisle, Henderson, & Hanlon, 2009) and the multiplicity of theory has led to a blurred and overly broad definition (Jayawickreme, Forgeard, & Seligman, 2012). Crisp (2016) defines wellbeing in the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy as being used to describe what is non-instrumentally good for a person. Carlisle et al. (2009) see wellbeing as a collateral causality of many social, cultural and economic changes associated with the period roughly recognised as high, late or liquid modernity connecting it to the moral value system of modern society. Crisp (2016) considers that the question of wellbeing is of independent interest, but is also of great importance in moral philosophy, especially in the case of utilitarianism. Utilitarian philosophers, such as Stuart Mill and Bertrand Russell agreed with Aristotle that subjective feelings of happiness are not the ultimate target (Ryff & Singer, 2008). They would maintain that the greatest number of people should benefit from, or derive happiness from a morally good action (Bentham, 1789; Mill, 1863). The relevance of utilitarian philosophy to tourism development, especially quality of life research is perhaps self-evident, in that it should advocate creating the maximum benefits for the greatest number of people. Theories of sustainability increasingly attempt to embrace notions of utilitarianism in wellbeing which mean developing destinations which create the greatest number of benefits for the greatest number of people within the limits of the earth's resources. The ideal form of tourism development would be a utilitarian one which does not compromise the wellbeing of local people. Philosophy may not be a convincing enough argument for many tourists to act altruistically, but Aristotle believed that he could defend the virtuous choice as always being in the interest of the individual. For him, virtue both tends to advance the good of others, and (at least when acted on) advances one's own good.

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

**ISIArticles**  
مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلید کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات