EXPLORING RESIDENT AWARENESS OF CULTURAL TOURISM AND ITS IMPACT ON QUALITY OF LIFE

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Abstract

Indianapolis has dedicated considerable public investment and focused public policy efforts on the development of cultural tourism during the past several years. A city-wide cultural tourism initiative in 2002 set sights on positioning Indianapolis as a premier cultural tourism destination. The initiative's two objectives were to improve the quality of life for Indianapolis residents and to enhance the visitors' experience by showcasing the city's cultural amenities and attributes. The goal of this study was to chronicle the impact of the initiative over a period of two years. In 2004, a baseline index was reported that determined the relationship between the level of resident awareness of the initiative and their quality of life rating. The same instrument, based on a three-dimensional model developed by Raphael, Steinmetz, and Renwick (1998), was again administered in 2006 to determine changes in the residents' awareness of the initiative and their quality of life score.

Keywords: *cultural tourism, quality of life, Indianapolis*

Introduction

Many cities increasingly see cultural tourism as a driver of future economic growth. However, the full picture of the impact of cultural tourism on a city's quality of life is not always well understood. The quality of life of an urban population is an important concern in achieving economic prosperity through tourism development, and Indianapolis is no exception. There are many components involved in measuring a city's quality of life. A large part is the standard of living for residents, and the amount of money and access to goods and services. These statistics are easily measured. Other statistics that attempt to measure alternative dimensions of urban living, such as mental and physical happiness, culture, and environmental health and safety, are far more difficult to measure. This has created an inevitable imbalance as programs and policies are created to fit the easily available economic numbers while ignoring other measures which are much more difficult to plan for.

Cultural tourism, as defined by the Indianapolis Cultural Development Commission, is "experiencing the diverse mosaic of places, traditions, arts,

celebrations and experiences that the Indianapolis area offers to residents and visitors. It is an important component of an overall tourism plan that emphasizes the total Indianapolis experience." Furthermore, the commission states, "In addition to all the growth and expansion Indy is experiencing and will continue to experience, there is even more to celebrate. A powerful sports schedule, exciting national conventions, landmark anniversaries, and new summer celebrations will together tell the Indianapolis story. It's a chance for the city to be recognized for the cultural destination that it is" (Indianapolis Cultural Development Commission, 2004).

In 2002, this organization implemented a Cultural Tourism Initiative, a program to heighten the exposure of the arts and cultural community of Indianapolis. This program was designed to improve the quality of life for Indianapolis residents and enhance travelers' experiences while visiting the city. A USD 10 million initiative focusing on the marketing of grass-root projects and "big picture" strategic planning is being allocated and distributed to support the initiative's goals.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate non-economic quality of life measures for the city of Indianapolis before full implementation of the initiative in 2004 and two years later in 2006. In 2004, a quality of life study was conducted to analyze three dimensions and determine whether or not a relationship between quality of life and cultural tourism awareness exists. Using a model developed by Raphael, Steinmetz, and Renwick (1998), questionnaire items were aggregated into three general dimensions: "being" (physical characteristics), "belonging" (environmental characteristics), and "becoming" (emotional, mental and spiritual characteristics). A quality of life score for each dimension was also calculated and reported. The same study was conducted two years later to determine possible changes in the residents' opinion of their quality of life. The study also attempted to determine if there was a sustained relationship between the level of awareness by residents of the city's cultural tourism initiative and their quality of life in 2004 and then in 2006.

The 2004 and 2006 studies addressed the following three hypotheses:

- Residents' perceptions of their "being" significantly correlate with their understanding of cultural tourism in Indianapolis.
- Residents' perceptions of their "belonging" significantly correlate with their understanding of cultural tourism in Indianapolis.
- Residents' perceptions of their "becoming" significantly correlate with their understanding of cultural tourism in Indianapolis.

Literature Review

Cultural tourism is growing while travel trends and tourist demographics continually change. Tourists are currently taking shorter vacations, mainly in urban destinations, and a more sophisticated and educated tourist is emerging. According to Cabrini (2003), Europe continues to attract increasing numbers of tourists to its

cultural locations. The European Commission reported 20% of European tourists are responding to cultural motivations, while 60% of European tourists are interested in cultural discovery during their stay. As tourism popularity and international travel continues to increase, cultural tourism interest will additionally see a substantial increase (Cabrini, 2003). Additionally, interest in cultural tourism peaks for individuals between the ages 45 and 65. As the population life expectancy continues to raise, so will the interest in cultural tourism (Cameron, 1993).

Attitudes toward tourism may be directly related to how residents feel about their community and surrounding region (Jurowski & Brown, 2001). Residents' support for tourism development and the likelihood of recommending their region and supporting tourism funding is based on perceived image (Schroeder, 1996). Jurowski, Uysal, and Williams (1997) noted internal marketing campaigns are imperative to explain the social benefits of tourism to residents looking to reduce opposition and form a favorable destination image. Destinations must establish the right balance between community needs and interests, while promoting compatible community objectives, symbolic of the values of the residents (Cabrini, 2003; Cameron,1993).

Impacts of Cultural Tourism on Quality of Life

A review of available literature on the topic of cultural tourism impact on a destination's quality of life did not generate nearly as much as a similar search on the topic of the impact of cultural tourism on the visitors' quality of life. For example, Neal, Sirgy, and Uysal (2004) developed a model and a measure to capture the effect of tourism services on travelers' quality of life (QOL). They hypothesized that travelers' overall life satisfaction is derived from satisfaction with the primary life domains, such as family, job, health-related elements.

Sutherland and Tweed (2005) pointed out that many studies focus on the economic and environmental aspects of the impacts and ignore other types of consequences of cultural tourism development. They suggest several quality of life indicators that can be studied in the future such as access to leisure and recreation facilities, opportunities to pursue hobbies and cultural exchange, and increasing opportunity for learning and education. Sutherland and Tweed (2005) also stated that it may never be possible or advantageous to define an absolute set of quality of life indicators because each destination has its own cultural tourism planning and context. However, a set of core set if quality of life indicators can be identified and be adapted by every city.

As supported above, quality of life can mean many things to different people. Some would argue that in order for a community to enjoy a good quality of life, residents should feel safe from crime, live in affordable and high quality housing, and should have access to education and employment. Indeed, these are basic expectations for a livable community. They go beyond economic status, age, race, household

composition, or any other demographic symbol. However, there are more subjective ideas of what makes a city an enjoyable place to live revolving around the character of a city. Increasingly cities and regions throughout the developed world are developing locally based measures to assess quality of life.

For example, a volunteer civic project called "Sustainable Seattle" introduced the concept of sustainability indicators for a metropolitan region with a pioneering report in 1993. They were inspired by Jacksonville, Florida's "Quality of Life" measures and the State of Oregon's growth-oriented "Benchmarks." The volunteers of "Sustainable Seattle" were seeking to do something different - measure progress towards true sustainability, or long-term cultural, economic, and environmental health and vitality. Such studies have assessed over 200 indicators of quality of life. They have looked at quality of life at the neighborhood, city, county and metropolitan level.

Wennergren and Fullerton (1972) use three indices to measure a community's quality of life: economic, social, and environmental. The geometric mean of the three indices, weighted by the population of the community, is used as an overall measure of community well-being. A series of studies have addressed issues related to the ability of travel and tourism to both enhance and diminish the QOL of local residents in the host community (Cohen, 1978; Linton, 1987; Williams & Shaw, 1988; Jurowski et al., 1997; Perdue, Long & Allen, 1990). Few studies have also addressed the effect tourism has on improving the overall life satisfaction of the traveler and focused on the impacts of tourism on the perceived host community well-being.

Anderson and Nurick (2002) consider that the conventional economic appraisal of cultural projects only focuses on the 'measurement of the measurable,' such as visitors attracted, jobs created, and income generated. However, the authors argue that an economic appraisal does not reflect 'immeasurable' effects on the places and regions in which cultural projects are located. The challenge lies in how to measure the changed image and aspirations of a location and the quality of life of its residents due to cultural impact. Their findings indicate increasing evidence that quality of life is becoming an important factor in relocation-related decisions for both skilled workers and business investors. The study further illustrates that cultural projects can greatly strengthen a city's 'brand' or image and cause it to be perceived more favorably.

Kim (2002) investigated how tourism development influences the quality of life of residents in different stages of development. Overall satisfaction with life was used as the measurement for quality of life. The results show that tourism development did affect people's overall life satisfaction. During the initial stage of tourism development, residents may feel stress caused by change, and demand for more public services and infrastructure. People's life satisfaction is higher during the maturity stage of tourism development. When tourism development enters its declining stage, quality of life may also start to decline.

Other studies have collected unique measures of quality of life, reflective of local environmental, social and economic conditions. Moreover, most communities have relied on data from the U.S. Census or other databases. The concept of "quality of life" as a multi-faceted concept seeks to include a wide variety of critical affecter variables within a unified framework. In this case, the researchers of this study's methodology define quality of life as a nexus where physical, environmental, mental, spiritual and emotional characteristics are all considered.

Measuring Quality of Life

Stanley (1979) found that researchers cannot measure all elements of quality of life; therefore, researchers must limit the items when designing the study's instrument. Selection of the indicators should be made by examining three areas: (a) the objectives of interpretation, (b) the theoretical values used for the study, and (c) the social and economic priorities of the geographic region under investigation at any given time. From this criterion, Stanley deduced a few general practices that could guide the choice of selecting such indicators: (a) empiricism and previous experience, (b) choosing an appropriate set of indicators that reflect a pre-approved interpretation or action plan, and (c) compliance with a theoretical model.

André, Delisle, Revéret and Bitondo (1999) stated that quality of life indicators should also meet the following criteria: (a) be representative of quality of life; (b) be simple and easy to interpret and communicate; (c) illustrate long-term trends; (d) react to changes in dimensions affecting quality of life; (e) suit the scale of the study; (f) derive their real meaning from a comparison with defined targets or specific thresholds; (g) receive theoretical recognition and comply with standards generally accepted by the experts; (h) be readily available or involve low acquisition costs; (i) be recognized for their quality and supported by sound documentation; and (j) be periodically updated at spatial and temporal intervals, using measuring and sampling procedures suited to the scale of quality of life.

Diener (1995) conducted an inventory of indicator selection practices for the quality of life index and found no standard way of choosing indicators for this index. As a rule, he concluded that indicators are chosen intuitively by the researcher. For the purposes of this study, the researchers relied on an adaptation of a model developed by Raphael et al. (1998) to design, pilot-test, and administer the questionnaire to Indianapolis residents. The original model used a health-based approach to assessing community quality of life and it was applied to Toronto, Vancouver and other North American cities. This community approach to quality of life was centered on people's perception of what would or would not make their lives satisfactory.

Based on the approach developed by Raphael et al. (1998), this study's questionnaire assumed that certain community dimensions affect people's quality of life and was assessed on the basis of three major indicators:

- "being," which reflects "who the individual is" and has physical components;
- "belonging," which involves people's relationship with their environments;
- "becoming," which involves individual activities to achieve individual emotional, mental and spiritual goals, hopes and aspirations.

In recent years, Indianapolis has developed projects that promote people's awareness of cultural attractions in the city. Many historical attractions, parks, and museums have undergone significant renovation or expansion projects in order to enrich their cultural offerings. Given the increased cultural opportunities in the city, it is important to measure if the new cultural tourism development has impacted on residents' physical, psychological wellbeing, and their connectiveness to the city.

Methodology

The following three objectives were established to address the purpose of the study: (a) in 2004 the researchers designed a 35-question survey to be administered to Indianapolis residents, (b) utilized a number of statistical techniques, including central tendency measures to produce a quality of life index score for each dimension, and correlation analysis between QOL dimensions and the variable of "people's understanding of the concept of cultural tourism," and (c) examined the findings in 2006 to explore if a sustained correlation exists between the quality of life dimensions and Indianapolis residents' understanding of the concept of cultural tourism between 2004 and 2006.

The research team intercepted subjects through a face-to-face random sampling technique. All research participants were 18 years of age or older and residents of Indianapolis. For both the 2004 and 2006 surveys, the same public, high-traffic area was identified for data collection during the same six weeks period of the year. The location was selected to attract a variety of Indianapolis residents that represent the study's population. The administration of the survey was carried out during all days of the week and in three daily shifts, mornings (8 am to Noon), afternoons (Noon to 4 pm) and evenings (4 pm to 8 pm). The team collected 760 useable surveys for the first round in 2004 and 960 surveys in 2006 for the second round. The data was entered into SPSS for analysis. For the purposes of this study, only experienced supervisors and interviewers were used.

Face-to-face surveys were used because they have a high response rate compared to other data collection methods. This technique allowed researchers the ability to administer a lengthy, 4-page questionnaire. Additionally, those distributing the survey screened for incomplete answers and addressed questions that could be misunderstood.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile

As shown in Table 1: Respondents' Demographic Profile (2004 Survey), male and female respondents were almost equally distributed, with male respondents accounting for 53.2% of the total sample. In terms of age groups, the mode of age groups was the younger group (18-30 years old), occupying 40% of the total. The middle age groups of 31-43 and 44-56 years old occupied 25.9% and 25.2%, respectively. Fewer respondents came from the older age group of over 56 years old (8.2%). With respect to ethnicity, most respondents were white people (75.5%). The next largest ethnic group was black people (14.7%), and other ethnicities included Hispanics (4.2%), Asian or Pacific Islander (1.2%) and other native Americans (2.5%).

Most of the respondents have lived in Indianapolis for at least 2 years (87.5%). Among them, approximately 60.9% have lived here for 10 years or more. Table 1 shows respondents were equally distributed in terms of family income. For instance, 33.4% of the respondents had less than USD 30000 household income, another 33.4% had household income of USD 30001- 60000, and the other one-third with household income over USD 60000.

Generally, respondents' demographic information is quite similar between the 2004 and 2006 data sets. As shown in Table 2: Respondents' Demographic Profile (2006 Survey), male and female respondents were also almost equally distributed, with male respondents accounting for 52.6% of the total sample. In terms of age groups, the mode of age groups was the younger group (18-30 years old), occupying 34% of the total. The middle age groups of 31-43 and 44-56 years old occupied 26.2% and 25.7%, respectively. This time, over 10% respondents came from the older age group of over 56 years old as compared to the previous survey which was 8.2%. With respect to ethnicity, white people dropped from 75.5% to 65.1%. The next largest ethnic group was still black individuals (16.3%).

Approximately 87.8% have lived in Indianapolis for at least 2 years. Among them, about 50.7% have lived here for 10 years or more, as compared to previous study's 60.9%. There was not a large change in the household income of the survey participates; 32.3% of the respondents had less than USD 30001 household income. An important difference is that only 25.1% of those surveyed have household income of USD 30001-60000; all others are above USD 60000.

Table 1 *Respondents' Demographic Profile (2004 Survey)*

		Frequency	Valid Percent (%)			Frequency	Valid Percent (%)
Gender	Male	402	**53.2**	**Ethnicity**	Hispanic	32	4.2
	Female	353	46.8		Black	111	14.7
Age	18-30	303	**40.0**		White	571	**75.5**
	31-43	196	25.9		Asian/pacific	14	1.9
	44-56	191	25.2		Native American	9	1.2
	Over 56	67	8.9		Other	19	2.5
Resi-dency	<1 year	45	6.4	**Household Income (USD)**	0- 30000	246	**33.4**
	<2 years	43	6.1		30001- 60000	246	**33.4**
	<4 years	76	10.8		60001- 90000	128	17.4
	<10 years	111	15.8		90001- 120000	77	10.5
	≥ 10 years	428	**60.9**		120000- 150000	39	5.3

Respondents' Perceptions of QOL Items

Table 3: Perceptions of Quality of Life summarizes the QOL items aggregated into the three general dimensions of quality of life: "being" (physical characteristics), "belonging" (environmental characteristics), and "becoming" (emotional, mental and spiritual characteristics) producing a mean score for each dimension and the several individual items under each dimension. In addition, Table 3 reports a mean score for the question of "I understand the concept of cultural tourism." The lower the mean score, the more favorable the response for all questions, as the score of 1 on the instrument indicates "strongly agree" and the score of 5 indicates "strongly disagree."

With respect to the results of 2004 survey, the mean score of participants' understanding of cultural tourism was 2.24 on a five-point scale. This indicates that residents' of Indianapolis had fairly good understanding of cultural tourism. Mean scores of the two items that measure the first quality of life factor "being" are 2.04 and 2.43, which showed that respondents seemed to have good overall health, lifestyle, and physical activity frequency. For the second quality of life factor "becoming," mean scores of its items are 2.56 and 2.69. This revealed that participants felt quite happy, calm, and their stress level was moderate. Scores for the third quality of life factor "belonging" ranged from 1.57 to 3.20. The results show that respondents had a good sense of community and felt quite safe in the city. One high score (3.20) suggested that participants were not very satisfied with the traffic conditions in the city.

Table 2 *Respondents' Demographic Profile (2006 Survey)*

	Frequency	Valid Percent (%)		Frequency

Table 3: *Perceptions of Quality of Life*

QOL Dimensions/items	2004 Survey		2006 Survey	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
I understand the concept of "Cultural Tourism"	**2.24**	**0.92**	**2.36**	**1.10**
Quality of Life Factor 1: Being	**2.23**	**0.82**	**2.60**	**1.26**
Overall health	2.04	0.72	2.20	0.96
Physical activity frequency	2.43	1.25	2.67	1.39
Quality of Life Factor 2: Becoming	**2.63**	**0.54**	**2.84**	**1.10**
Being happy	2.58	1.01	2.56	1.07
Experiencing no stress	2.69	0.96	3.07	1.23
Quality of Life Factor 3: Belonging	**2.40**	**0.57**	**2.42**	**1.52**
Feeling a sense of community	2.74	1.12	2.63	1.16
Feeling safe in home during daytime	1.57	0.80	1.82	12.82
Feeling safe in my neighborhood during daytime	1.68	0.82	1.50	0.81
Feeling safe in downtown during daytime	1.96	0.80	1.82	0.90
Feeling safe in my home after dark	1.92	0.92	1.75	0.97
Feeling safe in my neighborhood after dark	2.24	1.05	2.07	1.11
Feeling safe in downtown Indianapolis after dark	2.70	1.02	2.81	1.21
Clean/no litter	2.70	1.04	2.68	9.57
No air pollution	2.70	1.09	2.96	1.16
No noise pollution	2.62	1.01	2.83	1.14
No crimes	2.88	1.03	3.32	2.87
Good public transport	3.20	1.07	2.81	1.26

** The above items were measured on a “strongly agree” (1) to “strongly disagree” (5) scale.

Bivariate correlation analyses were performed to test the relationship between the three quality of life dimensions and understanding of cultural tourism for the two data sets. As indicated in Table 5: Results of Bivariate Correlation Analyses of the Three Quality of Life Dimensions and Understanding of Cultural Tourism, the correlation coefficients between the three QOL dimensions and “people’s understanding of the concept of cultural tourism” were 0.125, 0.178 and 0.171 for the 2004 survey, and 0.175, 0.151 and 0.091 for the 2006 survey. For both surveys, all three dimensions were statistically significant as related to understanding of cultural tourism ($p < 0.01$). Therefore, the three hypotheses were confirmed, that is, residents' perceptions of their “being”, “belonging” and “becoming” significantly and positively correlate with their understanding of cultural tourism in Indianapolis.

Table 4: *Independent Samples t-test between 2004 and 2006*

	mean	t-value (df)	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
I understand the concept of "Cultural Tourism".	2.24 (2004) 2.36 (2006)	-2.406 (1687)	0.016*	-0.122	0.05100
Being	2.23 (2004) 2.60 (2006)	-7.013 (1726)	0.000**	-0.373	0.05323
Becoming	2.63 (2004) 2.84 (2006)	-4.906 (1719)	0.000**	-0.210	0.04281
Belonging	2.40 (2004) 2.42 (2006)	-0.337 (1620)	0.736	-0.021	0.06202

*: Results are statistically significant at the level of 0.05
**: Results are statistically significant at the level of 0.01

Relationship between QOL Dimensions and Understanding of Cultural Tourism

The results indicate that people's understanding of the importance of cultural tourism development did play a positive role in affecting people's perception of their quality of life in the dimensions of "being", "belonging" and "becoming." In other words, people living in a city with a relatively well-informed and better development of cultural tourism may perceive its city's quality of life better than that of a city with a lower level of cultural tourism development. This finding is consistent with the results of previous studies (Kim, 2002) which observed that tourism development affected people's overall life satisfaction.

Table 5: *Results of Bivariate Correlation Analyses of the Three Quality of Life Dimensions and Understanding of Cultural Tourism (2004 and 2006 Survey)*

		Being	Becoming	Belonging
Pearson's correlation coefficient	2004 Survey	0.125**	0.178**	0.171**
	2006 Survey	0.175**	0.151**	0.091**

** Significant at 0.01 level

As with all research, this study has limitations. The goals of the study were to determine (a) changes in the Indianapolis residents' opinion of their quality of life over a period of two years, 2004 and 2006 and (b) if there was a sustained relationship between the level of awareness by residents of the city's cultural tourism initiative and

their quality of life ratings. Notably, the two limitations of the study are the degree to which the investigators could capture the full range and scope of the population under investigation and the study's limited time frame. Both the 2004 and 2006 instruments were administered face-to-face at the same downtown location during the same six weeks of the year.

The results showed that a positive relationship still exists between the three quality of life dimensions and understanding of the concept of cultural tourism. The finding of this study has practical significance to the city agencies in charge of the cultural tourism initiative. For instance, this study helps reinforce the assumption that development of cultural tourism is positively correlated with the residents' quality of life. The expansion of public services, infrastructure, and financial support in the development of cultural tourism will result in sustaining and improving residents' quality of life. As consistent with the findings of Kim (2002), residents may feel increased stress as the demand for additional public services and infrastructure escalates during the initial stage of cultural tourism development, but inevitability residents will experience a better quality of life during the maturity stage of tourism development. In actual marketing of cultural tourism, the government agencies may opt to emphasize the positive relationship between quality of life and cultural tourism for its local residents.

The 2004 and 2006 studies could act as springboards for future studies to measure the continued impact of the initiative on the city's quality of life. The two studies identified a relationship between cultural tourism development and quality of life. Future examination of these relationships will shed more light as to the importance of cultural tourism on each of the dimensions of quality of life. Cities are responsible for supporting public and private efforts to create and maintain urban areas where people want to live, work, and enjoy their surroundings. Cities view cultural tourism initiative as another tool in restoring and revitalizing economic development by serving as a focus for downtown and regional redevelopment and cultural renewal, in addition to creating vibrant public areas integrated with amenities that result in improved quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Successful cultural tourism initiatives are not simply a matter of having better transportation and hotels, but of adding a particular local flavor in keeping with traditional way of life and projecting a favorable image of the benefits both to the residents and tourists of such goods and services alike.

Cultural tourism, if properly planned, organized, and managed, can bring understanding, appreciation, prosperity, and better life to all who are involved. Inadequate recognition of potential conflicts between cultural tourism projects and their impact on the resident's quality of life can lead to poor planning and adverse impacts on the lifestyles of the city's residents. Investing in communities' quality of

life by promoting cultural tourism is the main reason cities are becoming key players in supporting and leading cultural tourism initiatives.

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