

SELECTED LEISURE LIFESTYLES OF RESIDENTS IN RURAL TOURIST AND NON- TOURIST COMMUNITIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

Lawrence R. Klar, Jr.

Professor, Department of Hotel, Restaurant and Travel
Administration, 107 Flint, University of Massachusetts, Amherst,
MA 01003

Rodney B. Warnick

Associate Professor, Department of Hotel, Restaurant and Travel
Administration, 107 Flint, University of Massachusetts, Amherst,
MA 01003

The *Lifestyle Zip Code Analyst* was used as a secondary data source to compare selected lifestyle characteristics of the adult populations in 21 tourist and 45 non-tourist towns in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Towns were rural in nature, with populations under 25,000. All tourist communities within the state were included in the survey. Non-tourist communities were randomly selected from towns with populations no less than 2,500 and no more than 25,000 in size. Adult participation rates were found to be higher for a number of leisure/culturally related activities in tourist communities. For other activities, little or no differences were found.

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a concerted effort to attract tourists in communities that have not always been known as tourist destinations. At the same time, efforts to stimulate even more tourism activity have been increasing in areas that have been established as tourist destinations for some time.

Considerable research has been conducted which has attempted to identify the impacts of tourism at the community level. Not all of the findings were encouraging. For example, the early work of Pizam (1977), Pizam and Pokela (1978) and Klar, Keegan and Warnick (1985) found negative relationships between tourism and various quality of life factors. These studies aside, much of the early research tended to focus on economic rather than social variables; it is more recently that research having to do with the social effects of tourism has increased (Ap, 1990). A number of those studies have generally found tourism to be related to positive factors such as certain quality of life indicators and residents' satisfaction with the presence or growth of tourism in their particular communities (Milman and Pizam, 1988; Long, Perdue and Allen, 1990; Klar, Warnick, Byrd and Pakkala, 1993; and Allen, Hafer, Long and Perdue, 1993).

What does not appear in the literature, however, is research that examines the lifestyles of the citizens who reside in high-tourism communities. Are there differences in the leisure lifestyles of adults living in tourist and non-tourist communities? Is the quality of life richer in one setting than another? Does the presence of tourism in a community stimulate participation in leisure activities, depress it, or have no effect at all? While only the surface of the issue could be scratched, such questions were the focus of this study.

Method

The *Lifestyle Zip Code Analyst* (1991) was used as a secondary data source to compare selected lifestyle characteristics of the adult populations in 21 tourist and 45 non-tourist towns in the

Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Specifically, adult participation rates were compared for the following activities:

Avid Book Reader	Hike and Camp
Bicycling	Run/Jog
Cultural Activities	Self-Help
Current Affairs/Political	Skiing
Fishing	Sports on TV
Fitness	Tennis
Gardening	Walking
Golf	

Tourist communities were selected on the basis of lodging and food establishments and the presence of entertainment facilities and obvious tourist attractions.

Results

This study attempted to identify possible relationships between the presence of tourism in rural communities and the leisure lifestyles of their residents. With the exception of watching sports on television, it was expected that participation in all activities would be higher in tourist communities if, in fact, tourism and enhanced quality of life indicators are related.

Mean participation rates in non-tourist communities were higher for only the four activities of hiking and camping, fishing, watching sports on television, and skiing (Table 1). With the exception of hiking/camping, the differences were not noteworthy.

Table 1. Higher mean percent participation in non-tourist communities.

Activity	Non-Tourist	Tourist	Difference
Hike and Camp	17.2	24.0	-6.8
Fishing	18.7	20.2	-1.5
Sports on TV	33.6	34.5	-0.9
Skiing	14.1	15.4	-0.8

Mean participation rates in the other activities were higher in tourist communities (Table 2). The most striking differences were in gardening and involvement in cultural activities. Differences were also high for walking, avid book reading and involvement in current affairs and politics.

Table 2. Higher mean percent participation in tourist communities.

Activity	Non-Tourist	Tourist	Difference
Gardening	42.9	31.3	11.6
Cultural Activities	25.8	14.8	11.0
Walking	46.9	38.4	8.5
Avid Book Reader	47.3	40.6	6.7
Current Affairs/Political	21.4	15.3	6.1
Bicycling	19.1	15.4	3.7
Tennis	9.4	6.1	3.3
Run/Jog	12.0	10.2	1.8
Self-Help	15.6	14.4	1.2
Golf	19.3	18.5	0.8
Fitness	32.9	32.6	0.3

Since involvement in cultural activities is generally associated with a high quality of life, that particular activity was examined on a town by town basis (Table 3). Two figures are reported. The first column is simply the participation rate expressed as a percent of the total adult community and the second is the index

compared to the norm for the United States as a whole where 100 is the average. Thus, participation in Lenox is 159% greater than for the country as a whole while in Dighton the rate is 42% below the national average.

Table 3. Cultural activity comparisons.

Non-Tourist			Tourist		
High Group	Pct	Index	High Group	Pct	Index
Wellfleet	28.6	181	Lenox	41.0	259
Nahant	27.0	171	Deerfield	40.2	255
Montague	26.6	168	Stockbridge	38.3	243
Orange	23.3	148	Williamstown	35.1	222
Sheffield	22.5	142	Provincetown	31.8	202
Essex	21.3	135	Nantucket	30.3	192
Ipswich	21.2	134	Chatham	27.0	171
Williamsburg	20.5	130	Orleans	26.3	166
Hatfield	20.2	128	Rockport	26.2	166
Northfield	19.7	125	Newburyport	25.3	160
Dalton	18.0	114			
Low Group			Low Group		
Dighton	10.8	68	Dennis	25.2	161
Millbury	10.5	67	Lee	24.6	156
Spencer	10.0	63	Brewster	24.2	154
Whitman	9.9	63	Edgartown	24.0	152
Ware	9.7	62	Sturbridge	22.1	140
Uxbridge	9.6	61	Oak Bluffs	19.6	124
Athol	9.3	59	Eastham	19.2	122
Blackstone	8.7	55	W Yarmouth	18.9	119
Acushnet	8.4	53	Bourne	16.7	106
Templeton	4.7	30	Adams	14.5	92

Involvement in cultural activities was clearly greater in tourist communities, whether comparing the high groups or low groups. In fact, with the exception of Adams, participation in every tourist community was above the national average while participation in all non-tourist communities in the low group was well below the norm.

Discussion

According to these findings, participation in selected leisure activities was higher in rural Massachusetts towns categorized as tourist communities than non-tourist communities for gardening, involvement in cultural activities, walking, avid book reading and being involved in current affairs and politics. To a lesser extent, participation was also higher for bicycling and tennis. Hiking/camping participation rates were found to be somewhat higher in non-tourist communities. For the remaining activities, the differences were small or virtually non-existent.

Participation rates in tourist communities for certain activities were clearly greater; however, this does not mean that the presence of tourism causes adult participation rates to be higher. Instead, the nature of tourism in these communities may be such that these tourist towns attract people who are more educated, more politically active, and more culturally aware than individuals residing in other rural towns in the state. If that is so, it suggests that the presence of certain kinds of tourism activities contributes to the quality of life and "livability" of communities, at least in rural settings.

It would be helpful to examine rural communities which promote other types of tourist activities. For example, in Massachusetts the types of tourist activities that are "typical" emphasize the historic features of the area, numerous cultural events, especially music and dance, and the many activities associated with the North and South Shores, Cape Cod and the Islands, and the Berkshire Mountains. The quality of life in other types of tourist towns may be quite different if the tourist attractions take on a different flavor. For example, the characteristics of adults living in towns with such tourist attractions as theme parks, gambling or sports may be quite different from those living in the tourist communities in this study.

It may be that the criteria by which tourist communities are selected should be refined. For example, the towns of Wellfleet, Nahant and Ipswich clearly attract many tourists, yet did not meet the criteria primarily due to the lack of food or hotel facilities. These communities are clearly in a high tourism region. Had they been classified as tourism communities, the differences between the two groups would have been even greater.

It would be useful to control for income, education and length of residence, as well as changes in the number and type of tourist attractions in each town. For example, it would be particularly appropriate to identify changes in tourist attractions over the past ten to fifteen years and changes in each town's residents by education. Theoretically, tourist communities have will have attracted more highly educated, culturally inclined individuals. Furthermore, in addition to tracking secondary data, it would also be valuable to identify the primary reasons new individuals selected their respective communities as their place of residence.

Literature Cited

Allen, Lawrence R., Harry R. Hafer, Patrick T. Long and Richard R. Perdue. 1993. Rural residents' attitudes toward recreation and tourism development. *Journal of Travel Research*, Spring:27-33.

Ap, John. 1990. Residents' perceptions research on the social impacts of tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 17(4):610-615.

Klar, Lawrence R., Jr., Rodney B. Warnick, Janet Byrd and Patti Pakkala. 1993. Quality of life indicators in rural, tourist and non-tourist communities in Massachusetts. *Proceedings of the Northeast Recreation Research Symposium*, Saratoga Springs, NY, pp. 153-155.

Long, Patrick T., Richard R. Perdue and Lawrence Allen. 1990. Rural resident tourism perceptions and attitudes by community level of tourism. *Journal of Travel Research*, Winter:3-9.

Milman, Ady and Abraham Pizam. 1988. Social impacts of tourism on central florida. *Annals of Tourism Research*, V 15(2):191-204.

Pizam, Abraham. 1977. Some costs and benefits of tourism to rural communities: The Cape Cod case. Paper presented at the Eighth Annual TTRA Conference.

Pizam, A. and J. Pokela. 1978. Businessmen and residents' perceptions of tourism's impacts: Analysis and implications for tourism policy making. *International Tourism Congress: New Perspectives and Policies*. Ankara, Turkey: Mugla School of Business Administration.

_____. 1991. *The Zip Code Market Analyst*. Wilanette, IL: Standard Rage and Data Service.