

The impact of tourism on subjective quality of life among Hungarian population

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Abstract

Nowadays the clarification of the issues concerning subjective *quality of life* (QoL) enjoys a priority both in the dialogue between academic workshops and in political quarters responsible for the general state of society. The researchers – let them be the representatives of philosophy, psychology, sociology, geography or economics – are keen on finding the paths towards the sources of happiness, the ways to achieve subjective well-being, whilst the politicians are eager to trace what could be done in this sense by the power. There has been a wealth of literature on the relationship between the achievement of overall life satisfaction and sustainability of political power, notwithstanding only minor emphasis was put on the travelling behaviour of population as a factor of QoL and, consequently, of happiness. The governments of bourgeois democracies tend to cherish the sources of happiness stemming from leisure time spending – driven not so much by the desire to extend their power in time, rather prompted by moral responsibility for the well-being of society. Writings on the ways how policies might promote leisure time spending with travelling are many, but it is hardly known how these efforts have been able to influence subjective QoL.

In Hungary, the National Tourism Development Strategy (2005–2013) attributes paramount importance to travelling of Hungarian population as one of the means to increase QoL – an effort unique even in international comparison. To attain the objectives formulated in this document, and in order to yield a profit for the society, the Tourism Unit of Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (now Ministry of Local Government), together with the Hungarian National Tourist Office and Geographical Research Institute Hungarian Academy of Sciences had requested the Hungarian Central Statistical Office to perform a survey on the happiness markers related to travelling behaviour of the country's population. This survey by questionnaires conducted in 11,500 households in the year 2007 has surfaced relationships between tourism and QoL hardly acknowledged heretofore.

Putting the results of the survey considered representative with reference to the adult (18+) population of Hungary in the context of Hungarian and international literature, the present study provides an assessment of the tables of the data referring to the different variables. A special emphasis is addressed to the general linkage between travels and overall life satisfaction and to the components of happiness offered by travelling.

Keywords: tourism, quality of life, happiness, welfare, well-being, life satisfaction

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Introduction

The fact that changing one's usual environment helps to satisfy physical needs more effectively, namely relaxation and nutrition outside of the everyday space ensures a more intense regeneration, is among the well-known thesis of tourism sciences (PUCZKÓ, L.–RÁTZ, T. 1998; MICHALKÓ, G. 2007). But, generally the participation in travelling, or the concrete effect of a trip on the individual's happiness, is a less known issue. The theoretical outcomes of such an analysis result in a valuable knowledge not only for the social sciences, but also for the political sphere, as recognizing the importance of the population's quality of life is one of the criteria for modern government (BIANCHI, M. 2007). European Union institutions emphasise that focusing on quality of life is the responsibility of the government in power (at the time of this study 413 documents of the EU operative legislation⁴ include the term 'quality of life'). In Hungary, almost 100 laws or decrees include the term 'quality of life' in its text. The New Hungary Development Plan (NHDP)⁵ adopted in 2006 refers to the National Tourism Development Strategy (NTDS) as a 'beneficial' sector document. The NTDS is a strongly quality of life oriented strategy. All these point out that tourism has passed the one-sided focus of its economic and regional development function, because by now the Hungarian politicians have recognized the importance of its social role. Nevertheless, exploitation of the opportunities regarding development of quality of life still needs substantial research focusing on the cohesion of travelling and happiness.

Although studies focusing on quality of life date back for a long time also in Hungary (HANKISS, E.–MANCHIN, GY. 1976), academic tourism professionals has begun to recognize its opportunities only at the beginning of the 21st century (KOVÁCS, B.–MICHALKÓ, G.–HORKAY, N. 2007; MICHALKÓ, G.–LŐRINCZ, K. 2007). Besides the lack of the theoretical background, the one-sided statistical data collection, namely the demand/turnover oriented approach limited the launch of such a study. As of 2004, the results of the survey about the travelling habits of the Hungarian population conducted by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) provided more information about the relationship between tourism and quality of life. As a result of the interest from the political sphere and the academic circles, the cohesion between the travelling habits and the happiness in connection with it was analysed for the first time in 2007 where the sample was representative to the Hungarian adult (18+) population. The HCSO included a short questionnaire in the 2007 data collection, developed by a professional team included the Tourism Unit of Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (now Ministry of Local Government),

⁴ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/download>: 6 March 2008.

⁵ 1103/2006. (X. 30.) Government Order about the adoption of the New Hungary Development Plan.

the Hungarian National Tourist Office and the Geographical Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The questions intended to trace the relationship between tourism and quality of life from three different aspects: firstly travelling as source of happiness, secondly effect of travelling to the quality of life, and thirdly subjective reflection at the destination.

The present study is a pioneer initiative in Hungary, it intends to analyse the correlation between travelling and happiness using a representative sample. This allows to point out the effect of household's size, education, age, income level and travelling habits/participation in tourism on the subjective QoL. This paper does not include the role of tourism at the destination, namely its local effects.

Effect of tourism on the subjective quality of life

Although wealth, position in the power hierarchy and the social status are the charismatic symbols of happiness in the developed world, the psychology considers the control over the consciousness as the base for the individual's quality of life, henceforward (CSÍKSZENTMIHÁLYI, M. 2001). First of all, it is up to the individual how to appreciate the life, whether to feel satisfaction or not, so happiness derives from internal harmony. CSÍKSZENTMIHÁLYI, M. (2001:77) points out in his flow analyses that 'In order to improve our life, we should improve our experiences'. Tourism is a typical activity where travellers experience a so called flow. This means they become active in leading their deeds, their feeling becomes a milestone of the experience. The perfect experience originated from the objective, preparation, energy input and concentration can be relieved during other trips which are expressed by the definition of life satisfaction, as VEENHOVEN, R. (2003) puts, it leads to the awareness of happiness. As tourism trips lead far away from spaces of everyday life, the exclusion of the factors disturbing consciousness and of everyday life impulses contributes to the relaxation, to the participation in the activity or to re-experiencing it.

The flow experience fulfilled by travelling can be reached both by leisure and business tourism. Meanwhile leisure tourists seek the empirical experiences in connection with the desired attraction, in the case of business trips, the fulfilment of professional success generates the flow itself reached on the way to it. Travelling needs a comprehensive preparation including defining the motivation, choosing the destination, ensuring the expenditure and organization (MÄSER, B.-WEIERMAIR, K. 1998; BIEGER, T.-LAESSER, CH. 2004). This allows defining tourism as a flow stimulating activity. The experience of standing before a worldwide known painting far from home fulfilling thereby a dream, or chatting after one's presentation at an international conference, all these need a significant input. Therefore the achievement induces happy

moments. These moments, alone themselves or together as a trip, can lead to life satisfaction.

Although tourism has been dedicated a core role in studies aimed at quality of life (CSÍKSZENTMIHÁLYI, M. 1998; NEAL, J. *et al.* 1999), academics has paid less attention to the effects of spending leisure time by travelling. The reason behind this can be explained by the late recognition of the correlation between tourism and life satisfaction among academics, as at the beginning of the studies on subjective quality of life, travelling was not included among the measured factors of value hierarchy (NEAL, J. *et al.* 2007; ROYO, M. 2007). In QoL studies starting in the 1960–70s, tourism had no separate image, although the number of international tourist arrivals reached 100 million by that time (WTO 2003). Freedom, the acquittance of work limitations naturally had a key role in different satisfaction models, but travelling became a significant segment of leisure time spending only later on. Its function was not so characteristic like today when the number of international tourist arrivals converges to one billion (NEAL, J. *et al.* 2004). The role of tourism in life satisfaction studies is highlighted by the fact that the internationally most acknowledged expert in happiness studies, RUUT VEENHOVEN's reference database contains only one study⁶ dealing with tourism. Meanwhile since the beginning of the 1990s, international bibliography has referred continuously to studies dealing with different aspects of the correlation between tourism and the subjective QoL (DOBOS, J.–JEFFRES, L. 1993; RICHARDS, G. 1999). The same cannot be said about the Hungarian professionals who ignored the topic. This is mainly due to the fact that basic research of life satisfaction in Hungary belongs to the competence of sociology which pays less attention to tourism. Meanwhile the 'Hungarostudy' research series of MARIA KOPP tries to approach QoL as complex as possible, it hardly recognises the effect of tourism to the increase of happiness. This can be explained by the study's orientation towards health sciences (KOPP, M.–PIKÓ, B. 2006).

Although tourism has got no lead in any international research on QoL, the factors which are monitored in most of the life satisfaction studies, are strongly interrelated with travelling (FEKETE, Zs. 2006; BRÜLDE, B. 2007). In Rahman's model, health, family, friends and work are in the focus, all of them – even to a different extent – are important motivations for travelling (KOVÁCS, B.–MICHALKÓ, G.–HORKAY, N. 2007). All these lead to health tourism, VFR (visiting friends and relatives) or business tourism. In order to preserve health, to maintain social relationships, to be successful in the professional life/work, people often leave their usual place of living, so travelling contributes to life satisfaction. According to the results of the research led by ÁGNES UTASI (2006), more elements of the subjective well-being, as one of the attributes of quality

⁶ <http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl> Download: 8 March 2008.

life, can be linked to tourism. Although individual surveys do not highlight the role of travelling in forming social and transcendent relations, according to the program's hypotheses, travelling has a significant role in developing safety satisfaction factors like familiar relationships, public life or religion.

Approaching from the point of view of the bibliography analysing subjective QoL, well-being materialised in travelling can be observed both in the activity itself, so in the satisfaction of the motivation and in the everyday life's influence (PERDUE, R. *et al.* 1999; JUROWSKI, C.–BROWN, D. 2001; GILBERT, D.–ABDULLAH, J. 2002). For most of the travellers, tourism is a useful and pleasant activity as it generates agreeable episodes of leisure time spending. Travelling is good. Considering that travelling has a motivation, and that the traveller prepares the trip himself or with the help of a professional travel organizer, tourism is mostly a successful activity. So, besides getting away from the everyday environment, self-justification, pleasure generated by the satisfaction of needs, tourism mobility also includes the usefulness, as travelling proceeds have their benefits in everyday life (e.g. education/new knowledge, new relationships, physical relaxation etc.).

The measurement of subjective quality of life is one of the most difficult areas of social sciences (BABBIE, E. 1999). The commission of the political sphere motivates researchers to 'bomb' the society with surveys using different scales of satisfaction, in spite of acknowledging the methodological difficulties of the topic (FERRERI-CARBONELL, A.–FRIJTERS, P. 2004; GEBAUER GY. 2007). Meanwhile some professionals intend to approach subjective QoL by so called substitute (proxy) indicators, most of the academics agree that one cannot judge one's well-being based on an outsider's observation (HEGEDŰS, R. 2001; SZABÓ, L. 2003). Participation in tourism is a typical example for the acknowledgement of a gap in using a substitute indicator. Namely, travelling to a funeral of a relative living in the countryside does not increase quality of life, so the number of trips taken cannot lead to conclusions about one's well-being. Even though there are researchers who question the feasibility of the measurement of happiness (GRIFFIN, J. 2007), it does have a place among social indicators if the monitoring of the subjective QoL presumes the norms, takes into account the temporal comparability, and includes substantive questions (LENGYEL, L. 2002).

Compared with general happiness research, the studies aimed at the correlation between tourism and subjective QoL have not enriched much the bibliography about the methodology. In most cases, attitudes toward travelling, correlation between tourism activities and satisfaction and monitoring of tourism's effect to one's life are in the focus of analysis about tourism mobility and happiness (POMFRET, G. 2006; ANDERECK, K. *et al.* 2007). And, in none of the studies has been included a survey representative to the population of a country.

Role of Hungarian population's travelling in happiness generation

Participation of the Hungarian population in tourism

Travelling is part of leisure time culture of the Hungarian population, tourism can be defined as part of the life both among people grown-up/socialised in the Kádár-system/socialism and among the generation following them (CZEGLÉDI, J. 1982; LENGYEL, L. 1988, 2004). Commissioned by the Hungarian National Tourist Office, the research group in M.Á.S.T. (Market and Public Opinion Poll Company) has been carrying out survey about the travelling habits of the Hungarian population as of 2003. Using the same methodology since then, it enables comparison between time-series, and the 1,000 persons sample is representative to the adult (18+ years old) Hungarian population by place of residence, gender and age. According to the research results, the Hungarian population actively participates both in domestic and outbound tourism. Between 2003 and 2006, 61–72% of the households had taken a one-day trip, meanwhile 61–62% was the share of households taking an overnight trip. Reasons for non-travelling are mainly economic situation, health concerns and lack of time (M.Á.S.T. 2007). The tourism motivation, and the activities generated by it come to life in relaxation, in visiting friends and relatives and in beach/waterside tourism, namely they appear on the physiological level and on the level of social relations of the hierarchy by MASLOW, A. As the satisfaction of the basic and the growing needs also play a role in life satisfaction (MASLOW, A. 2003), getting out of the everyday environment by travelling can contribute to the increase of happiness of the Hungarian population. This leads to the conclusion that people who travel are happier than non-travellers.

Methodology

In line with the National Tourism Development Strategy (2005–2013) and in order to fulfil the policy's requirements regarding quality of life, the Tourism Unit of Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (now Ministry of Local Government), together with the Hungarian National Tourist Office and the Geographical Research Institute Hungarian Academy of Sciences defined the issues seeking the primary correlation between tourism and life satisfaction⁷. After consulting the international and available in Hungary literature, three themes had been highlighted: firstly general life satisfaction,

⁷ Parallel, the Tourism Unit of the Ministry of Local Government began to develop the Tourism-specific Life Satisfaction Index (in Hungarian TĒMI). In order to monitor the theoretical frameworks and to develop the methodology, it has commissioned the preparation of an internationally pioneer study to a consortium led by company Xellum Ltd.

secondly the role of travelling in happiness generation, thirdly tourism as an activity influencing economic, social and natural environment. The questions defined by the expert team were included in the survey about the travelling habits of the Hungarian population conducted by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. The results of the survey conducted in 11,500 households in 2007 are representative to the Hungarian adult (18+) population. In this paper, the general life satisfaction and the symbiosis of travelling is analysed by household's size, age, education, income level and participation in tourism/number of trips taken.

Results

Travelling as a factor of happiness

The analysis of the Hungarian population's life satisfaction shows a general average of a more positive than unconcerned state of 3.32 (1 to 5 scale where 1 is not happy at all, 5 is very happy) (*Table 1*). Happiness is influenced significantly by age, education, income level, and participation in tourism, meanwhile household's size has a limited effect.

The bigger the household is, the happier is the individual. The happiness value is 2.88 in single households, 3.50 in households with 4 persons, meanwhile in households with 5 or more persons, the happiness value is somehow lower (3.47). The value of life satisfaction shows a significant decrease with the age of the respondent. Meanwhile happiness value is 3.67 among the 18–24 years old, the same value is 2.89 among 65+ years old people. Also education has an important role in life satisfaction. Respondents without primary education are much less happier (2.84) than people with a degree (3.86). Polarization regarding income level shows the biggest difference in happiness value. Meanwhile people who consider their income level very low have a happiness value of 2.80, people in the highest income category have a value of 3.93 (Hungarian population proves the controversial axiom that money does not make happy, as money has proved to be of primary importance in the evaluation of life satisfaction). Also travelling contributes to life satisfaction. The more trips are taken, the happier is the individual. Those who did not take any trip in 2007, enjoy a happiness value of 3.05, meanwhile the same ratio is 3.73 among those who had taken at least 4 trips during the period in concern.

Although the Hungarian population is actively involved both in domestic and outbound tourism, the interviewees rated the importance of travelling in their own life at 2.53 on average (1 to 5 scale where 1 = no role at all, 5 = very important role) (*Table 1*). Thus a conclusion could be drawn that tourism mobility does not play an especially important part in the value hierarchy of

Table 1. Image of happiness among the Hungarian population, 2007 (n=11,500)

Factor	Life satisfaction*	Role of travelling in satisfaction**	Role of travelling in life***
Household's size			
1 Person	2.85	3.14	2.07
2 Persons	3.22	3.38	2.41
3 Persons	3.42	3.55	2.66
4 Persons	3.50	3.69	2.82
5+ Persons	3.47	3.49	2.48
Age			
18–24	3.67	3.86	2.99
25–44	3.55	3.66	2.79
45–64	3.20	3.41	2.48
65+	2.89	3.01	1.87
Education			
No education	2.84	2.94	1.70
Primary	3.02	3.21	2.05
Secondary	3.43	3.58	2.68
Degree	3.68	3.78	3.15
Income level			
Very low	2.80	3.16	1.88
Low	3.14	3.34	2.23
Average	3.50	3.60	2.79
High	3.79	3.79	3.28
Very high	3.93	3.85	3.63
Number of trips			
No trip	3.05	3.20	1.91
1–3 trips	3.58	3.73	3.14
4+ trips	3.73	3.88	3.41
Total	3.32	3.47	2.53

* Question: Generally, how happy do you consider yourself?

** Question: In your opinion, how does travelling influence one's happiness when one can afford to travel freely?

*** Question: What role does travelling play in your life?

Source: HCSO

the Hungarian society. At the same time the household's size, age, education, income level, and the participation in tourism are relevant factors when talking about the importance of tourism mobility.

The larger the household is, the more important is the role of travelling, but comparing households with 4 persons (2.82) with bigger (5+) households we can see a drop in this value (2.48). In line with ageing, travelling is dedicated less importance: meanwhile among the 18–24 years old respondents the value is 2.99, 65+ years old respondents rate the importance of travelling at 1.87 on an average. Also higher education seems to allow for the increased importance of travelling, whereas the least educated people show a much lower rate (1.70)

than the average. Also the evaluation of income level increases parallel with the importance of travelling. Interviewees with the lowest income gave a rate of 1.88 on an average, meanwhile among those with the highest income the same ratio is 3.63, namely the latter group assigns maximum importance to tourism. Those who had taken no trips during the studied period, are also aware of the importance of tourism mobility, their average rate of 1.91 is based on the previous travelling experience. Naturally, tourism mobility was appreciated much higher (3.41) by those interviewees who had taken 4 or more trips.

The Hungarian population bears witness to the closer relationship between tourism mobility and life satisfaction when thinking about travelling as a source of happiness (*Table 1*). The adult population gives a higher rate for travelling as a source of happiness (3.47) than for life satisfaction in general (3.32). Taking into account the demographic factors, only respondents with high or very high income level show a similar or a somewhat lower (-0.08) rate of travelling as a source of happiness than general life satisfaction. The maximum positive anomaly was registered among the respondents with very low income (+0.36), the single households (+0.29) and among the 45–64 years old interviewees (+0.21). With regard to the effect of travelling on happiness, the household's size, education, income level and tourism mobility shows a parallel ratio, meanwhile the age is in inverse ratio to it. For the households with 1 to 4 persons, the importance of tourism mobility as a source of happiness is in line with the education, income level and participation in tourism in 2007 (in the case of households with 5 or more persons, the evaluation of travelling as a source of happiness is lower than in the smaller ones). The older the respondent is, the lower is the importance of travelling as a source of happiness. In this respect the youngest respondents gave the highest rates, whereas the oldest interviewees assigned the lowest rates.

Travelling as a factor of value hierarchy

The expenditure structure of the households highlights the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of need satisfaction. The realized expenditure is not in correlation with the evaluation of the importance of the given need, as the income level of the households is also influenced by different circumstances, that are difficult to define (e.g. illness, heritage), besides the classical income and expenditure factors like education, age, place of residence etc. So, when examining life satisfaction, it is much more approved to focus on the image of needs, rather than the volume of the expenditure on their satisfaction.

The Hungarian society's satisfaction based on Gárdonyi's 'we are poor, but we are alive' philosophy dates back to the 'fridge socialism' in Kádár's Hungary (LENGYEL, L. 1988., 2004., 1988). The conversion to capitalism and the

emerging consumer society after the transition in 1989 resulted in electronic equipment, cultural goods, travelling abroad, but also health and prevention services topping the value hierarchy of the Hungarian population. Besides the decreasing consumer structure of the impoverished social stratification, the diversification of material factors influencing life satisfaction can be observed until today.

Regarding the factors included in the study, health and prevention is at the top of the value hierarchy of the Hungarian adult population (Table 2). It is followed by the housing/home, and the electronic devices. On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = not important at all, and 5 = very important) health and prevention has an importance of 3.82, meanwhile buying new/changing car is the least important (2.24) for the respondents. Travelling is not among the essential values in the life of the Hungarian population. Domestic trip (3.03) is well behind health and prevention (3.82), housing/home (3.56) and electronic equipment (3.28). Travelling abroad (2.42) is even less important than clothing (2.93) or cultural activities (2.67).

Table 2. Importance of selected material goods in the life of Hungarian population, 2007 (n=11,500)

Factor/Goods	Domestic trip	Outbound trip	Health, prevention	Cultural activity (cinema, theater, exhibition etc.)	Housing/home	Electronic equipment	Clothing	Buying new/ changing car
Education								
No education	2.10	1.52	3.60	1.76	2.87	2.46	2.24	1.44
Primary	2.49	1.89	3.66	2.09	3.26	2.99	2.63	1.85
Secondary	3.23	2.57	3.86	2.84	3.71	3.46	3.10	2.43
Degree	3.65	3.20	4.06	3.46	3.82	3.48	3.16	2.61
Income Level								
Very low	2.40	1.79	3.62	2.04	3.25	2.96	2.73	1.75
Low	2.74	2.12	3.77	2.38	3.41	3.09	2.71	1.95
Average	3.31	2.67	3.88	2.93	3.72	3.47	3.09	2.50
High	3.61	3.32	4.05	3.35	3.77	3.57	3.30	2.80
Very high	3.76	3.50	3.62	3.44	4.06	3.85	3.20	2.99
Total	3.03	2.42	3.82	2.67	3.56	3.28	2.93	2.24

Source: HCSO

As the study has a focus on tourism, the factors are highlighted where domestic and outbound trips showed the maximum value difference between the attributes. The importance of domestic trip is influenced mostly by the education. For the domestic trips, average rates by respondents without any

education (2.10) and by respondents with a degree (3.65) showed a much bigger difference than regarding household's size, age or income level. The same is in the case of the outbound trips where income level generates the biggest difference in the value. Meanwhile respondents with a very low income gave a value of 1.79 for the importance of outbound trips the same ratio is 3.50 among the respondents with a very high income. For people with secondary education or a degree as well as for people with high or very high income, domestic and outbound trips are of greater importance than the average.

2.3.3. *Travelling as a functional activity*

With the fact taken for granted that travelling has a vital role in the satisfaction of human needs, trips with different motivations can influence life satisfaction. For example, having a disease healed during a trip, fulfillment of dreams and wishes outside of the daily environment, meeting/visiting friends and relatives, or a simple physical, spiritual or mental refreshment can contribute to the increase of subjective quality of life.

Tourism mobility of the Hungarian adult population is mostly dominated by visiting friends and relatives, i.e. maintaining human relationships (Table 3). On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = not important at all, 5 = very important), relations with friends and relatives living far away has an importance of 3.84. This is followed by the regeneration, i.e. recreation of one's working capacity (3.68). As travelling is also a joyful activity, a lot of respondents are keen to re-experience it over and over; they travel for the sake of enjoyment. This function of tourism mobility is much more valued (3.44) than health and prevention (2.83). Generally speaking, travelling has the least importance in relation to success feeling of the individual (2.67).

When the attributes with the different functions of travelling are analysed with regard to the role and importance of tourism mobility, it is household's size and age that mainly influence the health and prevention functions of taking a trip. Education is an important determining factor in relation to the regeneration function meanwhile income level has a significant role at re-experiencing travelling or taking another trip. The number of trips strengthens the relationships with friends and relatives resulting in an increasing difference between the attributes. Health and prevention mark the biggest difference (+0.33) in the case of households with two (3.00) and five or more (2.67) persons. Regarding the age of the respondents, also health and prevention differentiate the most: meanwhile 18–24 years old respondents value it 2.31, the same ratio is 3.15 among 65+ year old respondents which shows a difference of +0.84. Education has an outstanding role regarding relaxation, regeneration as the difference between respondents without education (2.91)

Table 3. Functions of Travelling among the Hungarian Population, 2007 (n=11,500)

Factor	Health, prevention	Success feeling	Re-experience of travelling	Human relations	Regeneration
Household's size					
1 Person	2.99	2.73	3.38	3.75	3.53
2 Persons	3.00	2.63	3.38	3.79	3.56
3 Persons	2.78	2.69	3.43	3.88	3.74
4 Persons	2.74	2.72	3.52	3.90	3.83
5+ Persons	2.67	2.59	3.42	3.83	3.61
Age					
18–24	2.31	2.65	3.67	3.79	3.65
25–44	2.74	2.74	3.53	3.91	3.85
45–64	3.05	2.69	3.38	3.83	3.66
65+	3.15	2.39	3.02	3.71	3.19
Education					
No education	2.75	2.32	3.08	3.79	2.91
Primary	2.62	2.43	3.13	3.71	3.36
Secondary	2.85	2.70	3.48	3.85	3.74
Degree	3.03	2.89	3.70	3.98	3.94
Income level					
Very low	2.60	2.42	3.05	3.73	3.33
Low	2.76	2.55	3.31	3.77	3.52
Average	2.86	2.71	3.52	3.89	3.76
High	3.07	2.98	3.66	3.83	3.99
Very high	2.90	3.03	3.94	4.13	3.91
Number of trips					
No trip	2.61	2.52	3.10	3.52	3.36
1–3 trips	2.93	2.70	3.57	3.93	3.86
4+ trips	3.02	2.86	3.75	4.21	3.86
<i>Total</i>	2.83	2.67	3.44	3.84	3.68

Source: HCSO

and ones with a degree (3.94) is +1.03. Income level determines the tourism mobility, namely repeated travelling is valued much more by respondents with high income (3.94) than by interviewees with a very low income (3.05) which means a difference of +0.89. The number of trips has the most influence with regard to the relationship with friends and relatives, respondents who had taken no trips in 2007 has a value of 3.52 which is much lower (+0.69) than the value among the respondents taking 4 or more trips (4.21).

Analysing the attributes from the reverse aspect, the importance of travelling shows similar results as stated above. Health and prevention is the least valued/determining function among the 18–24 years old (3.07) cohort and it is valued the highest among respondents with a high income (3.07).

Success is the least important for interviewed with no education (2.32) and the most important for respondents with a high income (3.03). Re-travelling has the smallest role among 65+ years old, meanwhile the biggest role among individuals with very high income (3.94). Maintaining the relationship with relatives, the biggest difference can be seen between respondents taking no trip in 2007 (3.52) and the ones taking 4 or more trips (4.21). The regeneration function of travelling shows the biggest gap between respondents without education (2.91) and respondents with a high income (3.94).

3. Conclusions

Thinking about happiness dates back to Aristotle's times, but its wider interpretation has been assisted and shaped by recent social-economic changes. The rise of living standards, an easy availability of goods and services, and the growing freedom motivate politicians to initiate the development of intelligence concerning research inquiring about happiness. Accepting VEENHOVEN'S hypothesis, according to which happiness is the reflection of life satisfaction and the materialisation of subjective quality of life, more attention is paid to the exploration of the characteristic features of happiness, and to the way how to reach it. Because of the transdisciplinary character of happiness studies and due to the complexity of life, the spectrum of such studies increases continuously. And so, also tourism as one of the most dynamically developing leisure sector plays an ever more important role in the studies on happiness.

In Hungary, research activities aimed at the correlation between tourism and the subjective QoL has begun in line with the realisation of the National Tourism Development Strategy (2005–2013). The main outcomes of the basic research which is representative to the Hungarian adult population can be summarized in the followings.

Tourism mobility contributes to life satisfaction, as travellers have proven to be happier than non-travellers. Among the factors defining tourism demand, this is mostly on a par with the role of personal incomes being discretionary in increasing happiness. The higher the individual's income is, the happier he/she is. Since discretionary income is a basic condition for travelling, richer people travel more frequently what makes them happier.

Although two thirds of the Hungarian households participate in tourism, travelling does not have a key role in life. It has been found that younger, more educated people and persons with a higher income devote more attention to travelling/the role of tourism. This is mainly explained by the extensive types of motivation, and by the more successful socialisation.

Even if travelling does not play a determining role in the life of the Hungarian population, defining it as a factor of happiness results in a value

above the average satisfaction level. Only respondents with high and with very high income valued tourism as factor of happiness at an average rate or at a rate lower than that. Hungarian adults who are satisfied with their tourism mobility think that travelling can make them happier, meanwhile completion itself highlights that travelling is not the key for happiness.

Travelling cannot be defined as one of the most important issues in life. Similarly to other Hungarian and international studies, health and prevention is in the focus when talking about most important things in life (this fact shows a confidence in developing health tourism). The fact that domestic tourism is valued more than travelling abroad, can be explained by the financial limitations of the population.

Travelling primarily serves maintaining and strengthening social relations. Taking into account that studies on the travelling habits of the Hungarian population as a rule qualify visiting friend and relatives (VFR) among the most important motivation, it is not surprising that making relationship with friends and relatives closer also defines the function of tourism mobility. Meanwhile health is the most important in life, this is not reflected when the function of tourism is discussed. Probably the high price level of health and wellness tourism keeps back the population from the more active participation in health tourism. From the viewpoint of the development of Hungarian tourism a very positive sign is that the population have recognised the experience of re-travelling. So probably an increasing number of people intend to participate in domestic and outbound tourism.

The first phase of the research programme aimed at the exploration of the symbiosis between tourism and the subjective quality of life has confirmed the need for more detailed studies. In the next phase of the project the impacts of the concrete trips and tours upon the life of the inhabitants are planned to be explored.

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