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## Seniors in international residential tourism: looking for quality of life

### ABSTRACT

This research was conducted in golf resorts, questioning tourists living in Portugal. Principal component analysis highlighted determinants of quality of life (QOL) of senior residential tourists. An ordered probit model evaluated what matters most to seniors seeking to achieve their desired level of well-being. Aesthetics of locations, perceived value, medical assistance, socialization, and community involvement contribute to decisions to establish a second residence in Portugal - either to ensure a good QOL at retirement or permit longer periodic stays. Results show that quality of neighbourhoods explains their aesthetic value and suggest that local social relationships matter. Beauty, security, and safety are equally important. This is one of the first studies suggesting that aesthetics in neighbourhoods explain QOL of senior residential tourists.

KEYWORD Quality of life; senior tourism; residential tourists; aesthetics; neighbourhood

### Introduction

Seniors are now referred to as “the grey market” since their importance keeps increasing worldwide (Kotler, Bowen, Makens, & Baloglu, 2017). According to the United Nations (2015), seniors are the fastest growing age group on earth. They currently control more than 50% of discretionary income and value bonds with friends and family (i.e. connectedness). Older adults reflect a richer aging population in good health and with a desire to travel. This segment’s growth has transformed it from a traditionally homogeneous niche into a segment comprising different subgroups: “explorers”, “livewires”, “vacationers”, and “homebodies” (Tiago, Couto, Tiago, & Faria, 2016). In 2020, experts predict that one in every eight individuals worldwide will be above 60 years old (World Tourism Organization, 2015).

The concept of quality of life (QOL) is deeply embedded in the definition of tourism. However, testing and empirically demonstrating that tourism can indeed improve QOL of all participants in tourism continues to be a major challenge. Nonetheless, the overall perspective on the value of tourism has gone from an emphasis on economic benefits to a stronger focus on non-economic measures such as QOL and satisfaction. How tourism affects both general conceptions of this industry and individuals’ well-being and overall life satisfaction is an important, but still relatively underresearched question (Uysal, Sirgy, & Perdue, 2012).

The significance of vacation experiences to QOL was first examined by Neal, Sirgy, and Uysal (1999). The cited authors demonstrated that the effects of travel and/or tourism experiences on life satisfaction are conveyed through a series of mediation effects. These involve satisfaction with, in general, leisure life, travel and/or tourism services and travel and/or tourism experiences in general, as well as specific services (i.e. pre-trip, en route, destination, return services, etc). In addition, Mitas, Yarnal, and Chick (2012) investigated the impact of travel experiences on the elderly’s life satisfaction. Tourists’ positive and negative memories generated by their most recent trip were also shown by Sirgy, Kruger, Lee, and Yu (2011) to affect satisfaction in 13 life domains, including leisure life, which, in turn, influence tourists’ overall life satisfaction.

Nawijn, Marchand, Veenhoven, and Vingerhoets (2010) found that holiday takers show an increased sense of well-being prior to and after trip experiences, as compared with non-holiday takers. In a

related study, Neal, Uysal, and Sirgy (2007) investigated the moderation effect of length of stay, concluding that extended stays are associated with higher levels of satisfaction in leisure life domains as opposed to shorter stays.

Not enough research has been dedicated to the needs of the elderly (Albayrak, Caber, & Bideci, 2016). Therefore, further research is required in ageing studies related to the tourism industry to understand how to help the elderly achieve later life satisfaction, such as ways to pursue a meaningful life in retirement life. Most studies have focused on North America (Jang & Ham, 2009) and Australia (Glover & Prideaux, 2009), but a few have looked at the United Kingdom (UK), Ireland, Germany, and Sweden (Ward, 2014). Except for Spain, Southern Europe (Alén, Losada, & de Carlos, 2015) is clearly underrepresented even though it constitutes a major tourist destination region. Variations in social, economic, and cultural contexts are likely to require more specific applied studies worldwide.

The present research focused on Portugal as a residential tourist destination and involved senior travellers from different generating markets, such as Spain, France, the UK, and Germany. The rationale for this study was twofold. On the one hand, Portugal is a major destination for international tourism flows. On the other hand, the abovementioned countries constitute important origin markets that are also bound to show differences due to different cultural characteristics. Thus, to strengthen the theoretical framework related to the QOL of foreign senior residential tourists, this study sought to evaluate the determining factors that have an impact on this segment's QOL.

### ***QOL and well-being in tourism***

QOL research in tourism has gained much momentum over the last two decades. Academics working in this area have examined issues related to tourists and host communities (Uysal et al., 2012). The recent growth of research on QOL and well-being in tourism led Uysal, Sirgy, Woo, and Kim (2015) to perform a comprehensive review of this literature. The cited authors concluded, on the one hand, that tourism experiences and activities affect tourists' overall QOL, and, on the other hand, that the impact of vacation experiences on QOL may depend on tourists' different stages in life and other background variables that can influence the degree of importance tourists attribute to travel.

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Empirical evidence has been found for vacations' contribution to QOL, together with variations in the extent to which vacations affect the QOL of different individuals. Because QOL has varied meanings to different people and at assorted points in their life, this factor represents both an individualized and dynamic concept (Dolnicar, Yanamandram, & Cliff, 2012). Tourism clearly contributes to more social tourists' well-being (McCabe & Johnson, 2013). Tourists' sense of well-being is boosted immediately after taking a vacation, but its effects fade several months later (Chen, Lehto, & Cai, 2013). Researchers focusing on the impact of travel and tourism experiences on senior travellers' psychological well-being or level of happiness have identified important factors in home environments. For example, loss of freedom, relative deprivation, declining status, discrimination, and social exclusion experiences of the elderly can be alleviated by the ego-enhancing settings, properties and opportunities of tourism (Dann, 2001).

The level of involvement of elderly tourists and the perceived value of these experiences increase satisfaction, with travel experiences playing an important role in leisure activities and overall QOL. Leisure life satisfaction and general QOL are predictors of revisit intentions (Kim, Woo, & Uysal, 2015).

Previous studies of active seniors, who are key figures in the drive tourism market worldwide, have considered the well-being benefits for senior tourists who drive recreation vehicles in the United States, Europe, and Australia (Wu & Pearce, 2016). Issues about QOL and the rewards of travelling during particular seasons of the year appear to be extremely similar for different nationalities. This contributes to a more integrated, holistic view of the value of travel for senior tourists.

### ***Seniors and aging in tourism***

After retiring from work, most seniors devote their additional leisure time to interests and put tourism among their top priorities. Being able to travel can be seen as almost the “essence of retirement” (Weiss, 2005) because fewer limitations exist on the timing of trips and duration of stays. Poffiey, Pederson, and Brewer (1995) found other reasons for this phenomenon such as a higher level of wealth, higher discretionary income, lower consumer debt and the tendency to travel greater distances for longer lengths of time. Currently, low flight prices make travel easier. Sedgley, Pritchard, and Morgan (2011) argue that researchers need to apply humanist and participatory approaches to exploring how the elderly perceive the meaning of their lives.

With the goal of further understanding the senior travel market, researchers have studied seniors’ motivations. Wang, Chen, and Chou (2007) studied family decision-making, emphasizing the influence of husbands and wives’ different roles when senior tourists participate in group package tours. Prayag (2012) used the push and pull framework to focus on senior travellers’ motivations and future behavioural intentions to visit the city of Nice, in France. The results indicate that resting and relaxing and spending time and being together with family are the most important push factors. The most important pull attributes are weather and climate, beaches and water sports and beautiful scenery and attractions.

Other authors delved into senior tourism research by subjecting health issues to analysis. Fleischer and Pizam (2002) surveyed Israeli senior citizens and found their tourism motivations are a function of income and health and their trip duration changes with age.

### ***Residential tourism***

The role of second home tourism as a potential economic driver for many tourist destinations has emerged as an important topic of investigation (e.g. Müller, 2013). Residential tourism (O’Reilly, 2009) is often the outcome of migration between second homes and permanent residences. The migration trajectory of this tourism may be domestic, including domestic second homes or permanent domestic – or international – changes such as seasonal out, expatriate or permanent out migration (Haug, Dann, & Mehmetoglu, 2007).

Significant numbers of seniors have been buying properties abroad and moving to a foreign country, whereby they anticipate finding an amenity-seeking retirement (Breuer, 2005). They usually take up residence abroad, but this is often associated with the use of a second home on a seasonal basis rather than a permanent move. Thus, studying characteristics and behavioural patterns of seasonal and permanent residents could produce relevant insights in terms of, for instance, ties to home countries, social activities, settlement and residence type and housing equipment and floor space (Breuer, 2005).

Previous tourism had given tourist residents access to the place in which they chose to live (Haug et al., 2007). Residential tourists admit to fantasizing about having a life in the destination they visited previously as leisure travellers.

Ageing studies have usually researched the elderly as consumers, with only one study addressing elderly residents’ perceptions of tourism development (Tomljenovic & Faulkner, 2000). Past studies have mainly explored topics related to the elderly as travellers rather than investigating them as

members of tourism communities. The scarcity of research on the elderly's contributions to tourism development and their perceptions of tourism development in their community constitutes a gap in the scientific literature (Hung & Lu, 2016).

## Conceptual model and research hypotheses

The present research was conducted in essentially two stages. In the first phase, a questionnaire was developed with a set of 61 statements related with determinants of choosing a place for retirement where QOL can be enhanced. The 61 statements appear in the literature in discussions of different factors, but, in the present study, they were used to assess safety (Aref, 2011) and the general environment (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Ko & Stewart, 2002). Other factors addressed were infrastructure (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Jurowski & Brown, 2001), social interactions (Ko & Stewart, 2002), and economic factors (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Jurowski & Brown, 2001). Still other items covered health (Ko & Stewart, 2002), neighbourhoods and the location and aesthetics of the respondents' place of residence in Portugal (Nicholls & Crompton, 2005).

The above mentioned factors were reduced by means of principal component analysis (PCA) and grouped and labelled accordingly with the associated statements and literature. The refined list of components included aesthetics, perceived value, medical assistance, socialization, and community involvement. These components were also referred to as determinants of retirees' choices by Uysal et al. (2015). This exploratory factor analysis (EFA) meant that the main determinants could be specified for decisions to live in Portugal in order to improve senior residents' QOL. Based on the components identified by EFA in the first part of the research, the nine hypotheses described below were proposed.

*H1: Aesthetics have an influence on senior residential tourists' overall assessment of improved QOL in Portugal.*

Aesthetics are equated with the most frequent landscape values and with the most common attractions found in coastal zones (Brown, 2006). Aesthetics also play a positive role in nature-based tourism and its contributions to QOL (Bushell, Staiff, & Conner, 2002), as well as having been identified with mountain-specific resource characteristics (Nepal & Chipeniuk, 2005). Tourists' aesthetic judgements have also been studied in the context of nature-based and urban tourism destinations (Kirillova, Fu, Lehto, & Cai, 2014). More recently, Trinh and Ryan (2016) researched the aesthetic context of visitors' experiences within cultural tourism attractions. In addition, Nicholls and Crompton (2005) show that aesthetics matter at the time of choosing a place to have a second home, but, thus far, the results that prove the aesthetics of locations can influence QOL are still extremely limited.

*H2: Perceived value has an influence on senior residential tourists' overall assessment of improved QOL in Portugal.*

Perceived value is an underlying determinant of satisfaction with travel experiences among the elderly (Kim et al., 2015). Both motivation and involvement are considered antecedents of the perceived value of experiences in destinations (Prebensen, Woo, Chen, & Uysal, 2012). Woo, Kim, and Uysal (2015), in turn, found that residents' perceptions of the value of tourism development have positive effects on satisfaction with both non-material and material life domains, hence contributing to overall QOL.

*H3: Medical assistance has an influence on senior residential tourists' overall assessment of improved QOL in Portugal.*

The relationship between health and medical tourism and well-being and/or QOL has received increasing attention in the academic community (Smith & Puczko, 2016). This link can be seen from the perspective of either tourists or residents in terms of impacts on their QOL (Uysal et al., 2012). Nevertheless, these aspects of tourism are not necessarily positively correlated, as demonstrated by Michalkó, Bakucz, and Rátz (2013). The cited study found that, although the spa in question had a significant presence in the everyday life of a spa-town's residents, the development of spa tourism had limited effects on their QOL.

*H4: Socialization has an influence on senior residential tourists' overall assessment of improved QOL in Portugal.*

Socialization was found by Carneiro and Eusébio (2012) to be a motivation dimension when segmenting the senior tourism market based on the impact of tourism factors on QOL. It is also considered a dimension of tourist motivation when addressing QOL overall (Kim & Woo, 2014), as well as more specifically for elderly tourists (Woo, Kim, & Uysal, 2016).

*H5: Community involvement has an influence on senior residential tourists' overall assessment of improved QOL in Portugal.*

Community involvement is related to the extent to which residents are involved in sharing issues about their lives with their communities. Lee (2013) found that community involvement has a positive influence on sustainable tourism development. Community involvement was researched by Jurovski and Brown (2001), as well, and, later on, contextualized in a QOL literature review conducted by Uysal et al. (2015). In addition, this construct was included in a study by Wan and Li (2013), which assessed the sustainability of Macao's tourism development.

*H6: Perceptions of QOL have an influence on senior residential tourists' overall assessment of improved QOL in Portugal.*

Researchers see QOL as a dynamic concept involving individuals' subjective perceptions of well-being, which evolve over time (Dolnicar et al., 2012). Kim, Uysal, and Sirgy (2013) studied community residents' viewpoints regarding the impacts of tourism (i.e. social, cultural, economic and environmental) on their QOL and overall life satisfaction. Later, Kim et al. (2015) went further and investigated the relationship between elderly tourists' travel behaviour and overall QOL. Because it is highly relevant, QOL research has thus been conducted from two points of view: tourists and residents of host communities (Woo et al., 2015).

*H7: Season normally spent in the south of Portugal has an influence on senior residential tourists' overall assessment of improved QOL in Portugal.*

The tourist season has been shown to influence how residents perceive tourism impacts on their overall life satisfaction (Bimonte & Faralla, 2016). Seasonal factors clearly affect residents' perceptions of economic benefits, social costs, environmental sustainability and QOL in cultural heritage tourism destinations (Jeon, Kang, & Desmarais, 2016). These previous results generated interest in the present research in knowing how residential tourists' QOL might be affected by the season they stay in Portugal.

*H8: Sociodemographics have an influence on overall assessment of senior residential tourists' improved QOL in Portugal.*

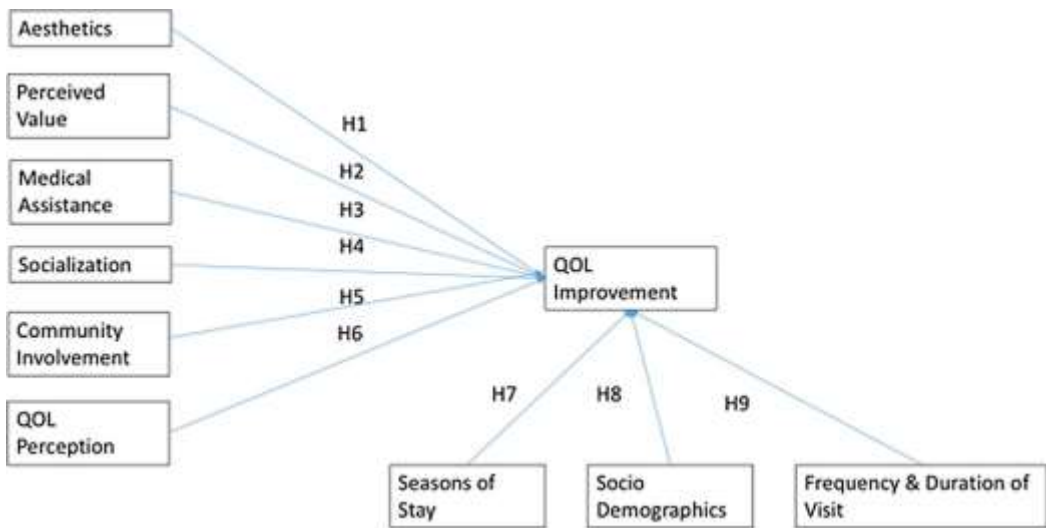
Sociodemographic characteristics have been extensively included in research in order to examine their influence on tourist behaviour. For instance, Agyeiwaah, Akyeampong, and Amenumey (2013) found that sociodemographics have an impact on international tourists' motivations to choose homestay, that is, accommodations in local people's homes at destinations. Yu, Cole and Chancellor (2016) assessed these factors in community QOL in the context of tourism development.

*H9: Frequency and duration of visit has an influence on senior residential tourists' overall assessment of improved QOL in Portugal.*

Both travel duration and frequency have been studied in order to assess their roles regarding the impacts of vacation experiences on the subjective well-being of tourists. Chen, Xiaoxiao, Xinran, and Lehto (2016) stress vacation duration's moderating effect on the relationship between tourist satisfaction and subjective well-being, but this impact was not confirmed for frequency of vacations. Terzi, Türkoğlu, Bölen, Baran, and Salihoglu (2015) argue that tourists' QOL can improve with increased frequency of participation in culture-related activities. The nine research hypotheses discussed above are shown in Figure 1 within the context of the present study's theoretical model.

## **Methodology**

As previously mentioned, the current research focused on using quantitative methods, namely, a survey based on a questionnaire administered to international residential tourists classified as seniors. The



**Figure 1.** Theoretical model and hypotheses.

questionnaire included 61 items and the relevant measurement scales, including a 7-point scale on which 1 corresponded to “strongly dissatisfied” and 7 to “strongly satisfied”. These statements were deliberately mixed up in the questionnaire to ensure unbiased answers.

The following sociodemographic variables were used to profile respondents: gender, age within the senior group, education level and income. Furthermore, EFA or, more specifically, PCA was used to explore the most relevant determinants.

The target population and resulting sample were foreign senior residential tourists who have invested in real estate and live in Portugal. The empirical study was carried out by means of a questionnaire distributed in the south of Portugal (i.e. the Algarve region) close to their second home residences. The data collection was conducted in golf courses and clubs in the Algarve, from September to October 2016. Golf tourism in Portugal was previously studied by Barros, Butler, and Correia (2010), although their research focused on analysing factors influencing the length of stay of tourists on holiday in the Algarve. The cited authors’ results reveal a sample profile quite similar to what the present study found.

The instrument was a survey based on a questionnaire. The measurement scales, among others, included seven-point scales to measure satisfaction with QOL in the community and the importance of several reasons for choosing a place to retire. The central aim of this research was to assess how sociodemographics, tripographics and determinants of residential tourism – as well as the relevant tourists’ perceptions of QOL – contribute to an overall perception of improved QOL while residing in the Algarve. The sample size was 142 respondents. Table 1 illustrates the characteristics of the sample.

The dimensionality of the data was subsequently reduced to six components, and these components were recodified to reflect re-categorization according to the number of nodes the components presented in their original form. This meant that a component with only one category now comprised only negative or positive assessments. An ordered probit model was created to test the effects of each of the determinants of senior tourists’ decisions to reside partially or for the rest of their life in the Algarve, close to or inside golf resorts, in order to improve their QOL. This type of model was selected as the most appropriate for determining the effects the conceptual model proposed because the data were ordinal (Ben-Akiva et al., 2002). Furthermore, ordered probit models permit an estimation of relationships between ordinal dependent variables and the set of independent variables, as required in this study.

**Table 1.** Sociodemographic and tripographic characteristics of sample.

| Tripographics (%)                      |      | Sociodemographics (%)   |      |
|--|------|-------------------------|------|
| Frequency of visits to Portugal        |      | Age                     |      |
| Three times a year or less             | 57.0 | Less than 65 years old  | 45.8 |
| More than three times a year           | 43.0 | More than 65 years old  | 54.2 |
| Preferred season for stays in Portugal |      | Country of residence    |      |
| Autumn                                 | 90.8 | UK                      | 68.3 |
| Spring                                 | 73.9 | Others                  | 31.7 |
| Winter                                 | 87.3 | Marital status          |      |
| Summer                                 | 26.8 | Married/living together | 88.0 |
| Duration of stay in Portugal           |      | Divorced                | 6.3  |
| Six months or less                     | 52.1 | Widowed                 | 5.6  |
| More than six months                   | 47.9 | Education               |      |
|  |      | Secondary               | 30.3 |
|  |      | University              | 48.6 |
|  |      | Postgraduate            | 20.4 |
|  |      | Other                   | .7   |

In ordered probit, an underlying score is estimated as a linear function of independent variables and a set of cut points. The probability of observing outcome *i* corresponds to the probability that the estimated linear function plus random error is within the range of the cut points estimated for the outcome. The model's cut-off point was set as the last category with the meaning "very important".

The model was tested using two samples randomly split off from the original database, leading to quite similar results. This supports the conclusions that the sample is representative and the results are generalizable.

Stata 7 software was used to estimate the model through a maximum likelihood function. The first step of the analysis was to examine the influence of eight dimensions of choice on overall assessments in order to determine the effects of sociodemographic and tripographic characteristics (see Table 1) on respondents' perceived QOL. All models were then adjusted for greater goodness of fit.

## Results

An analysis of the respondents' profiles based on their sociodemographic characteristics showed that the sample included a slightly higher number of males than females. The seniors engaging in international residential tourism were mainly over 65 years old (54%) with an average age of 67 years old, and half of the respondents were in the 65–74 years old range. About two-thirds of the participants come from the British Isles (68%), and the great majority were married (88%). Most senior residents have a university education, revealing a high education level (69%), and almost all respondents are retired.

All the seniors surveyed communicate in English, and, notably, more than a quarter also speak Portuguese. They prefer to stay in Portugal in the autumn, winter or spring for six months or less, even if this means they visit Portugal up to three times per year. This profile largely confirms Correia and Pimpao's (2013) findings.

Regarding their current life conditions, these residential tourists have all invested in real estate in Portugal, and, on average, they travel four times a year. Their average length of stay in Portugal is seven months a year, mostly in autumn and winter.

With respect to foreign senior residents' feelings before and after their stay, living in Portugal has markedly improved the respondents' QOL. Feelings that have intensified as a result of their stay in Portugal include feeling "calm and peaceful", "in good spirits" and "cheerful".

The measurement scales were processed with EFA in order to reduce the dimensionality of the data and identify the main factors relating to aesthetics, perceived value, medical assistance, socialization, community involvement and QOL perceptions. As was done by Bushell et al. (2002), aesthetics were



assumed to be a multidimensional construct with nine dimensions, while perceived value comprised six items, based on Prebensen et al.'s (2012) work. Medical assistance included three factors as suggested by Smith and Puczko (2016), and socialization comprised two factors related to tourists' need to be in harmony with friends and family (Ko & Stewart, 2002). Community involvement also included two factors connected with communication concerns and compliance with the Portuguese. Furthermore, QOL comprised seven factors related to well-being caused by tourism, as was done in Woo et al.'s (2015, 2016) studies.

The initial components utilized to define senior tourism residential determinants were reduced to a more manageable number (i.e. five). The remaining 27 statements having eigenvalues greater than one and explaining 77.0% of the total variance (Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin test: .852; Bartlett's test:  $p = .00$ ) were grouped into six factors labelled as follows: aesthetics, perceived value, medical assistance, socialization, community involvement and QOL (see Table 2).

Reliability coefficients were computed for each factor, items with low loadings or reliability were eliminated to enhance the quality of the model, which meant some items were discarded before further analyses were conducted. Since the main purpose of this research was to identify the determinants of QOL of foreign senior residential tourists, an ordered probit model was tested to identify the factors that may have the most influence on QOL in the south of Portugal.

Table 3 summarizes the results of the ordered probit model estimated to measure the effects of residential tourists' choice determinants on their overall assessment of their QOL. All the variables with non-significant beta weights or collinearity were eliminated to improve the estimated model. The results of the regression of six components re-categorized based on their eigenvalue accounted for 18.53% of the variance of improved QOL. These results are a fairly good indicator of the robustness of the model estimate (Correia & Kozak, 2012). A likelihood ratio test with six degrees of freedom resulted in a score of -130.58625 ( $p < .05$ ). All the variables retained show significant beta weights. Table 3 shows the results of the ordered probit models.

## Discussion

The previously described nine hypotheses proposed that respondents' overall assessment of their QOL resulting from their stay in Portugal is influenced by a series of factors. These include aesthetics (Trinh & Ryan, 2016), perceived value, medical assistance (Michalkó et al., 2013), socialization (Kim & Woo, 2014) and community involvement (Wan & Li, 2013). Other significant factors are perceptions of QOL (Kim et al., 2015), season of stay (Bimonte & Faralla, 2016), sociodemographics, frequency and duration of visit (Chen et al., 2016). These contributed to respondents' agreement with the following statement: "Overall, I feel that my QOL improves after spending time in Portugal."

Six out of nine hypotheses are supported by the data. H5 (i.e. community involvement) was not proven to be significant as respondents are mostly from the British Isles and they usually prefer to live in British communities (Dias, Correia, & López, 2014). H8 (i.e. sociodemographics) is also not statistically significant when explaining QOL achieved in the Algarve, thus suggesting that the sample was relatively homogeneous. In addition, H9 (i.e. frequency and duration of the stay in the Algarve) also proved to be not significant as an influence on QOL, which is a further corollary of the sample's homogeneity.

Aesthetics (with a beta weight of .264,  $p < .05$ ) has a positive influence on QOL, which supports H1 (Kirillova et al., 2014). Perceived value (beta weight of .200,  $p < .05$ ) is positively and statistically significant in overall assessments of improved QOL during the respondents' stay, which supports H2 (Woo et al., 2015).

Medical assistance also has a positive effect on senior tourists' QOL in the Algarve (.262,  $p < .05$ ), which supports H3 (Uysal et al., 2012). Socialization acts in the same direction (beta weight .652,  $p < .05$ ), supporting H4 (Woo et al., 2016). This proved true for QOL (beta weight .254,  $p < .05$ ), as well, and for visits concentrated in the spring (beta weight .468,  $p < .05$ ), providing support for H6 (Woo et al., 2015) and H7 (Jeon et al., 2016).



**Table 2.** Results of PCA.

|   | Component | Mean | Standard deviation | Total variance explained (%) | Cronbach's alpha |
|---|-----------|------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Aesthetics</i>                                       |           |      |                    | 32.02                        | .89              |
| Quality of neighbourhood                                | .77       | 5.70 | 1.03               |                              |                  |
| Beauty/aesthetics                                       | .75       | 5.60 | 1.03               |                              |                  |
| Security/safety   | .78       | 6.02 | .91                |                              |                  |
| Upkeep  | .69       | 5.70 | .97                |                              |                  |
| Calm/quiet nature                                       | .72       | 5.83 | .92                |                              |                  |
| Local population  | .57       | 5.60 | 1.19               |                              |                  |
| Cleanliness   | .74       | 5.68 | .93                |                              |                  |
| Low traffic volume                                      | .71       | 5.27 | 1.16               |                              |                  |
| Location  | .62       | 5.66 | 1.15               |                              |                  |
| <i>Perceived value</i>                                  |           |      |                    | 11.57                        | .81              |
| The value of my house and/or land                       | .62       | 5.08 | 1.18               |                              |                  |
| Housing costs and availability (senior homes)           | .78       | 4.63 | 1.08               |                              |                  |
| Taxes (real estate, sales taxes and bed tax)            | .79       | 4.27 | 1.36               |                              |                  |
| Tax benefits (if moved to Portugal permanently)         | .67       | 4.72 | 1.42               |                              |                  |
| Fair prices for goods and services                      | .63       | 5.36 | 1.13               |                              |                  |
| Cost of living  | .54       | 5.61 | .95                |                              |                  |
| <i>Medical assistance</i>                               |           |      |                    | 9.48                         | .90              |
| Medical service   | .85       | 5.15 | 1.02               |                              |                  |
| Hospital and medical facilities                         | .87       | 5.02 | 1.09               |                              |                  |
| Medical assistance                                      | .84       | 5.28 | 1.06               |                              |                  |
| <i>Socialization</i>                                    |           |      |                    | 6.44                         | .68              |
| Opportunity to be with friends                          | .76       | 5.73 | .99                |                              |                  |
| Opportunity to become familiar with other residents     | .68       | 5.10 | 1.36               |                              |                  |
| <i>Community involvement</i>                            |           |      |                    | 5.69                         | .80              |
| Citizen involvement / inclusion and awareness           | .81       | 4.42 | 1.26               |                              |                  |
| Communication with natives                              | .85       | 4.68 | 1.38               |                              |                  |
| <i>QOL</i>  |           |      |                    | 11.97                        | .91              |
| I have gotten the important things that I want in life. | .86       | 5.76 | .91                |                              |                  |
| In general, I am happy with (feel good about) my life.  | .83       | 5.99 | .81                |                              |                  |
| I have a meaningful and fulfilling life.                | .84       | 5.92 | .87                |                              |                  |
| The preservation of my way of life is good here.        | .87       | 5.93 | .86                |                              |                  |
| My material well-being is satisfactory.                 | .73       | 5.91 | .91                |                              |                  |

**Table 3.** Results of ordered probit model.

|                        | Coef. | Std. Err. | z    | <i>P</i> > z |
|------------------------|-------|-----------|------|--------------|
| H1: Aesthetics         | .264  | .122      | 2.17 | .030         |
| H2: Perceived value    | .200  | .120      | 2.13 | .031         |
| H3: Medical assistance | .263  | .120      | 2.18 | .029         |
| H4: Socialization      | .653  | .135      | 4.85 | .000         |
| H6: Perceived QOL      | .255  | .119      | 2.14 | .032         |
| H7: Season of visit    | .468  | .221      | 2.12 | .034         |

## Conclusion and implications

This research sought to make both scientific and managerial contributions to a topic that has been underresearched. This study's results provide an in-depth profile of seniors who engage in residential tourism abroad, specifically those choosing Portugal as their destination. This was enriched by characterizing how they evaluate their QOL based on an understanding of their lifestyles and the experiences they are willing to have.

Moreover, the research included looking for subsegments of tourist residents based on differences in their behaviour patterns, including seasonal and permanent stays. In particular, aesthetics were by far the number one component in terms of the variance explained of QOL, as assessed by senior tourist residents (32%). Interestingly, not only perceived value (11.6%) but also perceptions of QOL (12%) need to be emphasized in terms of overall assessments of improved QOL. Moreover, medical assistance (9.5%) and socialization (6.5%), although not as strong, have a role to play in this context.

The implications of this study are critical to managers involved in the development of residential communities targeting affluent seniors. These include incoming flows of foreign tourists with longer lengths of stay, second-home investments and higher consumer spending at destinations. Clearly, managers should pay attention first to the aesthetics of the destination, namely, to the quality of neighbourhoods and their beauty, cleanliness, safety, and security. Moreover, housing costs and the availability of homes suitable for seniors, as well as tax incentives associated with real estate, constitute important tools to enhance perceived value. This attracts more seniors looking for improved QOL through international residential tourism.

Since this study focused on senior tourist residents living close to golf courses and in a specific region (i.e. the Algarve), future research is needed to follow up on these findings. This can be done not only by replicating the research in other international regions with top quality golf courses but also in other geographical areas where senior residents live far away from this popular sports activity.

The present study offers some limitations of which the most important is that the convenience sample was restricted to the Algarve. Hence, more observations and countries need to be included in further data analyses. In addition, given the importance of aesthetics in the proposed model, more items to measure the importance of aesthetics for this type of tourist should be added in future studies. Finally, another issue that merits more research is an analysis of senior tourists' profiles regarding their overall past travel experiences.

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