A Qualitative Look at Leisure Benefits for Taiwanese Nursing Students

Shwu-Ching Hsieh
West Texas A&M University

Angela Spaulding
West Texas A&M University, aspaulding@mail.wtamu.edu

Mark Riney
West Texas A&M University

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Abstract

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Keywords

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Shwu-Ching Hsieh, Angela Spaulding, and Mark Riney
West Texas A&M University, Canyon, Texas

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Introduction and Statement of the Problem

In the twentieth century, leisure has emerged as a critical issue in people's lives. Increased material standard of living, better health, increased level of education, a declining percentage of life devoted to work, and greater personal freedom has provided, for many, a vastly increased potential for leisure. The use of free time in voluntary and pleasurable ways is an expected, and often realized, part of life in postindustrial societies (Kelly & Godbey, 1992). As Godbey (1999) described, leisure and its use has become increasingly important to individuals' sense of self and well being, as well as a critical part of the economy. Thus, the study of leisure has emerged.

Society in Taiwan (which was affected by western culture) experienced a transition from an agricultural to an industrial society at the beginning of the twentieth century. Quality of life has been enhanced due to the success of Taiwan's economic development. Yen (1997) argued that since the government did not appropriate a budget for the public leisure system, commercialized organizations play a major role in the recreation industry in Taiwan. While commercialized leisure activities are not deemed less desirable than public activities, this fact does demonstrate the budgetary priorities of the government (and the lack of priority on leisure activities). With increased advertisement, some individuals are easily attracted to follow commercialized leisure activities, such as MTV and video games. Others indulge in sensual pleasures, such as gambling, drinking, or pornography (that are viewed as unhealthy leisure activities, Yen, 1997).

A flood of "leisure" has emerged throughout society; yet, unfortunately, society has not been educated to properly make use of it. Several studies investigated the use of leisure (or satisfaction with leisure) among the Taiwanese people. For example, a report by Executive Yuan

(1992) showed that people have significantly increased their leisure time and recreation expenditures. Other studies have shown that people were intent upon meeting their needs for leisure, but were not satisfied physically and mentally (Ho, 1991; Hsieh, M. J., 1998; Lin, 1996). Furthermore, Wang (1997) expressed that teenagers in Taiwan: (1) have a negative philosophy of life; (2) believe they have an insufficient amount of leisure activities; (3) hold a negative viewpoint of leisure; and (4) hold a negative attitude toward school education.

Franklin's research (1996) states that many individuals contend that they do not have time for more physical or active leisure activities due to constraints or barriers on their time (e.g., work, family, school, social organization, etc.), yet they spend approximately two or three hours per day watching television or performing some other sedentary or passive leisure activity. Therefore, it is not the lack of time per se, but the way leisure is viewed (a leisure attitude) that contributes to how people respond to leisure activities. It is apparent that progress needs to be made concerning leisure attitudes, which includes not only improving the quality and leadership of leisure service facilities, but also empowering people with a positive understanding of leisure in general. According to Franklin's (1996) and Wang's (1997) research, most individuals have a negative attitude and understanding of leisure.

Leisure education is essential. This is a current issue for the Taiwanese people, who need to foster a positive attitude toward leisure. Psychologist Erikson (1963) suggested that there are eight psychosocial crises extending through an individual's lifespan that establish stages in the development of personal maturity. He believed that the search for identity becomes especially acute during adolescence both as a result of rapid changes in the biological, social and psychological aspects of the individual, and because of the necessity for occupational, sexual, or friendship choices to be made. Adolescence; therefore, is an important milestone in terms of personal development. It is during this critical period that later attitudes toward life are formed. Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, and Whalen (1993) proposed that the majority of an adolescent's waking time is spent engaged in leisure activities. For most adolescents, recreational activities and leisure experiences are central to identity development (Kelly & Freysinger, 2000). Furthermore, fulfilling leisure activities may be important for healthy psychological development during adolescence (Hendry, 1983).

Purpose of the Study/Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to determine the attitudes of first year nursing students toward leisure participation at the Jen-Te Junior College of Medicine Nursing and Management in Miao-Li, Taiwan. More specifically this study's purpose can be stated in the following guiding research questions:

- What types of leisure activities do first year nursing students at Jen-Te Junior College participate in?
- What are the attitudes of the first year nursing students at Jen-Te Junior College toward leisure?
- What is the relationship between leisure attitudes and leisure participation of first year nursing students in Jen-Te Junior College?

Significance of the Study

Adolescence is a peak time of leisure needs. Fitzgerald and others (1995) stated that knowledge of an adolescent's leisure time activities and attitudes are important for understanding the adolescent's social world and individual needs. Because leisure participation enhances health, it is important that all people have greater opportunities to experience leisure. If we are concerned with the psychological and sociological aspects of leisure, the study of leisure attitudes becomes an imperative task. To help students gain a better leisure attitude, it is important that they become interested in leisure activities as this can help them become more satisfied with their life. If a significant relationship is found between life satisfaction and leisure activities, the value of leisure education in school might be considered in greater depth. Research has shown that there is high relationship between leisure attitudes and leisure behavior. However, there has been relatively little investigation on this issue in Taiwan.

This study was conducted to explore the leisure attitude and leisure participation of junior college students. The study is significant because it added to the literature concerning leisure and attitudes toward leisure. The results from this study also provide educational administrators, society, and government with valuable guidance to inform administrative and counseling practices.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were utilized in this study. These definitions of each terms provided so that the reader can have a better understanding of the context the study was founded on.

Adolescence: Adolescence is a period of growth beginning with puberty and ending at the beginning of adulthood; it is a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood. From the respective of psychology, adolescence occurs between the ages of 11-19 (Rice, 2001).

Attitude: An attitude is generally defined as a disposition toward an object or event. Disposition is assumed to have cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (Neulinger, 1981).

Junior College Students: The students referred to in this study are students of Jen-Te Junior College of Medicine Nursing and Management. They are first year nursing students in a five-year program. Their median age is 16 years old.

Leisure: Leisure entails the time that an individual perceives to be free from obvious and formal duties, which include a paid job or other obligatory activities (Neulinger, 1981).

Leisure Activity: Leisure activity was defined as intrinsically motivated, out-of-class activities (including informal and more formally organized extracurricular activities) that junior college students do for their own enjoyment and by their own choice (not to fulfill class requirements or earn grades and credits) (Munson & Savickas, 1998).

Leisure Attitude: A person's attitude toward leisure is his particular way of thinking about, feeling about, and acting toward leisure (Neulinger, 1981). In this study there are three components of leisure attitudes: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. They are operationally defined by the Leisure Attitude Scale (LAB) (Ragheb & Beard, 1982).

Leisure Participation: Leisure participation was operationalized as the number of times that an individual had participated in certain leisure activities during the previous 12 months (Hsieh, C. M., 1998).

Review of Literature

The purpose of this section of this manuscript is to review relevant and related literature on the leisure participation and attitudes among junior college students. Literature to be discussed includes the definition of leisure; the categories (types) of leisure activities; the benefits of leisure; and the attitude towards leisure.

The Definition of Leisure

"Leisure" has been conceptualized and defined from a number of perspectives (such as Godbey, 1999; Kelly, 1990; Kelly & Freysinger, 2000; Kelly & Godbey, 1992; Murphy, 1974, 1981;). These different perspectives reflect historical differences in the organization of societies as well as differences in concepts and impingements upon both freedom and pleasure (Godbey, 1999). Murphy (1974) conceptualized leisure in six dimensions:

> 1. Discretionary time: leisure is considered as the portion of time remaining when the basic requirements of work for existence have been satisfied;
> 2. Social instrument: leisure is viewed as a means to social ends such as fulfillment of social function;
> 3. Social class, race, and occupation: leisure is determined by social and inherited factors;
> 4. Classical: leisure is deemed as a state of freedom or a condition of the soul;
> 5. Anti-utilitarian: leisure is viewed a worthy end itself - "doing your own thing" is encouraged;
> 6. Holistic: leisure is viewed as a total construct of life in which any activity can be found (Yen, 1997, p. 329).

Kaplan (1975, p. 18-19) proposed that there were six definitions of leisure, each based on a different premise. They are as follows:

> 1. The humanistic or classic approach is based on a concept of being human that requires freedom of action;
> 2. The therapeutic perspective assumes that people are less than healthy and require some remediation;
> 3. The quantitative model presumes that leisure as time can be identified by the form of time usage;
> 4. The institutional concept views leisure as one element of a social system made up of institutions with complementary functions;
> 5. The epistemological idea is based on the values embodied within a particular culture; and,
> 6. The sociological approach is based on the view that leisure and everything else is defined in a social context by social actors who are creating their own interpreted universe of meaning (Edginton, Hanson, & Edginton, 1992; Kelly & Godbey, 1992).

Generally, leisure has been conceptualized in the following basic contexts: time, activity, and state of mind or experience (Godbey, 1999; Kelly & Freysinger, 2000; Kelly & Godbey, 1992). In this study, leisure is understood to involve time, activity and state of mind or experience.

The Categories (Types) of Leisure

A review of literature reveals several previous attempts to develop a classification system for leisure activities. The most frequently used strategy is to "factor analyze" or "cluster analyze" information about the frequency with which individuals participate in leisure activities. Examples of this approach are Tinsley and Johnson's (1984) cluster analysis of nine relatively homogeneous groups of leisure activities. In addition, Tinsley and Eldredge (1995) have looked directly at the psychological benefits of leisure participation. They proposed a needs-based taxonomy of leisure activities, for which they cluster-analyzed 82 leisure activities and identified 12 leisure activity clusters. One group was judged to be a residual, and the other 11 groups were named: agency, novelty, belongingness, service, sensual enjoyment, cognitive simulation, self-expression, creativity, competition, vicarious competition, and relaxation. Others, such as Fitzgerald, Joseph, Hayes and O'regan (1995) have investigated the leisure activities of adolescent schoolchildren. In their factor analytic study, the developed six categories that included: sports, outdoors, "keep fit" programs, non-sports, entertainment, and computer/friends.

Munson and Savickas (1998) conducted a study of college students' leisure activities and developed three leisure categories. Categories from this study included: expressive activities (e.g., sports and games, arts and hobbies and listening to music), relaxed activities (e.g., socializing, reading and watching television), and learning activities (e.g., thinking and contemplating). Yen (1997) also examined the leisure participation and leisure constraints in the lives of students at normal universities and teachers' colleges in Taiwan. The results of her factor analysis found 59 activity items, which were forced into nine patterns. She proposed that student were most likely to participate in activity patterns of social recreation, followed by activities of mass media and education, music and social activities, sports, outdoor recreation, art and hobby activities, games, youth culture and meditation and religion activities.

The Benefits of Leisure

According to Dumazedier (1967) leisure fulfills three functions: relaxation, entertainment, and personal development. Relaxation provides the individual a recovery from fatigue, entertainment provides a deliverance from boredom, and personal development increases one's own knowledge. According to Dumazedier, leisure serves to liberate the individual from the daily automatism of thought and action.

Driver, Brown and Peterson (1991) described diverse benefits that society and individuals receive from leisure. The benefits of leisure include positive mental and physical health and an increased psychological well-being, self-esteem, happiness, and social interaction (Iso-Ahola, 1993, 1997; Lu & Argyle, 1994; Tinsley & Eldredge, 1995). Leisure participation helps one cope with life's stresses. It helps one's perception that social support is available. In addition, participation in leisure activity can help foster self-determination, a disposition which has been shown to contribute to an individual coping capacities and health (Coleman & Iso-Ahola, 1993).

The psychological benefits of leisure experiences have been espoused by social scientists for over 50 years. A number of health benefits, both physical and psychological, may be attributed to regular leisure exercise behavior. Leisure educators, as well as many others, have attempted to inform the public of the benefits of regular leisure participation (Driver, Brown, & Peterson, 1991). Leisure activity may also contribute to the enhancement of beliefs that one has the capacity to initiate actions, persist with endeavors and achieve successful outcomes. By learning a new leisure activity, a person can develop commitment, control and acceptance of challenge (Godbey, 1999).

The Attitude Toward Leisure

The meaning of attitude

An attitude is generally defined as a disposition toward an object or event. This disposition is assumed to have cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (Harrison, 1976; Neulinger, 1981). The cognitive component contains thoughts or beliefs toward the attitude object. The affective component consists of feelings or emotions that people have in relation to the attitude object. The behavioral component encompasses people's actions with respect to the attitude object according to the beliefs and feelings (Harrison, 1976). Attitudes reflect "very general evaluations that people hold of themselves, other people, objects and issues" (Petty, 1995; p.196). The formation of attitudes is one function of the process of socialization. Once an attitude is developed, individuals continue to express that attitude through their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. The particular thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of interest to leisure service providers are those associated with leisure participation (Dattilo, 1999).

The meaning of leisure attitude

Neulinger (1981) defines a person's attitude toward leisure as his particular way of thinking about, feeling about, and acting toward (or in regard to) leisure. We normally assume that behavior follows beliefs (cognitive component) or affect. If an individual likes a particular leisure activity, he might be inclined to do it. However, the link between attitudes and behavior is often very weak. There may be many situational restraints or competing attitudes that cause the individual not to act on every attitude (Crandall & Slivken, 1980). For example, a teenager may enjoy participating in leisure golf but will refrain from doing so because his or her peer group or family does not approve.

In practice, attitudes often refer primarily to affective cognitive reactions rather than behavior. Participation in a leisure activity does not represent whether a leisure state of mind is actually being experienced. Thus, participation in presumed leisure activities is only valuable when it results in a state of mind that is reflected in positive leisure attitudes (Crandall & Slivken, 1980).

Methodology

A qualitative research approach becomes an avenue for researching leisure when leisure is operationalized as a subjective phenomenon. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to describe personal outcomes or the meaning and role of leisure in the lives of the participants

as expressed in their own terms and from their own perspective. In addition, Kelly (1991) emphasized that the foremost advantage of the qualitative study of leisure is that it is studied with methods that correspond to its nature, that is, as a qualitative experience. Other values set forth were that qualitative research "brings people back in" to the study and that these people are not mere numbers in a computer. Explanations are rich and have depth making leisure sound more like a story than a diagram, and the qualitative method allows the introduction of new elements into the explanation that were not anticipated by the researcher. From qualitative results, leisure providers can base their services on the meanings and priorities of the potential users rather than on participation rates alone.

Site and Sample Selection

Participants for this study came from first year nursing students of a five-year program at the Jen-Te Junior College of Medicine Nursing and Management in Miao-Li, Taiwan. The five-year program includes four departments; nursing, rehabilitation, data-management and applied foreign languages. During the 2000-2001 academic year, the total number of the students was about 6000. The majority of students are females. The students range in age from 16 to 20. Students are required to take an entrance examination before being admitted to this program. The majority of students are from central Taiwan.

Students and the instructor from one class at the college participated in this study. The sample size was 50 students. The class was selected because of ease of access created by the fact that the lead researcher was the instructor of the class. Students in the class represented a broad spectrum of student types (socio-economic, gender, academic achievement). Plus all students were willing to participate.

Data Collection

The methods of data collection used in this study were questionnaires (which included personal essays) and interviews.

The major method of data collection used in this study was a questionnaire, which included an essay. Interviews were also used. The interviews permitted the researchers to further interpret each participant's explanation of their responses. By using multiple sources of data and multiple methods of data collection, the researcher were able to corroborate, refute, or add depth to their findings.

Questionnaire Development

The researchers created the questionnaire for this study. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section solicited demographic and personal information from the participants. The second section contained five open-ended qualitative questions. Students were asked to write an essay representing their perspectives on the leisure activities they participated in, their attitudes toward leisure, and whether their leisure attitudes affect their leisure participation. A copy of the questionnaire is attached in Appendix A.

The questionnaire was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of leisure activities do first year nursing students at Jen-Te Junior College participate in?
2. What are the attitudes of first year nursing students at Jen-Te Junior College toward leisure?
3. What is the relationship between leisure attitudes and leisure participation of first year nursing students in Jen-Te Junior College?

Translation of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was constructed and reviewed in English, and then translated into Chinese by the researchers. A review of the translation by two Chinese translation experts was conducted to determine if further language modification was required. Some minor changes were suggested and were subsequently incorporated into the final draft, so that the person taking the questionnaire would have a better understanding of the type of response the question required. It also made the data much more valuable and easier to tabulate.

Distribution Procedure for the Questionnaire

The first year nursing students were from the Jen-Te Junior College of Medicine Nursing and Management in Miao-Li, Taiwan. The questionnaire was distributed in one class of first year nursing students in the five-year program. Before giving the questionnaire, the researcher provided background information with regard to the research project. Students were given the opportunity to decline participation in this study. All 50 students participated in the study. Once the questionnaires were completed, the researcher also gave students the opportunity to discuss the questionnaire and any additional questions that came up.

Data Analysis

The grounded theory method (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was used to generate the research findings. "A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. It is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 23). The grounded theory researcher allows data to be emergent, meaning that data comes into being or arises from the actual research setting through the data collection methods. Emergent data is necessary because meaning is determined by the context of the research setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher must also engage in continuous data analysis so that every new piece of data takes into account a sufficiently comprehensive context. In other words, data collection is guided and integrated by the emerging data.

The theory developed in this study is substantive. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), a substantive theory evolves from the study of a phenomenon positioned in one particular situation context (e.g., a junior college). A formal theory develops from a study of a phenomenon explored under many different types of situations. This theory is substantive in that it is grounded on one school setting, the Jen-Te Junior College of Medicine Nursing and Management in Miao-Li, Taiwan.

The constant comparative analysis (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was the method used to generate the grounded theory of the attitudes of first year nursing students towards leisure participation. Glaser and Strauss (1967), in describing the constant comparative method, noted that it has two functions: (1) a procedure for analyzing data and (2) a means for generating theory. There are four stages of the constant comparative method: locating and comparing incidents in the data, integrating categories and their properties, delimiting the theory, and writing the theory.

Stages of the Constant Comparative Process

Stage one: Locating and comparing incidents

The first major step was to translate the questionnaire results from Chinese to English. There were a total of 50 questionnaires to be translated and verified. Translating the answers took over 100 hours.

The next major step following the translation of the questionnaires was a thorough reading of each response and marking incidents found in the data. An incident tells what is happening in the research setting. By definition, incidents are units of data that serve as the basis for defining categories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Incidents are the smallest concrete units about a topic that can stand-alone. Following Glaser (1978), Glaser and Strauss (1967), and Strauss (1987), the incidents the researchers chose were analytic (described characteristics of concrete events), sensitizing (yielded a meaningful picture), and interpretable in the absence of any addition information. The researchers analyzed each response, line by line, in order to locate the leisure incidents. The researchers identified 20 incidents for question one (Table 1), 12 incidents for question two (Table 2) and 5 incidents for question three (Table 3).

Table 1

Incidents for Leisure Activity Types

1. Surfing the Internet (for chatting and e-mail)

2. Talking on the telephone

3. Going to parties

4. Attending reunions with friends

5. Surfing the Internet (for looking for something)

6. Going to the library

7. Going to the bookstore

8. Window-shopping

9. Reading (magazines, and newspapers)

10. Listening to music

11. Watching TV shows and tape recorders

12. Reading (novels and comics)

13. Going to movies

14. Singing

15. Games and sports

16. Dancing

17. Attending students' association activities

18. Listening to lectures and speeches

19. Reading (literature and books)

20. Attending social service work

Table 2

Incidents for Leisure Attitude

1. To meet new friends and interact with others

2. To develop close friendships

3. To expand one's knowledge

4. To satisfy one's curiosity and explore new things

5. To relieve boredom, stress and tension

6. To relax mentally

7. To increase interests, enjoyment, and pleasure

8. To relax physically

9. To keep in shape physically

10. To expand social experience and abilities

11. To gain sense of accomplishment and satisfaction

12. To promote self-improvement.

Table 3

Relationship Incidents of Leisure Attitudes and Leisure Participation

1. Need to gain new information that others have

2. Desire to meet with friends and have fun

3. Need to make connections with others who can assist
with career plans

> 4. Need to exercise to lose weight and improve health
>
> 5. Need to relax and renew

Stage two: Integrating categories

After the researchers exhausted the data and found no more incidents, categories were constructed (see Table 4, 5, and 6). By looking at each incident's similarities and differences, the researchers grouped the 20 incidents from research question one into 5 categories (Table 4), the 12 incidents in question two into 5 categories (Table 5), and the 5 incidents in question three into 1 category (Table 6).

Table 4

Categories of Leisure Activity Types Incidents

> 1. Social activities
>
> 2. Learning activities
>
> 3. Entertainment activities
>
> 4. Active-Express activities
>
> 5. Development activities.

Table 5

Categories of Leisure Attitude Incidents

> 1. Social interaction
>
> 2. Learning-seeking
>
> 3. Psychological well-being
>
> 4. Physical health
>
> 5. Self-growth.

Table 6

Category of Relationship Incident of Leisure Attitudes and Leisure Participation

> *1. Need*

Comparing the similarities and differences in the incidents enabled the researchers to generate a working proposition about developing categories. According to Glaser (1978), Glaser and Strauss (1967), and Strauss (1987), a working proposition results when a provisional interpretation of relationship is made based on the data. A working proposition is a statement denoting the relationship between incidents. The researchers began to see the following working hypotheses emerge:

1. First year nursing students' needs affect their attitudes toward leisure.
2. First year nursing students' needs affect the types of leisure activities that they participate in.
3. First year nursing students' attitudes toward leisure affect the types of leisure activities in which they participate.

Stage three: Delimiting the theory

According to Glaser (1978) and Glaser and Strauss (1967), delimiting is a process of reduction whereby irrelevant incidents are withdrawn from categories, and overlapping incidents and categories are combined. Theoretical saturation, a component of the constant comparative process, also works to delimit irrelevant and overlapping incidents. Saturation occurs when the collection of the new data fails to turn up new incident types or categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

To achieve delimiting, the researchers went through an unlimited number of questionnaires looking for new ideas and opinions. The researchers screened through the sample size of the result with similar answers and discarded redundant answers.

Stage four: Writing the theory

Writing the theory of the research findings is the fourth stage in the constant comparative process. Blumer (1969), Glaser (1978), Glaser and Strauss (1967), Strauss (1987), and Strauss and Corbin (1990) advocate the use of theoretical propositions or hypotheses as a method of expressing sociological theory. According to Glaser (1978) and Glaser and Strauss (1967), writing theoretical propositions or hypotheses begins when the researcher is convinced that the research framework forms systematic theory that provides accurate statements of the phenomenon under study. There are three working propositions on needs-guided leisure influence identified in this study.

Credibility Criteria

Credibility is an "umbrella" term that includes criteria for judging the adequacy of a study's research process and the grounding of its findings (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Every research study must be evaluated in terms of the specific credibility criteria of the research method that is used to generate the findings. In the following section, the credibility criteria used during the study will be discussed.

Prolonged Engagement

Prolonged engagement is the investment of sufficient time to achieve the purpose of learning the setting, testing for misinformation, and building trust. In accordance with the technique of prolonged engagement, one of the researchers spent every day for four weeks in the classroom, in the role of the classroom instructor, to build a rapport with the students before asking them to complete the research questionnaire.

Triangulation

Another technique for achieving a credible study is triangulation. Triangulation is the use of multiple sources of data and multiple methods of data collection to support emerging research findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The major method of data collection used in this study was a questionnaire, which included an essay. Interviews were also used to classify information on the questionnaire. For example, when a questionnaire response was unclear or needed clarification, one of the researchers would interview the participant to get the intended response. For example, a student responded that one of the types of leisure activities was music participation. The researcher, through an interview process, was able to determine how that student was defining 'music participation.' To achieve the case of multiple sources of data, research was conducted with different students. Fifty different students were selected. In addition, the research utilized multiple methods of data collection by utilizing both questionnaires and interviews. The interviews permitted the researchers to further interpret the participant's explanation of their responses. By using multiple sources of data and multiple methods of data collection, the researchers were able to corroborate, refute, or add depth to the findings.

Peer Debriefing

Peer debriefing is another technique for promoting a credible study. Peer debriefing is a process of communicating with a peer (e.g., a colleague) for the purpose of exploring aspects of the study that might otherwise remain only implicit in the researcher's mind (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

After the translation of the questionnaires, the researchers confided in two expert Chinese translators to make sure that all participant responses had been accurately translated to English. When dealing with two languages as diverse as Taiwanese and English, it is important to make sure that participant responses are correctly interpreted and translated as they intended. This adds to the credibility of the findings. In addition, the researchers shared the results with the nursing faculty of the five-year program at Jen-Te Junior College of Medicine Nursing and Management to get their feedback. This process of peer debriefing with the nursing faculty gave the researchers a way to confirm the credibility of the findings. The nursing faculty was asked to review the findings to determine if they could confirm, based on their experiences with other nursing students, that the findings sounded credible. The faculty did confirm the findings and did not add any new questions that would have created further data collection or exploration.

Member Checks

Another technique for achieving a credible study is through member checks. Member checks gave the researchers the opportunity to assess intent (i.e., what the participant intends by acting in certain ways). Member checking also puts the research participants on record for the accuracy of their questionnaire responses. Each student reviewed the data they had provided in order to determine if the information was correct or needed editing. If an error was found, it was corrected.

Researchers Relationship to the Study

      The three researchers involved in this study had different roles and responsibilities. It is important to reveal these roles in order to allow the reader to access the trustworthiness of the study and the study results. By identifying the researchers' vestedness to the study, the reader can understand any biases or tendencies that may occur. The lead author, Shwu-Ching Hsieh, is an instructor at the school site and in the classroom from which the participants of the study reside. Her familiarity with the students may have led them to be more open and honest in their responses. On the other hand, her involvement as a teacher may have impacted student responses through their desire to please her by saying what they thought she would prefer. The additional researchers provided assistance with the design and implementation of the study, particularly with the qualitative research elements. They assisted with the design of questionnaires, data analysis, and assistance with the translation of the research back into English. They also contributed as peer debriefers. They did not enter the research site or meet any of the participants of the study.

Findings and Discussions

      The questionnaire used in this study has two sections. The first section discusses the demographic data related to participants in the study. The second section discusses the results related to each questionnaire question.

Demographic Data

      This first section of the questionnaire relayed demographic information concerning the participants themselves. The 50 participants were first year nursing students in a five-year program at Jen-Te Junior College in Miao-Li, Taiwan. The participants were all 16 years of age. There were 49 participants who spoke the dialect of the Fu-Jen province of China from the Southern Min tribe. Only one participant spoke the dialect of Hakka from the tribe of Hakka. There were 36 participants that resided on campus, while the remaining 14 participants resided at home. The majority of the participants lived in central Taiwan, (most being from the cities of Taichung, Zhanghau, or Miao-Li). The average amount of cash on hand for a typical participant was approximately $NT 500 to 1000 per week. The occupation of each participant's father varied, with 20 being laborers, 12 businessmen, 8 engaged in the service industry, 5 civil servants, and 5 farmers. The occupation of each of the participants' mother similarly varied, with 30 being housewives, 7 laborers, 6 businesswomen, 4 engaged in the service industry and 3 as civil servants.

Figure1. Conceptual Framework of Needs-Guided Leisure Attitudes.

Development activities:

Attending in students' association activities

Listening to lectures and speeches

Attending social service work

Reading literature

Social activities:

Surfing the Internet for chatting and e-mail

Talking on the telephone

Going to parties

Attending reunions of friends

Active-Express activities:

Games and sports (badminton, basketball, jogging and swimming)

Dancing

Learning activities:

Surfing the Internet for looking for something

Going to the library

Going to the bookstore

Window- shopping

Reading (magazines and newspapers)

Entertainment activities:

Listening to music

Watching TV shows and tape recorders

Reading (novels and comics)

Going to movies

Singing

Self-Growth

Social Interaction

Physical Health

NEED

Psychological Well-being

Learning-Seeking

Questionnaire Data

It was clear that engagement in an activity was seldom due to one single need. At least five categories of needs were described by participants as their reasons for participating in leisure activities, regardless of their tribe, place of residence, pocket money or parents' occupations.

These needs were: social interaction, learning-seeking, psychological well-being, physical health, and self-growth.

Conceptual framework of needs-guided leisure attitude

Through data reduction and categorization in open coding, a conceptual framework of needs-guided leisure attitudes was developed (Figure 1). Statements of relationships among categories are proposed and represent attitudes in leisure participation for all the participants.

The conceptual framework shows that the participants' leisure experience is partly social-psychological but simultaneously influenced by external stimuli and the person's "need" conditions. The individual first considers the antecedent conditions and constraints (which may be external or internal) before engaging in leisure activity. Positive and beneficial experiences result from this engagement. In observing the Figure 1, one should assume that there are no simple cause and effect linkages between categories. Several categories may operate simultaneously when an individual makes decisions about leisure preferences and participation.

A more detailed discussion of each of these categories is developed below. In some cases, verbatim quotes by participants are inserted to support the logical linkages within categories

Core category

Research data shows that the core category in this study is *need*. The core category is the actual or perceived characteristics or situations, which influence the occurrence of a phenomenon. In this study, one's attitude toward leisure—*need*, surfaces. Leisure attitude means personal intention and leisure functions or benefits gained from leisure participation in specific activities under specific conditions. A needs-guided leisure attitude means *need* is the main factor considered by the participants in their preferences for leisure activities. A person's need is self-determined. The need may take the form of a desire, intention or goal. It is something that is deemed necessary for a positive and successful life experience.

The majority of participants proposed that they often want to satisfy their needs or resolve their problems by taking part in specific leisure activities:

> Shopping is a leisure activity…but I do not think I'd be interested in going shopping on my own. I'd find it meaningless. When I go with my friends, then, it's fun. We can talk and laugh together. Chatting on the Internet or telephone helps me build close friendships with others. (Student A)

> Surfing the Internet is my leisure activity…. There are many papers and homework in my classes. The data in textbook is not sufficient enough for us, so I usually surf the Internet when I need to look for more information. In others words, I use the computer for studying. (Student B)

> I think I am too fat. I want to keep in good shape, so I exercise. This is what I do for leisure. (Student C)

> I just like to avoid the hustle and bustle of daily activities, so music is one of my leisure activities. A bit of music will cheer me up and help me to relieve my stress and tension. (Student D)

I spend most of my free time in extracurricular leisure activities. For example, I like to work together with my friends in school association activities. I gain sense of achievement and value through these activities. (Student E)

Category

The researchers organized the participants' essays and reflections into a core category as described above. The following five categories of needs emerged from the identified organizational process: social interaction, learning-seeking, psychological well-being, physical health, and self-growth.

(1) Social Interaction

Social interaction refers to the need for interaction and affiliation with friends and family members in order to meet new friends and interact with them and develop close friendships. Leisure activities that can fulfill the need of social interaction are named social activities. They include "surfing" the Internet for chatting and e-mail, talking on the telephone, attending reunions with friends during lunch or dinner, and going to parties.

The majority of participants' responses described similar social interaction needs:

I usually surf the Internet and check e-mail every day. Entering the chat rooms is what I do the most on the Internet. I like to meet new and different friends. I often write e-mail and send jokes or pictures to my friends. Chatting on the Internet or telephone helps me build close friendships with others. (Student F)

I have no computer of my own, so I usually talk with my friends on the telephone. I like to invite my friends out for shopping or dining. We can talk and laugh together. It's more fun. (Student G)

The participants use social activities, such as "surfing" the Internet for chatting and e-mail, talking on the telephone, and attending reunions with friends, to fulfill their need for social interaction.

(2) Learning-Seeking

Learning-seeking often accompanies the desire to seek something new. This need involves learning, exploring, discovering, creating, and acquiring useful skills. In other words, leisure activities help to expand the participants' knowledge, satisfy their curiosity, and explore new activities.

Leisure activities that can fulfill the need of learning-seeking include such activities as surfing the Internet for information updates, going to libraries and bookstores, window-shopping, and reading books, journals, magazines and newspapers.

The majority of participants' responses described the following learning-seeking needs and activities:

The Internet is a great research tool. The Internet is an information superhighway and it opens a whole world to everyone. Through surfing the Internet, I can

broaden my knowledge and acquire update information in different fields. It's the greatest contribution to my knowledge. Besides, I can make progress in my typing skill. (Student H)

Going to the bookstores, reading magazines or going window-shopping definitely can satisfy my curiosity and helps me pursue my knowledge of fashion. (Student I)

From these comments, it is clear that the participants expand their knowledge, explore or discover new things, and acquire useful skills by involving themselves in learning activities, such as "surfing" the Internet, reading, and bookstores and window-shopping.

(3) Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being includes a desire for a change in environment and routine, plus a relief from boredom and stressful situations. Leisure activity contributes to emotional well-being by relieving boredom, stress and tension; increasing mental relaxation; and pursuing enjoyment, interests and pleasure. Leisure activities that fulfill the need for psychological well-being are designated as entertainment activities, such as listening to music, watching TV, going to movies, singing, and reading novels or comics.

Participants make the following comments with regard to psychological well-being:

The main purpose of going to the movies is to try to get away from my busy routines. (Student K)

Music is very peaceful. I forget the hustle-bustle of daily work. I enjoy listening to the music and singing while I am reading novels or comics. It makes me feel refreshed. (Student L)

At night, we are at home reading the newspapers or watching TV. Some TV shows are interesting and funny. They make our life full of enjoyments and pleasures and they relieve our boredom and tension. On holidays, if I do not go out, I often stay at home and watch TV or listen to tape recorders all day long. (Student M)

According to these students, entertainment activities, such as listening to music, watching TV, going to the movies, and reading novels can contribute to emotional well-being by relieving boredom and stress or pursuing enjoyment and pleasure.

(4) Physical Health

Physical health refers to physical relaxation and personal fitness. Leisure activities that can fulfill the need of physical health include all types of games and sports. For example, participants name the following: badminton, table tennis, jogging, basketball, swimming, and dancing.

Participants expressed their health need in the following way:

> I feel I am too fat, so I am on a diet to lose weight. Teachers suggest that doing exercise is the best way to keep in good shape. Now I go jogging every morning. I find it's the mild sport and suitable for me. (Student N)

> I often take advantage of the time of extracurricular activities to play basketball or badminton with my classmates. Since I attend dancing club, I find that most of the adolescent like dancing. It's a very popular activity among the adolescent. It makes me feel active. (Student O)

> To say to enjoy or relax for enjoyment… There is not any! After school, I feel much tired. To engage in any sports or games, already tired. Therefore, if there's time, for rest just relax myself. (Student P)

Hence, it is obvious that participants participate in sports, dancing, or "active-express" activities to achieve physical health and relaxation.

(5) Self-Growth

Self-growth refers to the need for expanding social experience and abilities, for gaining a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, and for promoting self-improvement.

Leisure activities that can fulfill the need of self-growth are designated "development" activities. They include participating in students' association activities, listening to lectures or speeches, reading (literature or books), and attending social service work.

Most of the participants' responses described the following:

> We often take advantage of extracurricular activities to listen to different types of lectures or speeches. Through lectures and speeches, we can expand our social experience and broaden our minds and lives. It's a mean to promote self-improvement. (Student Q)

> Social service work makes my leisure life more meaningful and gives me sense of achievement and satisfaction. (Student R)

In conclusion, for the purpose of meeting their self-improvement needs participants use leisure activities such as attending students' activity clubs, listening to lectures or speeches, reading books, and doing social service work.

Propositions

Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Blumer (1969) advocate the use of theoretical propositions as a method of expressing sociological theory. A theoretical proposition, according to Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Blumer (1969), is a theoretical statement. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), propositions are necessary to suggest how phenomena might possibly relate to one another. Furthermore, Blumer (1969) states that the specification of concepts and their relationships phrased in terms of propositions are necessary for the development of new areas of study.

Based on the findings of this study, the following three working propositions were found:

Proposition one

First year nursing students' needs affect their attitudes toward leisure.

Need is the core category of the conceptual framework of needs-guided leisure attitudes. The majority of students indicate that *need* is the main factor considered in their preference for leisure activities. They often satisfy their needs by taking part in specific leisure activities. In this study, five categories of need emerge from the organizational process. These five categories of need include: social interaction, learning-seeking, psychological well-being, physical health and self-growth. Students do not participate in leisure activities unless they have the attitude that the leisure activity will meet one or more of these needs.

Proposition two

First year nursing students' needs affect the types of leisure activities that participate in.

According to the conceptual framework of needs-guided leisure attitudes in this study, it is clear that students seek out and align their leisure activities with their particular needs. If students have a health need, they will seek out a leisure activity, such as exercise, to meet this need. This is a finding similar to Crandall (1980). Crandall (1980) stated that needs and motivation can be treated as forces that cause people to seek certain behavior while they also can be the result of leisure participation. Based on Crandall's (1980) theory of causal chain of motivation-participation-satisfaction, if participation fulfills expressed needs, then participants will experience leisure satisfaction as a positive outcome from activity involvement. The results of this study find that specific needs motivate leisure participation.

Proposition three

First year nursing students' attitudes toward leisure affect the types of leisure activities in which they participate.

Iso-Ahola (1980) stated that leisure attitudes could be defined as the expressed amount of affect toward a given leisure related object. Thus, the more positive one feels about leisure, the more likely one is to report multiple, strong reasons for participating in leisure activities. Iso-Ahola and Mannell (1985) stated that the more positive the leisure attitude a person has toward a leisure activity, the more motivated he or she is to participate in the activity.

The propositions from this study are consistent with results from previous studies (Lin, 1996; Yen, 1997). From this study, it can be found that passive leisure activities such as surfing the Internet, watching TV, reading books/magazines, conversation, and listening to music/radio are also the most popular activities for adolescents. This may be due to the lack of more active leisure resources or opportunities; the lack of interest in more active leisure activities; the lack of time, money, or facilities; or the lack of companions and transportation.

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

Conclusions

Based on findings and considering the limitations of this study, the following conclusions are made:

1. That first year nursing students' needs affect their attitudes toward leisure and the types of leisure activities they participate in.
2. Need is the core category of the conceptual framework of needs-guided leisure attitudes. The majority of students want to satisfy their various needs through taking part in specific leisure activities.
3. In this study, the participants' various needs are grouped into five categories, which are identified as follows: social interaction, learning-seeking, psychological well-being, physical health and self-growth.

Recommendations for Future Study

The findings of this study may have implications in either professional practice situations or in research settings. As such, the following recommendations are made:

1. The findings add to the body of knowledge concerning leisure by enhancing the theoretical explanation of the construct. The framework contributes to understanding the relationship between leisure attitudes and participation. It is recommended that such understandings be considered as additions to existing theory, or be applied in the construction of new theoretical models and concepts.
2. It is recommended that additional research concerning relationships among leisure behavior variables discovered in this study be conducted.
3. Based on the conceptual framework of needs-guided leisure attitudes in this study, the following guidelines may be useful in the design, implementation, and evaluation of recreational programs; however, further research is needed using these guidelines:
   (a)   According to the effect of leisure attitude on leisure participation, it can be assumed that the more intense the need and the more positive a person's attitude is toward the leisure activity, the greater the leisure participation. Thus, recreation service providers should encourage people to hold positive leisure attitudes in order to increase their leisure participation.
   (b)   If participants have lower leisure attitudes, enhancing attitude change through education can be used to enhance future leisure participation.
   (c)   The purpose of leisure education can direct students as to how to use leisure wisely and achieve an optimal experience. Leisure education must be developed in the educational system.
   (d)   The results of this study provide educational administrators, society, and governments with valuable guidance that inform administrative and counseling practices.

4. The following recommendations may be useful for the college to which these students' attend. The college can use this information to help students with leisure issues.
(a)   Because leisure participation can fulfill the students' various needs, it is important that all students have greater opportunities to experience meaningful leisure.
(b)   The college can serve as the enabler and provide leisure education and leisure counseling to help individuals discover leisure opportunities and diversity of participation options within specific activities.
(c)   The college can work to remove perceived and actual constraints to leisure for all populations: youth to older adults, able-bodied and those with disabilities, rich and poor.
(d)   The college can seek effective ways to communicate the benefits of leisure and encourage students to make leisure a priority in their lives.
Future research in the area of leisure behavior may well involve the following:

5. It is recommended that the present study be replicated utilizing students from other countries, as well as other populations (e.g., adults, working class). Comparisons across different countries are also encouraged in order to expand the body of knowledge regarding leisure behavior theory.

6. In this study, only the types of participation were measured to represent leisure participation. The depth of involvement during the time of participation in leisure may need to be considered as another indicator of leisure participation in future leisure research.

7. This study was limited to first year nursing students in the Jen-Te Junior College of Medicine Nursing and Management in Miao-Li, Taiwan. It is recommended that second and third year nursing students be included in future study.

8. Social-demographic variables such as household, income, parents' educational level and occupation position, and school location may be relevant to this type of study and could be explored fully in the future.

Transferability

It is important to realize that there were several major limitations to this study. Transferability of these finding is limited by the conditions under which the study was carried out, particularly the choice of the study site and population. This study has only exposed the surface of a very complex social phenomenon. It has brought to light the leisure attitudes of first year nursing students as they participate in leisure activities in their daily lives. Many complexities of the phenomenon are yet to be understood.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire in English
Attitudes of First Year Nursing Students Toward
Leisure Participation Questionnaire

Introduction

Dear Student,

The purpose of this study is to research the attitudes of first year nursing students toward leisure participation. Would you please assist us by taking the time to complete this

questionnaire? This is a questionnaire where you get to write a short essay to describe how you think and feel about leisure. The questionnaire should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. There are **No** wrong answers. All responses to this questionnaire will be kept confidential. Again, thank you for your participation in this study.

Section 1: Demographic Data

The following questions are about you. Please follow the instructions for each question. Please check or complete the appropriate line:

1) Gender: _____1. Male ____2. Female
2) Current age: _____ years.
3) Tribe: _____ 1. Southern Min
    _____ 2. Hakka
    _____ 3. China
    _____ 4. Other (please specify). _____
4) Your current residence: _____ 1. On campus
        _____ 2. Off-campus
        _____ 3. Home
5) Your permanent residence: _____.
6) How much average discretionary money in each week: ($NT): _____.
7) Occupation of your father: _____.
8) Occupation of your Mother: _____.

Section 2: Leisure Participation and Leisure Attitude

Please describe, in detail, your response to each of the following questions:

1) What types of leisure activities are you presently involved in during your leisure time? Please describe these activities in detail and include the amount of time you spend per week engaged in each activity.
2) What benefits do you feel you receive from these leisure activities? Please describe these benefits in detail.
3) Please describe in detail your attitude toward each of the leisure activities you engage in. Overall, what is your attitude toward leisure?
4) Please answer the following question: What do you think is the relationship between your attitude toward leisure attitudes and your participation in leisure activities?
5) Do you feel that your leisure activities have had a positive influence on your work and studies? Why or why not? Please explain.

Please staple this sheet to your essay when you turn it in.
Thank you again for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Author Note

Shwu-Ching Hsieh received her master's degree in Education from West Texas A&M University. She currently is an instructor in the Jen-TE Junior College of Medicine, Nursing, and Management in Miao-Li, Taiwan. Her research interests include leisure attitudes, activities, and participation among Taiwanese students.

Dr. Angela Spaulding is an Associate Professor of Educational Leadership at West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas, where she coordinates the educational leadership program and teaches courses in leadership. She is also the project director of the A&M University System Regents' Initiative at WTAMU. She is a sponsor for Alpha Chi, an academy member of the Regent's Initiative for Excellence in Education and has been the recipient of the WTAMU Outstanding Professor Award. Dr. Spaulding's research interests include topics emerging from leadership and group dynamics, communication, conflict management, and the micropolitics of life in the classroom. She has numerous publications and presentations in these areas.

Dr. Mark Riney is an Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at West Texas A&M University. Dr. Riney specializes in a multicultural knowledge base and teaches courses in this discipline at WTAMU.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Dr. Angela Spaulding Associate Professor/Researcher Department of Educational Leadership, West Texas A&M University, WT Box 60208, Canyon, Texas 79016-0001; Telephone: (806) 651-2626; E-mail: aspaulding@mail.wtamu.edu

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