LEISURE PREFERENCE AND FACTORS OF LEISURE CONSTRAINTS: A CASE STUDY OF ADOLESCENTS IN TAIPEI

Ting-Wen Wang\textsuperscript{A*}, Shun-Jhe Jiang\textsuperscript{A}, Chih-Ling Feng\textsuperscript{B}

\textsuperscript{A}Department of Tourism & Leisure Management, Lee-Ming Institute of Technology, Taiwan
\textsuperscript{B}Department of Food & Beverage Management, Lee-Ming Institute of Technology, Taiwan
helen@mail.lit.edu.tw

Abstract

The study seeks to identify leisure constraints among adolescents in Taipei. Through an importance-performance analysis (IPA), it is revealed that adolescents have leisure constraints toward activities of “theme parks” and “traveling”. Adolescents perceive camping or barbeque to be higher of enjoyment than importance. Gender differential exists among activities of leisure constraints where males enjoy basketball but females enjoy shopping, nurturing pets, and culinary. Three types of leisure constraints have been confirmed by the factor analysis: intrapersonal, structural, and interpersonal constraints. Lack of interest is a key contributor for intrapersonal constraints. From one-way ANOVA, it was revealed that an individual who works more on part-time jobs tend to have more interest toward participation of leisure activities, implying an outgoing person may have less intrapersonal constraints than a shy person does. Lack of money is a key contributor for structural constraints where an individual having more monthly allowance would have less structural constraints. The greatest discrepancy exists between genders in interpersonal constraints where males tend to have more friends, males’ friends having more time to spare, and males’ friends having more transportation means. Hence, females tend to have more interpersonal constraints than their male counterparts do.

Key words: Leisure constraint, interpersonal, intrapersonal, structural

I. INTRODUCTION

With the advent of electronic technology, people spend more time on sedentary leisure activities than those that are recreational. Lack of recreational leisure activities may lead to declining health and/or increasing crime rates. Leisure researchers have conducted extensive studies of leisure constraints, as well as explaining the nature of participating in
leisure activities (Anaza and McDowell, 2013; Casper et al., 2011; Crawford and Godbey, 1987; Crawford et al., 1991; Jackson et al., 1993; Raymore 2002; Shaw 1994). Jackson (1988) defined leisure constraints as “a subset of reasons for not engaging in a particular behavior” (p. 211), rather than viewing it as barriers to leisure participation (Buchanan and Allen, 1985; Jackson and Searle, 1985). Jackson (2000) also argued that leisure constraints are “factors that are assumed by researchers and/or perceived or experienced by individuals to limit the formation of leisure preference and/or inhibit or prohibit participation and enjoyment in leisure” (p. 62).

Many of the existing literatures in the leisure field have investigated individuals with varying degrees of differences (Guo and Schneider, 2015; Tsai and Coleman, 2009; Walker et al., 2008; Walker and Wang, 2008). Nonetheless, the topic of leisure constraints is still in progress, especially models of multivariate analyses involving leisure constraints, negotiation, motivation, and participation (Hubbard and Mannell, 2001). The study aims to identify leisure activities that adolescents of Taiwan have constraints with. By ways of an importance-performance analysis, the authors pinpoint activities that adolescents enjoy and/or perceived importance with respect to their level of participation. Additionally, factors of leisure constraints are to be determined via exploratory factor analysis. One-way ANOVA would also be performed to differentiate leisure constraints by the samples’ demographics.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing literatures have contributed significantly to a body of knowledge on leisure constraints and provided important insights into the relationships between leisure constraints and leisure experiences. As an alternative perspective of constraints, Jackson et al. (1993) stated that leisure participation is dependent not on absence of constraints but rather negotiations through them. In other words, people may negotiate through constraints and succeed in initiating or continuing leisure participation (Crawford et al., 1991; Jackson and Rucks, 1995).

Three possible distinct barriers of leisure participation had been proposed: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural (Crawford and Godbey, 1987). Examples of intrapersonal barriers involve psychological states of an individual, such as anxiety, depression, religiosity, stress, perceived self-skill, and similar others. Interpersonal barriers are the result of interpersonal interaction between individuals’ characteristics. Examples of structural barriers include climate, season, availability of opportunity, financial resources, work schedule, and similar others. Later, Crawford et al. (Crawford et al., 1991) elaborated the hierarchically ordered categories of leisure constraints.

Raymore et al. (2002) presented a comprehensive measure of leisure constraints based on the literatures (Crawford and Godbey, 1987; Crawford et al., 1991). Each of the constraints is consisted of seven aspects. Intrapersonal constraints include: religion, self-conscious, shy, skill, uncomfortable, alright with family, and alright with family. Interpersonal constraints include: others’ know activities, others’ money, others’
obligations, others' skills, others' time, others' transport, and others too far. Structural constraints include convenient, know what's available, money, not crowded, other commitments, and time.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study uses a convenient sampling approach to survey its sample objects. Questionnaires were randomly distributed to high school students in the Greater Taipei Area. The sampling site took place at the front gate of ten high schools during afternoon hours as students are leaving their school. Respondents were asked to participate in the survey on a voluntary basis in which small gifts were given as incentives. Acceptance of the returned survey is strict to ensure validity of the returns. A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed in which 245 samples were returned. Of the 245 returns, 210 were deemed valid.

Each questionnaire contains three parts. The first part measures the level of participation, importance, and enjoyment that each respondent perceives toward a perspective leisure activity. In all, 22 leisure activities are listed in this part of the questionnaire. The 22 leisure activities are: (1) basketball; (2) table tennis; (3) hiking; (4) bicycling; (5) visiting friends or relatives; (6) theme parks; (7) shopping; (8) traveling; (9) camping or barbeque; (10) visiting exhibitions; (11) reading magazines or newspapers; (12) culinary; (13) music instrument; (14) sporting spectator; (15) chatting (by phone or online); (16) watching TV (movies); (17) computer games; (18) singing; (19) water sport; (20) extra curriculum activities; (21) nurturing pets; and (22) poker. Then, an importance-performance analysis (IPA) is to be performed for importance versus participation, as well as participation versus enjoyment.

The second part of the questionnaire contains 16 items relating to factors of leisure constraints. The literature review provides insights to the construction of the items. The 16 measures of leisure constraint items relate to: (1) lack of time; (2) lack of physical strength; (3) lack of interests; (4) lack of skills; (5) lack of transportation means; (6) lack of money; (7) lack of friends; (8) my friends don't have time; (9) my friends live at inconvenient locations; (10) my friends don't have the transportation means; (11) my leisure intention is affected by the attitude of family members; (12) my leisure intention is affected by the distance to a leisure/recreational location; (14) lack of information; (15) bad weather; and (16) lack of suitable leisure facilities. The respondents were asked to evaluate their opinions on a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The third part of the questionnaire asks each respondent’s demographic file including gender, residing status, monthly allowance, off-campus working hours, and primary transportation.
IV. RESULTS

Of the 210 valid returns, high consistency was resulted from the reliability test where the Cronbach’s alpha is 0.876 for participation of leisure activities, the Cronbach’s alpha is 0.876 for the perceived importance level, and the Cronbach’s alpha is 0.858 for the perceived enjoyment level in the first part of the questionnaire. From the importance-performance analysis (IPA) for importance versus participation, it is revealed that students perceive activities of (6) theme parks and (8) traveling to be important but their participations have been limited, as shown in Fig. 1. Likewise, as shown in Fig. 2 for participation versus enjoyment, it is revealed that students enjoy activities of (6) theme parks, (8) traveling, and (9) camping or barbeque, but their participations have been limited. In general, with limited participation for camping or barbeque, students perceive camping or barbeque to be more of enjoyment than importance.

**Fig. 1. Importance vs. participation by all adolescents (n = 210)**

**Fig. 2. Participation vs. enjoyment by all adolescents (n = 210)**
To distinguish the perceptual differences between genders, Fig. 3 shows that male adolescents perceived activities of (6) theme parks, (7) shopping, (8) traveling, (9) camping or barbeque, and (12) culinary to be of importance but participation being limited. Likewise, Figure 4 shows that female adolescents perceived activities of (6) theme parks, (8) traveling, and (12) culinary to be of importance but participation being limited. A few interesting implications can be drawn from the IPA that females appeared to have acted upon the participation of (7) shopping but not the male adolescents. On the other hand, female adolescents do not perceive the activity of (9) camping or barbeque to be of importance. However, male adolescents perceive the activity of (9) camping or barbeque to be of importance but their participations have been limited.

In Fig. 3 and Fig. 4, although male and female adolescents separately showed leisure constraints for (12) culinary, as a whole sample in Fig. 1 leisure constraints are not shown for (12) culinary in Fig. 1. It is explanatory that (12) culinary was not categorized as an activity of leisure constraint in Figure 1 because the gap between (6) theme parks and (12) culinary is greater than the gap between (12) culinary and (9) camping or barbeque, or even (3) hiking. The proximity of (12) culinary with (9) camping or barbeque and (3) hiking allowed its separation from (6) theme parks.

![Fig. 3 Importance vs. participation by male adolescents (n = 112)](image-url)
Having examined importance versus participation, Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 compares gender differential for participation versus enjoyment. In Fig. 5 for male adolescents, leisure constraints are found in activities of (1) basketball, (6) theme parks, (7) shopping, (8) traveling, (9) camping or barbeque. Likewise, in Figure 6 for female adolescents, leisure constraints are found in activities of (6) theme parks, (8) traveling, (9) camping or barbeque, (12) culinary, (21) nurturing pets. Unlike the examination of importance versus participation where male adolescents do not view (1) basketball to be an important activity, males perceive (1) basketball to be an activity of enjoyment (in Fig. 5) but not the female adolescents (in Fig. 6). Conversely, females perceive (12) culinary and (21) nurturing pets to be activities of enjoyment but not the male adolescents. Therefore, as a whole, only (6) theme parks, (8) traveling, and (9) camping or barbeque can be viewed as leisure constraints by the whole population that they perceive these activities to be both of high importance and enjoyment but their participation of these activities have been limited.

After identifying leisure constraints among participation of 22 leisure activities, attention is turned to factor analysis of leisure constraints. As shown in Table 1, sixteen attributes of leisure constraints were factor analyzed where the top factor of leisure constraints can be attributed to intrapersonal constraints, which is explained by 30.783% of the total variance with an eigenvalue of 3.107. The second factor can be attributed to structural constraints, which is explained by 14.327% of the total variance with an eigenvalue of 2.610. The third factor can be attributed to interpersonal constraints, which is explained by 8.318% of the total variance with an eigenvalue of 2.277. The last factor accounts 7.592% of the total variance with an eigenvalue of 1.769. This is a hybrid factor between interpersonal and structural attributing to influence of family members and facility distance. Nevertheless, the Cronbach’s alpha for this last factor is only 0.594 which normally may be discarded, being lower than 0.70 for low reliability. The Cronbach’s alpha for the first three factors range from 0.785 to 0.814, indicating high reliability. The factor loadings range from 0.553 to 0.816 across all items which exceed the requirement of 0.4 or more. On a side note, it is noted that the second factor (structural constraints) received the highest mean, at 3.86. However, the first factor (intrapersonal constraints) accounts twice as much of the total
variance as the second factor (structural constraints), 30.783% versus 14.327%. Hence, it is also necessary to perform an ANOVA test of identifying leisure constraints by the samples’ demographics.

![Fig. 5 Participation vs. enjoyment by male adolescents (n = 112)](image.png)

![Fig. 6 Participation vs. enjoyment by female adolescents (n = 98)](image.png)

From the test of one-way ANOVA, it was found that male adolescents’ friends have significantly more time than female adolescents’ friends do (Q8: $M = 3.17$ vs. 2.87, $F = 5.146$, $p = .024'$). Also, male adolescents’ friends have significantly more transportation means than female adolescents’ friends do (Q10: $M = 3.85$ vs. 3.51, $F = 8.815$, $p = .003^{***}$). The implication is that males tend to have a much easier time of finding friends to do leisure activities with than their female counterparts do. As a whole, female adolescents have significantly higher interpersonal constraints than their male counterparts do (Factor 3: $M = 14.13$ vs. 13.14, $F = 7.515$, $p = .007^{**}$). Additionally, adolescents who have more monthly allowance tend to participate more in leisure
activities than their counterparts with less monetary resources (Factor 3: \( F = 2.681, p = .033^* \)). The implication is that when an adolescent has more monetary resources to spend, he or she may be more popular and tend to have less interpersonal constraints.

For Q3: attribute of personal interest toward leisure participation, the more part-time working hours by an adolescent, the more likely that the person would have more interest toward a leisure activity (\( F = 2.780, p = .048^* \)). The implication is that an adolescent who works more tend to be more outgoing and have more interest toward a leisure activity, or vice versa. However, statistical insignificant was shown for both the intrapersonal and the structural constraints.

**Table 1. Factor analysis of adolescents’ leisure constraints (N = 210)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection Factors (Attributes)</th>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
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<th>Communality</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1: (Mean = 3.71)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q4. Lack of required skills</td>
<td>.733</td>
<td>.604</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q2. Lack of energy</td>
<td>.748</td>
<td>.603</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q5. Lack of transportation means</td>
<td>.738</td>
<td>.578</td>
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<td>Q3. Lack of interest</td>
<td>.698</td>
<td>.644</td>
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<td>Q6. Lack of financial means</td>
<td>.654</td>
<td>.556</td>
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<td><strong>Factor 2: (Mean = 3.86)</strong></td>
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<td>Q15. Bad weather</td>
<td>.773</td>
<td>.623</td>
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<td>Q16. Lack of leisure facilities</td>
<td>.718</td>
<td>.577</td>
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<td>Q14. Lack of information</td>
<td>.579</td>
<td>.616</td>
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<td>Q13. Safety concerns</td>
<td>.570</td>
<td>.584</td>
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<td>Q12. Lack of time</td>
<td>.553</td>
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<td><strong>Factor 3: (Mean = 3.42)</strong></td>
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<td>Q9. Whether friends live in convenient locations</td>
<td>.816</td>
<td>.678</td>
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<td>Q8. Whether friends have time</td>
<td>.730</td>
<td>.594</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q10. Whether friends have transportation means</td>
<td>.716</td>
<td>.612</td>
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<td>Q7. Number of friends</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td>.542</td>
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<td><strong>Factor 4: (Mean = 3.49)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Q11. Family influence</td>
<td>.815</td>
<td>.684</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q12. Distance to leisure facility</td>
<td>.773</td>
<td>.715</td>
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**V. CONCLUSIONS**

The study has successfully identified activities of leisure constraints by adolescents; namely, visiting theme parks, traveling, camping or barbeque. These activities tend to require more monetary resources for participation. Hence, lack of money may be a key contributor of leisure constraints. It was also identified that male adolescents desire participation of basketball activity but not by the females. Conversely, female adolescents desire participation of nurturing pets and culinary but the same cannot be said of the males. Therefore, there is definitely a gender differential between genders because their motivation toward a specific type of leisure activity differs.
From the factor analysis and the test of one-way ANOVA, three types of leisure constraints have been confirmed: intrapersonal, structural, and interpersonal. It was found that female adolescents tend to have more interpersonal constraints than their male counterparts do, be it having fewer friends, their friends having less time, or their friends having less transportation means. As aforementioned, lack of money is a key contributor for structural constraints. Thus, adolescents having more monthly allowance tend to have less structural constraints for participation of leisure activities. As of intrapersonal constraints, it was revealed that when an individual works more (on part-time jobs), he or she may have more interest toward a leisure activity. By turning it around, it may be said that an individual who has more interest toward participation of leisure activities may be more outgoing and consequently acquires more part-time job opportunities. Therefore, an outgoing individual may not have intrapersonal constraints as those of a shy individual.

V. REFERENCES