BENEFITS AND CONSTRAINTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF AN URBAN

PARK REPORTED BY THE ELDERLY IN HONG KONG

A Thesis

by

KAM HUNG

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

December 2004

Major Subject: Recreation, Park & Tourism Sciences

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Approved as to style and content by:

John L. Crompton (Chair of Committee)	C. Scott Shafer (Member)
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ABSTRACT

Benefits and Constraints Associated with the Use of an Urban Park Reported by the

Elderly in Hong Kong.

(December 2004)

Kam Hung, B.A., Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. John L. Crompton

The purpose of this study was to identify benefits and constraints associated with the use of urban parks by a sample of elderly in Hong Kong. Before studying these topics, self-perception of aging of the elderly in Hong Kong was explored. In-depth interviews were conducted with 13 individuals inside and 12 outside the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park. Purposive sampling was used to select the sample. The interviews were semi-structured, based on an interview guide of open-ended questions.

Results of the study suggested that although there are some differences in explanations of aging among different countries, some aging models and theories which have been developed in western countries can be employed to interpret the aging phenomenon in Hong Kong. Several constraints and health-related social and psychological benefits of attending a park were reported by the sample. Heterogeneity of leisure constraints among different age cohorts of the elderly was found in the study. Although similarities were found between the benefits reported in this study and those reported in western countries, the magnitude of benefits received from visiting parks may be different because of the different characteristics of elderly in different countries.

In memory of

Ping Hung, my dearest sister.

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I am especially thankful to my parents. Without their support, I would not be staying here, pursuing my goals. A simple "thank you" is unable to convey my sincere gratitude to them for their unconditional love.

I owe a special thanks to my dearest sister, Ping Hung, who loved me and supported my study. Gratitude is also extended to the closest friend of my family, Yin Chiu Choi, who never hesitates to help my family; my oldest sister, Yui Hong, my brothers, Wei Hong and Hing Hung, and my sister-in-laws, who continuously support my study; and, last but not least, my lovely nieces and nephews, whose laughter and tears make my life more interesting.

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INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the benefits and constraints of the elderly in using the

Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park in Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, the term "elderly"

is socially defined according to Chinese tradition as a person who has reached the age of

60, while it is officially defined as a person who is aged 65 or over and therefore qualifies

for official associated medical and health services (Lam, 1997).

The world's population aged 65 and older is growing rapidly, by approximately

800,000 people a month (United States Department of Commerce News, 2001). More

than one-third of the world's oldest people who are aged 80 and above live in three

countries: China, The United States, and India. (United States Department of Commerce

News, 2001). Statistics reveal that this aging of the population will continue to increase in

both developed and developing countries. American society is becoming older (Greller &

Nee, 1989; London & Greller, 1991). Those aged 65 and older in the United States

constitute 34.9 million (13 percent) of the total population, which ranks the United States

32nd among countries in terms of proportion of older people. These facts demonstrate the

need to plan for the elderly in recreation and leisure settings. However, most attention in

the research literature has been focused on children and youth, and relatively little

research has addressed the needs of the elderly (Tinsley, Tinsley & Croskeys, 2002).

The rapid increase in aging population is a global phenomenon. In Tianjin, one of

the provinces in China, for example, "Elderly families", which refers to families living in

the same house with at least one elderly person present, account for 48 percent of all

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The citations in this thesis follow the style and format of the *Journal of Leisure Research*.

families in urban and rural areas. The proportion of "elderly families" is 34 percent in

Beijing, and 36.8 percent in Shanghai (People's Daily Online, 2000). The migration of

young people to developed areas where more job opportunities are present might

contribute to the lower percentage of elderly families in big cities. It may be one of the

reasons why approximately 35 percent of elderly people in China live alone (Wu, 2003).

The other reasons may include diminishing filial piety (Chow, 1999) and the increase in

nuclear families. The number of elderly people living alone is expected to be maintained

or even increase in the future due to the one-child policy in China.

Hong Kong, a Special Administrative Region of China, is no exception to the

trend of a rapid increase in aging population. The average annual growth rate of Hong

Kong's population in 1991, 1996, and 2001 was 0.6 percent, 1.8 percent, and 0.9 percent,

respectively. However, the 65 years old and over population in 1991, 1996, and 2001

increased by 8.7 percent, 10.1 percent, and 11.1 percent, respectively (Hong Kong

Census and Statistics Department, 2001). The proportion of those aged 65 and over is

projected to rise markedly, from 11% in 2001 to 24% in 2031(Hong Kong Census and

Statistics Department, 2002) (Table 1), reflecting a reduced fertility rate and increases in

life expectancy (Phillips, 1995). According to the Hong Kong Census and Statistics

Department (2002), "Hong Kong has experienced a continuous decline in mortality

during the last two decades, with a corresponding increase in expectation of life. The

expectation of life at birth for males increased from 72.3 years in 1981 to 78.2 years in

2001; while for females, the increase was from 78.5 to 84.1 years……By 2031, the

expectations of life at birth will be 82.3 years for males and 87.8 years for females". The

percentage of population of those aged 0-14 is projected to decline from 16 percent to 12

percent between the years 2001 and 2031 (Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department, 2002). (Table 2). The statistics cited above suggested that unless there is a boost in the birth rate, the proportion of elderly people in the population will keep growing.

TABLE 1

Projected Percentage of Aging Population in Hong Kong from 2001 to 2031

Year	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
Percentage	11%	12%	12%	14%	17%	21%	24%

Source: Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department (2002).

TABLE 2

Projected Percentage of Population Aged 0-14 in Hong Kong from 2001 to 2031

Year	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
Percentage	16%	15%	13%	13%	13%	12%	12%

Source: Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department (2002).

A rising population of elderly people will result in a corresponding increase for services in demand for the elderly (Kwan, 1990). Neglecting the needs of the elderly can lead to problems such as depression, suicide, alcohol abuse, smoking, deterioration in health, and so on. Well-structured community services are needed to help the elderly to cope. These include not only traditional social welfare services, but also leisure services. There is evidence that social welfare services for the elderly have emerged as a concern of the Hong Kong government. According to Chi and Chui (1999), the Hong Kong government has had a policy of providing community care since the 1970s. Community support services such as day-care centers, multi-service centers, social centers, and outreach teams have been established to provide community care for the elderly.

Although the elderly in Hong Kong are relatively physically healthy compared to elderly people in many other countries, they are a major consumer of health care resources (Chi & Chui, 1999). Due to their financial constraints, nearly half of the elderly live in public housing provided by the government. It is estimated that this number will increase as the proportion of elderly in the population increases. A projected increase in nuclear families will result in more old persons live alone, which will contribute to the climbing demand for public housing for the elderly (Chi & Chui, 1999). The government has invested effort in sustaining the physical and economic well-being of the elderly by providing medical services, housing assistance, a monthly allowance, and implementing a pension scheme. However, there has been no emphasis on maintaining their psychological and social well-being and Hong Kong has one of the highest suicide rates among the elderly in the world (Chi, Yip & Yu, 1997). Chi and Chou (2001) pointed out, "Over 30 percent of the suicide deaths occurring Hong Kong, were of old people aged sixty or above, while this group of people only comprised 14 percent of the total population" (p. 232).

Depression and decline in health are the two main causes of suicides in later life (Teague & MacNeil, 1992). Liu et al. (1993) reported that depression is serious problem with approximately 11 percent of males and 15 percent of females reporting they are depressed among the elderly in Hong Kong. Social support is recommended as a cure to help the elderly recover from depression (Chi & Chou, 2001).

Deprivation of social contacts can lead to a decline in both physical and psychological well-being of the elderly (Iso-Ahola, 1980). Kaiti Zhang, vice-director of the China Research Center on Aging, pointed out that among the things that can be done

to address this problem are providing high-quality services for them (Wu, 2003).

However, research has shown that most of the elderly spend their time watching

television at home, or just sitting, looking out a window, or taking a nap instead of going

out, and socializing (Kwan, 1990). Involvement in leisure activities has long been

recognized as a useful way of alleviating feelings of being isolated, bored and unhappy

(Iso-Ahola, 1980). More emphasis should be placed on leisure services in order to

maintain the psychological and social well-being of the elderly. To construct a better

leisure service system for the elderly, leisure service providers should first understand the

leisure benefits and constraints experienced by the elderly in Hong Kong. Without this

basic knowledge, the service provided may not meet the needs of the elderly, or even

worse, their leisure needs may not be recognized and thus not be addressed. Some may

argue that it is unnecessary to conduct research to discover the leisure benefits and

constraints of the elderly in Hong Kong since these have been relatively well defined in

western literature, but there are many differences between the elderly in western and

Asian societies, traditions, social environment, personality, education, perceptions of the

roles of elderly people, and so on. Hence, it is unreasonable to assume that the content,

form, processes and delivery mechanisms of leisure services for the elderly in Hong

Kong will be the same as in western countries. There is little literature addressing the

benefits and constraints associated with leisure among the elderly in Hong Kong. Most of

the existing literature concerns health and financial problems associated with the elderly,

but it seldom addresses their leisure needs.

Study Objectives

To understand the leisure constraints and benefits of elderly in Hong Kong, the aging phenomenon is explored first. This basic knowledge enables the findings to be better interpreted and meaningful insights to be discovered. In this study, an urban park, which is observed as a gathering place for elderly, was chosen as a starting point for investigating leisure benefits and constraints of the elderly. The purposes of this study are:

1) To investigate the aging phenomenon in Hong Kong through the self-reports of sampled elderly.

2) To understand the benefits received by a sample of older urban park users in Hong Kong.

3) To identify the constraints on leisure participation reported by a sample of older urban park users in Hong Kong.

Since no research on this topic has been conducted in Hong Kong previously, this exploratory study is a stepping stone for investigating leisure benefits and constraints of the elderly and the aging phenomenon in Hong Kong.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The main objective of this study is to identify the benefits and constraints associated with urban park use reported by the elderly in Hong Kong. This section commences with an overview of the aging phenomenon. The older age group should not be viewed as being the same as other age groups, and the review of aging research is intended to identify key characteristics of this older age stratum. After reviewing basic concepts of the aging phenomenon, the literature regarding leisure constraints and benefits are reviewed. Overviews of those areas are intended to enhance understanding of leisure benefits and constraints relating to the elderly before analyzing data obtained from the interviews with a sample of elderly in Hong Kong. Since there is a lack of reported research in these topics in Hong Kong, western literature was reviewed and used to provide an initial structure within which to collect the data and to analyze it systematically.

Aging Studies

Over the past 40 years, several studies in western countries have investigated the relationship between leisure and aging. Those studies provide evidence that recreation plays a role in maintaining life satisfaction of the elderly. They indicate that people who engaged more in recreation activities or settings tend to be more satisfied with their lives. However, few eastern studies have investigated the relationship between recreation and successful aging. In Hong Kong, for example, most aging research focuses on reporting daily activities and the health status of the elderly. Research seldom explains how aging

is defined, what aging means to old people, and how it affects this age group's leisure behavior or vice versa. Therefore, an overview of definition and theories of aging is necessary in order to provide an understanding of the aging phenomenon to provide a context for the findings of this study. Alternate definitions of aging, the meaning of successful aging, and aging theories which explain patterns of aging, are presented in this section. Relatively little information is available in Hong Kong. So this section provides an overview of leisure constraints and benefits research which has been reported in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Definitions of Aging. There is no universal definition of aging. According to Teague and MacNeil (1992), the meaning of old can be defined from six different perspectives: chronological, legal, biological, behavioral, sociocultural, and personal. A researcher's selection of a particular definition of being old depends on the focus and goal of the study.

1)   Chronological Model

The chronological model, which uses calendar years as a measure of age, is the most frequently used perspective (Teague & MacNeil, 1992). An example was given by Levinson et al. (1978) (Figure 1). This identifies four stages of the life cycle: childhood and adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood. Each stage occurs at a specified chronological age. A transition period is identified between each of the stages. According to this model, the late adult transition begins at age 60 and 5 years are allocated for the transition. Thus, late adulthood begins at age 65. Iso-Ahola (1980) suggested that leisure behavior should be analyzed as a sequential function of developmental phases and transitional periods. However, the heterogeneity emanating

from various biological backgrounds, means that caution should be exercised when

applying these stages to different populations to avoid overgeneralization of their

applicability to all social groups and cultures (Iso-Ahola, 1980). Nevertheless, a majority

of people are likely to pass through the sequential sequence of life stages indicated in the

model (Gould, 1975).
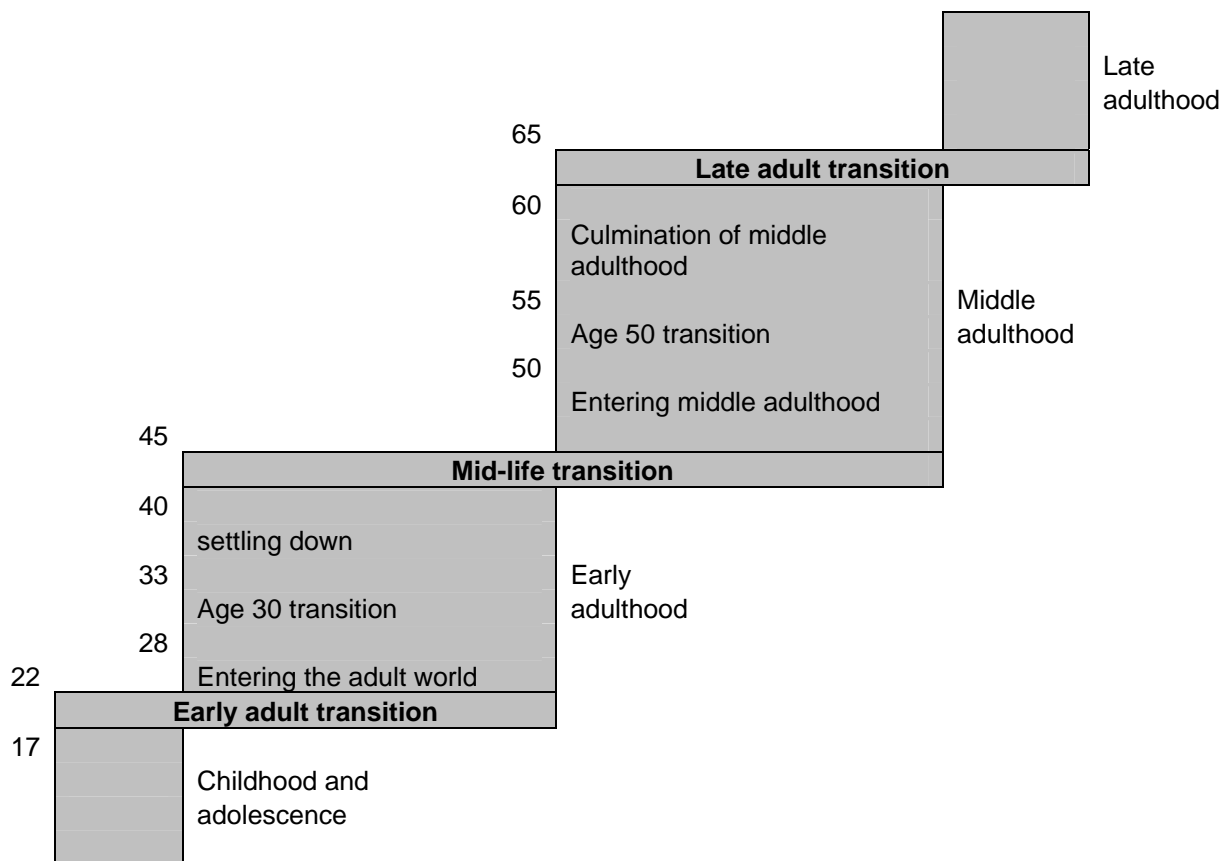
Source: Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee (1978).

Figure 1.   Developmental Periods in the Life Cycle

2)   Legal Model

Teague and MacNeil (1992) pointed out that the law often assigns legislative

responsibilities or benefits to specified chorological ages. The law defines legal age as

"the age at which a person becomes old enough to make contracts. This is generally eighteen to twenty-one in most states, but it may be lower for specific purposes. The phrase is sometimes used to mean the age at which a person can legally buy alcoholic beverages or legally consent to sexual intercourse" (Oran, 1983, p. 242). For instance, a minimum age of 21 is required in order to drink alcohol legally and a minimum age of 16 is required for driving legally (Table 3). Age 65 is often used to define old age by the rules and regulations associated with Social Security payments, Medicare, assisted housing, and so on. For instance, New York State Medicaid Law states that Medicare, which is a health insurance component of Social Security used to cover hospital care and other medical cares, is only available to those aged 65 or older and to certain disable persons. People who fit in this age category are generally defined as old people.

TABLE 3
Examples of Some Legal Ages in the United States

The legal driving age	16
The legal purchasing cigarette age	18
Voting age	18
The legal drinking age	21
The legal having sex intercourse age	Varies state by state
Age receiving benefits under Seniors Law	65

3)   Biological Model

Many have investigated biological changes in older adults attributable to the aging process (Teaff, 1985; McGuire, Boyd & Tedrick, 2004). The elderly often encounter changes in physiological characteristics such as changes in hair coloration, skin and appearance which can be observed such as white hair, wrinkled skin and poor

eyesight, and these are often used in interpreting the oldness of a person (Teague &

MacNeil, 1992). Other symptoms cannot be observed directly without technological

assistance such as changes in the brain and nervous system, circulatory system, and other

internal systems.

4)   Behavioral Model

Behavioral traits displayed by older people, such as forgetfulness and slower

motor time, may be used to define a person as old (Kalish, 1982). Often stereotypes are

used to interpret the behavior of the elderly. McGuire, Boyd, and Tedrick (2004) have

summarized both negative and positive stereotypes about aging and these are listed in

Table 4. There is a tendency for negative stereotypes to prevail (McGuire, Boyd and

Tedrick, 2004). Often perceptions towards the elderly are determined in face-to-face

interaction (Hazan, 2000) based on predetermined stereotypes associated with older

people.

TABLE 4
Negative Stereotypes and Positive Stereotypes of Aging

NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES
1. Most older persons are sick or disabled.
2. Most older persons have no sexual activity or desire.
3. Older persons are ugly.
4. Mental abilities start to decline after middle age.
5. Most old persons are "senile."
6. Old workers are not as effective as younger ones.
7. The majority of older persons are socially isolated and lonely.
8. Most older persons live in poverty.
9. Older persons feel miserable (cranky, depressed).

POSITIVE STEREOTYPES
1. Older persons are kind and warm.
2. Most older persons have great wisdom.
3. Older persons are more dependable.
4. Older persons are well off financially.
5. Older persons are a powerful political force.
6. Older persons are free to do whatever they want.
7. It is possible to slow down the aging process.
8. Old age is full of peace and serenity.

Source: McGuire, Boyd, & Tedrick (2004).

5)   Sociocultural Model

Teague and MacNeil (1992) indicated that many changes associated with aging are socially and culturally determined. Different roles have been assigned to different stages of life. People's roles change as they age. For instance, play and study are often the behavior associated with childhood. When people grow up, they are expected to obtain a job, get married and have children. Old people often are expected to be grandparents, be retired, and eventually become widows or widowers.

6)   Personal Model

The personal model suggests that age is defined by the person being evaluated (Teague & MacNeil, 1992). Some may perceive themselves as still being young compared to other on the age group due to their active life style. However, some may perceive themselves as being relatively old due the miserable life conditions or difficult financial situation that they are facing (Teague & MacNeil, 1992).

Successful Aging.   Researchers have investigated what ingredients are keys to successful aging. They have found that successful aging is often related to high morale and life satisfaction (Teague & MacNeil, 1992). Therefore, maintaining high morale and life satisfaction in the elderly has been defined as a primary goal in leisure services targeted at the elderly. Adaptation has been viewed as an important process in successful aging. It is defined as a process of responding to the constantly changing demands of one's environment (Teague & MacNeil, 1992). Both positive adaptation and negative adaptation can result depending on one's ability to adjust to the changes. Three common sources of major adaptive change in later life have been identified (Rosenthal & Colangelo, 1982) (Figure 2):

1. Sources related to the individual

2. Sources related to family

3. Sources related to the social environment

Sources related to the individual	Sources related to family	Sources related to the social environment
↓	↓	↓
Issues	Issues	Issues
-Personal health	-Marital relationship	-Ageism, stereotypes
-Death/dying	-Living arrangements	-Age segregation
-Retirement	-Elderly parent-child	-Crime
-Personal finances	relationship	-Inflation
-Use of leisure time	-Grandparenthood	-Health care
-Nutrition	-Sex relationship	

Source: Rosenthal, & Colangelo (1982).

Figure 2.   Common Sources of Major Adaptive Change in Later Life

Although each of us has to adapt to changes, there is particular emphasis on adaptation in later life in the aging literature. This emphasis arises from the specific changes in physiological, psychological and social facets of the lives of the elderly. McGrath (1970) indicated that stress can be induced when there is an imbalance between the need to change and the ability to change. Three threats have been identified in the changes (McGrath, 1970):

1. Physical Threat – threats of injury, pain, or death.

2. Ego Threat – involving injury or pain to the psychological self.

3. Interpersonal Threat – disruption of social relationships.

Maladaptive coping procedures such as alcohol, drugs, and suicide can be adopted to cope with stress when the elderly fail to adapt to aging successfully. The most common psychological disorder among older people is depression (Teague & MacNeil, 1992). This behavior is perceived as being a negative adaptation to the changes. Four sources of negative adaptation in later life have been delineated by Teague & MacNeil (1992):

1. Stress in later life

2. Lessened ability to cope with disruptive change

3. Loss of social supports

4. Absence of socially defined norms and roles for elderly

Avoiding negative adaptation and pursuing positive adaptation in later life has been defined as a common goal for those servicing the elderly. It is believed that this approach will help them achieve successful aging. So what exactly is successful aging? How are those elderly identified who successful adapt to later life while others do not? Since different approaches or theories have been adopted by researchers, the explanations for these questions vary among studies. To understand these alternate explanations of successful aging, descriptions of the major aging theories are given in the next section.

Aging Theories. According to Schroots (1996), theoretical developments in gerontology from a psychological perspective emerged after World War II. Three foci of the studies have been identified (Schroots, 1996, p. 742):

1. Psychology of the aged – focuses on older people and later life.

2. Psychology of age – studies age differences in behavior by comparing groups of different ages in cross-sectional research.

3. Psychology of aging – studies behavioral patterns of changes with age, integrating both the psychology of aging and the aged in longitudinal research.

Researchers have interpreted the development process of aging theories in different ways. For instance, Schroots (1996) identified three theoretical development periods based on the year in which the theories were initially explored: The Classical period (40s – 70s), the Modern period (70s – 90s), and the New period (80s – present). Table 5 lists the theories that fall in each category based on this classification.

TABLE 5
Schematic Overview of Psychological Theories of Aging

Theory	Author (s)
CLASSICAL THEORIES	
Developmental Tasks/Activity Theory	Havighurst (1948)
Psychosocial Theory of Personality development	Erikson (1950)
Counterpart Theory	Birren (1960)
Disengagement/Activity Theory	Cumming & Henry (1961)
Personality Theory of Age and Aging	Neugarten (1968)
Cognitive Theory of personality and Aging	Thomae (1970)
MODERN THEORIES	
Life-span Development and Aging	Baltes et al. (1980, 1987, 1992)
Reduced Processing Resources	Salthouse (1985, 1988, 1991)
Personality and Aging	Erikson (1950); Levinson et al. (1978); Costa & McCrae (1988, 1992)
Behavioral Genetics and Aging	Plomin & McClearn (1990); Pedersen (1996)
NEW THEORIES	
Gerotranscendence	Tornstam (1989, 1992, 1994)
Gerodynamics/Branching Theory	Schroots (1988, 1995a, b)

Source: Schroots (1996).

In contrast to Schroot (1996), Lynott and Lynott (1996) addressed theoretical development in aging from a sociological perspective. Two transformations were identified as break-points in the theoretical development of the sociological aging

literature. Theories which fall into these two periods are shown in Table 6 (Lynott & Lynott, 1996).

TABLE 6
Sociological Theories of Aging

Theory	Author(s)
FIRST TRANSFORMATION	
Disengagement Theory	Cumming & Henry (1961)
Concept of "subculture" of aging	Rose (1965)
Exchange Theory	Dowd (1975)
Modernization Theory	Cowgill (1974)
Socio-environmental approach to aging	Gubrium (1973)
Age stratification approach	Riley (1971); Riley, Johnson & Foner (1972)
Continuity approach	Archley (1971, 1972)
SECOND TRANSFORMATION	
Political economy of aging	Estes (1979)

Source: Lynott, & Lynott (1996).

The first transformation occurred at the time that disengagement theories emerged. According to Lynott and Lynott (1996), the publication of Cumming and Henry's book "Growing Old: the Process of Disengagement" in 1961 signaled the beginning of theoretical consciousness in social gerontology. Prior to 1961, the term "theory" did not appear in the literature although many studies had been conducted to explore patterns of aging. A majority of studies in this period adopted a unidimensional approach to thinking about aging. The foci of such studies were on "adjustment", "activity", or "individual life satisfaction" so they considered only personal factors associated with an individual's experience to adjustment in later life. Disengagement Theory differed from previous perspectives because it considered not only individual adaptability, but also viewed the social system as a source of explanation for disengagement behavior of the elderly.

The second transformation occurred around the late 1970s and early 80s (Lynott & Lynott, 1996). During this period studies appeared in social gerontology that addressed some fundamental methodological issue in the study of aging. It was suggested that the social organization of discourse in which researchers and respondents collectively negotiate and exchange what was meant by a sense of aging through talking and interaction, might adversely affect the reliability of aging studies. Contamination through the subjective perceptions of researchers being reflected in the results of studies was the main concern in this period. Therefore, a process of "objectification", which was intended to discover the "facts' of aging, was emphasized. Another emphasis in the second transformation period concerned the applicability of findings from aging studies. Questions were raised on how to apply the studies' findings to practical contexts to facilitate successful aging.

In the recent publication "Leisure and Aging: Ulyssean Living in Later Life" (McGuire, Boyd & Tedrick, 2004), 11 theories were identified that represent the experience of aging (Table 7). The authors classified the aging theories into three categories: Personal experience theories of later life, social factors shaping the experience of later life, and the negotiation of later life.

TABLE 7
Aging Theories

Theory	Author(s)
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE THEORIES OF LATER LIFE	
Disengagement theory	Cumming & Henry (1961)
Activity theory	Lemon, Bengston & Peterson (1972); Longino & Kart (1982)
Continuity theory	Archley (1977); Neugarten, Havighurst & Tobin (1968)
SOCIAL FACTORS SHAPING THE EXPERIENCE OF LATER LIFE	
Socialization to old age (Theory of socialization)	Rosow (1974)
Aging stratification theory	Riley (1971, 1985)
Modernization theory	Cowgill (1974)
THE NEGOTIATION OF LATER LIFE	
Life course perspective	George (1996)
Gerodynamics	Schroots (1995a, 1995b)
Selective optimization with compensation	Baltes & Carstensen (1996); Freund & Baltes (1998); Freund & Baltes (2002)
Socioemotional selectivity theory	Carstensen (1993)
Gerotranscendence	Tornstam (1992); Jonson & Magnusson (2001); Lewin (2001)

Source: McGuire, Boyd & Tedrick (2004)

These aging theories, which have been used in leisure and aging studies, are described in the following paragraphs. It should be noted that in addition to those theories mentioned, many other aging theories have been suggested, but those discussed here are the most common.

1)   Disengagement Theory

According to Lynott and Lynott (1996), Disengagement Theory was the first formal theory to be formulated in the aging literature. Prior to the emergence of Disengagement Theory, the focus of aging research was exclusively on personal factors. Cumming and Henry (1961) suggested that aging cannot be separated from the social

system in which aging is experienced. Therefore, social factors also were taken into consideration in this theory.

In contrast to Activity Theory, Disengagement Theory suggested that high levels of life satisfaction in old age are associated with reducing involvement with social roles and activity engagements (Cumming & Henry, 1961). In this theory, disengagement is perceived as an inevitable mutual satisfying withdrawal of an individual from society. It is based on the recognition that gradual losses of roles and diminished competency in the society are inevitable as a person ages. It requires old people to gradually disengage from their roles in order to maintain both a healthy functioning society and a satisfying aging life style for the individual.

2)   Activity Theory

The origins of Activity Theory can be traced back to Robert J. Havighurst (1948). Havighurst (1948) proposed a concept of developmental tasks in a life-span perspective which argued that happiness and success can be derived if a person successfully performs specific developmental tasks in a given period. Otherwise, unhappiness can result. Based on this principle, Lemon, Bengston and Peterson (1972) developed a formal statement of Activity Theory in 1972 (McGuire, Boyd & Tedrick, 2004). This theory is one of the earliest and most intuitively attractive of the aging theories (McGuire & Norman, n.d.).

This theory, assumes a positive relationship between a person's level of activity and the degree of his or her life satisfaction and adjustment in later life. Successful aging depends on the ability to maintain active social participation. The more active an individual is, the higher his or her level of life satisfaction will be. Aging is accompanied by a loss of roles. Activity theory suggests that compensating or substituting for the loss

of roles through activity participation is important to achieving successful aging

(McGuire, Boyd & Tedrick, 2004).

3)   Theory of Socialization

Like activity theory, the Theory of Socialization integrates role theory into its

approach. It suggests that socialization into old age is a process so that people adopt the

social role of old age (Rosow, 1974). Old people have specific social roles and positions

which are different from those of younger age groups. These roles and positions are the

result of changes in social identity and relationships that occur when a person ages

(Rosow, 1974). There are three basic conditions that need to be present for successful

socialization: (i) old people should have adequate knowledge of the social roles and

identities associated with transition into later life; (ii) old people should have the ability

to adapt to the changes; and (iii) old people should demonstrate motivation to adopt the

new social roles and identities in later life (Rosow, 1974). The erosion of social norms

and the diminished social status of old age in industrialized society, means that many old

people may fail to meet these three conditions for transitioning into later life (McGuire,

Boyd & Tedrick, 2004).

4)   Continuity Theory

Continuity Theory (Archley, 1971; 1972) argues that individuals have a tendency

to maintain a consistent trend in their behavior as they age. It differs from Activity and

Disengagement Theory in that success in aging is not determined by level of activity

participation, but relies on "how continuous current activities are with earlier ones"

(Lynott & Lynott, 1996, pp. 753). In later research, Archley (1989) pointed out that what

Continuity Theory suggests is an evolutionary approach rather than a homeostatic

approach which would resist changes of status in all circumstances. This evolutionary approach assumes that an integration of change into an individual's prior history takes place and, thus, there is adaptation or adjustment in later life.

Two types of continuity were identified: Internal continuity and external continuity (Archley, 1989). Internal continuity requires memory capacity so comparisons can be made between potential inner changes and an individual's past. External continuity evaluates changes based on the remembered structure of physical and social environments, role relationships, and activities. Individual personal history is the pre-requirement for both internal continuity and external continuity to occur. Adjustment of an individual's value and behavior is based on an evaluation and judgment of existing changes and the individual's history and past experience (Archley, 1989).

5)   Personality Theory

According to Schroots (1996), the study of personality as a predictor for successful aging was initiated by Havighurst, Neugarten, and Tobin (1968). Similar to Continuity Theory, aging is viewed as an adaptation process in which Personality Theory is the key element (Schroots, 1996). An individual's personality reflects a particular coping style in aging. People who have different personalities adapt to aging in different ways. Recognition of individual variability is the main characteristic which distinguishes Personality Theory from other theories (Teaff, 1985). Eight personality types have been identified (Havighurst, Neugarten & Tobin, 1968):

I.   "Reorganizers" – Maintain high level of activity by continually replacing lost role activities with new role activities.

II. "Focused" – Concentrate greater effort on a limited choices of activities.

III. "Disengaged" – Voluntary withdrawal from activities and social roles.

IV. "Holding on" – Defeat threats by prolonging middle-age patterns of behavior.

V. "Constricted" – Limit social interactions and consumption of energies by erecting defenses against threats and losses.

VI. "Succorance-seekers" – Look for help from others

VII. "Apathetic" – Always been apathetic and intend to keep apathy and passivity pattern of life style.

VIII. "Disorganized" – Poor psychological functioning and restricted role activity.

6) Age Stratification Theory

Age Stratification Theory was developed by Riley, Johnson, and Foner (1972). Again, role approach was incorporated into this theory. However, it differs from other theories, arguing that a society is constructed by a series of age strata and in each stratum people process a similar life course dimension, i.e., share a general biological history and common experiences in role performance and historical dimension. People who locate in the same age stratum experience a particular historical period with its unique characteristics together. As people in each cohort age and progress sequentially through the age strata together, they share similar patterns of living because they encounter the same history and experiences. Therefore, patterns of aging can be explained by analyzing characteristics of the old age strata (Lynott & Lynott, 1996).

7) Modernization Theory

Cowgill (1974) and Cowgill & Holmes (1972) proposed Modernization Theory which addresses the influence of modernization in a society on the status of elderly. He argued that there is a decline in the status of the elderly in modern society. Four main

factors led to that conclusion: (i) health technology, (ii) economic technology, (iii) urbanization, and (iv) mass education (Cowgill, 1974).

While the longevity of old people has been extended by advanced health technology, the mortality of birth rate also has decreased. These changes have increased competition both within the aging population, and between it and other age groups for jobs and other resources. The other three factors (economic technology, urbanization, and mass education) which have benefited younger generations have led to older people being phased out of the labor market and out of social responsibilities. Scientific technology has stimulated new and specialized occupations that require advanced knowledge and skills which are most likely to be obtained through education instead of experience (Cowgill, 1974). Since younger generations are more likely to gain this knowledge through education, the social status of the elderly declines since society depends more and more on the younger generation's skills. Another source of declining social status among old people is the separation of work from the home caused by urbanization. This results in the younger generation being more independent than in the past.

8)   Gerodynamics

Recent work has incorporated two physics laws, the second law of thermodynamics and dynamics systems theory into a theory to explain the functioning system of human beings (Schroots, 1995a; 1995b). The theory states that the functioning system of human beings can be viewed as a dynamic system in which disorder can occur when fluctuation in the system passes a critical or transformation point. The second law implies that human beings tend to progress toward the disorder and disparity with age, and face death eventually due to biological limitations.

Branching theory is used to explain various states of aging. When the fluctuating individual reaches a critical point, the result is not always disorder or death. The critical point can be viewed as a branching point, where one of three different life patterns may emerge. These three different life patterns are mortality (death); morbidity (disorder); and quality of life (life satisfaction and well-being) (Shroots, 1996). Nevertheless, biological limitations direct that death will be the ultimate destiny of a human being, irrespective of how well human beings maintain their system.

9)   Selective Optimization with Compensation

Selective Optimization with Compensation (SOC) is another aging approach which was proposed by Baltes (Balte, Baltes, Freund, & Lang, 1995; Baltes & Carstensen, 1996; Freund & Baltes, 1998; Baltes & Carstensen, 1999) (Table 4). Three processes are involved in this approach: selection, optimization and compensation. Selection is a process that develops and limits the choices of goals, life domains, and life tasks. In optimization process, people need to utilize their means and resources within their selected choices in order to achieve successful aging. This process is termed as "optimization". Compensation is a substitutive process that confronts the loss of resources which are needed for achieving desired outcomes. This may involve obtaining new skills, or using alternative aids to compensate for a behavioral deficiency.

Here is an example to illustrate how SOC works. Some old people may participate only in one leisure activity such as golf, and be good at it instead of exposing themselves to many activities. The process of making a choice of specific goals or tasks is termed the selection process. Having a goal to be good at golf, these elderly may purchase equipment, and spend time and efforts on practicing their skills. The utilization of

resources and investment on playing golf is termed optimization. For those people who have less talent for golf, they may practice more than others or hire a better instructor in order to upgrade their skills. This is a process of compensation for the resources that people do not have. In Freund and Baltes (1998) study, SOC was found to be significantly associated with subjective indicators of successful aging which were: satisfaction with aging, lack of agitation, and absence of emotional and social loneliness. However, using SOC may become more difficult as people age since obtainable resources such as skills and personal health may be more difficult to sustain or acquire in later years (Freund & Baltes, 1998).

10)   Socioemotional Selectivity Theory

Socioemotional Selectivity Theory has a similar approach to that of SOC, but with a narrower focus on social relationships (McGuire, Boyd & Tedrick, 2004). According to Baltes and Carstensen (1999), older people tend to reduce social contact, focusing more on fewer but closer social relationships, rather than exploring new social networks. Carstensen (1993) has identified three possible reasons for this phenomenon: (i) As people age, the need for acquiring and transferring knowledge or information decreases; (ii) There is decreased need for developing a sense of oneself as people age. Therefore, the social network shrinks because of the reduction in exposure of oneself to others; (iii) The need for affirmation and support increases as people age. It is believed that compared to making new friendships, closer social partners are more likely to provide emotional support for a person (McGuire, Boyd & Tedrick, 2004). This narrower focus increases or maintains social interactions with closer relationships and maximizes the potential for positive effect, while at the same time it reduces interactions with those

who do not offer emotional rewards which minimizes the potential for negative effect (Baltes & Carstensen, 1999). As McGuire, Boyd and Tedrick (2004, p. 41) state, "The ultimate outcome of socioemotional selectivity is a decrease in the size of an individual's social circle".

11)   Gerotranscendence

Gerotranscendence is also a relatively new theory of aging which was developed by Tornstam (1989; 1992; 1994). It suggests that life satisfaction can be achieved through focusing on a more cosmic and transcendent perspective, rather than emphasizing a materialistic and rational approach. This approach suggests that individuals may perceive the world at a more cosmic level. People who adopt this approach to life may not be concerned too much about time, space, life or death. What they focus more on is cultivating themselves to communicate with the spirit of the universe (Schroots, 1996).Through this transcendent perspective, social contacts are not perceived as being important anymore. Solitude may increase the importance and, thus, participation in social activity may decrease within this approach.

12)   Subculture Theory

Subculture Theory was developed by Rose (1965) who advocated that the aging phenomenon can be understood better by evaluating values against the characteristics or "subculture" of the aged group (Lynott & Lynott, 1996). Based on this theory, each age group has a specific culture which is different from others. Through interaction with other age group members, the aged group develops group consciousness which can be interpreted as "an awareness of belonging to a particular group" (Hendricks & Hendricks, 1977, pp. 113). The characteristics or subculture of a particular group are formulated by

many factors, such as health (Rose, 1965). For instance, young people with better health and energy may participate in energetic sports such as playing basketball while old people may engage in sedentary activities such as sitting. Each aged group has its own subculture which is different from that of others. Therefore, it is not appropriate to evaluate the older aged group based on an overall social standard (Rose, 1965).

13)   Exchange Theory

According to Lynott and Lynott (1996), Exchange Theory was formulated by Dowd (1975) based on a cost-benefit model of social participation. In this theory, the decision of retain or withdraw from social participation is based on an evaluation of the trade-offs between benefits/gains such as social support, and costs such as loss of status (Teaff, 1985). Level of life satisfaction can be increased or maintained through balancing this equation (Lynott & Lynott, 1996). Exchange theory primarily focuses on explaining why the elderly withdraw from society. Dowd (1975) argues that an unbalanced situation between the costs and benefits of engagement with society, result in the withdrawal of the elderly from the social system. As people age, there is a decrease in their levels of competence. Older people contribute less and less, and have to make more and more effort to retain balance of the exchange system. When the elderly see the efforts they have to make outweigh the benefits received, they withdraw from of the society.

14)   Attribution Theory of Aging

Attribution Theory of Aging was proposed by Teague and MacNeil (1992) based on the work of Iso-Ahola, MacNeil, and Szymanski (1977). This theory explains how self-perceptions affect the behavioral process, and why some older people can maintain a high level of life satisfaction, while others in the same situation cannot. This theory,

proposes that personal perception and individual attitudes are the main determinants of successful aging. Two attributions are involved: (i) dispositional attributions, which are those behaviors created by personal qualities such as personalities; and (ii) environmental attributions, which are those behaviors resulting from external factors such as job opportunities (Teague & MacNeil, 1992). Successful aging depends on the intensity of influences of those two attributions over each other, i.e., the extent to which a person's behavior is controlled by dispositional advantages or by environmental restrictions. According to this theory, life satisfaction is dependent upon people feeling they are in control of their lives rather than being controlled by the environment. The decline in perceptions of personal competence noted earlier may lead to environmental attributions becoming gradually dominant over dispositional attributions as people age. "Healthy" elderly people treat their failures as occasional cases instead of generalizing failures to all other situations. In contrast, "unhealthy" elderly transfer failures to other circumstances which are not related to the context of the failures (Teague & MacNeil, 1992).

Conclusion. Aging is a complex lifelong journey which is influenced by various factors along the life process. Those factors interact not only with the aging process, but also among each other. For instance, low income may lead to low social status and a low self-esteem. At the same time, this financial constraint can also result in life dissatisfaction for the elderly, since those people have to struggle to live instead of enjoying their later life. This section was intended to enhance understanding of aging by outlining alternate definitions of aging, concepts of successful aging, and the most widely accepted aging theories.

Six models of defining aging have been described: chronological, legal, biological, behavioral, sociocultural, and personal models. The chronological model assigns each life stage to a certain age cohort. People transition from stage to stage in sequence as they age. The legal model defines when people are old enough to legally perform some behavior. From the biological perspective, aging can be viewed as reflecting changes in appearance such as wrinkled skin. The behavioral model is used to determine the oldness of a person based on perception or observation of traits such as forgetfulness or slow response. The sociocultural model assumes that each stage has certain roles assigned to it. Those roles are different from the roles in other stages. For instance, old people are expected to be retired and, in contrast, young people should be working. The personal model is constructed based on perception of oldness of oneself. Some people who are aged 60 may feel themselves to be young due to their high level of involvement with society, but other people who are aged 40 may feel themselves to be old due to their miserable lives. This study will explore how a sample of old people in Hong Kong perceives their own oldness, and how others perceive their oldness. This study will identify some possible models that can be used to define aging through conversations with a sample of elderly people in Hong Kong.

Those who maintain high morale and life satisfaction are usually defined as having successfully aged. Adaptation has long been defined as an important determinant in successful aging. Personal, family and social environment are common adaptive resources available in later life to facilitate achievement of successful aging (Rosenthal & Colangelo, 1982). The adaptability of old people depends on the richness of those resources that they have. Those resources are essential in confronting the physical, ego

and interpersonal threats that old people encounter in their later life (McGrath, 1970). This study explored the life satisfaction of a sample of elderly in Hong Kong. Happiness with life was used as a synonym when the elderly did not understand the meaning of life satisfaction.

Different aging theories have been developed to explain what successful aging is and why some people age successfully while others do not. Fourteen aging theories were introduced in this section. Two general types of factors appear to have been taken into consideration when aging theories were formulated: personal factors, and a combination of personal factors and social factors. Personal factors, which are directly related to an individual, are the major sources that influence the extent of successful aging. Personality Theory, in which personality is used as a predictor for successful aging, is one such example. Social factors refer to those factors located in a social environment in which an individual lives. Human beings are often inevitably influenced by their social systems. Therefore, many aging theories such as Theory of Socialization incorporated personal and social factors together. These theories reject the hypothesis that successful aging is solely determined by an individual. Rather, they postulate that successful aging is formed through interaction between an individual and the social environment that the individual locates in.

Some aging theories, such as Disengagement Theories and Activity Theories, focus on the number of leisure activities in which elderly participate in order to determine the successfulness of their aging. In this research, the leisure activities of later life and of young adulthood of the samples were identified and compared. Other theories such as Age Stratification Theory and Subculture Theory were formulated based on specific

characteristics of the older age group. Different perspectives that are used in various disciplines are also evident in aging theories such Gerodynamics and Exchange Theory. Those different perspectives show that aging theories may not be framed in one context only. The variability among theories may be due to factors such as the discipline in which a researcher is in, and data that the researcher has available.

Leisure Constraints

The leisure participation of all age cohorts is constrained by a variety of factors. Some leisure constraints among the elderly may be the same as those among other age groups. For instance, external constraints such as bad weather or lack of facilities can discourage leisure participation, irrespective of the age cohort. However, there are particular characteristics of the elderly such as mobility difficulties and declined health, which often affect them more than other age groups. Therefore, the constraints reported in the literature on general leisure participation may not fully generalize to the elderly. Nevertheless, reviewing this research is a stepping stone to reviewing constraints of the elderly. Hence, this section reviews general leisure constraints; and subsequently discusses leisure constraints among the elderly.

General Leisure Constraints. Since the early 1960s, researchers have investigated barriers to recreation participation (Buchanan & Allen, 1985). However, theoretical frameworks were not constructed to explain leisure constraints until the early 1980s (Crawford, Jackson & Godbey, 1991). Constraints research has gone through substantial changes during the past twenty years. In recent years, some have summarized previous constraints research and from that basis suggested directions for future research in this

area. (Samdahl & Jekubovich, 1997; Henderson, 1997; Jackson & Scott, 1999; Nadirova & Jackson, 2000).

The most recent review on constraints research was authored by Jackson & Scott (1999). They classified the constraints literature into four stages. The first and second stages acted as a foundation for the later two stages. Researchers in the first two periods were seldom directed by conceptual frameworks. Nevertheless, the ideas and findings presented in those two stages were important to constructing more systematic research in the later stages. The first stage can be viewed as a pre-barrier period in which researchers made assumptions about the cause of recreation non-participation, e.g., non-participation is the result of lack of, or inadequate, services (Jackson & Scott, 1999). Empirical research on constraints to leisure participation was not introduced in this period. The second stage has been interpreted as the experimental stage in which researchers tended to provide answer to specific problems, rather than building theories to guide their work which would make it more generalizable. The focus of this research was on specific barriers such as the role of lack of facilities in non-participation (Jackson & Scott, 1999).

The third stage started in the early 1980s. In this stage, leisure constraint research was driven by two major assumptions: 1) Constraints function only as barriers to participation after preference for an activity is made, i.e., only structural or intervening constraints influence the participation decision; 2) There is a positive relationship between constraints and level of leisure non-participation (Shaw, Bonen & McCabe, 1991), i.e., when a constraint is present, the outcome must be non-participation. Another major characteristic of the third stage was that life cycle stage was viewed as an important variable in understanding leisure behavior (Buchanan & Allen, 1985). Several

researchers adopted life span as a framework with which to identify various leisure constraints that people encountered at each life stage (Witt & Goodale, 1982; Buchanan & Allen, 1985; McGuire, Dottavio & O'Leary, 1986).

Compared to the third stage, the fourth stage of leisure constraints research was more theory-driven. Researchers tended to identify domains of constraints and categorize constraint items into them. This helped organize work which had been done in earlier years, and formulated leisure constraints being described in a more logical way. Criterion variables which were used to measure the impact of constraints were broadened, more sophisticated statistical tools were used, and theoretical frameworks were built in this period (Jackson & Scott, 1999).

Although new ideas and findings are continuously added to previous research, it does not mean that the previous constraints research should be neglected once a new idea emerges. Rather, previous research provides basic knowledge which allows later researchers to discover better ways of understanding leisure. Several changes have occurred in the: (i) criterion variables; (ii) terminologies; (iii) definition of leisure constraints; (iv) statistical analysis; and (v) conceptual models (Samdahl & Jekubovich, 1997; Henderson, 1997; Jackson & Scott, 1999; Nadirova & Jackson, 2000). These changes are closely inter-related and should not be viewed separately. The following passages describe these changes in constraints literature.

1)   Criterion Variables

Early leisure constraints research was based on a widely accepted assumption that a constraint resulted in leisure non-participation (Jackson & Scott, 1999). The focus was on examining absolute non-participation, i.e., those who drop out from an existing

activity or do not take part in a new activity because a barrier exists. McGuire, Dottavio, & O'Leary (1986) indicated that a constraint may not only prohibit participation or result in people dropping out from leisure participation, but it may also reduce frequency of participation in an activity. Their study examined constraints to participation in outdoor recreation activities across the life span through two categories of constraints: prohibitors (those listed by individuals who have completely stopped participation) and limitors (those listed by individuals who have reduced their participation in a selected activity), which are termed by Jackson and Searle (1985) "blocking" and "inhibiting" barriers respectively.

Different criterion variables emerged in leisure constraints research. In 1988, Jackson proposed that a constraint to leisure is anything that inhibits people's ability to participate in leisure activities, to spend more time doing so, to take advantage of leisure services, or to achieve a desired level of satisfaction. Jackson and Dunn (1988) proposed a model which focused only on one aspect of non-participation, ceasing participation in leisure activities, but they pointed out that changes in the frequency and intensity of leisure participation also should be included in further refinements of the model. Jackson and Dunn (1991) used two sets of data to investigate the internal homogeneity of leisure constraints. They tested homogeneity on two forms of non-participation: 1) Non-participation in activities in which an individual had an interest but did not currently participate; 2) Ceasing participation in regularly attended activities. It was found that perceived constraints relating to these two forms of non-participation were different from each other. Thus, the authors suggested that constrained leisure must be viewed as an

internally differentiated concept, and research should be conducted in both of these situations.

A broader range of criterion variables is likely to be characteristic of future research. Jackson & Scott (1999) classified the criterion variables that had been used in previous research into four categories: 1) Inability to maintain participation at, or increase it to, desired levels; 2) Ceasing participation in former activities; 3) Nonuse of public leisure services; and 4) Insufficient enjoyment of current activities. These four criterion variables were applied in subsequent research reported by Nadirova and Jackson (2000).

2)   Terminologies

There have been two major changes in terminologies in leisure constraints research. First, the term "constraints" replaced "barriers" which was used in the early studies (Jackson, 1991). The early studies investigated "barriers" that prevent people from leisure participation, which is only one of the perspective outcomes of leisure constraints identified in the later research. "Constraints" is believed to be a more appropriate term since it embraces not only nonparticipation, but also the other outcomes of constraints such as inability to maintain or increase the desired frequency of participation, and insufficient enjoyment of current activities.

Second, researchers started to investigate barriers to recreation participation as early as the 1960s (Buchanan & Allen, 1985). A practical orientation was adopted at that time in which research was tended to provide practical answers to why there was limited participation in recreation settings (Jackson & Scott, 1999). Therefore, "recreation" was the term frequently used in the early research. However, this term has a narrower implication than a general leisure perspective. The later research uses "leisure" in place

of "recreation" which has two advantages: "broadening the focus of investigation and forging closer links than before with the mainstream of thinking in leisure studies" (Jackson & Scott, 1999, pp. 300).

3)   Definition of Leisure Constraints

In the earlier research, "constraints" was simply defined as "those barriers or blockages that inhibit continued use of a recreation service" (Backman & Crompton, 1989, p. 59). Research on constraints in the past was framed within the assumption that there was a positive relationship between leisure constraints and leisure nonparticipation. Refinements in the definition of leisure constraints have been made continuously as leisure constraints research has progressed. For instance, Kay and Jackson (1991) pointed out that constraints do not necessarily lead to nonparticipation. People can experience some constraints even they participate in a leisure activity. As more potential outcomes of leisure constraints have been identified, the range of definition of leisure constraints has been broadened. The definition of leisure constraints has evolved with the refinement of outcomes of leisure constraints. Based on the four domains of "constrained leisure" summarized by Nadirova and Jackson (2000), "constraints" can be redefined as those factors that inhibit continued use of leisure service, cause inability to participate in a new activity, result in the inability to maintain or increase frequency of participation, and lead to negative impacts on the quality of the leisure experience.

4)   Statistical Analysis

Four statistical analysis tools have been adopted in leisure constraints research: item-by-item analysis, total constraints scores, factor analysis, and cluster analysis (Jackson, 1993). Table 8 summarizes the differences among those four statistical tools

identified by Jackson (1993). As leisure constraints research progresses, the statistical

analysis tools adopted move from a lower level of aggregation such as item-by-item

analysis and total constraints score, to a higher level of aggregation such as factor

analysis and cluster analysis (Jackson, 1993). However, the statistical analysis tools at the

higher aggregation level are not substitutes for those at the lower level of aggregation. i.e.,

factor analysis and cluster analysis should not be viewed as replacements for item-by-

item analysis or total constraints score analysis. Rather, these tools can be complementary

and selected based on the specific needs of a leisure constraints studies. Although

classifications on dimensions of leisure constraints and comparison on those dimensions

are more feasible when using higher level of analysis tools, more meaningful insights

often can be derived in the reverse direction (Jackson, 1993).

TABLE 8

Four Ways in Which the Constraints Data Were Manipulated

ITEM-BY-ITEM ANALYSIS
- Provides much information about how specific constraints are experienced, and by whom.
- Too high a level of detail.
- Process of analysis is laborious, may obscure patterns and generalities within the data and increases the probability of Type I error.

TOTAL CONSTRAINTS SCORE
- Too high a level of generality to be of much use in the analysis of variations in and sources of constraints, or in deriving practical implications from the results.

FACTOR ANALYSIS
- Useful tool for describing the underlying structure and components of a phenomenon such as constraints.
- Reducing a large number of items to a smaller number of internally cohesive dimensions
- Working with factor-based data is less laborious
- Facilitates the comparison of results across categories of associated variables.
- Generate a fragmented picture of the experience of constraints.

CLUSTER ANALYSIS
- Major advantage: cut across the dimensions and which are otherwise difficult or impossible to identify.
- Shift focus to the ways in which individuals and groups of people encounter varying arrays of constraints on fulfilling their leisure aspirations.
- Classifications derived from cluster analysis enhance the opportunity to begin investigation of the experience and operation of leisure constraints in people's lives
- Provide sharper differentiation by categories of associated variables than the results of factor analysis.

Source: Jackson (1993).

5)		Conceptual Models

Leisure constraint models were developed in order to integrate previous work on leisure constraints (e.g., Godbey, 1985; Iso-Ahola & Mannell, 1985; Jackson & Dunn, 1988; Jackson & Searle, 1985; Crawford, Jackson, & Godbey, 1991). Three major contributions to modeling constraints have been made to this point.

First, Jackson and Searle (1985) suggested a model which viewed recreation behavior as a process of decision-making (Table 9). Blocking barriers and inhibiting barriers were used to screen leisure activity choices. The model proposed that activities first are filtered by blocking barriers. If there is an absence of blocking barriers, activity choices will then be examined by inhibiting barriers. Blocking barriers are: internal and external barriers; lack of interest; and lack of awareness of an activity. Inhibiting barriers are internal and external barriers. In contrast to previous research, Jackson and Searle (1985) injected a psychological barrier, lack of interest, into consideration, which in later research was interpreted as an intrapersonal constraint. However, this model was relatively complicated to implement (Jackson & Searle, 1985), and was still rooted in the assumption that non-participation must result when a barrier is present in the decision making process. Other possible outcomes from the presence of a barrier are neglected.

Table 9 suggests there are only two possible outcomes from a decision on recreation behavior: participation (P) or nonparticipation (NP_1; NP_2; NP_3; NP_4; and NP_5). When any of these blocking barriers (i.e., lack of interest and awareness, or other barriers) are present in the decision-making process, the choice recreation behavior is blocked and nonparticipation results. The theoretical range of activities T_5, T_6, T_7 ... T_n are the remaining options in this situation. When the blocking barriers are absent from the

decision-making process, participation in recreation can take place given there are no any external (EB_1, EB_2, and EB_3,) or internal barriers (IB_1, IB_2, and $IB_{3)}$ inhibiting the process. Therefore, in cases T_1, and T_2, participations (P) in activities occur due to the absence of both external and internal barriers. However, nonparticipations (NP_1 and NP_2) results in cases T_3 and T_4 since internal barriers present in case T_3, while external barriers present in case T_4.

TABLE 9
A Parallel Decision-Making Model of Recreation Behavior

Theoretical Range of Activities	Blocking Barriers			Practical Range of Activities	Inhibiting Barriers						Actual Range of Activities
	Interest	*Awareness*	*Others*		*EB_1*	*EB_2*	*EB_3*	*IB_1*	*IB_2*	*IB_3*	
T_1	0	0	0	P_1	+	+	+	+	+	+	P
T_2	0	0	0	P_2	+	+	+	+	+	+	P
T_3	0	0	0	P_3	+	+	+	-	-	-	NP_1
T_4	0	0	0	P_4	-	-	-	+	+	+	NP_2
T_5	X	0	0								NP_3
T_6	X	X	0								NP_4
T_7	0	0	X								NP_5
T_n	0	0	X								NP_5

X	Blocked choice	+	Favorable to choice	EB	External barrier	P	Participation
0	Open choice	-	Unfavorable to choice	IB	Internal barrier	NP	Non-participation

NP1= non-participants who wish to participate but cannot because of the influence of internal barriers;
NP2= non-participants who wish to participate but cannot because of the influence of external barriers;
NP3=those who express no interest in participating;
NP4= those who do not participate because of a lack of awareness of the activity as a potential recreation behavior;
NP5= those who participation is blocked absolutely by the influence of one or more factors other than those identified in NP3 and NP4

Source: Jackson & Searle (1985).

Following Jackson and Searle's (1985) study, Jackson and Dunn (1988) suggested two models (Figure 3 & Figure 4), which reflected how participation, non-participation, ceasing participation, and demand were linked together within a comprehensive system of leisure decision-making. The first model presented an interconnected relationship

between participation, non-participation, and demand (Figure 1). Consistent with Jackson

and Searle's (1985) approach, the authors indicated that people can be interested or not

interested in an activity even they are non-participants. Those non-participants who are

interested but are unable to participate in an activity, fall into the latent demand category

suggesting they may become participants later once the barrier to leisure participation is

overcome. The second model incorporated the added situation of ceasing participation

into consideration (Figure 2). It divided participants into two groups: Former participants

and people who had never participated. As in the first model, loss of interest is a

criterion in both groups which identifies whether a person has latent demand or no

demand for a leisure activity.
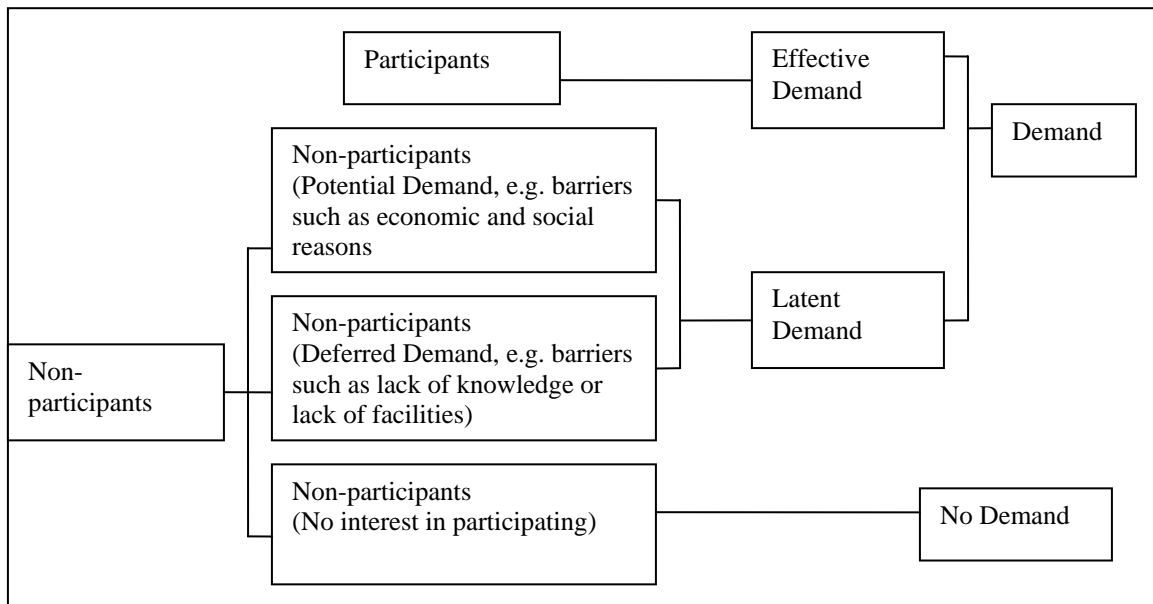
Source: Jackson & Dunn (1988).

Figure 3.   Participation, Non-participation, and Demand
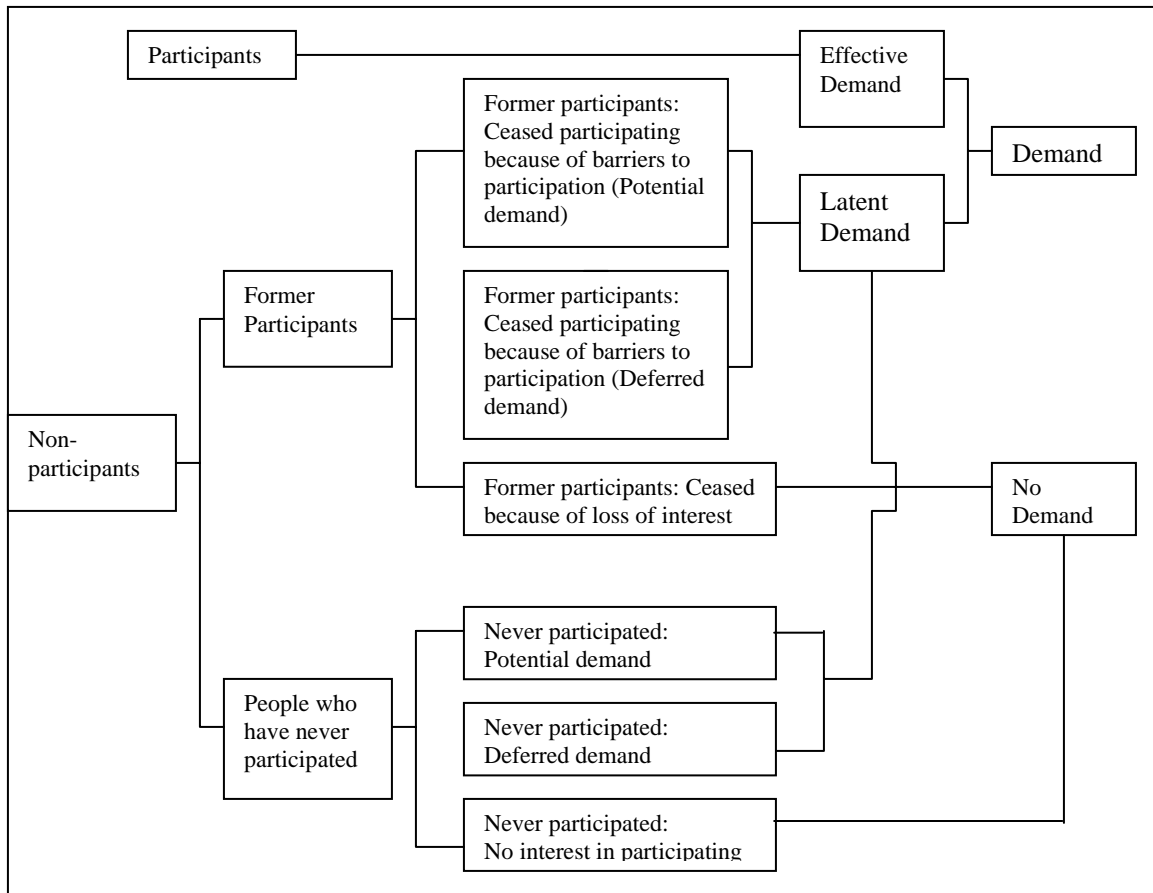
Source: Jackson & Dunn (1988).

Figure 4. Participation, Ceasing Participation, Non-participation, and Demand

A more recent model classified leisure constraints into three categories:

intrapersonal constraints, interpersonal constraints, and structural constraints (Crawford,

Jackson & Godbey, 1991) (Figure 5). This model is now more widely accepted by

leisure researchers compared to the other models. Intrapersonal constraints are

psychological conditions of an individual such as personality, interest and attitude toward

leisure (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). When those intrapersonal constraints are removed,

intention to participate in leisure will be present. Interpersonal constraints relate to

interaction between a potential leisure participant and others, such as family and friends

(Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). For instance, a child would like to play basketball with his

friends, but he chooses not to do so after his mother intervenes ordering him to help her with some housework. If neither intrapersonal nor interpersonal constraints inhibit an individual's desire to participate, then structural constraints may influence it. Structural constraints are external factors in the environment, such as lack of facilities and inconvenient transportation which can frustrate potential leisure participants.
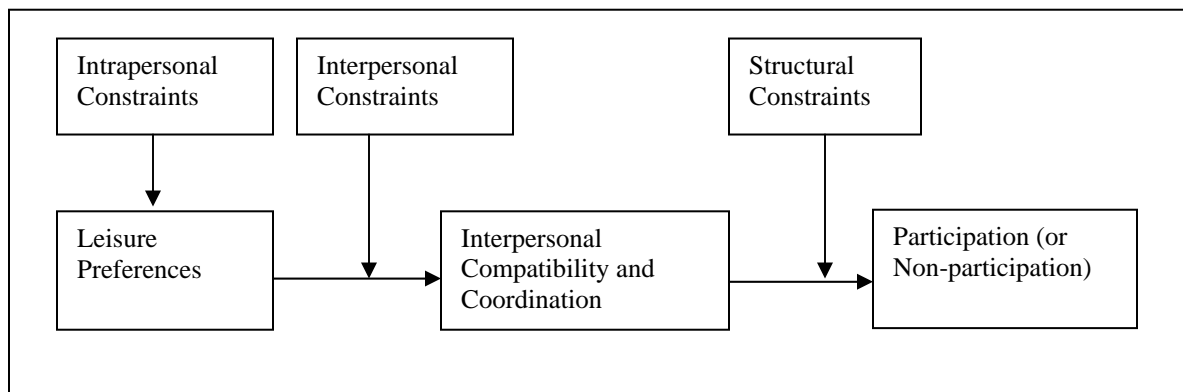
Source: Crawford, Jackson, & Godbey (1991).

Figure 5.   A Hierarchical Model of Leisure Constraints

The hierarchical model of leisure constraints is relatively simple, but it is sophisticated compared to its predecessors. Jackson, Crawford and Godbey (1993) suggested this model shifted understanding of leisure constraints to a deeper level, and facilitated the interpretation of the empirical results within a theoretical framework. It suggests that leisure participation is a sequential and negotiable process. It starts with antecedent (intrapersonal and interpersonal) constraints. Once a person surmounted personal constraints, he/she has to deal with non-personal constraints, which are the structural constraints. The person has to move in sequence through the hierarchical model, before a decision on participation or nonparticipation is made. Instead of having absolute

non-participation as the criterion outcome when a person encounters a constraint, this model suggests that leisure participation can occur either in the absence of constraints or through successful negotiation of constraints (Jackson, Crawford & Godbey, 1993).

The hierarchical model of leisure constraints was formulated by Crawford, Jackson and Godbey (1991) based on three discrete models of types of leisure constraints: Intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints (Crawford & Godbey, 1987). The emergence of these three constraints acted as a break-point in leisure constraints research which focused originally on structural constraints instead of taking antecedent constraints into consideration. The antecedent constraints assumed that constraints may not only impact leisure participation after formation of preference, but also interfere with the selected preference for leisure participation.

Negotiation of constraints, which was first raised by Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey (1991), is another major concept in this model. The authors argued "leisure participation is heavily dependent on negotiating through an alignment of multiple factors, arranged sequentially, that must be overcome to maintain an individual's impetus through these systemic levels" (Crawford, Jackson & Godbey, 1991, p. 314). Based on this approach, constraints are negotiable rather than insurmountable, and nonparticipation is no longer interpreted as the sole outcome of constraints, rather, it is only one of many possible outcomes (Scott, 1991). Past studies have provided empirical evidence for this approach. For instance, Kay and Jackson (1991) found respondents succeeded in maintaining their desired level of participation despite the presence of constraints. Thus, nonparticipation or reduction in leisure participation is not the absolute outcome of constraints. Indeed, Shaw, Bonen and McCabe (1991) even found a positive relationship

between constraints and level of participation in their study. A higher participation level was reported by those respondents who experienced more constraints than those with a lower participation level. Scott (1991) work provided an explicit explanation for this phenomenon. Apart from nonparticipation, modification of behavior to maintain a pattern of sustained involvement can result along with the process of negotiation. Many factors can lead to various outcomes of negotiation. For examples, people have different personal abilities or assets with which to negotiate constraints such as personalities, motivations, and social status; they experience different types of constraints; their perceived importance of constraints differs; the strength of constraints encountered differs; and so on.

Refinements of the hierarchical model of leisure constraints and negotiation approach were made. Thus, Jackson and Crawford and Godbey (1993) suggested six propositions:

1. Participation is dependent not on the absence of constraints (although this may be true for some people) but on negotiation through them. Such negotiation may modify rather than foreclose participation.

2. Variations in the reporting of constraints can be viewed not only as variations in the experience of constraints but also as variations in success in negotiating them.

3. Absence of the desire to change current leisure behavior may be partly explained by prior successful negotiation of structural constraints.

4. Anticipation of one or more insurmountable interpersonal or structural constraints may suppress the desire for participation

5. Anticipation consists not simply of the anticipation of the presence or intensity of a constraint but also of anticipation of the ability to negotiate it.

6. Both the initiation and outcome of the negotiation process are dependent on the relative strength of, and interactions between, constraints on participating in an activity and motivations for such participation.

The first three propositions summarized the ideas presented in the previous research on leisure constraints. The other three propositions were constructed based on the interrelationships among different types of constraints, and the interaction between the relative strength of constraints and motivations in leisure choices (Jackson, Crawford & Godbey, 1993). It is expected that further investigation into the role of negotiation in the hierarchical model of leisure constraints will be conducted, and refinements will continuously be made in the model.

Leisure Constraints among the Elderly. According to Levinson's model (1978), late adult life begins at approximately 60 years. An elderly person at this age has to face many changes in later life such as a decline in health and loss of role status. Crises may arise from an inability to adjust to these changes. There is evidence to suggest that leisure-time pursuits can reduce the undesirable impacts of a later-life crises (DeCarlo, 1974). To facilitate leisure participation among older people, several researchers have investigated the constraints which may frustrate leisure participation by the elderly. Two methods for categorizing those literatures are used here: By (i) Life span; and (ii) Scope of study.

1)   Life Span

Life span work falls into two categories: studies which have embraced all age

groups including the elderly (e.g. Buchanan & Allen, 1985; McGuire, Dottaviao &

O'Leary, 1986; Jackson, 1993; Scott & Jackson, 1996); and studies that have focused on

the older age cohorts only (e.g. McGuire, 1983; Backman & Mannell, 1986; Buchanan &

Allen, 1985; Blazey, 1987).

The former category compares older age groups with other age groups. Most of

these studies investigated how life stages and leisure constraints patterns are associated.

Change patterns in various constraints across the life span were developed. For example,

McGuire, Dottavio & O'Leary (1986) studied constraints to participation in outdoor

recreation across the life span. The study found different patterns of constraints

experienced by different age groups. For instance, when constraints worked as limitations,

lack of leisure companions exhibited a U-shaped pattern (Figure 6) while lack of time

exhibited an inverted U-shaped pattern across the life span (Figure 7). Figure 6 implies

that the younger respondents frequently experience lack of companions. This constraint

became less problematic in middle age, but increased saliency in the older ages. The

reverse is true for lack of time (Figure 7). Jackson (1993) also found a U-shaped pattern

with lack of companions and an inverted U-shaped relationship in family commitments

associated with age. Patterns of various constraints, such as health, transportation, costs,

and so on, associated with age have been drawn in this type of study. Age and life stages

are used as the basis for the analysis of changes in the intensity of constraints that affect

leisure participation. Comparisons of the impacts of constraints on leisure activities at

different ages or life stages are the focus of this category of study.
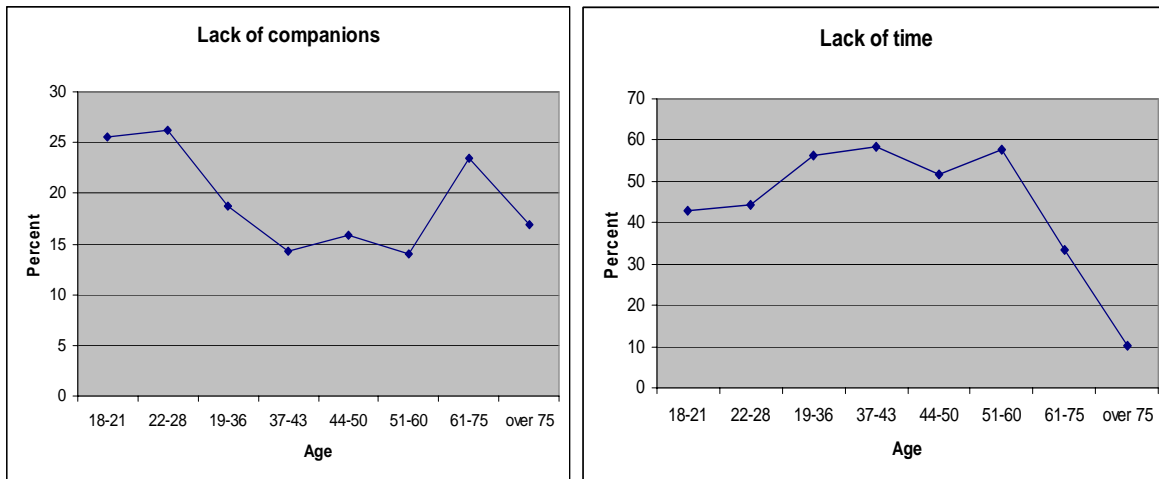
Source: McGuire, Dottavio & O'Leary (1986).

Figure 6. Constraints Experienced by Different Age Groups

The other category of life span has focused on studying the elderly group only. Studies of this type tend to rank a comprehensive set of leisure constraints associated with those in the older age group, explain the impacts of those constraints to the elderly, and provide recommendations for removing or reducing those impacts. For instance, McGuire (1983) provided a list of constraints reported by respondents who aged from 45 to 93. 30 constraints were reported and the perceived importance of each constraint was analyzed (Table 10). The study identified lack of time as the most important limiting factor in leisure activity choice. The ranking of the other constraints is shown in Table 10.

TABLE 10
Ranking of Constraints

---

1. Not having enough time
2. The weather
3. Not having enough money
4. Having more important things to do
5. Being too busy with other activities
6. Lack of energy
7. Being too busy with work
8. Health reasons
9. Not having anyone to do them with
10. Not having the skills needed
11. Lack of equipment
12. Lack of facilities
13. Friends don't do them
14. Not knowing how to do them
15. Feeling too old to learn the activity
16. Fear of getting hurt
17. The amount of planning required
18. Not wanting to interrupt daily schedule
19. Not having anyone to teach the activities
20. Too may family responsibilities
21. lack of information
22. Fear of crime
23. Being no good at the activities
24. Not getting a feeling of accomplishment
25. Lack of transportation
26. Having to make too many decisions
27. Fear of making a mistake
28. Feeling guilty about doing them
29. Fear that others would make fun of participation
30. Feeling that family and friends would not approve

Source: McGuire (1983).

Based on the 30 constraints reported by McGuire, Blazey (1987) listed 26

potential travel constraints, and asked respondents who were aged 50 and older to

indicate their constraints in participation in a travel program (Table 11).

TABLE 11

Ranking of Senior Travel Constraints

FACTOR 1: EXTERNAL RESOURCES
    A. I have not heard that such trips are being offered to senior citizens.
    B. I have had difficulty getting information about the trips when I called the Marshall Center.
    C. The trips require me to do too much planning.
    D. I don't have enough money to go on trips.
    E. I don't have either the clothing or luggage I need for traveling.
    F. I don't have any way to get to or from the Marshall Center.

FACTOR 2: TIME
    A. I don't' have time to travel.
    B. I have more important things to do than travel.
    C. Traveling would interrupt my normal routine.
    D. Work keeps me too busy to travel.
    E. I'm too busy doing other things.

FACTOR 3: APPROVAL
    A. I'm afraid I'd make a mistake by going someplace disappointing.
    B. Traveling requires me to make too many decisions.
    C. My family or friends would not approve of me going on trips.
    D. I'd feel guilty about going traveling.

FACTOR 4: ABILITIES/ SOCIAL
    A. My spouse doesn't like to travel.
    B. I don't have a traveling companion.
    C. None of my friends go traveling.
    D. I'm not interested in traveling.

FACTOR 5: PHYSICAL WELL-BEING
    A. I don't have the energy to travel.
    B. My health prevents me from traveling.
    C. I'm afraid to travel on certain forms of transportation.
    D. I prefer not to drive during hours of darkness.
    E. I'm too old to travel.
    F. I have a disability which makes travel difficult.

Source: Blazey (1987).

Similar constraints are consistently reported in leisure constraints studies concerning older adults. There are many reasons that may contribute to similarities or differences among these studies. Different research designs, samples used, activities focused upon, or statistical methodologies adopted in various studies can result in different constraints being reported by the elderly.

2)   Scope of Study

Scope of study as the criterion for categorizing constraint of the elderly derived

either from general constraints studies (e.g., McGuire, 1983; Buchanan & Allen, 1985;

Mannell & Zuzanek, 1991), or from activity or location specific constraints studies (e.g.,

Blazey, 1987; Backman & Mannell, 1986; Scott & Jackson, 1996**).**

General constraints studies gather information on constraints from all aspects of

leisure. They focus on identifying factors that affect older adults' participation in general

leisure activities. For example, McGuire (1983) investigated general leisure activity

involvement and constraints, are the 30 constraints reported (Table 10) were associated

with general leisure involvement in respondents' daily life. Mannell and Zuzanek (1991)

used Experiential Sampling Method (ESM) and the Alternative Activity Probe Technique

(AAPT), which required participants to carry a pager to record all daily activities.

Respondents gave reasons for not feeling that they wanted to participate in any physical

leisure activities at the time they were paged. Barriers to participate in 28 activities were

investigated in Buchannan and Allen's (1985) study. This study also did not limit the

scope of investigation in terms of activity. Instead, it reported the constraints encountered

by respondents in general leisure participation.

Activity or location specific constraints refer to factors that are associated with a

specified activity or location on which studies focused. For instance, Blazey (1987)

investigated the reasons leading to nonparticipation in a senior travel program. The

barriers to participation in the travel program were analyzed by using various

demographic variables including gender, age, health status, income, and so on. Lack of

money, health, lack of traveling companion, and a reluctance to drive during darkness

were reported as the most important factors in making a travel decision among the older adults. Backman and Mannell (1986) examined how an attitudinal barrier may influence leisure participation in an institutional home. They indicated that lack of leisure participation among institutionalized elderly may be dependent upon psychological barriers, such as attitudes. Scott and Jackson (1996) focused their scope of study on parks. Fear of crime, poor health, lack of companionship, and lack of transportation were the major constraints they identified.

From the above discussion, it can be seen that earlier research tended to summarize those factors that affected general leisure participation, while later research tended to narrow the focus of study on a specific activity. Although general constraints studies provide a broad range of constraints, specific constraints studies give insightful information on constraints associated with a specific activity or location. This information may be more useful for leisure service providers in alleviating leisure constraints, and designing and improving leisure services.

Conceptual Model. Many researchers have reported constraints experienced by the elderly in a leisure context. However, no theoretical models have emerged which integrate all the extant findings and show the applicability of those models among the older age group. Researchers tend to develop and refine models for general constraints which can be applied to all age groups, rather than be applied to a particular group such as the elderly. Researchers seldom address whether leisure constraints of the elderly can fit into these models, and if they can, how these models can help researchers or leisure service providers to improve the leisure experience of the elderly. The following

paragraphs attempt to apply the hierarchical model of leisure constraints which was developed by Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey (1991) to the older age group only.

As mentioned in previous paragraphs, leisure constraints are assigned into one of three categories: intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural/social constraints. The constraint items which have been reported in previous leisure research on older adults are assembled under each of these three categories in Table 12. The categorization is based on the definitions on intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints given by Crawford and Godbey (1987).

> Structural barriers represent constraints as they are commonly conceptualized, as intervening factors between leisure preference and participation (Crawford & Godbey, 1987, p. 124).

> Intrapersonal barriers involve individual psychological states and attributes which interact with leisure preferences rather than intervening between preferences and participation (Crawford & Godbey, 1987, p. 122).

> Interpersonal barriers are the result of interpersonal interaction or the relationship between individuals' characteristics (Crawford & Godbey, 1987, p. 123)

There is evidence that constraints associated with the older age group are different from the constraints associated with younger aged groups. Thus, it is necessary to construct a specific leisure constraints research model relating to the older age group only. Future leisure research regarding the elderly can incorporate this theoretical model, so it may be useful in building a systematic research framework and offering a guide for the future research.

The perceived importance of each constraint item which has been reported in previous research varies suggests that the impact of constraint items is not constant across all situations. It may vary among (i) different subgroups such as the 60-65 and 70-75 age cohorts; (ii) activities such as walking and playing golf; and (iii) conditions such as weather, education background, and so on. Therefore, findings are likely to be relatively context specific and may be different in contexts which differ from those to which the research refers.

TABLE 12
Leisure Constraints of Older Adults Reported in Past Studies

	Trela & Simmons, 1971	Harris, 1976	McAvoy, 1976	DeGroot, 1976	Scott & Zoernic, 1977	McGuire, 1979	McGuire, 1983	Backman & Mannell, 1986	Blazey, 1987	Shaw, Bonen & McCabe, 1991	Jackson, 1993	Scott & Jackson, 1996
Intrapersonal Constraints												
Attitude towards leisure								X				
Feeling too old to learn new activities												
Lack of self-discipline										X		
Lack of interest										10		9
Not getting a feeling of accomplishment							24					
Fear of crime			6				15					5
Fear of getting hurt							12					
Fear of making mistakes							26					
Friends don't do them							21					
Feeling too old to learn the activity							16					
Lack of compassion		5	2		7							
Feeling guilty about doing them							29					
Not wanting to interrupt daily schedule							20					

TABLE 12
Continued

The amount of planning required							23					
Other interests	X				2	4						4
Interpersonal Constraints												
Social isolation										X		
Lack of companion							9		3			7
Feeling that family and friends would not approve							28					
Fear others would make fun of participation							29					
Structural/social Constraints												
Being too busy										X		
Too busy with doing other things/activities							7		6			2
Too busy with work						5	3		7			
Having to make too many decisions							27					
Having more important things to do							5					
Cost/Money			5	3	3	3	4		1		X	12
Family commitment						8	10				X	3
Health	X	4		5	1	6	6		2	X	X	10
Lack of physical ability			1	4	7				5			
Lack of energy							8		9	X		
Lack of equipment							13					
Lack of facilities		1	7	2	4		14					
Lack of information							22					6
Not having the skills needed							11					
Not knowing how to do them							18					
Being no good at activities							25					
Not having anyone to teach the activities							17					
Time		2	3	1	6	1	1		8		X	1
Too crowded												8
Transportation/Accessibility	X	3	4		5		19	4			X	11
Weather					6	2	2					

Numbers refer to ranks of constraints.
X indicates constraint was identified in the research.

Conclusion. This section has overviewed general leisure constraints and leisure

constraints associated with older age groups. Four stages of constraints research have

been identified by Jackson and Scott (1999). In the first stage, the main reason for

nonparticipation in recreation was assumed to be the result of inadequate leisure services

provided. The second stage of research addressed specific limitations in recreation

services such as inadequate facilities. More systematic research was conducted in the

later eras. While nonparticipation was identified as the only consequence of leisure

constraints in the early research, more impacts of constraints were identified in the most

recent stage. Research has indicated that in addition to nonparticipation; unable to

maintain or increase desired levels of participation, ceasing from existing participation,

and insufficient enjoyment of current activities are three other outcomes of constraints

(Jackson & Scott, 1999).

Changes overtime as leisure constraints research progressed were identified in

criterion variables, terminologies, definition of leisure constraints, statistical analysis, and

conceptual models. These changes are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they are likely to

be interrelated to each other. For instance, a broader definition of leisure constraints

emerged as more criterion variables were explored.

Leisure constraints studies associated with the elderly were also reviewed in this

section. Two main streams of studies were identified: studies based on life span in which

constraints of older age groups were compared with those in other age groups, and those

based on scope of research in which old people were the only target sample of research.

This type of study limited the scope of research to on old people rather than others.

Leisure constraints of older adults reported in past studies were summarized in Table 12.

Leisure Benefits

Both intuition and empirical evidence provided by the existing literature, suggest that leisure activities are beneficial to participants. Various studies have addressed how leisure activities or settings can benefit participants, and how those benefits can be used as a tool to improve the delivery of leisure services. Although multiple leisure benefits have been identified, some leisure service managers are still not conscious of the importance of thinking in terms of leisure benefits both for structuring service delivery, and for securing for scarce resources and justifying services. Research on leisure benefits has provided basic knowledge of them and built a foundation for further investigation. The following paragraphs are intended to provide an overview of the leisure service delivery models that are based upon leisure benefits.

Definition of Benefits. Benefits can be divided into "monetary" and "nonmonetary" benefits (Driver, Brown & Peterson, 1991a, p. 5). A monetary benefit is defined by welfare economists as "an economic measure of the relative value or worth of a good or service" (Driver, 1992, p. 22). It evaluates the value or worth of goods and services by customers' willingness to pay (Driver, 1992; Driver, Brown & Peterson, 1991a). This measurement is relevant in park and recreation resources contexts where managers are expected to generate resources in order to demonstrate the efficacy of managerial decisions. However, criticisms of solely using this approach to measure benefits have been forthcoming because some positive impacts , for example, better mental health and increase in life satisfaction, cannot be measured in dollars. Researchers have pointed out that both economic and noneconomic measures of leisure benefits should be considered (Lewis & Kaiser, 1991).

Refinements of the definition of a benefit have been made over time. The early

definition of a nonmonetary benefit was "benefit-as-improved-condition" (Driver, Brown

& Peterson, 1991a, p. 5), but this focused only on the condition of improvement that

occurred due to the supply of goods and services. This excluded other possible benefits,

such as keeping the body in a healthy condition through regular exercise, or obtaining a

positive experience through leisure participation. A more recent definition of

noneconomic leisure benefits identifies three different states (Driver & Bruns, 1999)

(Figure 7):

1) An improved condition (i.e. a gain) of an individual, a group of individuals (e.g., a
   family, a community, society at large) or another entity such as the physical
   environment.

2) Maintenance of a desired condition so that an undesired condition would not
   occur (i.e. prevention of an unwanted condition).

3) Realization of a specific satisfying psychological experience (i.e. a psychological
   outcome).

```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│            ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐                     │
│            │           ┌──────────────────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐      │
│            │           │  1. Improved Condition   │  │              │      │
│            │           └──────────────────────────┘  │   Benefits   │      │
│            │    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐ │              │      │
│            │    │ 3. Satisfying psychological       │ └──────────────┘      │
│  ┌──────────┐   │    outcome                        │                       │
│  │Management│→ │ Participation │ ┌───────────────────────────┐              │
│  └──────────┘   └───────────────┘│ 2. Desired condition      │             │
│            │                     │    maintained             │             │
│            │    ┌────────────────────────────────┐            │            │
│            │    │ Dissatisfying psychological     │ ┌──────────────┐       │
│            │    └────────────────────────────────┘ │ Disbenefits  │       │
│            └──────→ Worse condition                 └──────────────┘       │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
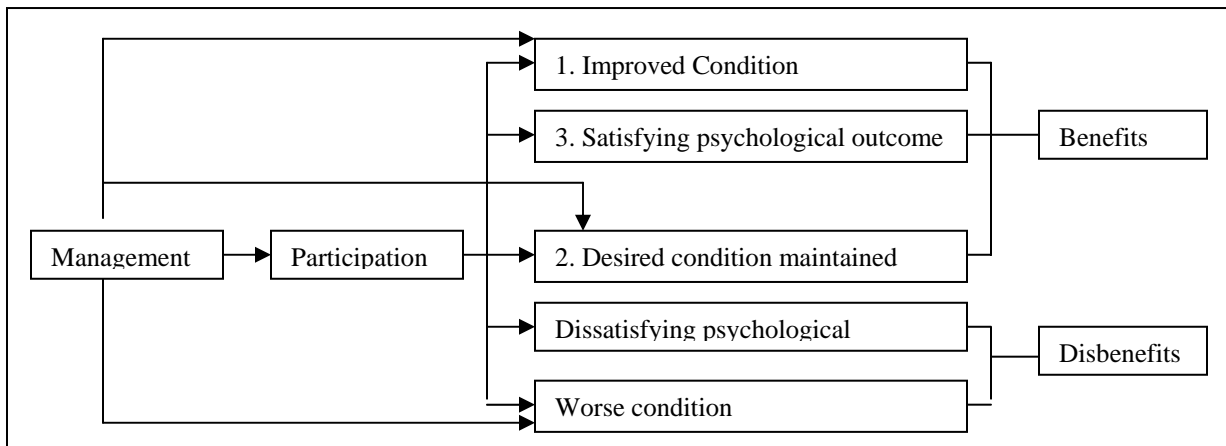
Source: Driver & Bruns (1999).

Figure 7.   The Three Types of Leisure Benefits

History of Benefits Research. A positive relationship between outdoor recreation and personal physical and mental benefits was speculated in the early 1960s. However, serious research on this topic essentially commenced with the release of the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC) reports in 1962 (Driver, 1992). Researchers and practitioners realized there was a lack of consensus about leisure benefits, and too little scientific support on the mental and physical health benefits of leisure was available to the ORRRC. This initiated the need for research on this issue. Since then, a substantial amount of research on leisure benefits has been conducted (Driver, 1992).

Legislative and administrative guidelines were important in stimulating the identification of leisure benefits (Lewis & Kaiser, 1991). The allocation of scarce resources was based on the magnitude and value that a leisure service can produce. Therefore, most of those resource allocation decisions were dependent on demonstrating the economic value of a managerial decision. Frequently, resource managers need to

justify the reasons for proposed programs, policy changes, and investment decisions in order to gain support from top management and the public. Federal legislation, regulations, and executive orders have required that economic and environmental consequences be identified in federal natural resource management actions (Lewis, & Kaiser, 1991). Lewis, & Kaiser (1991) make the following observation:

> The 1974 Forest and Range Land Renewable Resource Planning Act (RPA) directs the Forest Service to identify management needs, opportunities, and alternative programs and to analyze their long-term cost and benefits. The 1976 Federal land Policy and Management Act requires the Bureau of Land Management to develop multiple-use management plans for lands under its administration and to inventory the resource values of these lands to identify changes and emerging resource needs (p. 21).

Although these guidelines might restrict managers from freely implementing a managerial decision relating to a leisure service, they certainly motivate managers to identify and quantify those benefits that are likely to emerge from a program or a decision. Thus, these guidelines have encouraged research into identifying leisure benefits.

A major contribution to the leisure benefit research literature emerged from the efforts of 57 authors and co-authors of 35 chapters, in *Benefits of Leisure*. This book, which was published in 1991, reports the state-of-knowledge of benefits from various perspectives. Following a meeting of these authors, an application workshop on applying benefits of leisure knowledge was held in 1991. This workshop was intended to integrate knowledge of benefits research into park and recreation management. It was here that the

concept of Benefit-Based Management (BBM) was developed in the United States and Canada (Driver, n.d.).

Conceptual Framework Development. The early benefits research was limited to reporting and listing individual leisure benefits associated with general or particular leisure activities. However, over time the research become more sophisticated and a more systematic and conceptual approach emerged. In the following paragraphs, five conceptual models and approaches which have been proposed to guide leisure benefits research are described.

1)   Benefit Approach to Leisure (BAL)

A systematic approach focusing on applying knowledge of leisure benefits to practical management was conceptualized at the 1991's Workshop on Applying Knowledge About the Benefits of Leisure (Driver & Bruns, 1999). Since the purpose of this approach was to use leisure benefit information to guide management, it was named Benefit-Based Management (BBM). However, it was recognized subsequently that this term constrained the application of the model only to management instead of other aspects of leisure. Thus, it was renamed the Benefit Approach to Leisure (BAL) which is perceived to have a broader range of use beyond management, and thus is preferred in leisure benefits research (Driver & Bruns, 1999). BBM is viewed as the major application of BAL, and is being applied by a number of agencies in Canada and the United States (Driver & Bruns, 1999). The terms Benefits-Driven Approach and Benefits-Based Recreation refer to the same benefit approach in Canada. Since BAL emphasizes maximizing desired outcomes and minimizing undesired outcomes, some people prefer to refer to this approach as "An Outcomes Approach" (Driver, n.d.).

BAL requires managers to focus on why a leisure service is delivered instead of simply providing the service to the public, i.e., it inputs the needs and wants of customers into the design of leisure services (Driver & Bruns, 1999). In the past, managers often decided what type of service should be provided to the public without consulting potential users. However, this approach has been recognized as inappropriate since the services decided by managers may not fulfill the needs of the public who pay for them through the tax system. The BAL approach identifies those benefits that people seek before designing a service and, based on those findings, managers provide a service which is likely to better match the public's needs.

Driver and Bruns (1999) suggested that delivery of leisure services can be viewed as a production system in which designing a leisure service should be based on the benefits information obtained from service users. To make the concept simpler, BAL can be viewed in the context of General Systems Theory (Driver & Bruns, 1991) (Figure 8). Benefit outputs result from a production process, i.e., from interaction with inputs such as capital within the system's structure. BAL integrates the concepts of General Systems Theory and of modern management science and planning (Driver & Bruns, 1999). The inputs of this system include not only managerial decisions, but more importantly, these managerial decisions are made based on benefit information that is provided by users.

Inputs $\longrightarrow$ Interaction of inputs within the system's structure $\longrightarrow$ Outputs
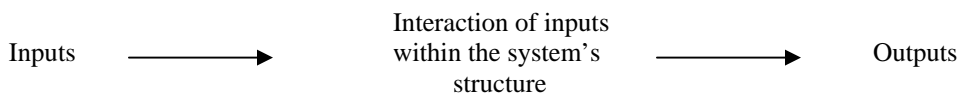
Source: Buckley (1968).

Figure 8.   General Systems Theory

BBM received considerable attention after the 1991Workshop on Applying Knowledge About the Benefits of Leisure. For example, Allen (1996) demonstrated how to apply BBM to a recreation service. He interpreted BBM as a process which can be divided into three phases: Benefit and opportunity identification; Implementation; and Evaluation and documentation (Table 13). Managers who adopt the BBM approach have to identify benefits that customers seek at the beginning of the process, and integrate those benefits into the design of a service. Managers should decide which benefits they want to be the end products of a service based on the mission and goals of the agency, and tailor-make the service to derive those benefits. Continuous evaluation of the service is important since it allows managers to monitor whether the targeted benefits are emerging. The results of evaluations should be injected into the whole process, so the service can be modified, and better implemented. Allen's (1996) work suggested procedures for managers to follow in order to adopt a BBM approach. Those procedures demonstrated that BBM is a feasible approach which can be applied in a practical situation in an agency, and that the process is simple and logical to implement.

TABLE 13

Steps of the Three Phase Implementation Strategy

PHASE I: BENEFIT AND OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFICATION
1.   Analyze agency mission, goals and management plan.
2.   Identify potential benefits sought by users and other stakeholder groups.
3.   Determine core group of benefits which users seek and management can realistically provide.
4.   Modify mission and goals for administrative units, if necessary to reflect target agency benefits.
5.   Develop linkage between identified benefits and potential activity opportunities offered by agency.
6.   Identify structural elements for each recreation opportunity which are essential to benefit achievement.

PHASE II: IMPLEMENTAITON
1.   Modify recreation sites, areas or services to meet the essential structural requirements for target benefits.
2.   Select control sites, where feasible, which match modified sites and/or services.
3.   Develop instrumentation and procedures for monitoring benefit achievement.
4.   Orientation and training of all staff including part-time and volunteer staff.
5.   Implement services.
6.   Monitor participation and conduct assessment of users over an extended period of time using behaviorally based measures.

PHASE III: EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTATION
1.   Review ongoing formative evaluations for content or structural changes.
2.   Analysis of monitoring data to determine effects of recreation participation on benefit achievement.
3.   Determine if untargeted benefits were achieved.
4.   Develop final reports documenting benefit achievement and implementation process.
5.   Disseminate findings to appropriate local, state and national audiences.

Source: Allen (1996).

2)   Information Process of Leisure Benefits

Information Process of Leisure Benefits is a model that explains the process of the production of a benefit (Mannell & Stynes, 1991) (Figure 9). It suggests that the information process of leisure benefits can be broken down into two processes: the production process and the valuation process. In this model, policy and management information needs as well as leisure are the inputs or causes of the process. Leisure can be defined as specific types of activity or as a setting; as time free from obligations; as meaningful and satisfying experience; or as some combination of activity, time and experience (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). Five outcomes or consequences are derived from

the production process with those inputs. They are physiological, economic, environmental, social, and psychological outcomes. These outcomes are termed leisure benefits in other literatures. However, in this model, benefits can only emerge after a valuation process in which values or worth are added to each outcome. If an outcome is interpreted as an advantage, then it can be a benefit. In contrast, if it is interpreted as a disadvantage, then it can be a cost. This recognizes that positive benefits are not the only products of a leisure experience. Some people may be dissatisfied with their leisure participation due to, for example, an injury caused in the activity. Then disbenefits can result.
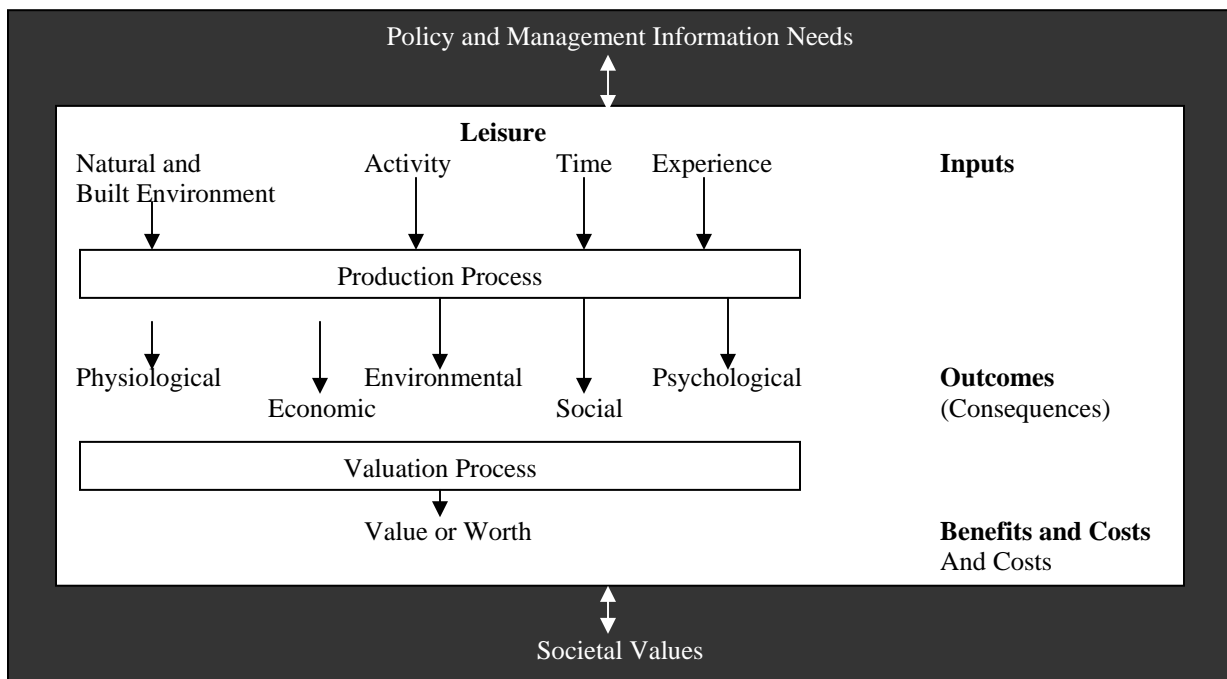
Source: Mannell, & Stynes (1991).

Figure 9.   Information Process of Leisure Benefits

Specific items within the five outcome of participation that have been listed by Driver (1990) are shown in Table 14. Since this section is intended to provide a general overview of leisure benefit model development, a detailed explanation of each benefit item will not be provided here. It is possible that other psychological benefit factors still remain to be discovered (Tinsley, 1984), so refinements to this list from subsequent research are possible.

TABLE 14

Specific Types and General Categories of Benefits That Have Been Attributed to Leisure by Research

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I.   PERSONAL BENEFITS
A.   Psychological

1. Better mental health and health maintenance
- Holistic sense of wellness
- Stress management (prevention, mediation, and restoration)
- Catharsis
- Prevention of and reduced depression, anxiety, and anger
- Positive changes in mood and emotion

2. Personal development and growth
- Self-confidence
- Self-reliance
- Self-competence
- Self-assurance
- Value clarification
- Improved academic and cognitive performance
- Independence and autonomy
- Sense of control over one's life
- Humility
- Leadership
- Aesthetic enhancement
- Creativity enhancement
- Spiritual growth
- Adaptability
- Cognitive efficiency
- Problem solving
- Nature learning

- Cultural and historic awareness, learning, and appreciation
- Environmental awareness and understanding
- Tolerance
- Balanced competitiveness
- Balanced living
- Prevention of problems to at-risk youth
- Acceptance of one's responsibility

3. Personal appreciation and satisfaction
- Sense of freedom
- Self-actualization
- Flow and absorption
- Exhilaration
- Stimulation
- Sense of adventure
- Challenge
- Nostalgia
- Quality of life and/or life satisfaction
- Creative expression
- Aesthetic appreciation
- Spirituality
- Positive change in mood or emotion

B.   Psychophysiological
1. Cardiovascular benefits, including prevention of strokes
2. Reduced or prevented hypertension

TABLE 14
Continued

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3. Reduced serum cholesterol and triglycerides
4. Improved control and prevention of diabetes
5. Prevention of colon cancer
6. Reduced spinal problems
7. Decreased body fat and obesity and/or weight control
8. Improved neuropsychological functioning
9. Increased bone mass and strength in children
10. Increased muscle strength and better connective tissue
11. Respiratory benefits (increased lung capacity, benefits to people with asthma)
12. Reduced incidence of disease
13. Improved bladder control of the elderly
14. Increased life expectancy
15. Management of menstrual cycles
16. Management of arthritis
17. Improved functioning of the immune system
18. Reduced consumption of alcohol and use of tobacco

II.   SOCIAL AND CULTURAL BENEFITS
A. Community satisfaction
B. Pride in community and nation (pride in place and patriotism)
C. Cultural and historical awareness and appreciation
D. Reduced social alienation
E. Community and political involvement
F. Ethnic identity
G. Social bonding, cohesion, and cooperation
H. Conflict resolution and harmony
I. Greater community involvement in environmental decision making
J. Social support
K. Support democratic ideal of freedom
L. Family bonding
M. Reciprocity and sharing

N. Social mobility
O. Community integration
P. Nurturance of others
Q. Understanding and tolerance of others
R. Environmental awareness, sensitivity
S. Enhanced world view
T. Socialization and acculturation
U. Cultural identity
V. Cultural continuity
W. Prevention of social problems by at-risk youth
X. Developmental benefits of children

III.   ECONOMIC BENEFITS
A. Reduced health costs
B. Increased productivity
C. Less work absenteeism
D. Reduced on-the-job accidents
E. Decreased job turnover
F. International balance of payments (from tourism)
G. Local and regional economic growth
H. Contributions to net national economic development

IV.   ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS
A. Maintenance of physical facilities
B. Stewardship and preservation of options
C. Husbandry and improved relationships with natural world
D. Understanding of human dependency on the natural world
E. Environmental ethic
F. Public involvement in environmental issues
G. Environmental protection
   a. Ecosystem sustainability
   b. Species diversity
   c. Maintenance of natural scientific laboratories
   d. Preservation of particular natural sites and areas
   e. Preservation of cultural, heritage, and historic sites and areas

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Source: Driver (1990).

3)   Benefit Chain of Causality

Early discussions of leisure benefits assumed that there was a one-step process, from which psychological benefits would result. Tinsley and Tinsley (1986) proposed a concept of causal effects of leisure experience (Figure 10), which suggests a hierarchical process for production of a benefit. This model postulates that psychological needs which are gratified through leisure participation are intermediary benefits in a chain of benefits associated with leisure behavior rather than the end products of a leisure experience (Driver, Tinsley & Manfredo, 1991b). Those psychological needs are means which must be present in order to achieve such final benefits from leisure participation as life satisfaction and personal mental growth. Therefore, advocates of the approach argue that need gratification should not be used as a term to represent the final psychological benefits of leisure.
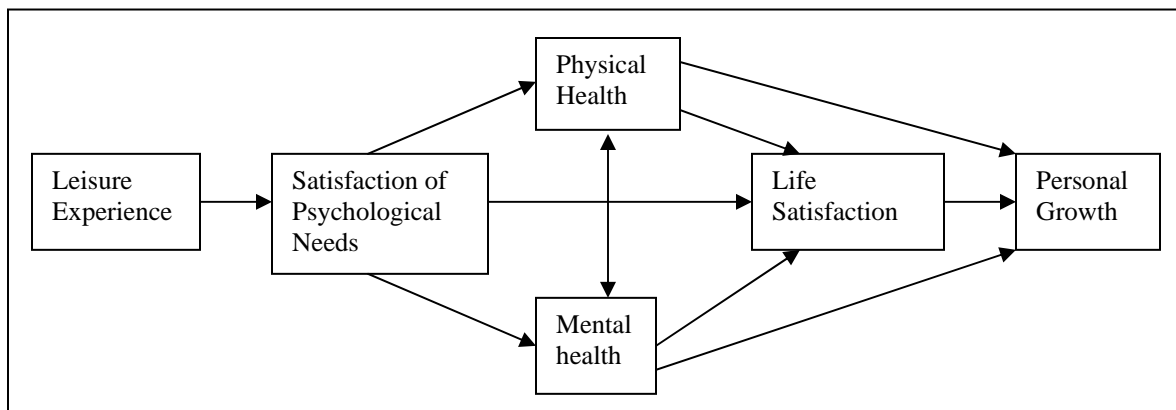
Source: Tinsley and Tinsley (1986).

Figure 10.   Relationships between Leisure, Psychological Need Fulfillment, and Psychological Benefit

This notion of a benefit chain of causality is generally accepted in later research. Driver, Tinsley, and Manfredo (1991b) used an example to explain how this model works.

As shown in Figure 11, mental relaxation and improved job performance are the intermediary benefits which result from a leisure activity. Enhanced job performance may induce several other benefits at the end such as increased life satisfaction and enhanced sense of well-being. This chain reaction is termed a Benefit Chain of Causality.
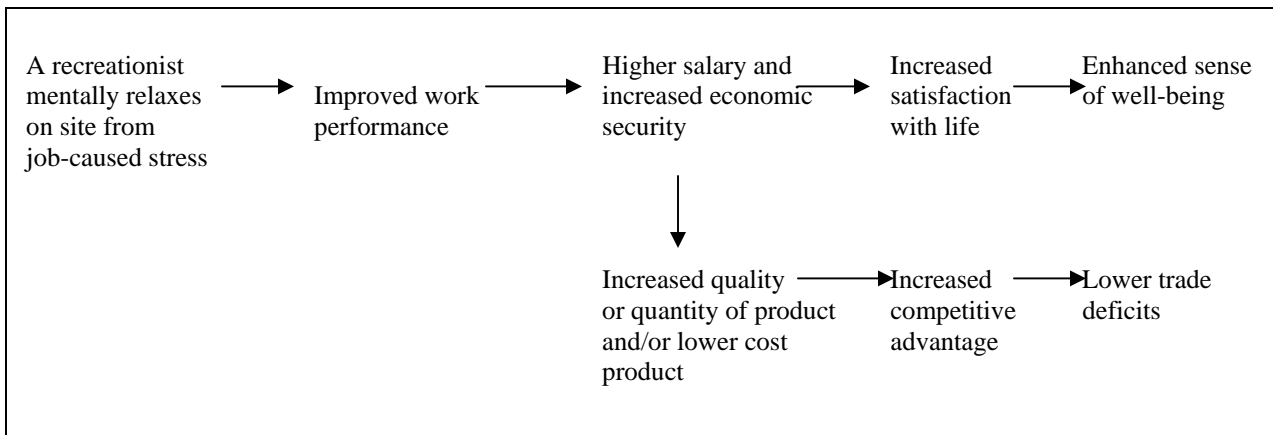
Figure 11.   The Benefit Chain of Causality according to Driver et al. (1991b)

Allen (1996) applied the benefit chain of causality to recreation management, and argued that indirect impacts may result from a leisure activity. For instance, a family that goes biking together may reduce family health stress (first order consequence), but if the family keeps exercising together, a reduced health costs to society may also result at the end (second order consequence) (Allen, 1996) (Figure 12).
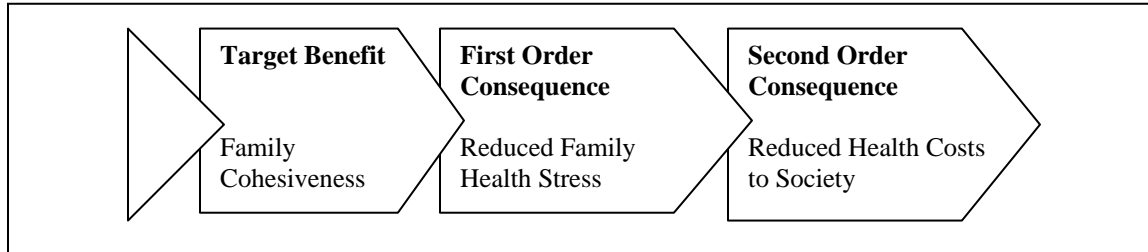
Figure 12.   Benefit Chain of Causality according to Allen (1996)

However, it should be noted that a need gratified in the middle of the chain does

not necessarily lead to other benefits. Changes in need gratification must exceed a

threshold before the impacts on personal growth, mental and physical health, and life

satisfaction can occur (Driver, Tinsley & Manfredo, 1991b) (Figure 13). If the need

gratification is lower than the maintenance threshold, then level of life satisfaction would

be low, no personal growth would occur, and deterioration in physical or mental health

could result. Leisure deficit is the term suggested to describe the situation when an

insufficient level of need gratification exists. When level of need gratification exceeds the

maintenance threshold, a person may experience levels of life satisfaction ranging from

high to low, minimal personal growth, and being able to maintain physical or mental

health. Leisure sufficiency is the term to describe this situation. When level of need

gratification exceeds the growth threshold, a person may experience levels of life

satisfaction above average, optimal personal growth, and enrichment physical or mental

health. Leisure enrichment can be used to describe this situation. The above description

implies that the higher level of need gratification is, the higher the level of life

satisfaction, personal growth, physical/mental health, and level of need satisfaction will

be.

Level of Need Satisfaction		Level of Life Satisfaction	Personal Growth	Physical/ Mental Health
Optimal	Leisure Enrichment	Above Average	Optimal	Enrichment
	------------------TG			
Adequate	Leisure Sufficiency	High or Average To Low	Minimal	Maintenance
	------------------TM			
Insufficient	Leisure Deficit	Low	None	Deterioration

Source: Tinsley and Tinsley (1986).

Figure 13.   The Relationship of Psychological Need Satisfaction through Leisure Experience and Personal Growth

4)   The Paragraph about Leisure (PAL) Model

PAL was first introduced to provide evidence of the full range of needs that can be gratified by leisure experiences (Tinsley & Eldredge, 1995). Tinsley, Barrett, and Kass (1977) reviewed the work of the major need theorists and proposed a list of 44 psychological needs that could be satisfied by participation in leisure activities. The 44 items (Table 15) measure11 psychological benefits of leisure that were identified in the instrument. Each item contains a paragraph that describes a psychological need (Tinsley, Barrett, & Kass, 1977). Tinsley and Kass (1979) proposed 8 psychological benefit dimensions in the later research as an adequate representation of the most important psychological benefits of participation in leisure activities in order to reduce the complex array of 27 dimensions (Table 16). In a review of previous works on psychological benefits of leisure, Tinsley (1984) indicated that these eight factors offer an adequate representation of the psychological benefits available from leisure activities.

TABLE 15
Psychological Needs Identified

LEISURE ACTIVITY SPECIFIC
Needs which can be satisfied to a significantly greater degree through participation in some leisure activities than by participation in other leisure activities.

Ability	Creativity	Security
Achievement	Dominance	Self-Esteem
Activity	Exhibition	Sentience
Advancement	Getting Along with Others	Sex
Affiliation	Independence	Social Service
Aggression	Nurturance	Social Status
Authority	Play	Supervision
Catharsis	Responsibility	Understanding
Compensation	Reward	Variety

LEISURE ACTIVITY GENERAL
Needs which are satisfied to approximately the same degree by all leisure activities.

Abasement	Infavoidance	Relaxation
Autonomy	Justice	Self-Control
Counteraction	Moral Values	Succorance
Defendence	Order	Task Generalization
Deference	Recognition	Tolerance
Harmavoidance	Rejection	

Source: Tinsley, Barrett, and Kass (1977).

TABLE 16
Eight Psychological Benefits of Leisure Derived from Analysis of 27 Leisure Activity Specific Need Satisfier Scales

1. SELF-EXPRESSION (ORGINALLY NAMED SELF-ACTUALIZATION)
   A complex benefit reflecting, in order of prominence, 1) satisfaction of the individual's need to express oneself successfully through creative use of one's talents, 2) to undertake novel activities, often of benefit to others, and 3) to enjoy recognition and power for these efforts.

2. COMPANIONSHIP
   Satisfies the person's need to engage in playful but supportive relationships with others in which feelings are valued, self-expression is accepted and one's feelings about self are enhanced.

3. POWER
   Satisfies the individual's needs to be in control of the social situation and enjoy the center of attention, often at the expense of others.

4. COMPENSATION
   Satisfies the person's need to experience something new, fresh or unusual; to satisfy needs not satisfied by their job or daily routine.

TABLE 16
Continued

5. SECURITY
Satisfies the individual's need to be able to make a safe-secure long-term commitment free of bothersome change, in which they will be rewarded for their efforts and receive a measure of recognition.

6. SERVICE
Satisfies the person's need to be of assistance to others.

7. INTELLECTUAL AESTHETICISM
Satisfies the need of the individual for intellectual stimulation and aesthetic experiences. Note: his factor appears to be bipolar with low scores reflecting satisfaction of the individual's need for physical activity.

8. SOLITUDE (ORGINALLY NAME AUTONOMY)
Satisfies the person's need to do things alone without feeling threatened.

Source: Tinsley (1984).

5) Recreation Experience Preference Scales (REP)

The REP scales were developed collaboratively under the leadership of Driver who realized the need for methods and instruments which would operationalize leisure benefits. Unlike Tinsley, whose background is in psychology, Driver was more interested in the application of the benefit approach to management systems in order to better understand and respond to the needs of recreationists, and to quantify those needs more objectively (Driver, Tinsley & Manfredo, 1991b). Based on these motivations, Driver et al. developed the REP scales to identify and quantify a particular choice object (Table 17). Like PAL, the REP scales use the assumption of "unmet needs" that recreationists intend to fulfill through leisure participation. Although there are some overlaps in the scales and domains measured by the REP and PAL, the orientations and purposes of these two instruments are different (Driver, Tinsley & Manfredo, 1991b). REP aims to assist managers in providing recreation experiences which can better satisfy the "unmet needs"

with the assistance of an objective method which can better identify and quantify leisure benefits. Instead of focusing on managerial implications, PAL focuses on measuring and quantifying the relative importance of each psychological need that a recreationist seeks. Although the original motivations of REP and PAL are different, similarities of scales and domains exist. This similarity of outcome suggests the reliability of instruments which have been developed for PAL and REP.

TABLE 17
The Dimensions That Compare the Recreation Experience Preference (REP) Scales

1.	ENJOY NATURE		B. Escape family
	A. Scenery	9.	INTROSPECTION
	B. General nature experience		A. Spiritual
2.	PHYSICAL FITNESS		B. Personal values
3.	REDUCE TENSION	10.	BE WITH CONSIDERATE PEOPLE
	A. Tension release		(social security)
	B. Slow down mentally	11.	ACHIEVEMENT/ STIMULATION
	C. Escape role overloads		A. Reinforcing self-confidence
	D. Escape daily routines		B. Social recognition
4.	ESCAPE PHYSICAL STRESSORS		C. Skill development
	A. Tranquility/solitude		D. Competence testing
	B. Privacy		E. Seeking excitement
	C. Escape crowds		F. Endurance
	D. Escape noise		G. Telling others
5.	OUTDOOR LEARNING	12.	PHYSICAL REST
	A. General learning	13.	TEACH/ LEAD OTHERS
	B. Exploration		A. Teaching/sharing skills
	C. Learn geography of area		B. Leading others
	D. Learn about nature	14.	RISK TAKING
6.	SHARE SIMILAR VALUES	15.	RISK REDUCTION
	A. Be with friends		A. Risk moderation
	B. Be with people having similar values		B. Risk prevention
7.	INDEPENDENCE	16.	MEET NEW PEOPLE
	A. Independence		A. Meet new people
	B. Autonomy		B. Observe other people
	C. Being in control	17.	CREATIVITY
8.	FAMILY RELATIONS	18.	NOSTALGIA
	A. Family kinship	19.	AGREEABLE TEMPERATURES

Source: Driver, Tinsley & Manfredo (1991b).

Two response formats have been developed for use in questionnaires following the REP approach: "Importance" format and "Adds-To-Detracts-From" response formats.

The importance format requires respondents to identify the relative importance of each item in the REP inventory. The response importance scales range from Not At All Important to Extremely Important. The Adds-To-Detracts-From response format was developed later to ask recreationists about the contribution each scale item made to their total expected satisfaction. The response range from Detracts Very Strongly through Neither Detracts Nor Adds to Adds Very Strongly (Driver, Tinsley & Manfredo, 1991b).

Benefits and Aging. To improve leisure service delivery to the elderly and help them better cope with later life, it is vital to understand the leisure benefits that an older person can derive from leisure activities. Based on this information, leisure service managers can better design services which can provide benefits that the elderly look for in leisure participation. However, a majority of past research has focused on college-aged and non-elderly adult participants (Tinsley, Teaff, Colbs & Kaufman, 1985). Although Rapoport and Rapoport (1975) disproved the speculation that the recreation benefits of leisure have less relevance for older persons than for young adults, older adults are still a group that has been neglected in the study of leisure benefits. The inadequacy of research and information regarding the psychological and social benefits developed by older persons in leisure participation has been noted (Tinsley, Teaff, Colbs & Kaufman, 1985; McPherson, 1991). Having recognized the importance of leisure services to older persons, a few studies have recently examined their psychological and social benefits for the elderly (Tinlsey, Teaff, Colbs & Kaufman, 1985; Tinsley, Colbs, Teaff & Kaufman, 1987; Raymore & Scott, 1998; Tinsley, Tinsley & Croskeys, 2002). However, the amount of research on leisure behavior of older persons has been relatively small compared to other age groups.

Tinsley, Teaff, Colbs, and Kaufman (1985) conducted a survey to classify leisure activities in terms of the psychological benefits of participation reported by older persons in 18 leisure activities. Most of the activities studied were sedentary or indoor activities (Tinsley, Tinsley & Croskeys, 2002). They used the PAL instrument in this survey. The 18 leisure activities were classified based on the importance on each PAL scale reported by the respondents. Six clusters of activities resulted: companionship, compensation, temporary disengagement, comfortable solitude, expressive solitude, and expressive service. This study suggested that a balanced program of leisure services could be developed that would provide a full range of psychological benefits to older persons. Since activities which are grouped in the same cluster provide similar psychological benefits while different clusters provide different benefits to the elderly, the elderly could obtain a wide set of psychological benefits by participating in activities in different clusters.

Using the same data set, Tinsley, Colbs, Teaff, and Kaufman (1987) identified the most salient psychological benefits reported by older persons participating in leisure and examined the relationship of these benefits to morale, physical health, economic status, age, and gender. This research indicated that the elderly should not be treated as a homogeneous group since the psychological experiences of leisure activities varied with morale, physical health and sociodemographic profile. For instance, older women who reported lower morale were more likely to identify companionship as the primary psychological benefit sought in their leisure experiences, while persons over 65 years of age from higher socioeconomic backgrounds were more likely to report satisfaction of their needs for power through their leisure experiences.

The influences of sociodemographic factors in aging and leisure behavior were also demonstrated in later research (McPherson, 1991). McPherson (1991) indicated that aging is not only a biological process, but also a social process which is affected by various factors including sociodemographic variables such as gender; social psychological variables such as values; and community factors such as place of residence. These factors lead to various actions in the leisure benefits and activities reported by older persons. Thus, heterogeneity of leisure benefits exists among older persons. McPherson (1991) suggested that at least three distinct age groups can be delineated within the older population: 60-69; 70-79; and 80+. Leisure managers should be aware of the differences among these subgroups when designing services.

Research which was conducted later reported similar findings on the heterogeneity of participation among the elderly in leisure activities and the benefits they derive. For instance, Tinsley, Tinsley, and Croskeys (2002) reported differences in park use among four ethnic groups (African American, Hispanic, Asian and Caucasian) in Lincoln Park, Chicago. Significant differences reported were park usage patterns (Travel time, frequency of visit, transportation, and days of visits), social milieu, use of park facilities, and psychological benefits. The most salient psychosocial benefits of using the park were an immediate sense of pleasure or gratification, the opportunities to engage in nonchallenging activities, and the opportunity to be with other people (Tinsley, Tinsley & Croskeys, 2002). Statistically significant differences among the four ethnic groups were found on most of the psychosocial benefits. This indicated that various ethnic groups might have different needs when they visit a park.

Raymore and Scott (1998) pointed out that an urban park is a desirable place for continuity in leisure to occur among older adults and, thus, to facilitate adaptation to the aging process. To accommodate the recreation needs of the elderly in urban parks, it is necessary to equip park managers with knowledge of leisure benefits and, based on that knowledge, to help them provide better service which will enable the elderly to derive their desired leisure benefits. However, inadequate information on how older visitors benefit from using local parks in urban areas is likely to be an obstacle for managers specifically targeting older adults. Although some studies have been conducted to address this need, the primary focus of these studies has been on park usage patterns, activities carried out in the park, and sociodemographic information relating to older adults' use (Raymore & Scott, 1998; Tinsley, Tinsley & Croskeys, 2002). Even though some psychosocial benefits have been reported, those benefits are predetermined prior to the research by generating the list of benefits from previous research which focused on other age groups instead of being derived solely from the older age group. Therefore, qualitative research intended to explore and discover the benefits that the elderly receive from leisure activities appears likely to usefully complement the existing literature.

Conclusion. There has been a continuous refinement of the definition of leisure benefits. In recent research, a benefit is defined as a gain by an individual or group, maintenance of a desired condition, or the realization of a specific satisfying psychological experience. Benefits are the ultimate products that leisure services provide to the public. Leisure benefits research has gone through development process. The most significant landmark was publication of the "Benefits of Leisure", in which the state of the art in benefits research was synthesized. Applying knowledge of leisure benefits to

practical management was emphasized later by the evolution of Benefit-Based

Management (BBM) and Benefits Approach to Leisure (BAL). They focus on providing

benefits which are desired by the public.

Previous research emphasizes that heterogeneity of leisure benefits exists among

the older age group. Benefits received by old people from participation in the same

leisure activity are not necessary the same. Management should not overlook this

heterogeneity in designing a leisure service.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was guided by three research focuses: 1) How is the aging phenomenon in Hong Kong, 2) what benefits do the elderly receive from visiting the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park in Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong, and 3) what constraints inhibiting visiting or using the park are perceived by the elderly? To address these questions, the author employed in-depth interviews conducted with individuals both inside and outside the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park. The interviews were semi-structured, based on an interview guide of open ended questions (Bernard, 2002) which have shown in Appendixes A and B. Data regarding the benefits and constraints on urban park use from the perspective of the elderly were generated from conversations with the samples.

Study Areas

It is likely that for some individuals constraints might be sufficiently strong that they prevent elderly people from visiting a park. Conducting interviews solely with respondents in the park would exclude those who experienced these strong constraints. Therefore, in addition to exploring the constraints and benefits on park use with elderly who were in the park, elderly who might not be able to visit the park also were included in the study. As a result, two samples were used. One was employed within the park, while the other was comprised of non-park visitors who were at sites outside the park but within its half-mile catchment area. Participants were recruited from different seating areas within the boundary which the author observed to be gathering places. Those sitting areas outside the park where the interviews took place were located at Fuk Loi Estate, Tai Pei Square, Yee Pei Square, Sam Pei Square, Sam Pei Square, and Luk Yeung

Sun Estate. The study areas are shown as black dots in Figure 14. The criterion for inclusion in the study was that participants had to be aged 60 or over.

Tsuen Wan District. This paragraph provides a brief introduction to Tsuen Wan district in the New Territories where the interviews were conducted. Hong Kong is composed of three main districts: New Territories, Kowloon, and Hong Kong Island (Figure 15). The total population of Hong Kong is approximately 6.7 million, and half of the population is located in the New Territories. The proportion of population aged 65 and over in the New Territories is approximately 8% (Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department, 2001) (Table 18). The proportions of population aged 65 and over in Hong Kong Island and Kowloon are higher than in the New Territories. This uneven distribution of population also occurs in different constituency areas within Tsuen Wan district (Table 19). The difference may be attributable to such reasons as social structural differences; concentration of immigrants in particular areas (for instance, many immigrants from Chiu Zhou province live in Kowloon City); housing arrangements such as public housing policy; and economic development in different areas. For example, Central is a more commercially-focused area whereas Kwai Chung is more industrial-focused. It is unknown as to whether the results of this study can be generalized to other districts of Hong Kong or other constituency areas in Tsuen Wan district because this was a non-probability sample.
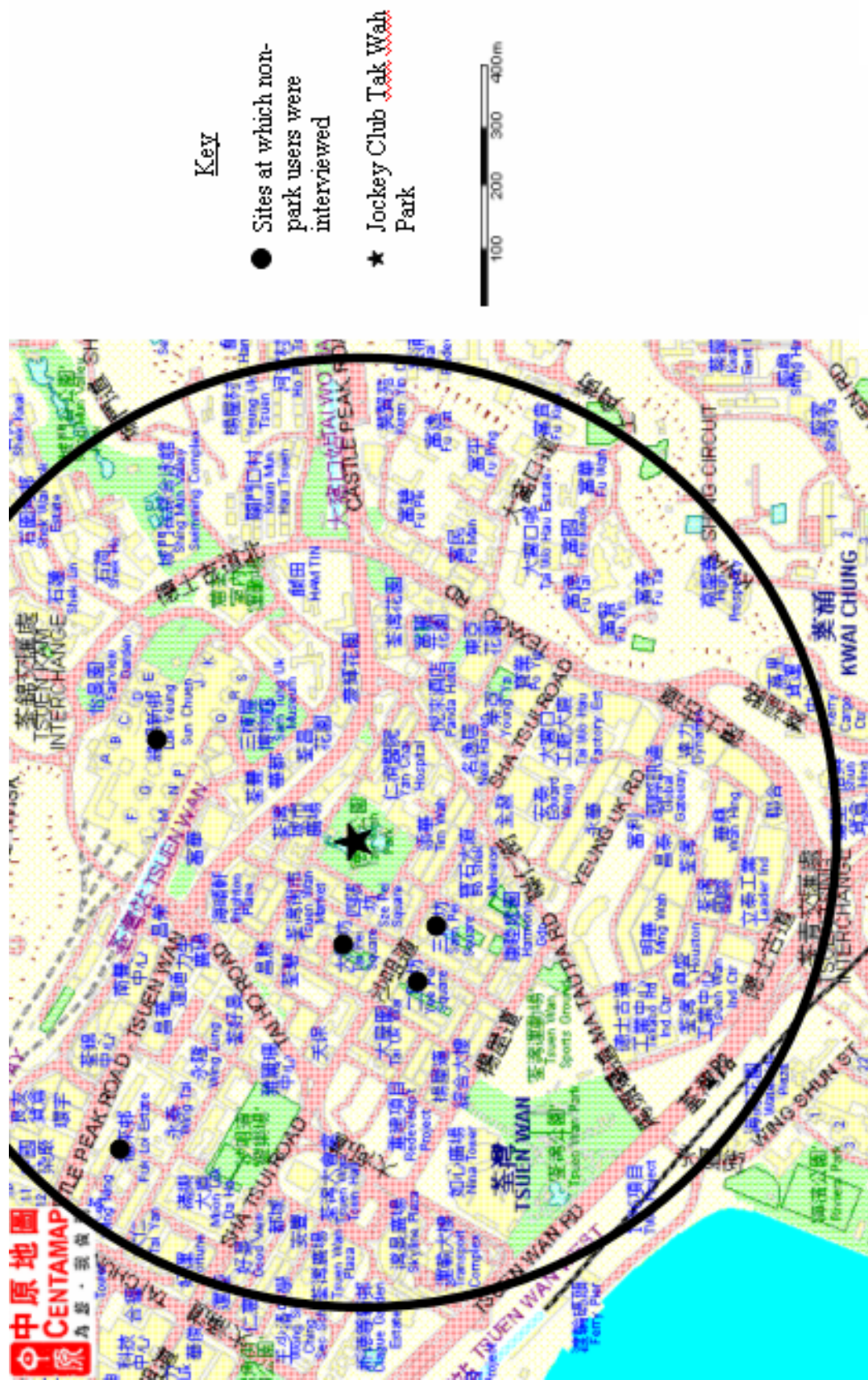
Source: Centamap (n.d.)

Figure 14. The Area in Which Interviews Were Conducted. The Circle Represents a One-half Mile Radius of Jockey Club Tak Wah Park

Source: Centamap (n.d.).

Figure 15.   Map of Hong Kong

TABLE 18

Summary Statistics of Districts in Hong Kong

	Hong Kong Island	Kowloon	New Territories
New Territories	1,335,469	2,023,979	3,343,046
Proportion of population of aged 65 and over (%)	11.9	14.5	8.8

Source: Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department (2001).

TABLE 19

Constituency Areas in Tsuen Wan District

Constituency Areas	Tak Wah	Yeung Uk Road	Hoi Bun	Clague Garden	Fuk Loi	Discovery Park	Tsuen Wan Centre	Allway	
Population	18,389	17,996	19,078	18,371	15,641	18,147	13,062	19,000	
Proportion of population of aged 65 and over (%)	12.8	9.0	5.8	13.1	19.2	4.7	5.8	10.6	
Constituency Areas	Lai To	Lai Hing	Tsuen Wan Rural West	Tsuen Wan Rural East	Luk Yeung	Lei Muk Shue East	Lei Muk Shue West	Shek Wai Kok	Cheung Shan
Population	17,346	14,360	13,478	13,751	17,927	16,242	12,135	13,509	17,095
Proportion of population of aged 65 and over (%)	6.1	5.5	5.5	6.5	10.3	11.3	12.6	14.3	12.6

Source: Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department (2001).

Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park. Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park is

located in Tak Wah Street, Tsuen Wan, and is managed by the Leisure and Cultural

Services Department (LSCD). The following profile of the park was obtained through

email communications between the principal investigator and LSCD (personal

communication, October 2, 2003), since there appears to be no written documentation

about it.

The total area of the park is 1.7 hectares. Most visitors to it are retired elderly persons. It is designed in Chinese-garden style. Two phases of construction were involved. Phase I of the Park, which occupies an area of 0.65 hectare, was completed in 1989 at a cost of HK$10 million Hong Kong dollars, of which HK$8 million was donated by the Hong Kong Jockey Club. Phase II of the Park was opened for public use following its completion in November 1995. The two phases are intended to give a feeling of "visiting a place of scenic beauty" to visitors, and to provide a resting place in the busy town centre of Tsuen Wan District. Special features of the park are: a tile-roofed house with courtyard and a mid-lake island; a stone bridge and a pavilion built on the island with fish in the lake; a "magnificent mountain" constructed by rocks that are all made of Taihu rocks which are well-known in China; a man-made waterfall; a Chess Garden; a Chinese garden; a children's playground; a goldfish pond with rock features; and a Chinese pavilion; a rock bridge and a pavilion are located by the side of the fish pond; a Camellia Garden and an Herb Garden are located in the Chinese Garden; sitting-out areas of various sizes are decorated with artificial mounds and rock features, where grass and different types of trees are grown. Figures 15 through 20 were pictures taken inside the park while Figures 21 and 22 were those taken at the sites outside the park when the interviews were conducted.

Figure 16. Entrance to Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park

Figure 17. Pond and Bridge in Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park

Figure 18. Pavilion in Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park

Figure 19. Chose Up View of Pavilion in Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park

Figure 20. Chinese Chess Players in Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park

Figure 21. Morning Exercises in Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park

Figure 22. Bridge Players in a Gathering Place outside the Park

Figure 23. A Sitting Area outside the Park

Sampling

Two samples were employed for the interviews. In total, 25 elderly participated. In-depth interviews were conducted with 13 individuals inside and 12 outside the park. All participants were aged 60 years or over. Based on the suggestions of McPherson (1991), the researcher wanted to include samples from three distinct age groups: 60-69; 70-79; and 80+ in order to have a broad spectrum of informants. To accomplish this, applied purposive sampling (judgment sampling) was used in which respondents were chosen nonrandomly, and the number of participants depended on the richness of data collected, instead of predeterming the sample size of each age group before selecting the samples (Bernard, 2002). The number of participants in each cohort is shown in Tables 20 and 21.

TABLE 20
Number of Participants inside the Park

	Female	Male
60-69	2	2
70-79	2	4
80+	1	2

TABLE 21
Number of Participants outside the Park

	Female	Male
60-69	1	2
70-79	2	3
80+	2	2

Data Collection Procedures

Interviews were conducted in Cantonese, which is the most common language used in Hong Kong. The interviewer approached older persons in the park whom she thought might be qualified to participate in the study. Those chosen were first greeted and asked about their age in order to identify whether they qualified as being old enough to take part in it. Qualified persons were invited to participate in the interview. The purposes and procedures of the interview were explained to them. Participants were required to show an understanding and a willingness to participate before the interviews could take place. They were also told that they could withdraw from the interview at any time.

An interview protocol suggested by Creswell (1997), which is termed an interview guide by Bernard (2002), was used. This interview protocol is a list of predetermined questions and topics to be asked in the interview (Appendix A & B). Headings, information about starting the interview and ending the interview, and thanking the respondent were included. Creswell (1997) mentioned two major advantages of using such an interview protocol:

1)   Helps a researcher organize thoughts;

2)   Enables a person to take notes during the interview about the responses of the interviewee.

Open-ended questions were asked in the interview in order to generate more insightful information from respondents. Participants were encouraged to talk freely. To learn the backgrounds of participants, demographic information and park visiting patterns were first identified. By using probing techniques, such as showing an understanding of an interviewee's situation by nodding the head, or asking some "tell-me-more" questions,

the interviewer sought to stimulate more information from participants without injecting her opinions into the interaction (Bernard, 2002).

After questions regarding demographic and park visitation patterns, participants were asked to identify the benefits and constraints associated with park use. To help participants clarify terms being used in the study, the interviewer explained the meaning of "benefit" and "constraints". "Benefits" were identified as positive conditions that are improved or maintained as a result of activity participation. Examples of those positive conditions are: good health, happy life, improved social relationship, and so on. "Constraints" were identified as those factors that lead to activity nonparticipation, insufficient level of participation, or lack of enjoyment of an activity. Examples are: bad weather, lack of time, limited mobility, inadequate service supply, and so on.

The interviewer generally asked questions in the order they were listed in the interview protocol. However, on occasions the order was adjusted to accommodate different situations. Interference of the interviewer in the interview was minimized to reduce her influence on the responses of participants. After completing the interview, the participants were thanked and their questions welcomed regarding the study.

The interviews were tape-recorded unless respondents requested that this not occur. Note-taking was done for three interviews in which interviewees rejected being audio-taped to keep their confidentiality. Transcripts for those interviews were transcribed from Cantonese to English immediately after the interviews in order to keep memory loss of data to a minimum.

Text Analysis

There are many analysis strategies that can be used in qualitative studies. There is no single definite form of analysis that is used with qualitative data (Creswell, 1997). This study adopted four principles of analysis suggested by Giorgi (1997): 1) Reading of the data; 2) dividing the data into parts; 3) organizing and transforming the data into disciplinary language; and 4) expressing the structure of the phenomenon.

Reading of the Data. Creswell (1997) suggests reading through all the collected information can help a researcher to obtain an overall sense on the data. Skuza (2003) adopted this strategy in her study. She reported the advantage of adopting this method (Skuza, 2003):

> I read the entire text several times to get a sense for the whole….This enabled me to become familiar with the text and helped me to develop openness to the meanings in it (p. 73).

The interviews in this study were first transcribed from Cantonese to English before reading and analyzing the data was conducted. Note-taking was performed while the investigator read the transcripts. These notes and memos were short phrases, ideas, or key concepts that helped to organize the data (Agar, 1980).

Dividing the Data into Parts. In this stage, the researcher broke down the cumbersome text into small parts so the data could be better organized and presented. Categories were developed in order to sort the data. Since it is not the intention of the author to present every single word generated from the interviews, categorization of the data was intended to retain the most meaningful data and discard unwanted data. This stage is what Skuza (2003, p. 73) referred to as "highlighting the parts and revealing

constituents of meaning". Readings of the text are necessary at this stage. Each small part

or category generated from the process can be also called "meaning units" (Giorgi, 1997).

Skuza (2003) offered the following explanation of "meaning units":

> The meaning units are smaller parts of the whole text found in the early stages of
>
> text analysis. In comparison to emerging meanings found later in the analysis, the
>
> meaning units are less refined and do not necessarily refer to essential meaning (p.
>
> 74)

The investigator intended to find out the meaning units in the text through asking herself

questions such as "What benefits did the participant report? Is there any relationship with

their age and visiting park behavior? What are those constraints that limited the

participant from visiting the park? How did those constraints influence their in-park

behavior? The meaning units identified are useful for further organizing and making

sense of the data.

  Organizing and Transforming the Data into Disciplinary Language. This section

further organized and transformed the data into disciplinary language which can be

understood by other researchers. Imaginative variation was suggested by Skuza (2003) as

a key approach to use for this purpose. She reviewed imaginative variation as a process of

seeking for possible meanings through cross-checking different meaning units, using

divergent perspectives, varying frames of references, and so on. Again, self-raised

questions were used during the process (Skuza, 2003). Examples of those questions were:

Are those meaning units similar or different? If I cluster this unit with other units, can

they become a cluster? Does the meaning keep the same if I remove or add a phrase into

this meaning unit? By applying imaginative variation techniques, units with similar meaning can be clustered and thus the meaning to the whole can be given (Skuza, 2003).

Expressing the Structure of the Phenomenon. Results of the study were narratively presented in Findings section before discussion on the findings can be conducted in the final stage. The findings were presented in three sections: perceptions of aging; constraints associated with park use; and benefits associated with park use.

Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations of the study. First, the sample size is small. Only 25 elderly in total were interviewed. Since those interviews were conducted only in the Tsuen Wan district and not in other districts in Hong Kong, the generalizability of the results to other districts and constituency areas is limited. Even within the Tsuen Wan district, this study did not include those older adults who were working, need to be hospitalized or who stayed at home due to limited mobility, poor health condition, or being busy with house chores. Most interviewees were invited to participate in the interviews when the investigator observed they were free and possibly had enough time to take part. Therefore, this study may not reflect the general benefits and constraints associated with park use of majority of elderly in Hong Kong. A larger random sample can be included in the future research to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

The study focused on one urban park in Hong Kong. Reliability and representativeness of the study would have been increased if it had been conducted in more parks in Hong Kong.

Leisure benefits and constraints of the older age group may be similar to those in younger cohorts. Recreation behavior may be carried over by an elderly person from

his/her younger age. A longitudinal study of the group would be a better way to identify changes in leisure benefits and constraints of the elderly. However, it is difficult to carry out because of the time, cost, and mortality of the elderly.

Benefits and constraints reported in this study were based on self-report. As mentioned in past studies (Ulrich, Dimberg & Driver, 1991), multiple methods can be used. For instance, a change in body conditions due to exercise can be measured both in laboratory and field studies. However, such methods only measure short term benefits and constraints associated with park use. The long term consequence of visiting parks will eventually require longitudinal or follow-up studies (Ulrich, Dimberg & Driver, 1991).

FINDINGS

This section presents the study's findings in four sections: i) profile of the sample; ii) perceptions of aging; iii) constraints associated with park use; iv) benefits from park going.

Sample Profile

Socio-demographic information of the sample is likely to be useful in interpreting the data. Five profile dimensions were explored: education, job status, marital status, health status, and residence.

Education. All participants were 60 or more years of age. Nearly half of them had no formal education. More female participants were uneducated than males. This may be because in the past, education for males was considered to be more important than for females in China. The role of females was generally confined to taking care of family duties for which it was not considered necessary to have formal education. The situation has changed in recent years. More females now go to school. This might explain why none of the female participants in the 70-79 and 80+ cohorts had formal education, while all of the female participants in the 60-69 cohorts had some formal educated. The poverty and wars that characterized China's past may explain why male participants who were aged 80 or above were either not educated, or educated only up to primary-school level.

This sample profile is not typical. According to the Working Party Report (1973), more than half of the Chinese population aged 60 or over had not been formally educated, while 90 percent of all the aged population had not reached secondary school education level. A participant in this study explained:

I didn't receive any education. It was a hard time for China when I was little.

There was a war going on. Japan invaded China. We were poor at that time. In

fact, the whole of China was poor. I didn't have the chance to have an education.

In recent years, China has been more stable in terms of its politics. The economy

also has improved. More families now can afford to pay for an education for their

children. This might explain why the younger male participants in the sample tended to

have a secondary-school education. From 1945 to 1956, the population in Hong Kong

increased from 650,000 to 2,490,000 (Elderly Service Center in Chai Wan District, 1980).

Much of the increase being stimulated by the communist take-over in China and the

cultural revolution. A majority of elderly in Hong Kong were born in mainland China

(Ikels, 1983). Most participants in this study reported that they had emigrated to Hong

Kong from mainland China. The need to earn money by getting a job was a reason

preventing some of them from getting a secondary education.

Job Status. Nearly all participants were retired. Only one was currently working.

When asked the reasons for not working, a majority of participants indicated that they

were perceived by employers to be too old to work. Some indicated that they would like

to work if there was a chance. A participant, who was aged 60, shared her frustration of

being retired:

I don't feel that I am old yet. I want to work because I still have ability to do a job.

It would be nice if I could work for a half-day, and do house chores for half a day.

But I don't have a job now. If I was 65 or 70, then it would be fine. I am not so

old yet, but nobody wants to hire me. I want to work if there is a job for me.

[Have you ever looked for a job?] I don't search for a job now. I looked for jobs a

few years ago. People told me that I was almost at retirement age and I didn't

need to work any more. So I don't look for jobs any more because I know that I

can't get a job. [Why do you want to work?] I can pass my time more easily if I

have a job. It is not because of money.

Not all respondents wanted to be employed. Some preferred not working for a

variety of reasons including: having work for a long time, lack of working ability, and no

need to support their children any more. One participant noted:

I don't work now. I have been retired for more than 20 years. [So you retired at

about 50 years of age?] Yes. [Why did you retire so early?] Because all my

children were independent by themselves, and I no longer had to support them.

Participants' occupations when they were young included sales person, worker in a fabric

factory or sewing factory, mechanic in a metal modeling factory, farmer, librarian, truck

driver, self-employed, and restaurant owner. The majority of their jobs were "blue collar".

Participants indicated that life was difficult at that time. Many of them had emigrated

from mainland China and worked in any job that they could find to earn money. The low

education of this group resulted in most of them being unskilled workers who occupied

low status jobs in the industrial growth era of Hong Kong.

Marital Status. All participants were either married, or widowed. Some lived

alone, others lived with spouses, and others lived with their children.

Health Status. A majority of participants indicated that they had some health

problems. The problems identified in the interviews were: feeling pain on their knees,

diabetes, hypertension, poor vision, tearing of the eyes, unable to walk well with legs,

feeling tired after walking for a while, lack of energy, cataract, bronchitis, anemia, feeling

dizzy, feeling of pain in the body, stomach pain, asthma, degenerating neck and joints, and arthritis. Some elderly indicated that they considered it normal for them to have such illnesses since they were old now. One participant noted:

> My body has some little problems, just like everyone else. [What kind of problems?] I have hypertension. Most people in Hong Kong have hypertension. Sometimes I feel pain in some parts of my body such as my abdomen. Many problems. It is normal since I am old now. I felt ok after walking for few hours before. Now, if I only walk for one hour, my legs feel tired.

Many participants reported problems associated with walking due to knee and leg problems. They reported feeling tired after walking for awhile. Besides their walking inability, hypertension seemed to be the most common problem among the old people in the sample.

Residence. Two participants recruited in the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park were residents of Kwai Chung district, which abuts the Tsuen Wan district. Other than those two participants, all participants in the in-park interviews were residents who lived within walking distance to the park. In the interviews conducted outside the park, more participants lived outside of the Tsuen Wan district. Shek Wai Kok, Tsing Yi, Shek Lee Bui and Tung Mun districts were four residential areas reported by five participants. These participants either did not visit, or seldom visited the park.

Perceptions of Aging

Perception of Oldness. Most respondents reported that they felt old. Their reasons for feeling old were: increased age; declined health condition; being unable to perform the same tasks which they could do as young adults; hair coloration; not having a job;

slower motion; being less energetic; children having their own families; not able to work as fast as before; abundant life experience; and forgetfulness. Some reported that they felt old because they were perceived to be old by other people. The following comments from respondents illustrated this latter point:

They think I am old. They started to call me "abaak" (old man) when I was in my

middle 40s. My hair was already white at that time. So people thought I was old.

They call me "apoh" (old woman). Of course they feel that I am old. I am used to

it now since people have called me "apoh" for a long time.

When I take a bus, some people give up their seats to me since I am old.

Otherwise, they wouldn't give the seats to me.

Since I am old, I can easily chat to other old people. If I am not old, why would

they want to chat with me? I don't chat to young people. I have nothing in

common with young people, and don't know what to say to them.

Thus, participants felt oldness not only through their own perceptions, but also from other people's perceptions toward them. For instance, the salutations "abaak" and "apoh" indicated that people perceived them to be old people. Participants assumed their oldness in part because of other peoples' perceptions.

Leisure Activities. Most participants engaged in the same activities everyday. The daily activities were routinized. The following comment illustrated this:

I walk here (Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park) and to the elderly center to

sit, chat to other old people, and watch TV with other old people every morning.

Then I come back and have my lunch at home. I go there (the elderly center)

again at about 2:00pm. I go to the elderly center to chat with other old

people…There are many elderly there. We sit and chat together.

Although not all the activities reported by participants were the same, walking around,

chatting with other elderly, going for Yum Cha ("drinking tea"), and watching TV were

common. Betting on horse races and buying Mark Six (lottery) were common among

male participants. Other activities reported were: having morning exercise, playing

Majong (a Chinese game), traveling, hiking, listening to radio news broadcasts or the

Chinese Opera, reading newspapers and books, teaching Tai Chi (a Chinese Ku Fu) or

dancing, observing people, learning how to use a computer, and sitting.

Young Adulthood. Most participants' young adulthoods were family-centered.

Respondents indicated that they were busy with working and taking care of their families

before retirement. Their leisure activities were constrained by these work and family

obligations. Most of their time outside work was devoted to their families. After

retirement, they had more time to engage in leisure activities compared to their young

adulthood. One participant stated:

I worked at any kind of job out there when I was young. I had to earn money for

living. [What did you do after work?] I had nothing to do. I had to help with the

house chores in my family such as cooking. I did everything. I have too many

children. Both my wife and I had to work. If I didn't do it, no one would do it. We

had to help each other. Otherwise, we couldn't survive. It was difficult to earn

money at that time. Life was difficult in the 1950s. So I worked on everything as

long as it was legal. Everyone was the same, like me. There were many

immigrants from mainland China at that time. Most of them were land owners.

They moved to Hong Kong because of the Cultural Revolution. [Did you have any interests or habits when you were young?] No, I didn't have any interests. I was too busy. Now, I don't have any interests either. I had to do the grocery shopping after working everyday when I was young. My wife was working too at that time.

Being busy with earning money for a living and taking care of their families were the main constraints to engaging in leisure activities in their young adulthood. This was attributable to the poor financial status of those elderly who immigrated to Hong Kong. They had to struggle to make a living, for themselves and for their families. Chinese people are generally perceived to be family-oriented. To most of them, the well-being of the family is more important than personal pleasure. Therefore, most participants did not develop their own interests or engage in leisure activities for their own pleasure. After retirement, they no longer needed to take care of their families. They had more free time compared to their young adulthood. However, due to their lack of leisure experience and the failure to develop leisure habits, some of them do not know what to do during their retirement.

Life Satisfaction. When asking how satisfied or happy they were with their lives, different answers were generated. Some responded that they were not happy or satisfied with their lives because they felt lonely:

[Are you satisfied with your life?] No, not really. [Why?] I become more and more lonely now since my children leave me one by one when they grow up. So I become more and more unhappy. [How do you handle this situation?] I can't do anything about it. It is a natural process of a life.

As a human being, being happy or unhappy are the same. Life is the same

everyday. [How's your mood usually?] My mood is not good. [Why?] Wherever I

go, I am all alone. I don't have anyone to chat to, or do anything with. I get used

to it now. My wife passed away about 6-7 years ago. I have to live like this, and

can't do anything about it.... [What do you expect from life now?] I have nothing

to expect or rely on.

These people were occupied with working and family responsibilities before

retirement. After retirement, they lost those roles. Often children established their own

families and moved out. The feeling of loneliness led to life dissatisfaction and

unhappiness. Several respondents indicated that their happiness was vicariously

associated with the well-being of their children:

I am ok with my life now. All my children have grown up and have their own

families. As long as they are fine, I am happy with myself.

I am quite satisfied with my life. I am an old woman now. Just like others, as long

as my children have filial piety, have stable jobs, and I have three meals, I am

satisfied.

Some participants were depressed, and in two cases terminated the interview at this point

since they felt uncomfortable talking more about their feelings. Some reported that

happiness or unhappiness did not matter to them anymore. They were simply passing

their time in their later lives:

[Are you happy with your life?] It is ok. I am old now. Happy and unhappy are

not very important to me anymore. I am passing the rest of my time now.

Some who were constrained by limited financial ability were worried only about their ability to survive: "I have to live no matter whether I am happy or not. I am ok as long as I have three meals a day." These elderly either lived by themselves, or lived in an elderly care center. Most of them received a small amount of financial assistance from the government. Some showed evidence of depression in the interviews:

I have to live no matter if I am satisfied with my life or not. I am waiting for my time (death) to come. I am already 80 years old.

It is not about being satisfied or dissatisfied. I am old now; I have to live no matter if I am satisfied with my life or not. I am waiting for my death now. I only hope that I have good health and no illness now.

Not all members of the sample felt unhappy or dissatisfied with their lives. Some indicated they were happy. For example, one said:

I am a volunteer in Ya Li Sun Social Service Center. I am the chairperson of social services in Tsuen Wan District. This is a nonprofit organization which is supported by the government. We work for charity. I receive no money from my volunteering. Helping others can bring me happiness. I am happy with what I am doing now…I don't feel that I am old. In fact, I always feel like I am 18 years old. I am happy every day…I am satisfied and happy with my life since I have good life style and I am helping others.

This respondent mentioned being happy at several points in the interview showing that she received fulfillment from what she was doing: helping others. Another participant reported a similar experience:

> I teach old people to do healthy exercise once a week…I teach the elderly to exercise because I found it was helpful to me. I can help those elderly to maintain their good health…I am happy that I still have the ability to help others while helping myself. All of us are happy.

Both respondents were happy with doing something meaningful to them. A sense of fulfillment that they still had the ability to help others made them feel happy.

Leisure Constraints

Elderly were asked to identify constraints that associated with their general leisure activities and their park use respectively.

Constraints Associated with Leisure Participation. Respondents identified constraints that inhibited their participation in some activities. Although most of them were retired from work, both female and male respondents reported that they needed to perform house chores at home. One participant said:

> I do some house chores such as preparing meals for my family. I normally cook three meals a day for my family. After cooking breakfast and lunch, I come here (park). Since my wife is working and my son and daughter are studying, I have to be responsible for all the house chores. Apart from doing them, I like to listen to Chinese operas on the radio. I watch TV, but only for news reports. Normally I listen to the radio for only about one hour. I don't have much time to watch TV since I have to do the house chores…If I have more time, I will spend more time on listening to the Chinese opera and watching TV.

Apart from time devoted to house chores, deteriorated health was the most frequently cited constraint to respondents engaging more in desired activities. One described how health inhibited his participation:

I usually walk slowly here…walking is good for my health...I can't do anything even I want to…What can I do now? My vision is not good. I am not as energetic as before… I can't see well so I can't play Chinese chess...I prefer to walk, so that I can have something to do...I don't have any leisure habits now...[Did you have any habits before?] Yes, I did. I played Majong, bet on horse races, etc. I don't do it anymore. [Why?] I can't see well. People also don't like to play Majong with me because I am so slow... [How does your current life differ from your young adulthood?] My young adulthood was more fun. I am old now. I can't do many things now. There are many inconveniences. [What did you usually do in your young adulthood?] I worked. [Any leisure activities?] I did some sports. [How about now?] I can't do it now. I fall down even just walking, don't mention sports. I am familiar with the environment here now since I am always here. So I am not so afraid of falling down here.

From this description, poor vision and fear of falling down were the main constraints to this participant performing more activities. Others reported health problems such as lack of energy, feeling of stiffness with hands and legs, and unable to walk far. Other than lack of time and declining health, other constraints for leisure participation reported by the sample were: lack of interest, loss of interest, lack of companions, lack of financial ability, and not in the mood. The following statements illustrate these constraints:

I don't have many interests. I only like to watch TV for sports and listen to

Chinese Opera on the radio. I don't travel since I am not interested in it.

[Do you do exercise?] I don't do exercise now, but I did it before. I used to swim,

bike, and play ping pong before. I lost my interest in sport after getting old.

I used to play Majong when I was young, but not anymore since my friends

passed away, and I have fewer friends now.

[Do you usually bet on horse racing or play Majong?] I don't gamble. I don't have

that money to gamble. I don't even have enough money for food…I don't attend

the elderly center for leisure activities. I don't have that mood. My situation is not

good. How can I have that mood to attend those activities?

I don't do fun activities by myself such as attending the elderly center. I have no

motivation to go since my sons are working hard to earn for a living.

Constraints Associated with Park Use. Elderly in both samples were asked to

identify any constraints associated with the use of Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park.

Table 22 lists the constraints which they reported.

TABLE 22

Constraints Associated with Park Use Reported by the Elderly

Constraints associated with park use reported by elderly in the park	Constraints associated with park use reported by elderly outside the park

1. Poor health conditions
   a. Unable to walk far
   b. Poor vision
   c. Being ill
2. Being too busy
3. Poor park management
   a. Too crowded
   b. Poor hygiene
   c. Unethical behaviors in the park
     - Drug use
     - Prostitution
4. Weather
	5. Poor health conditions
	   a. Unable to walk far
	   b. Lack of energy
	6. Being too busy
	7. Poor park management
	   a. Too crowded
	   b. Poor hygiene
	   c. Unethical behaviors in the park
	     - Drug use
	     - Prostitution
	8. Having other options
	9. Too far from residence
	10. Lack of interest
	11. Other interests
	12. Not knowing other park visitors
	13. Not wanting to interrupt daily schedule
	14. Too many male park visitors

1) Poor Health Conditions

Both groups of respondents reported being unable to walk far as a major

constraint to park use. One of the in-park interviewees said:

My legs are not good. Even though I want to stay here for a longer time, I feel

tired after walking here for a while. So I don't stay here for a long time. My legs

don't have much energy.

This symptom was shared by another participant outside the park:

No, I don't visit there. [Why?] Here is more close to my home. Tak Wah Park is a

little too far…I only walk around here now. I can't walk far now...My health is

not very good. [Where don't you feel good?] Here, on my hip (pointing). It is

inconvenient when I walk. I can't walk far now.

Being unable to walk far was a reason both for not staying in the park for a longer period

of time and not visiting the park. Poor health also restricted the elderly from participating

in some activities in the park. A respondent reported: "I only watch them play Chinese

chess. I don't play chess…My eyes are not good. I can't play chess with my bad vision."

The following quote shows that being ill can also be a constraint that leads to not visiting

the park: "[Have you experiences that prevent you from visiting this park?] Yes.

Sometimes I don't come because my body has had some illnesses." Apart from those

constraints, lack of energy prevented some elderly from visiting Tak Wah Park. An

outside-the-park respondent said: "I do nothing for fun. I don't even play Majong. I don't

have enough energy…I am even afraid to go to Tak Wah park."

2) Being Too Busy

Several participants indicated that they had more free time compared to their

young adulthood in their retirement. Nevertheless, being too busy was reported as a

reason for being unable to visit the park or not visiting the park more often. A visitor in

the park reported: "I can't come here more often…I don't have that much time to come."

A similar answer was given by a respondent outside the park: "I don't have much time. I

have to do the shopping, go for Yum Cha, do laundry, tidy up the apartment, cook, etc."

Although the elderly were retired from work, other business such as taking care of house

chores kept some of them busy and inhibited their park visitation.

3) Poor Park Management

Several constraints relating to the management of Jockey Club Tak Wah Park emerged in the interviews including: the park is too crowded, the park is not clean enough, and some unethical behaviors such as drug taking and prostitution that were occurring in the park:

People are not very hygienic here. Some people spit; some people throw cigarettes on the floor. It is better after the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) alert, but it still exits.

It is not a good place, very crowded and dirty…Sometimes I go to Kowloon Park and Hong Kong Park…Those parks are better than the park in the central area. Some girls from mainland China engage in prostitution there. There are some drug addicts too. It is not safe.

However, these factors did not affect other respondents' visiting behavior even though they had similar observations.

There are too many people here. It is too crowded…I always come here; about 5 to 6 times a week…There are many older people in this park. This is one of reasons that brings me here. Most of the visitors to this park are old people.

This participant was concerned that the park was too crowded. However, the presence of many elderly in the park, was a positive factor which outweighed concern with crowding and provided the motive for the respondent to keep visiting the park. Another respondent confirmed that poor management did not necessarily negatively influence visitors' visiting behaviors:

[How do you feel about this park?] This park is fine, but there are some unethical things going on in this park. Some females are prostituting here. [So how do you feel?] Uncomfortable. [Do you want them to stop coming here?] They have their freedom. They also do this for their own living. [Did anyone offer you prostitution?] Sometimes. [They asked you even when your wife was accompanying you?]. Yes. [Will this affect the frequency that you visit the park?] No. [Will this affect your mood when you are in the park?] No.

These observations show that while undesirable factors may be constraints to some participants, they may exert no influence on other participants' park visiting behavior. Negotiation of constraints, which was a concept first suggested by Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey (1991), may explain this difference. The latter two respondents experienced the same constraints as others in the crowding and prostitution. However, the overall attractiveness of the park was sufficiently great for them that it outweighed the constraints, and drew them to the park despite those constraints.

4) Weather

Some participants in the park indicated that they did not visit the park when it rained. Hence, weather was a constraint that stopped people from visiting the park temporarily.

Some constraints were reported only by respondents these in the outside-the-park sample (8 through 14 on Table 22).

5) Having Other Options

Participants indicated that instead of visiting Jockey Club Tak Wah Park, they visited other parks or places which were perceived to have more desirable locations, sizes,

capacities, freshness of air, and so on. For instance, one respondent noted: "Tsuen Wan Park is better than Tak Wah Park. It is bigger than the Tak Wah Park. The air is fresher there…Besides, there is a big market next to it. After visiting the park, I can shop there".

6) Too Far From Place of Residence

Several interviewees outside the park indicated that the sitting areas where their interviews were conducted were closer to their residences. Participants preferred to stay in familiar places near their place of residence.

7) Lack of Interest

Some elderly did not visit the park simply because they were not interested in it: "I am not interested in visiting a park. I like beach and quiet places…I like to buy stocks…I like reading." Thus, instead of visiting a park, the participant engaged in other activities in which he was more interested.

8) Not Knowing Other Park Visitors

Some participants indicated their unwillingness to talk to people whom they did not know:

I don't go there. I like to spend time with my friends here. We can chat. Sometimes I watch them playing bridge. We always gather here…I don't go because I don't know the old people there.

I am familiar with the people here…I know the people here, so I come here very often to chat to the people that I know. I don't know many people in Tak Wah Park, but I know many people here, so I don't go to the park.

These elderly wanted to spend their time with the people with whom they were familiar instead of making effort to become acquainted with those whom they do not know.

9) Not Wanting to Interrupt the Daily Schedule

Some respondents routinized their daily activities, and performed the same activities everyday:

I seldom go to park. I always go grocery shopping in the morning, then go back to cook soup. In the afternoon, I go to Pakin' Supermarket for shopping...[Are there any parks nearby your residence?] Yes, there are some, but I don't visit them. [Why?] I don't have time. I have to do the shopping, go for Yum Cha, do the laundry, tidy up the apartment, cook, etc.

This participant routinized her daily schedule and excluded visiting the park from the daily tasks list. She showed an unwillingness to disturb her daily schedule, so visiting the park was not something that she considered.

10) Too Many Male Park Visitors

This constraint was indicated by a female participant:

I only stay there for a while. You know, there are so many male elderly there...I visit the park sometimes, but not often. I visit a small park near my place more often instead. I know people there, so I can talk to them. I also sit in other places such as here where I know many elderly here. I like to talk to people that I know.

I know many people here. We have been living here (Tsuen Wan) for a long time

This respondent was interviewed in a sitting area where many female elderly frequently gathered. The participant may feel more comfortable to be with people whom she knows, and who are the same as her. The park was dominated by male visitors when the investigator was there. This may lead to shorter duration stays in the park and less frequent visitation by this participant.

Benefits Associated with Park Use

Several benefits associated with park use were reported by the sample. The different activities that elderly perform in the park may lead to them receiving a variety of benefits. Sitting and walking were the most frequent activities that elderly did in the park. It may reflect that they were the most readily available activities, and the lack of specialized recreational facilities for elderly in the park. Other activities reported were: dancing, doing exercises, studying horse race tickets, picking up and reading newspapers left by others, chatting with other older people, watching a Chinese chess game, observing people, practicing Tai Chi and Chinese Ku Fu, smoking, and stepping on little stones to massage the feet. Most respondents reported that they live near the park, which may be the main reason for their frequent visitations to it. A majority of participants visited the park alone. Since convenience sampling was used in this study, further study should be conducted to identify generalizable visitation patterns and profiles of older park visitors.

The array of benefits identified by respondents is reported in Table 23.

TABLE 23
Benefits Associated with Park Use Reported by the Elderly

Benefits Associated with Park Use Reported by the Elderly

1. Health-related benefits
    -   Maintain/improve health condition
    -   Reduce/avoid stiffness of body
    -   Take a rest in the park
2. Social benefits
    -   Chat to other people
    -   Know more people
3. Psychological benefits
    -   Enjoy pleasant scenery, green environment and fresh air
    -   Enjoy quietness in the park
    -   Cultivate mind
    -   Be able to pass time
    -   Be happy to teach or help others
    -   Feeling of not being alone
    -   Have more pleasant personality
    -   Increased life satisfaction and happiness
    -   Feeling more comfortable to be in the park
    -   Be able to observe people/activities

Health-related Benefits. Many participants indicated that their health could be maintained or improved through walking and exercising in the park. The following quotes show that some respondents were conscious of its influence on keeping their good health:

> [Why do you visit this park?] In the beginning, I traveled to the USA with my kids and I couldn't adjust to jet lag when I got back Hong Kong. I couldn't sleep at night. So I came here to exercise. I always have a sore feeling with my waist…I found that it improves after doing exercise for a while. My waist is fine now…I do more exercises with my waist, like turning my upper body left and right frequently…I think that doing exercises can help me to reduce the stiffness of my body. It is good for my health.

I do some exercises here, move my body. It is good for my health. At least I can

move my body parts to reduce the stiffness. I am so old now. What else can I do

except exercises?

Walking or doing a little exercise here everyday can improve my health…Doing

exercises can keep my body fit. If I don't move, I will be useless soon.

I always sit or walk in the park…walking is good for my health…I can maintain

the flexibility of my body.

Keeping physically fit and staying healthy were perceived to be important to these

sample members. Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park can offer a place to them for

walking or doing exercises in order to maintain or improve their health conditions.

Social Benefits. Some indicated that one of the purposes that led them to visit the

park was to chat with other elderly. A respondent observed: "Here there are some people

that I can talk to…There are many older people in this park. This is one of the reasons

that brings me here. Everyone is old (here). They are old just like me." Most visitors to

the park are old people and some indicated that it was easier to talk to old people since

they had similar life experiences and ways of thinking.

Apart from talking to people of similar age, some participants felt more

comfortable talking to those people who had similar origins. A participant indicated:

I don't come to this park with anyone. I come here by myself. When I see some

people from the same village as me in mainland China, we chat. [Are there many

of those people who are from your village?] Yes, there are some. [Which village

are you from?] Tung Guan province [Did you know those people before?] I know

those persons here. We are from the same village. Then we comfortable with each

others after chatting.

Most participants indicated that they only chatted to those people whom they

knew before, rather than people whom they did not know: "I usually chat to the other

people here…I only chat to the people whom I know. If I don't see anyone that I know, I

will just sit by myself." Although a majority of participants expressed this view, some

indicated a willingness to get to know more people:

I know more people after visiting this park. When I spend more time here, and

chat to more people, I know more people here. It is just like you go to Yam Cha in

the Chinese restaurant. You will know more people if you visit there frequently.

Psychological Benefits. Several psychological benefits associated with park use

were reported. Participants expressed their appreciation of the aesthetics and green

environment of the park:

Air is fresh here. That is why I come here. The scenery is pleasant here….

We come here to see green trees, and breathe fresh air. This park has some trees.

So I come here.

I enjoy the scenery here. You know the air pollution is pretty serious in a city.

There are many green trees here, so I can breathe fresh air.

I usually watch people playing chess, sit, walk, and breathe fresh air there (in the

park)…There are many green trees inside the park…It is good for my health.

The park is quiet, so I can sit here and enjoy the quietness.

The Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park is located in a busy central area where few

trees or natural resources can be found. This may contribute to the appreciation and

cherishment of the green environment of the park by the elderly. It provides a place for them to withdraw temporarily from the concrete city.

A respondent indicated that practicing Tai Chi and Ku Fu in the park everyday would improve his health, pass his time and cultivate his mind:

I visit this park every morning. It is open at 6:30am. I always come here around that time. I usually practice Tai Chi and Chinese Ku Fu, walk and talk to others. I learned Tai Chi and Chinese Ku Fu from an old person who is from mainland China. He was here to visit his relatives. He played Tai Chi in this park during his stay. Since I was retired and was spending my time in the park, I started to learn Tai Chi and Chinese Ku Fu with him. I have practiced them every day since then. While I am practicing, some people also follow my actions. I teach them Tai Chi and Chinese Ku Fu if they are interested in it. It is good for health and can cultivate the mind…This park is close to my residence. I have nothing to do, and have nowhere to go. I come here to practice Ku Fu and Tai Chi…walking or doing a little exercise here every day can improve my health, pass my time, and cultivate my mind.

Retirement gives the elderly more free time than they had as young adults. For those elderly who do not need to perform house chores or who now perform fewer house chores, they may feel that they have too much time on their hands. This participant learned Tai Chi and Chinese Ku Fu in the park and since then, he practices them everyday, and even teaches them to others. Tak Wah Park offers him a place to conduct these activities, so he can pass his time and cultivate his mind. The participant was also happy that he could teach others these skills. The role of being a teacher gave this

respondent a sense of fulfillment. Similarly, another respondent who offered free dancing

classes in the park stated:

> I visit the park everyday. It has been 10 years. I teach dancing here. It is free.
> Anyone who's interested in it is welcome to join us… I come here by myself and
> meet my students here. I have many students who have been in my class for many
> years. I didn't know them in the beginning. More people joined us later. There are
> now many students in my class. We have practice every morning…. I receive no
> money from my volunteering. Helping others brings me happiness. I am happy
> with what I am doing now…I teach Chinese dance. After the class, I join my
> students for Yum Cha.

A feeling of not being alone was indicated as a reason to visit the park by some in

the sample:

> It is good that I can exercise with other elderly together…We always turn on the
> music, and do exercises together. It is too boring if I exercise alone.

> I feel happier here. If I stay at home, I feel lonely.

Multiple reasons may lead to a preference for going to the park to meet other

elderly. Both respondents above indicated that their children were unable to accompany

them most of time. Feeling alone at home encouraged them to find a place where they

could spend their time and stay with others.

Respondents reported some psychological changes after attending the park. Some

stated that they felt happier in the park:

> Here there are some people that I can talk to…We always chat to each other…It
> does make our lives happier and make our personalities more pleasant.

> I come here for practicing Ku Fu and Tai Chi…We feel more comfortable and happy here.

> I feel happier in the park…Visiting the park increases my life satisfaction.

Retaining a pleasant personality, increasing life satisfaction, or feeling more comfortable and happy in the park were the psychological benefits received by some participants. These contributed to their repeating park visitation behavior.

However, not all respondents preferred to talk to others. Some preferred doing things on their own without interacting with others:

> I can sit and relax here. I can observe people passing me by. I observe people's faces…I always like to stay in the park. It was the same when I was young. I have a special interest. I like to observe people.

To those who do not like to interact with others, sitting alone and observing people can be entertainment. Tak Wah Park offers a place where they can conduct these activities.

DISCUSSION

This section discusses and interprets the results that were described in Findings section. It uses the same framework, viz.: i) perceptions of aging; ii) constraints associated with the park use; iii) benefits from park going.

Perception of Aging

Define "Oldness". Most participants in the study perceived themselves as being old people. Different factors led to such a perception. These included: increased age; declined health condition; being unable to perform the same tasks which could be done in their young adulthood; hair coloration; not having a job; slower motion; being less energetic; children having their own families; not being able to work as fast as before; abundant life experience; and forgetfulness.

Although differences may exist among the elderly in different countries, some of the models which have been developed in western countries to explain aging appear to be appropriate for explaining perception of "oldness" of the elderly in Hong Kong. Based on the models that have been identified in the literature review, models which appear to be useful in determining the oldness of the elderly in Hong Kong are shown in Table 24.

1) Chronological Model

Many respondents classified themselves as "old" because of their chronological age. They differentiated themselves from other age groups based on age differences. The chronological model (Gould, 1975; Levinson et al., 1978; Iso-Ahola, 1980) assigns ages to each life stage. In this study, respondents categorized themselves into the older aged group based on their increased age. This implies that they recognized that they were in

their later life stage. Therefore, the chronological model could be used to define aging in

Hong Kong.

TABLE 24

Models Appropriate for Defining "Oldness" of the Elderly in Hong Kong

Reasons of feeling being old reported by the sample	Models can be used for defining their "oldness"
• Increased age	Chronological model (Gould, 1975; Levinson et al., 1978; Iso-Ahola, 1980)
• Declined health • Hair coloration • Being less energetic	Biological model (Teaff, 1985; Teague & MacNeil, 1992; McGuire, Boyd & Tedrick, 2004)
• Unable to perform the same tasks which could be done in their young adulthoods • Slower motion • Cannot work as fast as before • Forgetfulness	Behavioral model (Kalish, 1982; McGuire, Boyd & Tedrick, 2004)
• Not having a job • Children have their own families	Sociocultural model (Teague & MacNeil, 1992)
• Different personalities led to different perceptions of aging	Personal model (Teague & MacNeil, 1992)

2) Biological Model

The biological model of aging (Teaff, 1985; Teague & MacNeil, 1992; McGuire,

Boyd & Tedrick, 2004) defines "oldness" based on the physical characteristics of aged

people. Changes in physical body attributes were used to determine oldness by some of

the sample including: declined health, hair coloration, and being less energetic.

Respondents in this study felt old based on their physical changes. Therefore, the

biological model could be used to define their "oldness".

3) Behavioral Model

Several behavioral changes were reported, including: Unable to perform the same tasks which they could do when younger; slow motion; unable to work as fast as before and forgetfulness. These changes are closely related to their declined health. The changes are so obvious that the elderly realize they no longer have the capability to perform a task they did when they were young adults. The behavioral model (Kalish, 1982; McGuire, Boyd & Tedrick, 2004), which determines the oldness of a person through displaying certain behaviors characteristics, can be applied in this case.

4) Sociocultural Model

Respondents reported that they felt old because they were not working and their children had their own families. They recognized the change of their roles in their later life. They were no longer head of the household. When they were young, they worked and took care of their families. Loss of these roles made them feel that they were no longer young. The sociocultural model assigns various roles to different life stages. The roles of old people are different from those who are young. For instance, old people are often retired instead of working. Therefore, this model also could be used to explain perceptions of oldness.

5) Personal Model

Since the findings of this study are based on self-reported interviews, respondents injected their personal feelings into perceptions of their oldness. Therefore, their personalities could be an influential factor in determining their perceptions of their aging. Given the same conditions, those who have more pleasant personalities might be more optimistic about their aging while those who are always pessimistic might feel being

miserable all the time in their later lives. As a result, in the same age cohort, some respondents feel old while others do not. The personal model (Teague & MacNeil, 1992), which suggests that people define their own perception of oldness, can be applied in this research.

6)   A Proposed Multi-factors Model

The links with the models above suggest that, although the context of this study may be different from studies that have been conducted in other countries, the basic concepts for studying oldness of the elderly is similar. However, it should be noted that the analysis of application of the models was based on the self-reports of respondents on their oldness, rather than on reports of perceptions of oldness from those in other age cohorts.

Based on analysis of the data collected in this research, a new model which can be used for defining "oldness" of the elderly, is proposed in Figure 24.
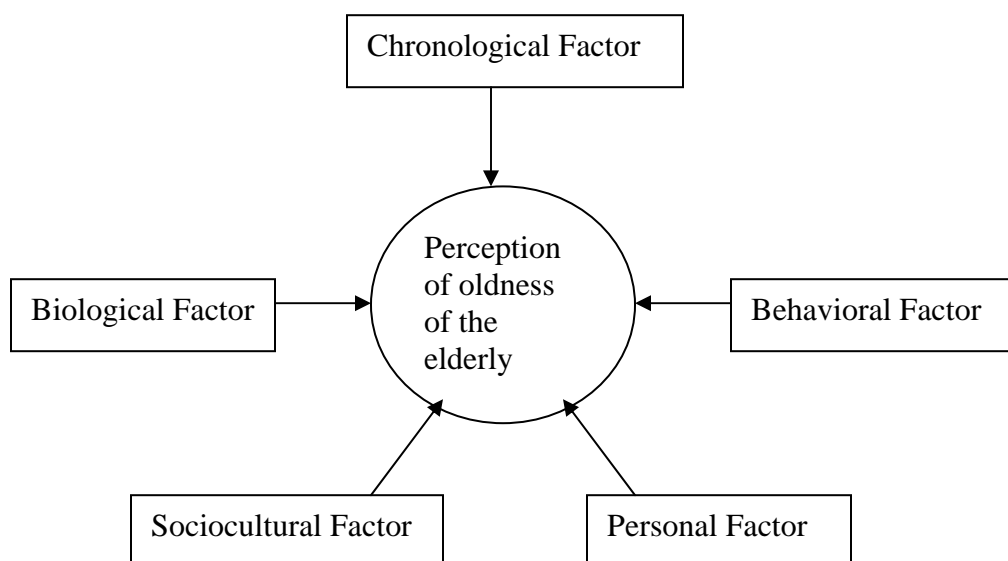
Figure 24.   A Proposed Multi-factors Model for Defining Oldness of Elderly

This model suggests that the elderly's perceptions of oldness is explained by multiple rather than a single factor. The earlier paragraphs described the unilateral influence of all five models: chronological, biological, behavioral, sociocultural, and personal, showing that each could be used to define the aging cohort in Hong Kong. This provides *ipso facto* evidence that aging is influenced by multiple factors and, thus, should be defined by a multi-factors model.

Life Satisfaction. Some elderly in this study expressed unhappiness during the interviews, while others indicated satisfaction with their lives. Life satisfaction of the elderly in Hong Kong appeared to be determined by a combination of factors relating to the availability of resources and presence of threats in later life. Hong Kong has a distinctive historical background and social structure which influences the formation of these resources and threats. For instance, it is comprised mainly of immigrants from mainland China stimulated by past unstable and perceived intolerable political situations and poverty in mainland China. Most immigrants, who are today's elderly in Hong Kong, have never been educated or have only a few years of formal educations. This caused them to take low status jobs in order to support their families. Their low income and busy working life did not enable them to engage in leisure activities. Since most of their time in young adulthood was spent on working, skills and habits of leisure activities were not developed.

When western culture subsequently was incorporated into Hong Kong's Chinese culture, the low education of the elderly made it difficult for them to embrace new ideas, skills and cultures. Younger generations have acquired new technological knowledge from their formal education and, thus, play more important roles in society while the

elderly remain as unskilled workers. The importance of the elderly in society has diminished as a result and, thus, the social status of the elderly is relatively low compared to their status in the past. Other threats that may lead to dissatisfaction of the elderly included: declined health, financial strain, lack of family social support, and diminished filial responsibility.

Some elderly reported they were satisfied with their lives. Different perceptions of life satisfaction of the elderly may be attributable to different resources and threats to which they are exposed. For instance, some elderly lived with their children or spouses, while others lived alone; some elderly persons' personalities are optimistic, while others feel pessimistic all the time; some elderly have adequate financial capacity, while others do not. It appeared that those who had more resources were more likely to have higher life satisfaction. To maintain a happy later life, it is necessary to maintain or increase the beneficial resources available to the elderly, and minimize the threats if elimination is impossible.

Aging Theories. Some of the aging theories, which have been developed in the literature in western countries, are evaluated here to see if those theories are useful for explaining the aging phenomenon among this sample from Hong Kong.

1)   Theory of Socialization

Most elderly reported that they did not engage in much leisure activity when they were young. After work their time was occupied in taking care of their house chores. After retirement, they started to visit the park, walk around, do exercises. Their roles were different before and after retirement. In their young adulthood, they acted as heads of households and had the responsibility of taking care of their families. These roles were

lost after retirement, or even before retirement when their children became independent. Some elderly may look for new activities to occupy their lives, while some may remain idle. The theory of socialization, which suggests various social roles associated with various life stages, can be used to interpret this change of the roles.

2)   Disengagement Theory

Although the elderly gradually withdraw from society, this withdrawal may be forced instead of being volunteered for some elderly. The diminishing importance of their contribution to society leads to withdrawing themselves from the roles that they had taken when they were young and, thus, dissatisfaction can be result for these people. However, some elderly indicated a willingness to take a rest after working for a long time. For these people, withdrawal may increase their life satisfaction. Therefore, the disengagement theory, which suggests only an inevitable mutual satisfying experience from disengagement from society, cannot fit into the context of Hong Kong completely.

Apart from changing roles in the society, some elderly pointed out that they also had to change their leisure activities due to declining health. Declining health is one of main concerns of the elderly in Hong Kong. Ikels (1983) indicated health probably had the greatest impact on the lives of the elderly. The declined health of the elderly reduces the ability to participate in some leisure activities. Therefore, they may not be able to engage in some activities that they desire. Dissatisfaction with life may occur as a result of constraints from health to leisure participation. This further implies that disengagement theory is not suitable for explaining the aging phenomenon in Hong Kong.

3)   Activity Theory

Participants who were more active in leisure activities were generally more satisfied with their lives, while those who spent more time on doing non-active activities such as sitting or walking around, had lower life satisfaction. For instance, one respondent stated:

> I am happy with my life. [Why?] Don't have to be too serious about everything. Cherish what you have, but don't focus too much on what you don't have. Don't compare yourself too much with others. [Do you feel fulfillment in your life?] Not so much. [Why?] I can't learn everything that I want to learn. [What do you want to learn?] There are many things. I want to learn music, everything. There are many classes being offered in many places for anyone who has an interest in learning. [Do you want to attend the classes?] It would depend on my interest. If I am interested in a class, I would take it. It also depends on my time. I would like to learn, if I have enough time to attend the classes.

He was currently teaching some elderly to do healthy exercises in Fuk Lai Estate. He had an active life style. He indicated that he was busy every day, and did not have time to practice what he learned from the computer class that he is taking. Another respondent was pessimistic with his life: "I have nothing to do. I don't even like gambling. I don't have any leisure habits…I don't have many expectations for my life. I am passing my time now."

The comparison of life satisfactions between these two respondents indicated that activity theory (Lemon, Bengston & Peterson, 1972), which suggests a higher level of satisfaction can be maintained through a more active leisure participation in the later life,

can explain differences in life satisfaction expressed by those who were active in leisure participation compared to those who are not.

Activity theory also indicated that roles lost should be compensated with new roles in order to maintain life satisfaction. The first respondent was learning new knowledge such as computer skills and taking new activities such as practicing and teaching healthy exercises. The role lost, i.e., working, was substituted with other roles. In contrast, the other respondent was doing nothing after retirement. This may contribute to his life dissatisfaction since life seems is no longer interesting to him. This comparison demonstrates that Activity Theory can be one of the aging theories which explains the aging phenomenon in Hong Kong.

4)   Age Stratification Theory

Most participants in this study had similar life experiences: experienced poverty and unstable politics in China, immigrated to Hong Kong, and worked hard in Hong Kong. Prior to the Sino-Japanese conflict, many Chinese people left China and migrated to Hong Kong. During the war, some of these refugees died due to a lack of food and medical attention, some moved back to China, and some remained in Hong Kong. In the late 1940s, the Chinese Nationalist Government was defeated and the communists took over China. Hong Kong experienced large numbers of immigrants after that time. Millions of people migrated from China to live in Hong Kong permanently. Most respondents reported that they worked hard and that life was difficult at that time. People had to work hard in order to support themselves and their families. After long working hours, they had to take care of the house chores. Due to the unstable politics and poverty in China, a majority of them did not have a chance to have a formal education. The low

education level forced them to occupy low status jobs in Hong Kong and, thus, their financial capacity was limited. This similar life experience resulted in similar leisure patterns among respondents in their young adulthood. Most of them indicated they seldom did anything for their own pleasure. They devoted most of their time to taking care of their families after work. Therefore, Age Stratification Theory, which advocates that a society is defined by a series of age strata and people located in each age stratum have similar life course dimensions, can be used to explain this phenomenon.

5)   Modernization Theory

Several studies have pointed out that the elderly are the group of people influenced most by the changes in Hong Kong. The public housing program was initiated due to the need to relocate as many as 50,000 people who became homeless after a disastrous fire in the Shek Kip Mei. The government keeps providing houses in some rural territories to alleviate the steady increase in population of core urban areas. The relocation broke the ties among the original neighborhoods. Old people have to fit into the unfamiliar environment and get to know their new neighborhoods. The previous networks among the neighborhood for support and assistance were broken due to the relocation. For those who do not live with their children, and are not proficient in speaking the common language in Hong Kong, relocation to new environs created a difficult situation.

A free education for nine years is currently offered to the young generation in Hong Kong. Unlike the older group, this nine-year education ensures that new generations will have a certain level of education. Financial assistance is available for those who want to pursue further education. This mass education offers the younger

generation a better chance to learn advanced technology and information processes. Thus, these people are better equipped to occupy important roles in Hong Kong society. Since most of the elderly in Hong Kong are either not educated, or have a relatively low education level, they can only become unskilled workers, and are gradually phased out from the job market. The social status of this group of people is reduced due to the diminishing importance of their roles in the society. Therefore, the modernization theory, which addresses the influence of modernization in a society on the status of elderly, can explain this phenomenon well.

The application of aging theories in the context of Hong Kong demonstrates that although the aging phenomenon in different countries may not be the same, it may be explained by similar theories. For instance, the education level and financial ability of older people in the United States may be higher than those in Hong Kong. However, elderly people in both societies may be adversely influenced by their lower skill levels in advanced technology. Therefore, some aging theories which can explain the aging phenomenon in the United States can usefully be applied to the aging context in Hong Kong.

Constraints Associated with Park Use

The constraints associated with park use identified here do not include the constraints of those who were not invited to participate in this study. For instance, this study did not capture the constraints to use of those who were working or who stayed at home. Nevertheless, this study provides some insights into constraints associated with park use.

The literature review pointed out that there was a heterogeneity of leisure constraints among different age cohorts of the elderly. This study included three age cohorts: 60-69, 70-79, and 80+. The constraints reported by each group are reported in Table 25. Although similar constraints were reported, there are some differences on the constraints reported by these three cohorts.

Both the 60-69 and 70-79 cohorts reported that "being too busy" was one of the constraints associated with park use. However, this constraint was not reported by those in the 80+ age group. This might be because most of those in the 80+ cohort were not responsible for house chores due to their health constraints, while those in the younger age groups still needed to take care of some house chores in their family. An aged 82 year old reported:

> I can't do any house chores now. I don't even cook now. I don't need to do anything now. Even if I want to do it, my hands and legs do not allow me to do it since they are so stiff now.

Several of those in the 60-69 and 70-79 age groups reported that they needed to do some house chores at home. For example:

> I help my wife with house chores. I have five family members. My children have to work. If I help with doing the house chores, preparing meals, my sons can take a rest when they get home. All of them are working now.

It is reasonable to conclude that the health of the younger elderly is generally better than that of the older elderly. Therefore, they are still capable of performing some house chores. For the same reason, the older age groups (70-79 and 80+) reported that the "park is too far from their residence", while the younger age group (60-69) did not include this

as one of their constraints. Lack of companions was reported as a more prominent

constraint among those in the old age group in past research. In this study, "not knowing

other park visitors" was reported as a constraint only in the 80+ age group. This may be

because older people like to stay in a familiar environment or stay with familiar people.

TABLE 25
Constraints Associated with Park Use Reported by the Elderly of Three Age Cohorts

60-69	70-79	80+

1. Poor health conditions
  a. Poor vision
2. Being too busy
3. Poor park management
  a. Too crowded
  b. Poor hygiene
  c. Unethical behaviors in
    the park
    - Drug use
    - Prostitution
4. Having other options
5. Lack of interest
	1. Poor health conditions
	  a. Unable to walk far
	2. Being too busy
	3. Poor park management
	  a. Too crowded
	  b. Poor hygiene
	  c. Unethical behaviors in
	    the park
	    - Prostitution
	4. Weather
	5. Having other options
	6. Too far from residence
	7. Not wanting to interrupt
	   daily schedule
		1. Poor health conditions
		  a. Being ill
		  b. Lack of energy
		2. Poor park management
		  a. Unethical behaviors in
		    the park
		    - Drug use
		    - Prostitution
		3. Having other options
		4. Too far from residence
		5. Not knowing other park
		  visitors
		6. Too many male park
		  visitors

The hierarchical model of leisure constraints which was developed by Crawford,

Jackson and Godbey (1991) is useful in interpreting the findings from this research. Table

26 reports constraints associated with park use by the elderly in three categories:

Intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints. Based on this categorization, park

or leisure managers can implement strategic plans for reducing or eliminating particular

types of constraints. For instance, to remove the intrapersonal constraints that the elderly

encounter, more parks should be built closer to residential areas, so those who are unable

to walk far can more easily visit the park. The parks should be designed to provide

pleasant landscaping to arouse the interest of elderly in attending the park. A better park management should be enforced in order to reduce the structural constraints of attending the park. For example, problems of drug use or prostitution being conducted in the park could be addressed and eliminated. These examples show that the categorization can better present the constraints associated with park use among the elderly, so park managers can focus on alleviating specific constraint items.

TABLE 26

Application of Hierarchical Model of Leisure Constraints in Hong Kong

Intrapersonal Constraints
1. Poor health conditions
   a. Unable to walk far
   b. Poor vision
   c. Being ill
   d. Lack of energy
2. Lack of interest
3. Other interests
4. Not wanting to interrupt daily schedule
5. Being too busy

Interpersonal Constraints
1. Not knowing other park visitors
2. Too many male park visitors

Structural Constraints
1. Poor park management
   a. Too crowded
   b. Poor hygiene
   c. Unethical behaviors in the park
      - Drug use
      - Prostitution
2. Weather
3. Having other options
4. Too far from residence

Benefits from Park Going

The benefits identified in this study are self-reported benefits. It is possible that some of the benefits of that accrue from visiting a park may not be realized by the sample's participants. For instance, frequent exercising or walking in the park may prevent heart disease which otherwise may develop, but they may not recognize this. The list of benefits reported in this study shows that visiting park can contribute to both the physical and mental health of the elderly. Psychological needs such as enjoying being with other elderly in the park were fulfilled through park visiting. Some elderly also reported that visiting the park increased their life satisfaction and happiness.

The benefits identified in this study indicate that Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park benefits the elderly, not only by maintaining or improving their physical health conditions, but also by contributing to their satisfying psychological experience in the park. Some benefits associated with park use are the same as the benefits reported in other leisure research in western countries. For instance, the need for companionship of the elderly is reported in this study and in previous studies. This indicates that similarities in terms of psychological needs may exist among elderly who reside in different countries. However, the extent of the need for companionship may be different. Most elderly in Hong Kong lack education. Their financial ability is thus relatively low compared to many elderly in western countries, such as the United States. Chinese elderly are likely to be more dependent on others for financial income compared to their western counterparts. Also, most Chinese elderly expect to be taken care of by their children in their later life. However, the gradual diminished filial responsibility in Chinese society means that many children move out from their parents' house after

getting married. The loss of job and importance in both family and society leads to a rolelessness for these old people. The dependent character which has been cultivated in past years makes some elderly feel miserable in their later life. One respondent who lived in a nursing house shared his feelings:

> My son is away, doesn't contact me anymore…I am alone all the time. No one can accompany me…I am old now. What can I expect from my life? As long as I can walk, I am ok with it.

He showed his unhappiness and depression in the interview. Some children may be willing to accompany their parents in some cases. However, their working schedule may keep them away from being with elderly parents. Some elderly remarked on their joy and happiness when they stayed with their children:

> I always walk around by myself. My children don't have time to accompany me. We only spend a few times together when they call me up for Yum Cha. Since I want to meet them, I meet them in the restaurant even though I don't like the food there. I always cook for myself. I only eat the food that I cook. You know, the food outside is not clean and healthy. It has so many artificial ingredients. That's why there are so many kinds of diseases occurring nowadays such as cancer. People don't care about the food they are eating. The food in the Chinese restaurant is imported from mainland China where the foods are not being properly processed. I don't like the food there.

She indicated that she only eats what she cooks for herself, since she does not like the food provided in the restaurant. However, she goes for Yum Cha with her children even though she does not like the food in the restaurant since she wants to meet her children.

This shows her need for the companionship of her children. It is suspected that the need for companionship is especially strong among the elderly in Hong Kong; more so than in the western countries due to cultural differences and, therefore, the degree of benefit they receive from socialization when visiting the park may also be greater.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusions

The main objectives were to investigate the perception of aging, and to identify constraints and benefits associated with park use experienced by a sample of elderly in Hong Kong. The study provides a literature review of aging theories, leisure constraints, and benefits. This review acted as a basis for investigating aging in Hong Kong. Interviews were conducted with two convenience samples: One group of elderly was using the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park in Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong, while the other was recruited from outside the park. All participants were aged 60 or over. It was anticipated that constraints and benefits associated with park use among the elderly could be discovered, and the aging phenomenon in Hong Kong better understood as a result of this study.

Based on the literature review and narratives that were generated from the interviews, the study evaluated aging models and theories which have been developed in western countries to see if they fit the context of Hong Kong. It was found that although there were some models and theories that were not applicable, some of them could be used to interpret the aging phenomenon in Hong Kong. The chronological, biological, behavioral, cultural, and personal models appeared to have attributes that explained how elderly in Hong Kong defined oldness. While disengagement theory did not appear to be useful, theory of socialization, activity theory, age stratification theory, and modernization theory were found to be applicable in Hong Kong. Thus, it is concluded that, even though aging in Hong Kong and in western countries may be different, the theories which explain the aging phenomenon may be similar.

Several constraints associated with park use were reported by the sample. Although constraints reported by the elderly in different cohorts may be similar, heterogeneity among different age cohorts of the elderly exits. Due to the different resources processed by elderly in different age cohorts, the types of constraints and extent of influence of those constraints on their leisure participation and park attendance are also different. For instance, elderly in the 60-69 and 70-79 age groups were constrained more by doing house chores than those in 80+ age group. The constraint items are interrelated. For example, different health status of the elderly in different age cohorts may lead to different responsibilities for performing house chores and, thus, different levels of leisure participation. Since the elderly in the 80+ age group are constrained more by health, they perform fewer house chores than those in other age groups.

Several health-related, social and psychological benefits of attending parks were reported. Although similarities exist between the benefits reported in this study and those reported in western countries, the extent of benefits received from visiting parks may be different because of the different characteristics of elderly in different countries. For instance, the need for companionship among Chinese elderly may be higher than that among elderly in western countries. Therefore, Chinese elderly may derive a higher level of satisfaction in companionship from park visiting than those in western countries.

Implications

Most elderly aged 60 or over are retired from work. Therefore, they have more time for leisure. How they spend their time greatly influences their life satisfaction. Leisure has been found to be an important part of their later life. Neglecting the elderlys' needs in leisure can lead to unhappiness and life dissatisfaction. To tailor-make leisure

services for the elderly, leisure managers need to understand the aging phenomenon, and leisure constraints and benefits experienced by the elderly. Given the lack of research in Hong Kong, this study acts as a stepping stone in developing knowledge on these topics.

Aging theories developed in western countries were evaluated in the context of Hong Kong. Through the application of those theories, the characteristics of aging in Hong Kong become more conspicuous and understandable. This study identified constraints and benefits associated with park use through self-reports of the elderly. The narratives convey the elderlys' needs and difficulties in achieving life satisfaction. This information is useful not only for enhancing the knowledge of those who work in supplying leisure services to the elderly, but also for alleviating the constraints that the elderly experience and improving the quality of park services.

This study shows that many respondents do not integrate leisure habits into their lives. The diminished social roles and inadequate knowledge of leisure led to them being bored in the later life. When they were young, they did not have to chance to participate in leisure activities. Most of their time was occupied by work and taking care of house chores and their families. Therefore, they do not know how to spend their time in their later life. Leisure education is necessary in order to help them build a healthy leisure habit which can possibly enhance their life satisfaction and happiness. Given that most elderly in Hong Kong have little education, leisure education should be conducted informally instead of formally. For instance, television and outreach teams could be good media to convey leisure messages to the elderly on topics such as how to keep their bodies fit; encourage them to join free tours and participate in various leisure activities; inform them as to where and where traditional Chinese drama will be located, and so on.

When designing leisure services, leisure services providers should take the financial constraints of the elderly into consideration. The activities offered should be free or partially financially supported by the government in order to give leisure opportunities to those who lack financial resources.

Leisure education in both school and society should be conducted. Knowing the importance of having habits in later life, the government should educate young people about the importance of developing leisure skills, so they will not experience leisure incapacity in later life. Promotional efforts should be made to arouse and maintain a sense of filial responsibility for taking care of the elderly among young people.

Modern urban planning should be aware of the increasing aging population in Hong Kong. Consideration on providing more open space and recreation facilities to the elderly should be given in new urban planning schema. The amenities for the elderly should be located at convenient locations to maximize accessibility.

Improving existing service depends not only on the effort of leisure service management, but also on leisure academics. It is important to integrate the efforts of both so quality of leisure services to the elderly is enhanced and, thus, their life satisfaction is improved. Intergovernmental cooperation is useful for better planning, designing, implementing and evaluating elderly services. For instance, researchers can bring results of their studies of aging to agencies and suggest to them how to improve existing leisure services for the elderly. The government should show its enthusiasm and caring in elderly services by taking these suggestions seriously. The government should also convey a clear message to all its departments that providing quality leisure services is essential to maintaining a healthy society.

More research should be done to further investigate leisure constraints and benefits experienced by the elderly in Hong Kong. Future research should not necessarily focus only on parks, but could also be extended to other elderly services such as elderly care centers.

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APPENDIX A

IN-PARK INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

In-park Interview Protocol
Topic: Benefits and Constraints Associated with Park Use Reported by the Elderly in Hong Kong
The purpose of this study is to examine the personal benefits and constraints associated with the use of urban parks by the elderly in Hong Kong.

Time of interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewee:

Age of interviewee:

Age Group: 1) 60-69; 2) 70-79; and 3) 80+

Gender of interviewee (by observation): Female_____ Male_____

Questions:
1.   Socio-demographics Information

1.   What is your education level?

2.   What is your current job status?

3.   What is your marital status?

4.   What is your health status?

5.   How far do you live away from the park? Or, where is your residence?

2. **Park visiting patterns**

1. How often do you visit the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park (per week/month)?

2. Have you increased/ decreased/ maintained visitation to the park compared to your young adulthood?

3. Which days do you often visit the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park? (weekdays/weekends/both)

4. How much time do you usually spend in the park?

5. Please describe the people with whom you usually visit the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park.

6. What do you usually do in the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park?

3.   Benefits
"Benefits" are identified as positive conditions that are improved or maintained as a result of activity participation.

    1.   Why do you visit this park?

    2.   Can you describe any benefits that you get from visiting this park?

    3.   Among those benefits, which benefit(s) do you perceive is (are) most important to your repeated visitation to the park? Why?

    4.   Does visitation to the park increase/maintain/decrease your life satisfaction? Why?

4.   Constraints
"Constraints" are identified as those factors that lead to activity nonparticipation, insufficient level of participation, or lack of enjoyment of an activity.

1.   At age 60 or over, have you ever encountered any factors that lead to 1) Inability to maintain or increase visitation to the park at desired levels; 2) Ceasing visitation to the park; 3) Nonuse of the park; 4) Insufficient enjoyment of visitation/current activities in the park?

2.   If yes, what are those factors?

3.   How did you manage these difficulties?

4.   Did those factors exist in your young adulthood too?

5.   If yes, did they influence your visitation in the same way as they did at your age of 60 or over?

6.   If no, how different were the influences of those factors on your park visitation in your young adulthood and at age 60 or over?

5.   Aging theories
Aging definitions
   1.   Do you feel that you are old? If yes, since when? And, why?

   2.   Do other people perceive that you are old? If yes, who are they? And, how?

Successful Aging/ Adaptation (For those not visiting the park, skip questions 3-7)
   3.   What do you usually do in your daily life for leisure?

   4.   At age 60 or over, have you ever encountered any difficulties that affect your leisure participation?

   5.   If yes, what are those difficulties?

   6.   Do they differ from those in your young adulthood?

   7.   How did you manage these difficulties?

   8.   Are you satisfied/happy with who you are/your life now? Please give reasons for your answer.

Aging theories
   9.   Does your participation in these activities increase/decrease/maintain at the same level as in your young adulthood? Please give reasons for the condition that you just indicated.

   10. Did your current leisure activities/life style change in general compared to those in your young adulthood? Please give the reasons for your answer.

(Thank the individual for participating in this interview. Assure the individual of confidentiality of responses. Give the individual contact information if further information on the study is wanted.)

APPENDIX B

OUTSIDE-THE-PARK INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Outside-the-park Interview Protocol
Topic: Benefits and Constraints Associated with Park Use Reported by the Elderly in Hong Kong
The purpose of this study is to examine the personal benefits and constraints associated with the use of urban parks by the elderly in Hong Kong.

Time of interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewee:

Age of interviewee:

Age Group: 1) 60-69; 2) 70-79; and 3) 80+

Gender of interviewee (by observation): Female_____ Male_____

Questions:
1.   Socio-demographics Information

6.   What is your education level?

7.   What is your current job status?

8.   What is your marital status?

9.   What is your health status?

10. Have you ever visited Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park before? (If yes, or visited other parks, continue with sections: 2,3,4, & 6; If no, or haven't visited for a long time, go to sections 5 & 6 of the interview protocol)

2.   Park visiting patterns (For those who visit the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park or other parks)

7.   How far do you live away from the park? Or, where is your residence?

8.   How often do you visit the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park (per week/month)?

9.   Have you increased/ decreased/ maintained visitation to the park compared to your young adulthood?

10. Which days do you often visit the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park? (weekdays/weekends/both)

11. How much time do you usually spend in the park?

12. Please describe the people with whom you usually visit the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park.

13. What do you usually do in the Tsuen Wan Jockey Club Tak Wah Park?

3.   Benefits (For those who visit the park)
"Benefits" are identified as positive conditions that are improved or maintained as a result of activity participation.

5. Why do you visit this park?

6. Can you describe any benefits that you get from visiting this park?

7. Among those benefits, which benefit(s) do you perceive is (are) most important to your repeated visitation to the park? Why?

8. Does visitation to the park increase/maintain/decrease your life satisfaction? Why?

4.   Constraints (For those who visit the park)
"Constraints" are identified as those factors that lead to activity nonparticipation, insufficient level of participation, or lack of enjoyment of an activity.

7. At age 60 or over, have you ever encountered any factors that lead to 1) Inability to maintain or increase visitation to the park at desired levels; 2) Ceasing visitation to the park; 3) Nonuse of the park; 4) Insufficient enjoyment of visitation/current activities in the park?

8. If yes, what are those factors?

9. How did you manage these difficulties?

10. Did those factors exist in your young adulthood too?

11. If yes, did they influence your visitation in the same way as they did at your age of 60 or over?

12. If no, how different were the influences of those factors on your park visitation in your young adulthood and at age 60 or over?

5.   Constraints & Benefits (For those who don't visit the park)
"Constraints" were identified as those factors that lead to activity nonparticipation, insufficient level of participation, or lack of enjoyment of an activity.

   1.   Please give the reasons (constraints) for not visiting the park.

   2.   What do you usually do in your daily life for leisure?

   3.   Can you describe any benefits that you get from doing these leisure activities?

   4.   Among those benefits, which benefit(s) do you perceive is (are) most important to your continuous participation in this leisure activities? Why?

   5.   Do those activities increase/ decrease/ maintain your life satisfaction? Why?

VITA

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