A Benefits Theory of Leisure Well-Being

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Abstract

Leisure well-being is satisfaction in leisure life in a manner that contributes to subjective well-being. We develop a theory of leisure well-being that explains how leisure activities contribute to leisure well-being and ultimately quality of life. Leisure activity contributes to leisure well-being by satisfying a set of basic needs (benefits related to safety, health, economic, sensory, escape, and/or sensation/stimulation needs) and growth needs (benefits related to symbolic, aesthetic, moral, mastery, relatedness, and/or distinctiveness needs). These effects are further amplified when the benefits of leisure activities match corresponding personal characteristics, namely safety consciousness, health consciousness, price sensitivity, hedonism, escapism, sensation seeking, status consciousness, aestheticism, moral sensitivity, competitiveness, sociability, and need for distinctiveness, respectively

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1.1 Introduction

Past research has linked leisure activities (e.g., visiting family and friends, playing sports, watching television, listening to the radio, taking tourist trips, walking for pleasure, camping, making art, and/or using the internet) with subjective well-being (e.g., Andrews and Withey 1976; Balatsky and Diener 1993; Campbell et al. 1976; Headey et al. 1991; Jackson 2008; Koopman-Boyden and Reid 2009; McGuire 1984; Menec and Chipperfield 1997; Mitas 2010; Reynolds and Lim 2007; Yarnal et al. 2008). Despite of the plethora of research in this area, the question remains: How do leisure activities enhance subjective well-being? The research literature points to several theories, namely include flow (e.g., Cheng and Lu 2015; Csikszentmihalyi and LeFevre 1989) disengagement theory (e.g., Dong et al. 2014; Lapointe and Perreault 2013; Sonnentag and Fritz 2007; Sonnentag and Zijlstra 2006), self-determination theory (e.g., Conway et al. 2015; Ryan and Deci

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2000), goal theory (Kruger et al. 2015), and bottom-up spillover theory (e.g., Andrews and Withey 1976; Campbell et al. 1976; Grzeskowiak et al. 2014; Kim et al. 2015; Kuykendall et al. 2015; Newman et al. 2014; Zuzanek and Zuzanek 2014).

Our focus here is to use bottom-up spillover theory of life satisfaction to build a theory of leisure well-being (see Sirgy 2012 for a discussion of the subjective well-being research dominated by this theory). Specifically, we introduce 12 sets mechanisms that impact satisfaction with leisure life and subjective well-being (i.e., leisure well-being): leisure benefits related to safety, health, economic, hedonic, escape, sensation-seeking, symbolic, aesthetics, morality, mastery, relatedness, and distinctiveness. We theorize that the a leisure activity contributes to leisure well-being if it meets certain basic needs (benefits related to safety, health, economic, sensory, escape, and/or sensation/stimulation needs) and certain growth needs (benefits related to symbolic, aesthetic, moral, mastery, relatedness, and/or distinctiveness needs). We also theorize that amplification occurs when certain benefits of leisure activities match corresponding personality traits: safety consciousness, health consciousness, price sensitivity, hedonism, escapism, sensation seeking, status consciousness, aestheticism, moral sensitivity, competitiveness, sociability, and need for distinctiveness, respectively (cf. Driver et al. 1991; Edginton et al. 2005; Liu 2014; Mayo and Jarvis 1981).

1.2 The Theory

Our theory of leisure well-being is heavily influenced by concepts from Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs, Schwartz's (1994) value taxonomy, Inglehart's (2008) value system, Deci and Ryan's (2010) self-determination theory of motivation, and Murray (1938) individual needs. Hence, our theory reflects theoretical notions related to how a leisure activity is motivated by a set of benefits as reflected in the seminal works of Deci/Ryan, Inglehart, Maslow, Murray, and Schwartz.

We believe that every leisure activity is associated with certain goals--benefits related to basic needs (safety, health, economic, hedonic, escape, and sensation-seeking) as well as growth needs (symbolic, aesthetic, moral, mastery, relatedness, and distinctiveness benefits). The central tenet of the theory is that a leisure activity contributes significantly to leisure well-being if it delivers a range of benefits related to both basic and growth needs (see Fig. 1.1)—*the more a leisure activity delivers benefits related to basic and growth needs the greater the likelihood that such an activity would contribute significantly to satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being (i.e., leisure well-being)* (cf. Lee et al. 2014).

The psychological mechanism linking *perceived benefits* from a leisure activity and satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being can be explained using *bottom-up spillover theory* (e.g., Neal et al. 1999; Newman et al. 2014; Ragheb and Griffith 1982). The theory asserts that satisfaction with a specific leisure activity contributes to satisfaction in leisure life, which in turn contributes to subjective well-being. This is a psychological process involving a satisfaction hierarchy in which satisfaction related to a specific life event influences satisfaction with certain life domains, which in turn influences life satisfaction overall. Life satisfaction (or subjective well-being) is viewed to be a satisfaction construct on top of the satisfaction hierarchy; satisfaction in leisure life (as well satisfaction in other life domains such as social life, work life, family life, love life, community life, financial life) is considered to be less abstract. Hence, satisfaction in life domains (leisure life being a salient life domain) directly influences subjective well-being—a process characterized as bottom-up spillover. Similarly, satisfaction with a specific life event (e.g., leisure activity) is considered to be most concrete—bottom of the satisfaction hierarchy. Satisfaction with a life event influences domain satisfaction, which in turn influences subjective well-being (see a full description of this theory in Sirgy 2012).

We categorize the benefits related to a leisure activity in terms of basic versus growth needs (Maslow 1970). Leisure benefits related to basic

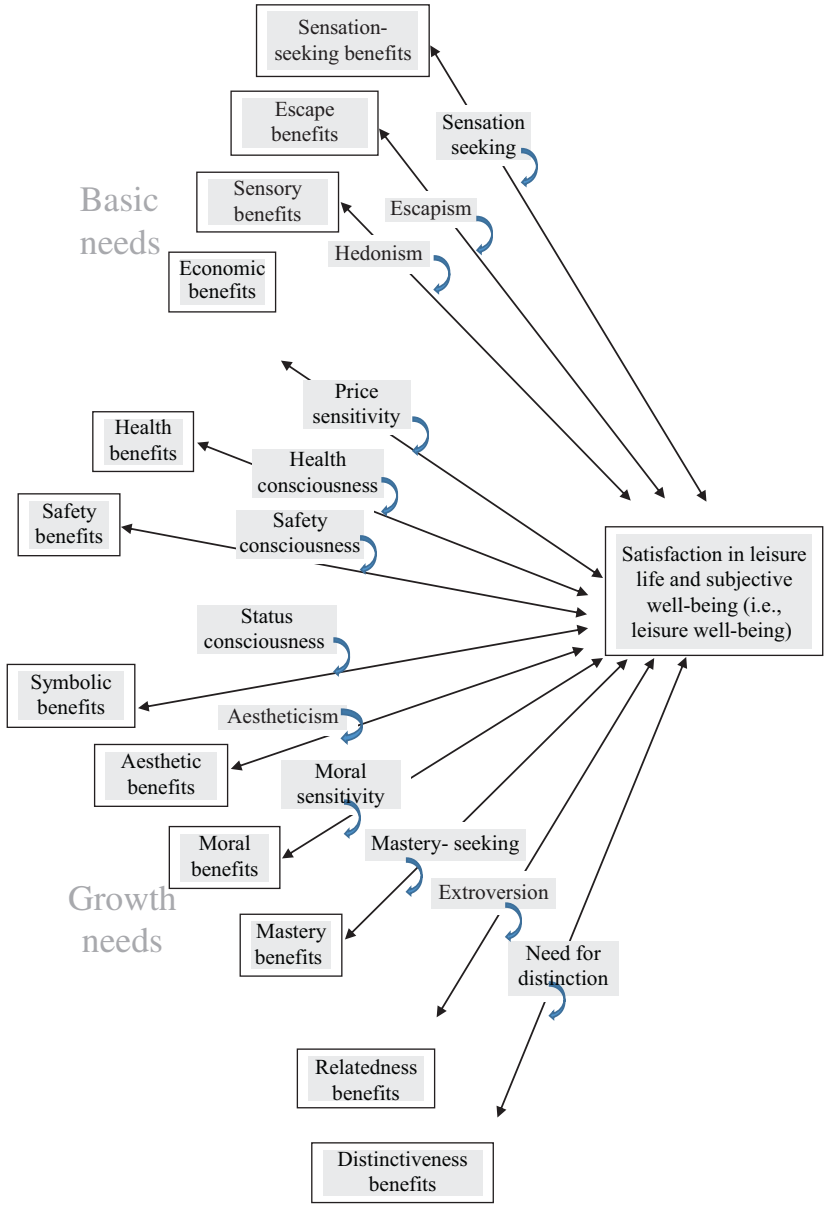

Fig. 1.1 The theory

needs include safety, health, economic, hedonic, escape, and sensation-seeking benefits. In contrast, leisure benefits related to growth needs include symbolic, aesthetic, moral, mastery, relatedness, and distinctiveness benefits. We will discuss these benefits and how they contribute to leisure well-being (i.e., satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being) in the sections below.

1.3 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Satisfaction of Basic Needs

One can argue that leisure well-being is mostly determined by leisure activities that have value derived from benefits related to basic needs such as safety, health, economic, sensory, escape, and sensation-seeking benefits (see Fig. 1.1).

1.3.1 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Safety Benefits

Leisure participants most often consider the safety features of leisure activities when they make satisfaction judgments about a leisure activity after engaging that activity (Beck and Lund 1981; Briggs and Stebbins 2014; Burton 1996; Kim et al. 2016; Mutz and Műller 2016; Pachana 2016). According to Maslow (1970), safety is a basic need. A leisure activity that meets the individual's safety needs is likely to generate feelings of security and confidence that may result in satisfaction with the activity (cf. Chitturi et al. 2008). Formally stated, leisure well-being derived from a leisure activity is a positive function of the individual's perception that the activity is safe. As such, increased safety benefits associated with a leisure activity (e.g., a person playing racquetball for leisure perceives a specific game to be safe because the players are required to wear protective eyewear) should also increase positive affect and decrease negative affect in leisure life.

We can add another personality factor that can further interact with perceived safety of the leisure activity, namely *safety consciousness* (e.g., Best et al. 2016; Forcier et al. 2001; Habib et al. 2014; Roult et al. 2016; Visentin et al. 2016; Westaby and Lee 2003). That is, leisure participants are likely to vary along safety consciousness. Those who might be highly safety-conscious and perceive the leisure activity to be unsafe are not likely to experience significant gains in leisure well-being. In other words, we believe that there is an interaction effect between perceived safety and safety consciousness on leisure well-being.

1.3.2 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Health Benefits

Leisure participants also consider the health benefits of leisure activities when they make judgments about a leisure activity before and after engagement (e.g., Blank et al. 2015; Careless and Douglas 2016; Chen et al. 2016; Davidson et al. 2016; Iwasaki and Smale 1998; Sato et al. 2014). For example, having played a good game of racquetball, the racquetball player may experience leisure satisfaction if the individual perceives significant health benefits accrued from playing the game. How many calories were lost? Increases in muscle tone? Benefits to the cardiovascular system? Etc. That is, perceived health benefits should contribute to satisfaction with the leisure activity.

Past research suggests a positive relationship between leisure activities that have health benefits and subjective well-being. For example, Newman et al. (2014) found detachment-recovery (a health-related feature of leisure activities) to promote leisure well-being. Another study (Nimrod et al. 2012) found that individuals with depression perceive leisure as a coping mechanism. Yet the more depressed they are, the less time is spent on leisure activities and the less time spent on leisure activities the more depressed they become. In a cross-sectional study among Spanish university students, Molina-Garcĭa et al. (2011) found that male and female students who are more involved in higher-level physical, leisure activities experience higher levels of psychological well-being.

Additionally, some people are more health conscious than others (e.g., Careless and Douglass 2016; Chang 2016; Iwasaki and Smale 1998; Stathi et al. 2002). If so, then one can easily argue that leisure activities perceived to be produce health benefits are likely to contribute significantly to leisure well-being (i.e., satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being) for health-conscious than nonhealth-conscious individuals.

1.3.3 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Economic Benefits

Economic needs are also involved in satisfaction judgments of leisure activities. Leisure participants may ask themselves whether the leisure activity is justified by the money spent (acquisition utility), as well as whether the money spent on the activity is a good deal compared with the

expected cost (transactional utility) (Thaler 1985; Urbany et al. 1997). Thus, individual's economic evaluation of a leisure activity is closely linked with their perceptions of the value of the activity (Sweeney and Soutar 2001). Formally stated, satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being (i.e., leisure well-being) derived from a leisure activity is a positive function of the individual's perception of the activity's ability to deliver economic value (e.g., a person playing racquetball for leisure perceives the fact that playing the game is indeed very affordable). As such, increased economic benefits associated with a leisure activity should also increase positive affect and decrease negative affect in leisure life affecting subjective well-being (cf. Brown et al. 2016; Fox 2012).

Additionally, some leisure participants are more financially frugal than others (Bove et al. 2009; Eakins 2016; Lusmägi et al. 2016). If so, then one can easily argue that leisure activities that have significant economic benefits are likely to contribute significantly to satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being (i.e., leisure well-being) for financially frugal than non-frugal individuals.

1.3.4 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Sensory Benefits

Sensory benefits and lack thereof are essentially related to basic needs. Leisure participants evaluate leisure activities on the basis of the extent to which the activity influences their sensory organs—their sense of sight, sound, touch, or scent (e.g., Wakefield and Barnes 1997). For example, activities such as sun bathing, wine tasting, and fine dining impact one's physical senses positively (Carruthers and Hood 2004). In contrast, playing a game of billiards in a dungeon that is damp, full of cigarette smoke, and disgusting rest rooms may be noxious to the individual.

Thus, one can argue that leisure well-being (satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being) derived from a leisure activity is a positive function of the individual's perception of the activity's ability to please one's physical senses. As such, decreased sensory benefits associated with a leisure activity (e.g., a person playing racquetball in a racquetball court that has not been swept and cleaned) should also decrease positive affect and increase negative affect in leisure life (Briggs and Stebbins 2014; Oliveira and Doll 2016; Weng and Chang 2014).

Additionally, some people are more sensory-oriented than others (Agapito et al. 2014; Amerine et al. 2013; Ericsson and Hastie 2013; Wakefield and Barnes 1997). As such, leisure activities that lack in sensory appeal s are not likely to contribute significantly to satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being for the sensory-types than non-sensory individuals.

1.3.5 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Escape Benefits

Much research in personality-social psychology has demonstrated that people are motivated to avoid noxious stimuli through leisure activities (e.g., Iso-Ahola 1980; Prebensen et al. 2012; Snepenger et al. 2006). Leisure activities allow them to get away from the stresses and strains from work, family, or whatever these sources of noxious stimuli. Unger and Kernan (1983) have identified six aspects of leisure activities that contribute to satisfaction: freedom from control, freedom from work, involvement, arousal, mastery, and spontaneity. Focusing on two of their six dimensions, *freedom from control* refers to "something one perceives as voluntary, without coercion or obligation" (Unger and Kernan 1983, p. 383). *Freedom from work* refers to the ability to rest, relax, and have no obligation to perform work-related tasks (cf. Sonnentag 2012). These two types of freedom contribute to satisfaction in different ways; some individuals may play golf to escape work, whereas others do so because golfing represents time away from work supervision. Neulinger (1981) posits that perceived freedom is a state in which the person feels that what she or he is doing is done by choice and because one wants to do it (p. 15). Suggestive evidence from past research supports this concept. For example, a study by Lapa (2013) found significant

differences between leisure satisfaction and perceived freedom based on age and income, perceived freedom and gender, and a positive linear relationship between life satisfaction and leisure satisfaction among park recreation participants. As such we theorize that subjective well-being derived from a leisure activity is a positive function of the individual's perception of the activity's ability to deliver freedom and escape benefits (e.g., a person playing racquetball for leisure perceives a specific game to be scheduled at times when he or she can escape from the job for an hour or two). Increased freedom/escape benefits associated with a leisure activity should also increase positive affect and decrease negative affect in leisure life.

Furthermore, some people have a greater proclivity to seek out leisure activities with freedom/escape benefits than others (Hallman et al. 2014; Haraszti et al. 2014; Lusby and Anderson 2010). If so, then one can easily argue that leisure activities that have significant freedom/escape benefits are likely to contribute significantly to satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being for individuals with a greater proclivity for freedom and escape than those with a lesser proclivity.

1.3.6 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Sensation-Seeking Benefits

Much research in personality-social psychology has demonstrated that people are motivated to seek stimulation through leisure activities (e.g., Argyle 1997). Examples of such activities include children's interest in leisurely reading outside of school hours (e.g., Jensen et al. 2011), optimal experiences in river racing (e.g., Shih and Chen 2013), leisure boredom and adolescent risk behaviors (e.g., Wegner and Flisher 2009), white-water rafting (e.g., Chen and Chen 2010), skydiving (e.g., Myrseth et al. 2012), and bungee jumping (McKay 2014).

We argue that leisure activities with sensation-seeking benefits tend to contribute to subjective well-being. Activity theory may shed some light on the why question. Much research has shown that the greater the frequency of participation in leisure activities among the elderly the higher the subjective well-being (e.g., Adams et al. 2011; Janke and Davey 2006; Lemon et al. 1972). Activities tend to make people feel alive and well. Hence, we can assert that leisure well-being (i.e., satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being) derived from a leisure activity is a positive function of the individual's perception of the activity's ability to deliver much stimulation and thrill (e.g., a person playing racquetball for leisure perceives a specific game to be highly stimulating because he or she is playing against a tough opponent). As such, increased stimulation/thrill benefits associated with a leisure activity should also increase positive affect and decrease negative affect in leisure life.

Additionally, some people are more sensation-seeking than others (e.g., Laviolette 2012; Sotomayor and Barbieri 2016; Zuckerman 1969, 1971, 2007). Zuckerman (1969, 1971, 2007) and Zuckerman and Aluja (2014) proposed the theory of "sensation seeking" involving sensory deprivation based on optimal level of stimulation. The sensation seeking scale includes 50 items that capture ideal levels of stimulation or sensory arousal based on behavioral, social and thrill-seeking types of activities. Zuckerman (2007) found that those who pursue dangerous sports tend to be sensation seekers. People who are high on sensation seeking tend to engage in high risk behaviors of all kinds. As such, we theorize that leisure activities that have significant stimulation/thrill benefits are likely to contribute significantly to satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being for sensation-seeking than non-sensation seeking individuals.

1.4 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Satisfaction of Growth Needs

Leisure scholars argue that participating in leisure activities serves as a medium for personal enhancement and self-development—offers the opportunity to realize one's potential for lasting fulfilment (e.g., Filep 2012; Kelly 1990; Kleiber

1999; Kuentzel 2000; Murphy 1974; Stebbins 1992, 1996, 2005, 2012). In other words, engaging in meaningful and purposeful leisure activities yields rewards that encompass self- actualization, self-enrichment, self-exploration, and self-gratification, and as such these rewards can be viewed as growth or higher-order needs (Hall and Weiler 1992). However, different forms and types of leisure lead to different outcomes and life enriching experiences. Robert A. Stebbins (2015), in his pioneering work on "serious leisure," classified leisure activities into three forms of leisure: serious, casual, and project-based leisure. He argues that leisure participants can achieve a sense of well-being while partaking in leisure activities whether these activities are serious pursuits, casual, or project based depending on the context in which leisure activities are experienced. For example, a number of studies in leisure and tourism reveal that a growing number of people who travel engage in leisure activities in order to seek challenges, co-create experiences, and also demonstrate creativity (cf. Filep 2008; Long 1995; Stebbins 1996; Thomas and Butts 1988; Wang and Wong 2014). Feelings of achievement and mastery are quite important for leisure participants and much research support this assertion (e.g., Beard and Ragheb 1980; Vitterso 2004; White and Hendee 2000). Thus, benefits realized from leisure activities do lead to the development of competency and skill mastery, personal development, and growth, reflecting states of self- actualization and self-enrichment, which in turn contribute to subjective well-being (e.g., Gilbert and Abdullah 2004; Dolnicar et al. 2012). The assertion that leisure activities can provide benefits that satisfy growth needs is consistent with several theories of human motivation, namely Maslow's (1970) needs theory and Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory. The extant literature supports the general theme of this paper in that every leisure activity provides functional benefits, and benefits related to basic as well as growth needs of participants as seen in Fig. 1.1. We now turn our attention to describing leisure benefits related to growth needs—symbolic, aesthetic, moral, mastery, relatedness, and distinctiveness benefits.

1.4.1 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Symbolic Benefits

The benefits that reflect self (or symbolic) needs relate directly to social approval, such that individuals evaluate leisure activities according to the extent to which those activities symbolize their social self (Maslow 1970). For example, people might wonder, "Does this leisure activity bestow status and prestige on me?" or "Are others impressed when they see me engaged in this activity?" The underlying need here is social approval (Sirgy 1986). The needs for self-esteem and self-consistency equally apply too (Sirgy 1982, 1986). People may question, "Does my engagement in this leisure activity help me become the kind of person I like to become?" (need for self-esteem) or "Is participation in this activity consistent with the kind of person I am?" (need for self-consistency).

Much research in consumer behavior has shown that consumers purchase goods to express their identity (e.g., Attanasio et al. 2015; Malhotra 1988; Sirgy 1982), and self-congruity plays an important role in pre-purchase behaviors (e.g., brand attitude, brand preferences, purchase motivation, brand choice), as well as post-consumption responses (e.g., consumer satisfaction, brand loyalty, repeat purchase). The same research applies to leisure activities and leisure well-being (Sirgy and Su 2000). How? Based on self-congruity theory (Sirgy 1986), each leisure activity is associated with a personality. For example, a person who enjoys fishing may have a calm demeanor, a person who enjoys racquetball is competitive, a person who plays chess is intellectual, etc. Thus, people feel satisfied with a leisure activity when they perceive the personality associated with a leisure activity matching their own actual self-image. Such satisfaction is motivated by the need for self-consistency. That is, people feel good about activities they participate because the activities serve to reinforce their personal identity. For example, if a person is an intellectual and has an image of a typical chess player as being intellectual, then playing a chess game serves to reinforce his image of being intellectual. This is self-valida-

tion making the person feel happy about the fact that he is playing chess. The same can be said in relation to the ideal self and social self (Snyder and DeBono 1985). People like to project positive images of themselves in the eyes of others (particularly significant others), and they may do this by engaging in leisure activities that are associated with those images. Doing so is motivated by the needs for self-esteem and social approval. For example, the image of a person who is a marathon runner is that of an athlete who can persevere through much pain and has much self-control. A person decides to participate in a marathon. He or she wants to become a person who exercises a high degree of self-control (ideal self-image); he or she wants to convince others that is a person who exercises a high degree of self-control (social self). Engaging in a marathon run is likely to be satisfying because the activity would meet the need for self-esteem (allow him or her to realize an ideal self-image) and the need for social approval (allow others to think of him or her as a person who has a high degree of self-control).

Formally stated, leisure well-being (i.e., satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being) derived from a leisure activity (e.g., a person playing racquetball for leisure perceives a specific game to be played with other players he or she can identify with—players like him of her) is a positive function of the individual's perception of the activity's symbolic value to reinforce and validate actual, ideal, and social self-image. As such, increased symbolic benefits associated with a leisure activity should also increase positive affect and decrease negative affect (Abbott-Chapman and Robertson 2015; Ekinci et al. 2013; Funk and James 2015; Shim et al. 2013; Sirgy 1982, 1986; Sirgy and Su 2000).

Additionally, some people are more self-expressive than others (e.g., Lee et al. 2015; Bosnjak et al. 2016; Waterman et al. 2008). As such, we theorize that leisure activities that have significant symbolic benefits are likely to contribute significantly to satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being for self-expressive than non-self-expressive individuals.

1.4.2 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Benefits Related to Beauty and Aesthetics

Maslow (1970) also describes the need for beauty or aesthetics. This need may be involved in satisfaction judgments of leisure activities. In other words, leisure participants evaluate leisure activities on the basis of the extent to which the activity satisfies their sense of beauty and aesthetics. Consider leisure activities such visiting an art gallery, attending a musical concerto, taking a sculpture or pottery workshop, painting of fine arts, etc. (Hasmi et al. 2014; Lehto et al. 2014; Stranger 1999).

Thus, we theorize that subjective well-being derived from a leisure activity is a positive function of the individual's perception of the activity's aesthetic and beauty value. As such, increased aesthetic/beauty benefits associated with a leisure activity or its environment (e.g., a person playing racquetball for leisure perceives a specific game to be played in an aesthetically pleasing court) should also increase positive affect and decrease negative affect in leisure life.

Additionally, some people are more aesthetics-oriented than others (e.g., Abuhamdeh and Csikszentmihalyi 2004). If so, then one can argue that leisure activities that have significant aesthetics/beauty benefits are likely to contribute significantly to satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being for those who are more aesthetics-oriented than those who are less so.

1.4.3 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Moral Benefits

We also introduce the concept of moral benefits based on Maslow's (1970) need for self-actualization and self-transcendence, as developed further by Schwartz (1994), and Inglehart (2008). Maslow (1970) describes a self-actualized person as integrated socially, emotionally, cognitively, and *morally*, such that he or she engages in moral reasoning and evaluates courses of action on the basis of moral criteria. Leisure participants may evaluate leisure activities

according to whether participation in those activities contributes to the welfare of others (e.g., relay events to raise funds for a group or community in need) (Godbey et al. 2005).

Thus, we argue that leisure well-being (i.e., satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being) derived from a leisure activity is a positive function of the individual's perception of the activity's moral benefits (e.g., a racquetball player who usually plays the game for leisure purposes signs up in a racquetball tournament sponsored by a charity organization such as the UNICEF—ticket proceeds used directly to support children and youth programs in developing countries). As such, increased moral benefits associated with a leisure activity should also increase positive affect and decrease negative affect in leisure life (e.g., Anić 2014; Long et al. 2014; Sylvester 2015).

Additionally, some leisure participants are more morally sensitive than others (e.g., Myyry and Helkama 2002). If so, then one can argue that leisure activities that have significant moral benefits are likely to contribute significantly to leisure well-being for the morally-sensitive than the morally non-sensitive individuals.

1.4.4 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Mastery Benefits

Unger and Kernan (1983) have identified mastery as an important driver of leisure activities. Leisure activities that allow people to experience feelings of mastery induce much positive affect. An individual might feel a sense of mastery after completing the ultimate level of a challenging video game. Suggestive evidence from research in subjective well-being supports this relationship (Newman et al. 2014; Sonnentag and Fritz 2007). For example, Chang and Yu (2013) was able to demonstrate that leisure competence is negatively related to health-related stressors for older adults living in Taiwan.

Mastery benefits in leisure activities contribute to subjective well-being. Perhaps this occurs through effectance motivation (Hills and Argyle 2001; Hills et al. 2000). Respondents were asked to rate their ability in relation to 36 activities: "How good do you think you are at this activity?" The study results indicated that reported enjoyment activities correlated highly with reported ability for all activities, even for activities that do not seem to involve effectance (e.g., watching television, reading a book, and going for a walk). Mastering leisure activities make people feel useful and productive. Through mastering leisure activities people experience rewards of all kinds: social rewards (e.g., Twenge et al. 2010), a sense of recognition, and in some cases monetary rewards (e.g., Tapps et al. 2013).

We believe that leisure well-being (i.e., satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being) derived from a leisure activity is a positive function of the individual's perception of the activity's mastery benefits (e.g., a person playing racquetball for leisure perceives a specific game to be helpful in enhancing his or her skill level in racquetball-related sports). As such, increased mastery benefits associated with a leisure activity should also increase positive affect and decrease negative affect in leisure life.

There may be individual differences here too. That is, some people are more mastery-seeking than others (e.g., Dweck and Leggett 1988; Forbes 2015). If so, leisure activities that have significant mastery benefits are likely to contribute significantly to subjective well-being for mastery-seeking than non-mastery-seeking individuals.

1.4.5 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Relatedness Benefits

Many leisure activities (e.g., watching a movie drama, playing tennis, engaging in team sports, getting together with others in church or social clubs) are social in nature. That is, they involve people socializing while engaging in leisure--social interactions that result in satisfaction of a variety of social needs. Examples of social needs include the need for social approval, affiliation, belongingness, social status, social recognition, cooperation, competition, and altruism (e.g., Brajsa-Zganec et al. 2011; Leung and Lee 2005).

Suggestive evidence from research in subjective well-being supports this relationship (Deci and Ryan 2010; Newman et al. 2014). For example, Chang and Yu (2013) demonstrated that leisure social support is negatively related to health-related stressors for older adults living in Taiwan.

Relatedness benefits in leisure activities contribute to subjective well-being by satisfying social needs, an important ingredient in subjective well-being. Consider the following study conducted by Hills et al. (2000). The study demonstrated the link between leisure activities and satisfaction of social needs. Specifically, satisfaction of social needs was significantly correlated with the following activities:

- Engaging in active sports, taking on dangerous sports, fishing, and attending musical performance (r = .27);
- Dancing, eating out, engaging in family activities, attending social parties, getting together with other people at pubs, travelling to tourist places on holidays, socializing with friends, going to the movies, and watching sport events (r = .45);
- Engaging in do-it-yourself activities, taking evening classes, doing meditation, engaging in serious reading, and sewing (r = .46);
- Attending political activities, raising money for charity, engaging in religious activities, and doing voluntary work (r = .55).

Thus, we believe that leisure well-being (i.e., satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being) derived from a leisure activity is a positive function of the individual's perception of the activity's relatedness benefits (e.g., a person playing racquetball for leisure perceives a specific game to be played in the context of a social club allowing him or her to socialize with others before and after the game). As such, increased relatedeness benefits associated with a leisure activity should also increase positive affect and decrease negative affect. Additionally, some people are more extroverted than others (e.g., Caldwell and Andereck 1994; Walker et al. 2005).

We also believe that this relation is moderated by extroversion-introversion. That is, leisure activities that have significant relatedness benefits are likely to contribute significantly to subjective well-being for extroverts more so than for introverts.

1.4.6 Leisure Well-Being Derived from Distinctiveness Benefits

There is a tendency in people to desire uniqueness. Striving for uniqueness is wired in us. As such, this motive is manifested in participating in leisure activities and hedonic consumption (Frochota and Morrison 2001; Tinsley and Tinsley 1986). Engaging in leisure activities considered less common or less popular is usually a way to demonstrate uniqueness—observers are likely to perceive the actor as highly distinct—standing out from the crowd.

We believe that leisure well-being (i.e., satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being) derived from a leisure activity is a positive function of the individual's perception of the activity's distinctiveness benefits (e.g., a college student may perceive squash as a game played by a select few, thus chooses to play squash because doing so is likely to make him or her highly distinct from other college students). As such, increased distinctiveness benefits associated with a leisure activity should also increase positive affect and decrease negative affect in leisure life.

Additionally, some people seek distinctiveness more than others (e.g., Abbott-Chapman and Robertson 2015). In other words, we believe that the uniqueness benefit effect on subjective well-being is moderated by a personality trait related to seeking distinctiveness. Leisure activities that have significant distinctiveness benefits are likely to contribute significantly to satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being for those seek distinctiveness than those who do not.

1.5 Conclusion

In this chapter we discuss a theory of leisure well-being guided by the concept of bottom-up spillover (e.g., Andrews and Withey 1976; Campbell

et al. 1976; Newman et al. (2014). The goal is to introduce to the reader a more-refined bottom-up spillover model by linking 12 sets of perceived leisure benefits to subjective well-being—leisure benefits related to safety, health, economic, sensory, escape, sensation-seeking, symbolic, aesthetics, morality, mastery, relatedness, and distinctiveness. We argued that the perceived benefits can be categorized in terms of basic versus growth needs. Benefits associated with basic needs include benefits related to safety, health, economic, sensory, escape, or sensation/stimulation needs. In contrast, benefits related to growth needs include benefits related to symbolic, aesthetic, moral, mastery, relatedness, or distinctiveness needs. We argue that the satisfaction that is extracted as a result of the leisure activity's interaction between benefits related to basic and growth needs is further amplified when the same benefits match the individual's personality. This satisfaction amplification associated with the leisure activity contributes significantly to positive affect in leisure life, which in turn contributes significantly to subjective well-being.

Although we provided suggestive evidence to our theoretical propositions, we believe that the theory can set the stage for programmatic research in this area. We encourage leisure researchers to conduct rigorous research to systematically test the theoretical propositions through cross-sectional surveys and longitudinal research. Such testing should lead to the transformation of the overall model into an established theory of leisure well-being.

Our theory of leisure well-being has several managerial implications. The theory prompts leisure professionals to do the following:

- Any leisure activity should be planned to provide benefits related to *basic needs*: benefits related to safety (safety measures are taken such wearing of protective eyewear), health (the game enhances cardio-vascular health and helps with weight control), economics (the service fee is affordable), sensory (after the game the patrons enjoy a soothing massage followed by a hot shower and a delicious snack), escape (the game is scheduled midday to allow the patrons to temporarily escape the stress of their job), and/or sensation/stimulation (the game allows the patrons to experience a high level of sensation/stimulation perhaps by matching players with competitors of equal skill level).
- Additionally, the leisure activity should also be planned to provide benefits related to *growth needs*: benefits related to the self (the patrons can identify with one another, perhaps in terms of age, gender, and occupational status—mature men who are professors playing racquetball at the same college), aesthetics (the racquetball courts are aesthetically pleasing), morality (the game is sponsored by a charity organization), mastery (a racquetball mentor oversees the game to provide tips and guidance to foster performance excellence), relatedness (the game is offered through a social club to allow players to socialize before and after the game), and/or distinctiveness (each play is encouraged to develop his or her own winning strategies and to share this knowledge with selected others).
- In addition to ensuring benefits related to the patron's basic and growth needs, the leisure activity should also be planned to ensure that the satisfaction effect from the inherent benefits related to basic and growth needs are further amplified by matching the leisure activity to patrons with corresponding *personality traits* (i.e., personality traits that reflect the selected basic and growth needs). For example, a benefit such as relatedness can be injected in the planning of the leisure activity if management knows that most of the patrons are extroverts. Hence, the extrovert racquetball players are likely to experience a higher level of satisfaction playing the game in the context of a social club to allow them to socialize before and after the game.

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