

A Cross-Cultural Study of the Family Leisure Motivation and Family Leisure Constraints Between German and Korean Families*

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Abstract : The purpose of this study was to examine the differences of family leisure motivation and family leisure constraints between German families and Korean families, and analyze the relationship among family leisure motivation, family leisure constraints, and family strengths. The sample in this study consisted of 102 Korean two-parent families with teenagers and 147 German two-parent families with teenagers. The results were as follows: 1) family bonding motivation and rest motivation did not differ significantly between German families and Korean families while educational motivation and obligatory motivation differ significantly between the two. 2) While Korean families were more constrained to intrapersonal constraints, German families were more constrained to interpersonal constraints. 3) Educational motivation, family bonding motivation, rest motivation, interpersonal constraints, and structural constraints were found to be significantly correlated with German family strength while educational motivation, family bonding motivation, rest motivation, and interpersonal constraints were found to be significantly correlated with Korean family strength.

Key Words : cross-cultural studies, family leisure constraints, family leisure motivation, family strengths

I. Introduction

The term “family leisure” becomes everyday language when referring to the time that parents and children spend together in free time or recreational activities (Shaw, 1997). It is also widely held to be an essential component of family life. Despite being highly regarded socially, several questions on the issue of family leisure remain unclarified; these

questions constitute the starting point of this study.

Until recently, family leisure has been a relatively neglected area of research within the field of leisure and family studies (Shaw & Dawson, 2001; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). This neglect has been due, in part, to the emphasis placed on understanding individual leisure, with less attention to the social context, such as family which is the most common context for leisure (Shaw, 1997).

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* This work was supported by Korea research Foundation Grant (KRF-2002-072-BM2544)

Our knowledge of the motivation, benefits and costs of family leisure participation, and its influences on family relationships remains limited.

From an individual perspective, the core attributes of leisure are freedom of choice, intrinsic motivation, and enjoyment (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). However, from a family perspective, it is not always freely chosen, intrinsically motivated, or completely enjoyable. Moreover, most previous studies have examined only the leisure of married couples and satisfaction with their marital relationships. And the majority of the family leisure research is also based on inferences made from studies of married couples. Such inferences may mislead us to believe that experiences of family leisure are the same for other family members (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). Given these shortcomings surrounding family leisure research, this paper examines family leisure experiences from the viewpoints of the family unit.

On the other hand, there has been increased research interest in the field of leisure and its impact on society. The efforts of these scholars have made it increasingly clear that leisure represents an important cultural aspect of national and community life. Valentine, Allison, and Schneider (1999) describe the role of leisure in two ways: (a) as a mirror that reflects the national character and cultural values of society, and (b) as a significant force in shaping and changing the culture of a society. However, little research has been conducted that extends and relates to the behavioral understanding of leisure of different cultures and nationalities. The rarity of such studies does not mean that this field of study is not without value. Cross-cultural comparative studies of

recreation, leisure and other expressive activities have immense potential for informing us about the place of such phenomena in human culture (Valentine, Allison, & Schneider, 1999).

Korea has its own characteristics in setting up attitudes toward leisure. Since strong bonds among family members are highly valued in Korea, most Koreans try to come together and enjoy each other as often as possible. As a result, family plays an important role in leisure life. However, Koreans also place great value on their work partly because national economic development has been a top priority for an extended length of time. Korean workers record 2,378 working hours on average yearly, placing Korea at the top of OECD nations in hours worked. The high levels of working hours are attributed to a 44-hour workweek, frequent overtime, and limited use of holidays. As a result, most Koreans sacrifice family-centered lives for work life.

Korea partially enacted a five-day work week system in July, 2004. Since then, many surveys of public opinion have reported that many people wanted more free time with their families. However, specifics of why people would want to spend more time with their families, and how, and what to do with this time, are still unclear (Yoon, 2002). For example, Korea National Statistical Office (2004) reported Koreans spent more than half of their free time in front of TV, and 72.7% of Koreans were dissatisfied with their current leisure life. Expenditures on leisure per household in 2000 were less than 100,000 won. It concluded that despite the success of the economic growth resulting in higher levels of income and greater supply of material goods, the importance of family leisure and recreation in the enhancement of the quality of life

of the average Korean has not kept pace.

In contrast, Germany implemented a five-day work week in 1974. Consequently, Germany is placed near the bottom of industrialized nations in hours worked, recording 1,362 working hours on average yearly according to OECD(2004). Growing propensity and shorter working hours have meant more leisure time and holidays. Travel is one of the most popular leisure activities in Germany. Sports, especially soccer, are favorite leisure activities (www.germany-info.org). There are more than 87,000 sports clubs affiliated with the German Sports Federation. Approximately 27 million people, nearly a quarter of the entire population, are members of some form of a sports club. The leisure industry represents eight percent of the German economy as a whole, and the typical German family spends about one fifth of its income on leisure activities (www.bbc.co.uk/education/languages/german). Germans do not consider their leisure time simply as an opportunity for fatigue recuperation or stress resolution as temporary conditions, rather they view leisure as a kind of basic human right to enhance one's quality of life. Consequently, the leisure culture in Germany has been well established in comparison to Korea's leisure culture.

Many benefits can be derived from cross-cultural leisure research. First, such studies provide an important opportunity to test and validate the generalizability of leisure phenomena and constructs. That is, they show that leisure is ubiquitous in human cultures, both past and present. Second, comparative leisure research enhances understanding of our own behavior. Finally, because of sampling from societies around

the world, such studies make it possible to examine the widest possible range of human variations in culture traits (Chick, 1998).

Understanding family leisure requires investigation of all factors, both positive (e. g. motivation, benefits) and negative (e. g. constraints), as well as culture that influence those phenomena. These considerations led us to investigate how German and Korean families perceive various aspects of family leisure. More specifically, how different motivational factors influence participation family leisure activities and constraints that inhibit participation in family leisure activities between both German and Korean families, and how family leisure motivation and constraints related to overall family strength.

II. Materials and Methods

1. Samples

The Korean family data was collected by means of a self-administered household questionnaire from May, 2003 to June, 2003. These families were recruited through secondary schools because such schools constituted the most likely venue for identifying families with teenagers. The Korean sample in this study consisted of 102 Korean two-parent families with adolescent child residing in Seoul and its outlying suburbs. The city is the political, cultural, social and economic center of South Korea. According to the UN Population Division, Seoul's urban area contained 9.7 million people in 2003, making it the 22nd most populous such area in the world.

Responses were solicited from one adolescent

child per family, from the father, and from the mother. The composite scores were used through means of mother, father, and child. The socio-economic characteristics of subjects were as follows: The proportions of fathers according to age were as follows: those in their 30s comprised 2.9% of respondents, those in their 40s, 88.2%, and those in their 50s, 7.8%. Of the mothers that responded: 13.7% were in their 30s, 81.4% were in their 40s, and those in their 50s comprised 3.9% of the sample. 68% of the children were middle school students, and 32% were high school students. The children were somewhat more unevenly distributed, with 70% being female. About 82% of families earned more than 2,000,000 won yearly. Seventy-four point five percent of the fathers were college graduates, and 54.9% of the mothers had graduated from high school.

The German family data was collected by means of a self-administered household questionnaire from July, 2003 to August, 2003. First, a bilingual researcher translated the questionnaire which was given to Korean families into German, then a native assistant researcher conducted the survey in Germany. The German sample consisted of 147 two-parent families with teenager residing in the Giessen areas. The proportions of fathers according to age were as follows: those in their 30s comprised 8.9% of the respondents, those in their 40s, 48.2%, and those in their 50s, 28.6%. Of the mothers that responded 17.3% were in their 30s, 54.8% were in their 40s, and those in their 50s comprised 15.5% of the sample. About 72% of families earned more than 2,400 euro yearly.

Giessen is a lively university city located about 45 minutes north of Frankfurt amid the forest and

rural countryside of the state of Hesse. A city of over 100,000 inhabitants, and is considered a medium-sized city. The 23,000 students studying in Giessen constitute a large part of the population and are always present in the city's cultural and leisure life. Giessen is an important cultural, economic and administrative center.

2. Measures

1) Family Leisure Motivation

The Family Leisure Motivation instrument consisted of four subscales that examined why families participated in family leisure activities. The instrument was modified from Beard and Ragheb's Leisure Motivation Scale (1983) to make it more relevant to family leisure. The four subscales were intellectual motivation, family bonding motivation, relaxation motivation, and obligatory motivation. Each scale contained 3 items that asked respondents to indicate how well each item described their current motivation. Each of the 12 questions were answered on a scale ranging from 1 (not entirely so) to 5 (very much so). The reliability of the family leisure motivation instrument is .85.

2) Family Leisure Constraints

Crawford and Godbey's(1987) three categories of leisure were used in order to collect information regarding constraints on family leisure participation. They categorized the constraints into three categories to reflect the way they affect relationship between preference and participation: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints. Intrapersonal constraints involve "individual psychological states and attributes" (p.122), interpersonal constraints are

“the result of interpersonal interaction or the relationship between individuals’ characteristics” (p. 123), and structural constraints are “intervening factors between leisure preference and participation.” (p. 124). In this study, the constraints were modified to make them more specific to family leisure. They include lack of time, physical health, psychological state as an intrapersonal constraint, lack of interest and disagreement among family members as an interpersonal constraint, and lack of money, facilities, and information as structural constraint. The questions were designed to see troublesome each category was, using a scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (very much so). The reliability of the family leisure constraints instrument is .52.

3) Family Strength

The Family Strength measurement was originally created by Stinnett and DeFrain (1985). Twelve questions were asked to determine how well each item described their family lives such as commitment to the family, appreciation and affection of each other, positive communication patterns, enjoyable time together, and the ability to successfully manage stress and crisis. Each of the 12 questions were answered on a scale ranging

from 1 (not entirely so) to 5 (very much so). The reliability of the family strength instrument is .93.

III. Results and Discussion

1. Differences in Family Leisure Motivation between German and Korean Families

Twelve items were set out in such a way as to determine how well each item described the reasons why family members participate in family leisure activities, using a scale ranging from 1 (not entirely so) to 5 (very much so). In general, Korean families and German families participated in family leisure activities to facilitate family bonding and to rest. Family bond motivation and relaxation motivation did not differ significantly between Korean and German families. However, intellectual and obligatory motivation differed significantly between the two groups.

<Table 1> shows that Korean families were significantly more motivated to focus on education and obligations as a family in comparison to their German counterparts. These results imply that

<Table 1> Differences in Motivation between German Families and Korean Families

Family Leisure Motivation	German Families ¹ M(SD)	Korean Families M(SD)	t-value
Educational motivation	3.04(.75)	3.54(.83)	-5.699***
family bonding motivation	4.17(.70)	4.21(.83)	-.391
Relax motivation	3.75(.71)	3.89(.83)	-1.642
obligatory motivation	1.82(.60)	2.57(.98)	-8.140***

¹ Family: Means of a father, mother, and child

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Korean families seem to be highly motivated when it comes to having an effect on their children's education, or family members' various experiences, performance, and capacity. Korean families were also significantly more motivated to obligatory reason than German families. Obligatory motivation may be related to high levels of negative affect during family leisure. For example, the home and family sphere is not clearly a context of leisure for mothers and adolescents. Even during shared family activities, mothers are more often called upon to put aside their leisure interests and play instrumental roles. Conflicts between adolescents and parents often peak, and adolescents experience family and home leisure as less intrinsically motivated and less harmonious. This implies that Korean families may have a reverse effect by compelling to family members participate in family leisure activities in the name

of family duty.

2. Differences in Family Leisure Constraints between German and Korean Families

Eight items were set out in such a way as to determine how much they feel each item was a barrier, using a scale ranging from 1 (not entirely so) to 5 (very much so). Intrapersonal constraints included lack of time, fatigue, and lack of composure. Interpersonal constraints were indifferences and disagreement among family members. Structural constraints were financial, lack of facilities, and information.

<Table 2> shows that there were significant differences in the perception of family leisure constraints between German families (M=2.50) and Korean families (M=2.64). While Korean

<Table 2> Differences in Constraints between German Families and Korean Families

Family Leisure Motivation	German Families M(SD)	Korean Families M(SD)	t-value
Lack of time	3.47(1.04)	3.30(1.16)	1.441
Physical fatigue	2.48(1.04)	2.88(1.09)	-3.424***
Lack of composure	2.06(.93)	3.54(1.33)	-11.475***
Intrapersonal constraints	2.66(.68)	3.23(.78)	-6.99***
Lack of interests among family members	2.78(1.02)	1.84(1.03)	8.415***
Disagreement among family members	2.67(1.02)	1.99(1.17)	5.575***
Interpersonal constraints	2.72(.88)	1.91(.96)	8.02***
Lack of money	2.54(.91)	2.88(.94)	-3.263***
Lack of facilities	2.02(.96)	1.86(.97)	1.567
Lack of information	2.01(.95)	1.95(1.02)	.590
Structural constraints	2.19(.64)	2.22(.72)	-.45
total	2.50(.52)	2.64(.58)	-2.301*

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

<Table 3> Differences of family strength between German Families and Korean Families

Family strength	German Families M(SD)	Korean Families M(SD)	t-value
	46.04(7.07)	45.40(7.74)	.785

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

families were more constrained to intrapersonal constraints, German families were more constrained to interpersonal constraints. Structural constraints did not differ significantly between either groups.

Time, physical and psychological constraints were the most constraining factors to participate in family leisure in Korean families, constraints related to time often were associated with employment circumstances (Samdahl & Jekubovich, 1997). However, Coalter (1993) argued that the reporting of time-related constraints might indicate that participation in family leisure is not a high priority.

Some interesting findings are worth noting. Significant differences between German families and Korean families were found in the interpersonal constraints, such as lack of interest and disagreement among family members. These results may imply that because Korean families regarded doing something together very highly, they actually perceive less interpersonal constraints, or consciously reported less family constraints.

3. Differences of Family Strength between German and Korean Families

Twelve items were set out in such a way as to determine how well each item described their

family lives, using a scale ranging from 1 (not entirely so) to 5 (very much so). <Table 3> shows that the level of family strength does not differ significantly between Korean families and German families.

4. Relationships among Family Leisure Motivation, Family Leisure Constraints, and Family Strength

Examination of Pearson correlation coefficients indicated a number of significant relationships among study variables. First, within the German family data set <Table 4>, while educational motivation was related negatively to intrapersonal constraints at $-.194(p<.05)$ and interpersonal constraints at $-.168(p<.05)$, family bonding motivation was related negatively to interpersonal constraints at $-.169(p<.05)$. In addition, rest motivation was related positively to intrapersonal constraints at $.184(p<.05)$, and obligatory motivation was related positively to structural constraints at $.216(p<.01)$.

In terms of the relationship among motivation, constraints, family strength, educational motivation, family bonding motivation, and rest motivation, all were positively correlated to family strength in German families at $.374(p<.01)$, $.317(p<.01)$, $.364(p<.01)$, respectively. In addition, interpersonal constraints and structural constraints

<Table 4> Correlation among Variables in German Families

variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
educational motivation	1.00							
family bonding motivation	.410**	1.00						
rest motivation	.368**	.488**	1.00					
obligatory motivation	.094	-.165*	-.089	1.00				
intrapersonal constraints	-.194*	.066	.184*	.019	1.00			
interpersonal constraints	-.168*	-.169*	-.095	.119	.311**	1.00		
structural constraints	-.071	-.156	-.074	.216**	.253**	.298**	1.00	
family strength	.374**	.317**	.364**	-.034	-.157	-.381**	-.243**	1.00

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

were negatively correlated to family strength in these families at $-.381(p<.01)$, $-.243(p<.01)$, respectively. It indicated that Germans families who participated in family leisure activities for education, family bonding and relaxation tended to report strong family bonding. In addition, German families who perceived more interpersonal constraints and structural constraints tended to report less family strength.

Secondly, within the Korean family data set <Table 5>, only rest motivation were found to be significantly correlated with interpersonal

constraints at $-.141(p<.05)$. In terms of the relationship among motivation, constraints, family strength, educational motivation, family bonding motivation, and rest motivation, all were positively correlated to family strength in Korean families at $.232(p<.01)$, $.240(p<.01)$, $.293(p<.01)$, respectively. In addition, interpersonal constraints were negatively correlated to family strength in these families at $-.161(p<.05)$. It indicated that Korean families who participated in family leisure activities for education, family bonding and relaxation tended to report strong family bonding. Korean families

<Table 5> Correlation among variables in Korean Families

variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Educational motivation	1.00							
Family bonding motivation	.638**	1.00						
Relaxation motivation	.667**	.756**	1.00					
Obligatory motivation	.509**	.418**	.480**	1.00				
Intrapersonal constraints	-.016	.056	-.052	-.055	1.00			
Interpersonal constraints	-.078	-.037	-.141*	-.029	-.136	1.00		
Structural constraints	.037	.046	-.032	.096	.002	.684**	1.00	
Family strength	.232**	.240**	.293**	-.045	-.007	-.161*	-.010	1.00

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

who perceived more interpersonal constraints tended to report less family strength.

Findings from correlation analysis revealed that educational motivation, family bonding motivation, and rest motivation were highly correlated to family strength positively in both countries. Differences in the correlations between motivation and constraints were found. Strong correlation between four kinds of motivation and three kinds of constraints were found in German families, but strong correlation only between rest motivation and interpersonal constraints were found in Korean families. More specifically, German families perceived intrapersonal constraints when participating in family leisure for relaxation. In contrast, Korean families perceived interpersonal constraints when participating in family leisure for relaxation.

IV. Conclusions

This study examined how differently Korean families and German families as a whole perceive family leisure motivation and constraints, and analyzed the relationships among family leisure motivation, family leisure constraints, and family strengths between those families.

Regarding family leisure motivation and family strength, German families and Korean families participated in family leisure activities to facilitate family bonding, relaxation, and intellectuality. These motivations were also related positively to family strengths. This implies that family leisure can play a positive role when families participated in family leisure for nurturing feelings of closeness among family members, recovering from the mental and

physical fatigue associated with everyday life and social responsibility, and developing family members' potentials. More importantly, family leisure may have a reverse effect by compelling family members to participate in the name of family duty. For example, family activities often require a considerable amount of work on the part of participants, and this may compromise their enjoyment and freedom. Family members are driven to engage in family leisure activities for different reasons, and the study of these different reasons offers the best insight into the communication and the decision-making process among family members. The knowledge of family leisure motivation may be used for predicting family leisure choices and demand patterns, providing the most need-fulfilling leisure counseling, basing activity packages on complementary needs or activities, and designing the environment to facilitate relevant needs in activities.

Secondly, even though Korean families were more constrained to intrapersonal constraints (lack of time, fatigue, and lack of composure) than interpersonal constraints (indifferences and disagreement among family members), interpersonal constraints were related negatively to family strength. It can be explained that Korean families regard doing something together very highly regardless of one's own interests. However, Coalter (1993) argued that the reporting of time-related constraints, one of the intrapersonal constraints, might indicate that participation in family leisure is not a high priority. Also, interpersonal relationships might be the most powerful and influential factor on Korean family strength. On the contrary, German families were

more constrained to interpersonal constraints (indifferences and disagreement among family members) than Korean families. And interpersonal constraints and structural constraints were negatively related to family strength. This study provided evidence that those who perceive high levels of interpersonal constraints tended to report weaker family strength for both families. However, Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey (1991) proposed that intrapersonal constraints were the most powerful of the three, while structural were the least powerful within the individual's decision-making process. This contradictory result suggested that individual leisure and family leisure might have different characteristics in that family leisure was more dependent upon family members' interests and communication.

However, leisure constraints are no longer viewed as insurmountable obstacles, but are now conceived of as "negotiable" (Jackson, Crawford, & Godbey 1991). That is, although people participate in leisure despite constraints, little is known about constraints negotiation. Recent evidence suggests that the strength of motivation for leisure and the perceived importance of anticipated benefits encourage people to attempt and to be successful in the negotiation of constraints, and that, in turn, successful negotiation is positively related to enhanced leisure (Nadirova & Jackson, 1999).

Lastly, in terms of the relationships between family leisure motivation and family leisure constraints, within German families, those who perceive high levels of intrapersonal constraints are less likely to participate for educational motivation, and more likely to participate for relaxation.

Families who perceive high levels of interpersonal constraints are less likely to participate for education and family bonding. Families who perceive high levels of structural constraints are more likely to participate out of obligation. Within Korean families, those who perceive high levels of interpersonal constraints are less likely to participate for relaxation. It is likely that there is a dynamic relationship between motivation and perceived constraints and each is influenced by the other.

This present study provided information regarding the relationship among family leisure motivation, constraints, and family strength. This information is of particular importance to the practitioners. It should be noted that measures of frequency and duration of various family leisure activities should be detailed in order to produce applicable and meaningful results. It is clear that motivation is an important factor in deciding family leisure activities and participating more frequently family leisure activities. What is required is a greater understanding of how perceived constraints and motivation work in relation to each other, how those constraints can be removed and motivation enhanced, and which constraints should be removed from certain sections of the population. A qualitative approach is now called for to analyze the situation from personal level as well as a cultural viewpoint. This could help gain better insight into how people rationalize family leisure in relation to their specific cultures, values, and lifestyles.

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Received April 4, 2005

Accepted May 16, 2005