

An Analysis of Structural Relationship among Perceived Restorative Environment, Relaxing Experience, Subjective Vitality and the Health-Related Quality of Life of the Participants in Nature-Based Urban Outdoor Recreation

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Abstract : Recently, there has been a growing interest in wellbeing where individuals pursue a healthy life. About the half of world population is living in cities, and the urban environment is negatively affecting the mental health of modern people. The stress level of urban dwellers continues to increase, and they pursue nature-based recreation activities to relieve their stresses. It was found that activities in green spaces are improving concentration, relieving mental stress, and positively affecting physical activities and social relationship, thus enhancing the quality of life. For that reason, studies have been continuously conducted on the role of nature, which is a green space for pursuing health and relieving the stress of urban dwellers. Therefore, this study investigated the effect of experiencing a restoration from nature-based outdoor recreation activities of urban dwellers on their quality of life for the groups with high and low-stress levels. The results of the analysis against visitors who trekked and climbed Mt. Bukhan National Park in Seoul, South Korea showed that the effect of perceiving restorative environment on relaxation, calmness and subjective vitality, and the effect of relaxation and calmness on the quality of life were similar in both groups. However, it was found that subjective vitality affected the quality of life in the group with the high-stress group, while it did not show a significant result in the low-stress group. This is because the high-stress group increased their belief in the future and themselves and vitality through nature-based outdoor activities, which in turn affected their quality of life, while people in the low-stress group normally have subjective vitality in their daily lives, not affected by nature-based outdoor recreation. This result suggests that urban dwellers feel relaxed and calm through nature-based outdoor recreation activities with perceived restorative environment, and such activities enhance their quality of life. Therefore, a wellbeing policy is needed to enhance the quality of life of citizens by creating green spaces in city centers for the promotion of public health.

Keywords : healing tourism, nature-based outdoor recreation, perceived restorative environment, quality of life

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