

Meaning beyond Pleasure in Leisure: Comparison between Korea and France

Authors : Joane Adeclas, Yoonyoung Kim, Taekyun Hur

Abstract : This study investigates individual's intrinsic motivation to practice their leisure activities, as well as, how the cultural environment may influence their motivation to practice their activities. Focused on the positive psychology, the present study proposed redefinition of leisure activities considering two factors. First, leisure activities could be as any activities that provide pleasure or meaning to individuals. Second, they can be practiced alone or in groups. In fact, based on this definition, a four-dimensional model of leisure activities was developed, to measure individual's perception of their leisure experience, based on four factors that are: personal pleasure, social pleasure, personal meaning and social meaning. Furthermore, recent studies have argued that leisure activities can be interpreted and understood differently across cultures. Therefore, the present study proposed to examine the possible role of the cultural context of individual's leisure practices. To do so, two cultural groups (Koreans vs. French) were compared in terms of the four-dimensional model of leisure activities. Three hundred Koreans and three hundred French participants were asked to answer an online survey about their leisure activities. Participants had to respond to questions related to several aspects of leisure practices as followed: the reason why their practice their leisure activities, the reason why they fail to practice their leisure, and their obsession relate to their leisure activities. Factor analyses based on participant's responses proposed a moderate fit of the four-dimensional model of leisure activities. Furthermore, significant cultural differences were also found. As a result, the cultural context seems to influence the reason why individuals practice their leisure activities based on our model. In fact, Koreans explained more than French, the practice of their leisure activities with social-pleasurable reasons. At a contrary, French explained more than Koreans, the practice of their leisure activities with social-meaningful reasons. The two cultural groups also significantly differ on their perception of failure. The results showed that French participants used more meaningful social factors to explain why they failed to practice their leisure activities than did Koreans participants. Finally, Koreans and French significantly differed regarding their obsession on their leisure activities. In general, French tend to have more obsession than Koreans about their leisure activities. Those results validated the four-dimensional model of leisure, as well as, the cultural differences in leisure practices. However, further studies are needed to validate this model at an individual and cultural level.

Keywords : culture, leisure, meaning, pleasure

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