

Social Exchange Processes in Leisure and Non-leisure Settings: A Review and Exploratory Investigation

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Social interaction is among the most frequently reported reasons for participation in leisure. However, little is known about the nature of social interaction processes in leisure settings and whether these are different than those occurring in non-leisure contexts (or if they vary in different leisure contexts). This paper examines the potential contributions of social exchange theory to the study of leisure behaviour, and presents the results of an exploratory investigation which utilized social exchange theory to examine resource exchange occurring in both leisure and non-leisure settings. Overall differences in perceptions about resource exchange in leisure and non-leisure contexts existed among respondents, and males and females had different perceptions of the resource exchange occurring in a leisure setting. The results suggest that social exchange theory provides a promising means to develop further understanding of the social aspects of leisure behaviour and, in turn, assist the continuing formulation of leisure theory through integration with other theoretical approaches.

KEYWORDS: *Social exchange theory, social interaction, leisure behaviour*

Introduction

A major reason for participation in leisure activities is "social interaction" (Crandall, Nolan & Morgan, 1980; de Grazia, 1962; Iso-Ahola, 1980, 1989; Kaplan, 1960; Samdahl, 1988, 1992; Shaw, 1984). However, operational terms such as "friendship", "making new friends" and "socialising", shed little light on why social interaction is an important intrinsic reward from leisure involvement. Furthermore, existing measures of satisfaction with the nature and degree of social interaction inherent in an activity also appear to do little to explain what occurs in social interaction in a leisure setting. What is it about social interaction that is meaningful to individuals engaged in leisure relationships? Social exchange theory appears to have the potential to explain a number of aspects of the social leisure experience. Social exchange theory is consistent with the "Stimulus-Organism-Response" approach advocated by Iso-Ahola (1989) and also seems to have some common

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theoretical constructs with the symbolic interactionist perspective adopted by Samdahl (1988, 1992) and Rossman (1989). These similarities include, for example, the need for feedback to maintain an interaction and the resultant reciprocal influences on behaviour. Although symbolic interactionism has received increasing attention in the leisure behavior literature, social exchange theory has not been so comprehensively treated. This paper presents a literature review and an exploratory study examining the utility of the social exchange approach for leisure research.

Review of Literature

There is little doubt that social interaction is usually one of the most frequently reported and/or highest ranked reasons for engaging in leisure. It is also often associated with life satisfaction. For example, Nystrom (1974) found, in a study of persons over 65, that social interaction was the most frequently reported use of their spare time and that for this group, social interaction was paramount to high life satisfaction. Iso-Ahola (1980, p. 242) suggested that the "evidence in favor of social interaction as a leisure motive is strong and unambiguous" and "this variable reportedly emerges as one of the leading reasons for leisure participation." He went on to conclude that "social interaction is the main ingredient" in leisure (Iso-Ahola 1980, p. 7). Shaw (1984) found that leisure was more likely in the presence of family and friends, and in a later review, Coleman (1990, p. 19) suggested that "social motives are usually prominent."

Though research has not addressed the reasons why social interaction appears to be so central to the leisure experience, more recent work has begun to grapple with the conceptual means by which a more thorough understanding of social interaction in leisure may be established. Samdahl (1988, 1992), adopting a symbolic interactionist position, argued that leisure is a social event constructed through interactions in social occasions and that informal social interaction was a common leisure context. Consistent with Samdahl's viewpoint, Rossman (1989, p. 22) suggested that "leisure is a special meaning attributed to social occasions that are created by the individuals involved through interaction with objects in the occasions" and further, that "people are the ultimate interactive objects." Rossman argued that symbolic interactions are central to leisure, and the intrinsic satisfaction gained in leisure is in part due to "being an active participant in creating and sustaining the interaction" (p. 24). Csikszentmihalyi (1990, p. 68) argued that feedback would seem to be vital to symbolic interactionism in terms of "creating and sustaining an interaction," since "once the interaction starts to provide feedback to the person's skills, it usually begins to be intrinsically rewarding." Younnis (1994, p. 80) suggested that friends "rely on one another for exchange and feedback in interpreting everyday events."

These authors then move symbolic interactionist theorizing into the realm of everyday exchanges. Central to symbolic interactionism theory are the concepts of reciprocal influences on one another's behaviour through

joint construction of the occasion and interpretation of objects in the occasion. The process appears to depend not only on feedback but also on reciprocal action on the part of individuals engaged in the interaction. Samdahl (1992, p. 27) argued that, as we interpret and give meaning to the symbolic nature of our environment, it "provides expectations regarding the likely behavior of others." If others do not reciprocate, the interaction may not be as rewarding and consequently may not be sustained. Such an approach to understanding behaviour is strikingly similar and complementary to some of those concepts also contained within social exchange theory. For example, the constructs of equity, reciprocity and distributive justice (Emerson, 1987) are central to social exchange theory. However, symbolic interactionism does not explain how or why interactions proceed, whereas social exchange theory can extend the symbolic interactionism approach by explaining the interaction process. Argyle (1991, p. 15) argued that symbolic interactionism, although a useful approach to the study of social relationships, has displayed less interest than other approaches "in the details of the interaction processes involved." Therefore, use of social exchange theory to also explore leisure behaviour and satisfaction may assist in the "unification of ideas" to help build leisure theory in a "progressive fashion" (Samdahl, 1988, p. 27).

Development of Social Exchange Theory

Ritzer (1988) argued that Homans (1958, 1961) is generally credited with the development of social exchange theory, although Searle (1991) suggested that the early developments can be traced back to Thorndyke (reinforcement theory) and Mills (marginal utility theory). Dissatisfied with existing approaches to sociological theory and research, Homans examined possible applications of the behaviourism approach of B. F. Skinner and concluded that "the heart of sociology lies in the study of individual behaviour and interaction", rather than structural functionalism (Ritzer 1988, p. 189). He argued that a person's behaviour was the result of reinforcement; that people would continue to do what was previously rewarding and discontinue behaviour that was costly. Homan's version of social exchange theory suggested that people will continue to interact when there is an exchange of rewards, but if the exchange is costly to one or more of the exchanging parties, it is less likely to continue.

Molm (1987, p. 101) argued that "one of the major contributions to social exchange theory" was that of Emerson (1962), who developed a theory of power-dependence relations. The theory is based on the idea that one person's power is a function of the dependency of another. "If two persons are unequally dependent on one another for valued outcomes, the less dependent person has a power advantage over the other, and the relation is said to be power imbalanced" (Molm 1987, p. 101). This subsequently results in an imbalance in the exchange as the more dependent person gives more than they receive. The relationship may be modified, however, by the influ-

ence of alternative sources of the "valued outcomes." If an actor receives valued outcomes elsewhere, they may be willing to continue in a power imbalanced relationship as the more dependent partner. Hegtvedt (1988, p. 142), described the situation as one in which "an individual who possesses a scarce resource highly desired by a partner is less dependent (and thus more powerful) than the partner who controls an undesired resource which is available from several alternative sources." It should be noted that outcomes or rewards may be tangible or psychological (Molm, 1987).

Blau (1964) continued the work of Homans and the early work of Emerson, but extended it to include exchanges at the cultural and structural levels. In more recent times, the later work of Emerson is credited with further advancement of this direction. In a review of the contribution of Emerson to exchange theory, Cook (1987, p. 209) argued that Emerson "is one of the key figures in the development of exchange theory." More specifically, she suggested that his later work developed the examination of exchanges from the dyad level to that of exchange networks and, in so doing, successfully linked micro-level theory with macrostructure concerns. Although Turner (1987) argued that the work of Emerson "liberated exchange theory from the conceptual shackles of behaviourism and in so doing it allowed for the analysis of social structure" (pp. 223-224), it is generally recognised that Emerson's work "adopts a model of human behaviour based explicitly upon operant principles" (Cook 1987, p. 214).

Ritzer (1988) also acknowledged the work of researchers whose approach varied slightly to that of the preceding versions of social exchange theory. Specifically, Ritzer reported on the work of Gouldner (1960) and Goode (1960, 1978) which focussed on the "reciprocal nature of social relationships and how power and prestige grow out of imbalances in reciprocity" (Ritzer 1988, p. 371). This version of exchange theory may have particular relevance to the study of exchange in leisure settings as it supports an active role on the part of the actor in terms of constructing reality, interpreting it and then acting on the basis of that reality. Samdahl (1992, p. 19) argued that leisure was, among other things, characterized by "the ability to act in relatively self-determined ways." Furthermore, social exchange theory based purely on behaviourism has been criticised for "its inattention to mental processes" (Ritzer 1988, p. 399).

Searle (1989) offered a concise explanation of reciprocity, based on the work of Gouldner (1960), which is an extension of the work of Parsons (1951). Parsons, according to Searle (1989, p. 354), suggested "that relations made stable through the provision of mutually satisfying gratification will be self perpetuating." Searle added that the concept of reciprocity takes this another step by suggesting that the reason one reciprocates is the internalization of a norm, an expectation that when something of value is received, one returns the benefit to the person from whom it was received and furthermore, that relationships cannot be sustained without reciprocity.

Therefore, it appears that there are two main schools of exchange theory. The first is more theoretically based in behaviourism and reinforcement,

while the second recognises more the role of cognition and values of individual actors. Searle (1989, p. 353) suggested that "individuals enter into and maintain a relationship as long as they can satisfy their self interests and in so doing ensure that the benefits outweigh the costs." In this sense, social exchange theory is more strongly posited within rationalism than is symbolic interactionism. Searle's approach, therefore, suggests a cognitive role for actors in the exchange and further, assumes that individuals are able to gauge the nature and extent of benefits and costs involved in their social leisure experiences. Searle added that as resources are finite and knowledge is limited, individuals cannot participate in every possible exchange and therefore must choose between known options. Actors evaluate options available to them and choose those which offer the greatest reward for the least cost.

Exchange theory has also been addressed from an economic perspective and is the subject of considerable research within that field. Although there may be some confusion about social and economic approaches to exchange, Emerson (1987) argued that economic theory has as its basis the market as a theoretical construct whereas in social exchange theory, "the longitudinal exchange relations between two specific actors is the central concept around which theory is organised" (p. 12). Based on this review, the present authors advocate that the study of leisure behaviour will be best served by a social exchange approach which recognises cognition and the role of values on the part of individual actors.

One unresolved issue in applications of social exchange theory concerns the level of appropriate analysis. The basis of this argument is the level of cognition that one ascribes to the actors in the exchange process and the level of explanation that is attempted (i.e., from the micro [dyad] relationship to the macro [social network] level).

While Emerson formed a macro view of exchange at the network/structural level, it appears that many sociologists still concentrate on the micro-level of analysis. Turner (1987, p. 236) even suggested they are moving "sociological theory back into psychology." He argued that studies of micro-level exchange behaviour "are inadequate for understanding the full dynamics of human interaction" (p. 237) and advocated the use of exchange theory "to analyse structural relations rather than human cognition" (p. 236). Furthermore, he stated that for a sociologist, "the question is not how actors think per se, but how variations in social structural positions determine their thought and action," and when one begins research with assumptions about rationality, "it is difficult to emphasise structure and far easier to engage in a psychological odyssey about human cognition" (p. 236). To this end, Turner exhorts sociologists to get out of the "quagmire" and "away from social psychology" (p. 229). This debate and the obvious "retreat back into psychology" appears widespread and raises a number of possible questions: (1) Are there problems with the methodology of social exchange theory at the network exchange level, and is it more appropriate to utilize it at the micro-level?; (2) If the results gained do not adequately explain network exchange behaviour, does using theory at the micro-level provide a better

explanation of human behaviour?; (3) Is exchange theory more meaningfully posited within a social psychological approach to studying leisure behavior?

Resources

The basis of exchange theory is that resources are exchanged during interactions. Emerson (1990, p. 41) conceptualised a resources as "not an attribute or a 'possession' of an actor in the abstract, but is rather an attribute of his (sic) relation to another or set of other actors whose values define resources." Stolte (1987) added that the value of a resource is assumed not to vary over time and to be reciprocal, but not necessarily equal. The types of resources included in studies vary considerably. Some resources are operationalized as instrumental in nature (e.g., money) whereas other studies utilized a more social and/or intangible approach (e.g., respect). For example, Prestby, Wandersman, Florin, Rich, & Chavis (1990) in a study of volunteer involvement, operationalized personal benefits as saving money, learning new skills and gaining information. Social benefits were described as, making friends, gaining recognition and receiving support, while purposive benefits included helping others and fulfilling an obligation. Bryant and Napier (1981) suggested that resources which are usually exchanged in social relations could include social approval, respect and self-esteem. Molm (1987) suggested that rewards may be psychological. Gaines (1994) supported this view and indicated that resources such as affection and respect were intangible in nature. The latter appear to be most relevant to social leisure behaviour.

Issues for Leisure Research

In the exploratory research described below, we adopt the micro/cognitive approach as the most appropriate context for beginning an exploration of social interaction in leisure settings, a view supported by Samdahl (1992) and Iso-Ahola (1980).

Social exchange theory has been the subject of a significant amount of research in the sociology and, social psychology disciplines and despite its relatively recent development, has now become "a significant strand of sociological theory" (Ritzer 1988, p.189). It appears though, that social exchange theory has not yet been explored to any great extent in the leisure behaviour literature, nor has social exchange in a leisure context been the focus of significant research within the social psychology or sociology disciplines. Yet there are a number of questions that lend themselves to this analytical framework. For example, what processes occur and what is experienced during social leisure relationships that make it one of the most frequently reported reasons for participation in leisure? Is it the nature of the resource exchange that provides intrinsic meaning to the experience? It would also seem critical that the use of theory should facilitate the compar-

ison of different behavioural contexts if it is to make a meaningful contribution to our knowledge (see Samdahl, 1988). For example, do people perceive different patterns of resource exchange in different leisure contexts (e.g., frequent participation activities compared to less frequent), and in what ways are social relationships perceived to be different in leisure settings compared to non-leisure settings? Rossman (1989, p. 23) argued that meaning is situationally specific, so that "the meaning of objects in leisure occasions differ from the meaning these same objects have in other occasions not defined as leisure." To put it slightly differently in social exchange terms, do people view the nature of resource exchange differently in leisure compared to non-leisure contexts? Does the exchange process influence the meaning attached to different types of social leisure experiences? The social exchange literature is vast and it is beyond the scope of a paper of this nature to provide a complete review. Therefore, features thought to be most relevant to leisure behaviour are discussed below.

Reciprocity

Although social exchange theory has been used to examine a large variety of human behaviours, the findings of studies examining the norm of reciprocity in particular may have the potential for use in leisure research, as the social leisure context seems a likely place in which reciprocity would occur and is consistent with the reciprocal nature of symbolic interactionism. Searle (1989) suggested that relationships that are successful over time are characterised by reciprocity, and it is likely that reciprocity is the key to positive feelings about social interaction. Emerson (1987, p. 12) concluded that despite a vast amount of social exchange research, "in each instance, the analysis is either hampered or rendered meaningless without some attention to the interpersonal comparison of benefits of exchange." Several studies illustrate the importance of the reciprocity concept.

Meeting new people is often given as a major reason for participation in leisure activities, and meeting new people may be conceptualised as an exercise in reciprocity. Meeker (1983), reported that the reciprocity norm operates as a starting mechanism for new social relationships because people are willing to begin by helping others, expecting that the help will eventually be returned. Such behaviour may be similar to "being an active participant in creating and sustaining the interaction" (Rossman 1989, p. 24). In an interesting study of the development of friendship between previously unacquainted roommates, Berg (1984) found that social exchange processes occurring between roommates changed in a qualitative way (e.g., increased self disclosure) during the year. The study found that the amount one person rewards another and the comparison level for alternatives (i.e., of living arrangements) become the most important factors in determining liking and satisfaction. In a study of dating behaviour, Berg and McQuinn (1986) found that continuing couples exchanged greater amounts of self disclosure than non continuing couples and reported higher levels of equity. Although not

explicit, one assumes that a significant amount of dating behaviour occurs in a recreation/leisure context. Recreation was one item among 26 that were used by Sabatelli (1988) to explore relationship satisfaction and social exchange. The study found that recreation was one of a number of items in which there was no difference between groups in their expectations and was not a high potential source of conflict within a relationship compared to expectations concerning sexual matters, companionship and communication. This may be due to qualitative differences in the nature of exchanges occurring in leisure and non-leisure contexts. Support for the cognitive approach to exchange theory is provided by Krishnan (1988, p. 223) who found that help seeking behaviour was uninfluenced by anticipation of reciprocity. This finding was attributed to "situational rather than sociocultural influences."

Some studies have utilized the reciprocity norm to examine the actor-organization relationship rather than the actor-actor relationship. While these are not a direct exploration of the social interaction phenomenon, they nonetheless are in a leisure setting and also support the assumption of actor cognition and a rational view of the exchange process.

Prestby et al. (1990, p. 117) found that people more active in voluntary organisations reported "more social/communal and personal benefits than less-active participants." The authors concluded that the results "demonstrate the utility of social exchange theory" and that these models have "much to contribute to the understanding of individual participation" (pp. 138-139) in a voluntary organisation, not necessarily in a "leisure activity" per se.

Bryant and Napier (1981) used social exchange theory to examine satisfaction with outdoor recreation facilities. The study however, did not deal with satisfaction from participation, but rather with expected benefits from facility development (e.g., economic, new outdoor recreation opportunities). Nevertheless the study is an example of the application of the theory to the leisure field. Based on the work of Bryant and Napier, Perdue, Long, and Allen (1987), examined the perceptions and attitudes of rural residents towards tourism. They found no significant differences "in the tourism perceptions and attitudes of outdoor recreation participants as compared to non participants" (p. 427). Ap (1993) also applied social exchange principles to the study of residents perceptions of tourism impacts.

Searle (1989, 1991) has been instrumental in pioneering the application of social exchange theory in leisure contexts. Studying the reciprocity norm in relationships between municipal recreation directors and their advisory board members, he found some support for the norm of reciprocity, but concluded that reciprocity was not the norm in these kinds of relationships (Searle, 1989). Perhaps the most relevant example of the application of social exchange theory to leisure behaviour, was the development of a theoretical construct of ceasing leisure behaviour based on social exchange theory (Searle, 1991). However, Searle also concentrated on the exchange between the individual and the organization, rather than interpersonal ex-

changes. The present study sought to further develop this approach, by focussing on the reciprocal nature of the actor-actor exchange relationship.

Summary

A frustrating omission in the majority of studies, is the lack of contextual "reality." Few of these studies were conducted in the field, while many were conducted under experimental conditions. On this point, the authors agree with Turner (1987) who encouraged sociologists do more field studies. What seems apparent from the literature review is that social exchange theory, and the reciprocity concept in particular, may prove to be a useful means of studying social interaction behaviour in leisure in more detail and with more rigour. It may also be possible to use social exchange theory to help build a cumulative understanding of leisure behaviour by examining possible links with other theoretical approaches including symbolic interactionism. Leisure settings may prove to be valuable areas for research in extending the understanding of social exchange theory and social interaction.

Problem Statement

This exploratory investigation was designed to examine the potential of social exchange theory to help explain leisure behaviour. If the approach was to prove useful, it should also be able to differentiate leisure from non-leisure (Rossman, 1989, Samdahl, 1988). Furthermore, previous applications of social exchange theory in a leisure context had focussed mainly on the actor-organisation relationship, whereas the present study, sought to extend the application of the theory to actor-actor relationships in a leisure context. The major purpose of the study therefore, was to conduct a preliminary investigation into the nature of resource exchange in social interactions in leisure settings and non-leisure settings. Although a number of research questions were addressed in the study, the following are reported here:

1. What resources were exchanged in a leisure setting?
2. What amount of these resources were exchanged in the leisure and non-leisure settings?
3. To what extent was resource exchange reciprocal?
4. Are there differences in the amount of resources that were exchanged in leisure and non-leisure settings?
5. What amount of these resources were exchanged in other leisure settings in which respondents participated less frequently?
6. Was any variation in the type and amount of resources exchanged associated with demographic variables?

Methodology

The convenience sample was comprised of 52 undergraduate Recreation and Park majors enrolled in a 400 level Recreation Administration class. The

researchers felt that this group would have a better understanding of the concepts involved in the study and would have a reasonable "correspondence between our theoretical conceptualizations and the connotative meanings of leisure" (Samdahl 1992, p. 20). The instrument was administered by the researchers in-class and took approximately 15 minutes for respondents to complete. The mean age of respondents was 22.3 years; 44% were female; the majority were in their 7th or 8th semester (77%); were not married (90%); and, did not have children (98%).

Instrumentation

Data were collected by means of a five page self-administered questionnaire. The instrument was developed following a review of literature related to resource exchange (e.g., Bryant & Napier, 1981; Prestby et al., 1990) and a collegial review by an academic colleague and a number of doctoral candidates in a leisure studies program. The five page instrument first presented a brief introduction on social exchange (which introduced the sample to the basic concepts of benefits, costs and resource exchange) and then elicited information on a range of demographic variables. Respondents were then asked to think about the leisure activity in which they participated most frequently and to answer a series of questions about that activity setting (the "primary" activity). Questions included: the activity type; with whom they participated; the type of group if applicable; and, the frequency of participation. The main dependent variables were: what resources were exchanged (which respondents indicated from a list of eight possible resources); and, how much of those resources were exchanged. The last item was measured by asking respondents their perception of the level of reciprocity (i.e., the amount of resources that they received compared to the amount they gave in the exchange). Responses were made on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Receive Considerably Less*) to 5 (*Receive Considerably More*). The mid-point of the scale (3) indicated a balanced exchange. Similar questions were asked about less frequent leisure and non-leisure behaviours. Less frequent or secondary leisure activities were those other than the most frequent activity. Non-leisure activities were activities considered by respondents as being non-leisure in nature (the instrument suggested work or school as examples).

The resources included in this study were status, information/knowledge, power, help, emotional support, self-esteem, social approval, and respect. These were gleaned from the literature, but mainly from two articles more concerned with the leisure context (Bryant & Napier, 1981; Prestby et al., 1990). Although self-esteem may be considered a problematic resource, recollections of an exchange may facilitate this concept as something of value which is exchanged within a relationship. Bryant and Napier (1981) concluded that the belief that people in an exchange will conform to the requirements of the fairness and reciprocity norms means that they are willing to contribute to an exchange, even when the rewards are not immediate but with an expectation that they will be gained in the future. They included

self-esteem as a resource in their study. Molm (1987) and Gaines (1994) argued that resources may be intangible and psychological. Furthermore, Gaines (1994) suggested that exchanges may result in net changes "in self-love or self-esteem" (p. 296). Wright (1988) also included self-esteem as an intangible resource. In addition, Argyle and Henderson (1985) argued that self-esteem resulted from interactions and may be reciprocal, since favourable evaluation by others may lead to the expectation of similar evaluation. For these reasons and because self-esteem is often associated with positive leisure experiences, it was decided that the exclusion of self-esteem was not warranted from an exploratory study of this nature.

Treatment of the Data

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to analyse the data. The specific statistical procedures applied to the data were Frequencies, Paired T-TEST, Mann-Whitney U, and repeated measure MANOVA. All research questions in the study were tested at the .05 significance level. A non-parametric test (Mann-Whitney U) was conducted because respondents only had to indicate the amount of resource exchanged in their primary activity contingent upon an earlier response and therefore the total N available for this analysis was reduced. As a pattern across the three conditions seemed to emerge as the analysis progressed, a repeated measures MANOVA analysis was also conducted to test for the main effects of sex and setting, and their possible interactive effect on mean resource exchange scores

Results

Typically the respondents participated most frequently in leisure with between one and five other people (77%) who were overwhelmingly their friends (90%). Frequency of participation in the primary activity varied between once and nine times per week with a mean frequency per week of 3.7, and a mean length of participation of just under two hours (104 minutes) per occasion. Respondents also reported participating in an average of three other leisure activities per week. Only 27% participated in four or more activities per week.

The resources that were most frequently exchanged during the primary leisure activity were information/knowledge (65.1%) and self-esteem (55.8%). Other resources which were relatively frequently exchanged included: help; emotional support; and, social approval, all of which had a 48.8% response. For these top five resources that were exchanged, respondents indicated the amount of that resource exchanged (amount received compared to amount given) during the social interaction in that leisure activity. The overall mean scores were: self-esteem (3.55); information/knowledge (3.32); social approval (3.30); help (3.27); and, emotional support (3.14) (see Table 1). Respondents generally reported receiving slightly more

TABLE 1
Amount Of Resource Exchanged In Primary Leisure Activity By Sex

Resources	Resource Exchange Mean Scores			T-test P	Mann- Whitney U P	N
	Overall	Male	Female			
Information/Knowledge	3.32	3.00	3.75	.008**	.014*	28
Help	3.27	2.92	3.77	.042*	.062	22
Emotional Support	3.14	2.82	3.50	.046*	.049*	21
Social Approval	3.30	3.21	3.44	.263	.252	23
Self Esteem	3.55	3.58	3.50	.799	.857	22

*sig at .05 ** sig at .01

resources than they gave (i.e., above the mid-point on the scale). The mid-point represented a balanced exchange. Therefore, respondents indicated that there was reciprocation of resources but the exchange was generally not equal.

The means reported for non-leisure activities tended to be somewhat lower than those for leisure activities. Using a paired T-Test analysis, a number of significant differences in the amount of resources that were exchanged were found between leisure activities and non-leisure activities (see Table 2). Although significantly more information/knowledge was reported as being received in a non-leisure rather than leisure setting, more emotional support, self-esteem and social approval were received in the leisure setting.

TABLE 2
Amount Of Resources Exchanged In Leisure Versus Non-Leisure Activities

Resources	Resource Exchange Mean Scores		Paired T-test P	N (Pairs)
	Leisure	Non-Leisure		
Emotional Support	3.28	2.83	.002**	40
Self Esteem	3.64	3.21	.008**	42
Information/Knowledge	3.40	3.74	.027*	43
Social Approval	3.43	3.14	.038*	42
Power	3.10	2.82	.078	39
Status	3.17	2.92	.142	40
Help	3.46	3.34	.463	41
Respect	3.34	3.27	.637	41

*sig at .05 ** sig at .01

When means scores for the amount of resources exchanged in the primary leisure activity for males and females were tested for significance, it was found that information/knowledge, emotional support and help were significantly different, with females recording higher scores (see Table 1). What should also be noted is that for two resources, males actually reported receiving slightly less than they gave. This was for help (2.92) and emotional support (2.82). The Mann-Whitney U analysis also revealed some significant differences between males and females on this measure. Females reported receiving significantly more information/knowledge and emotional support than did males. No other independent variables were significantly related to this measure. No significant differences between females and males were found when the mean scores for resources exchanged in other leisure activities and non leisure activities were compared.

Respondents also indicated the nature and amount of resources exchanged in leisure activities done less frequently (i.e., all those activities other than the primary activity). Means for these activities were similar to those for the activity done most frequently and no statistical significant differences were found between frequent and less frequent leisure activities.

The MANOVA analysis revealed that although the overall model and both main effects were significant, the interactive effect of sex and setting on resource exchange scores was not significant (see Table 3). Examination of the univariate analysis suggested that the difference between males and females was due to significant differences in perceptions of resource exchange occurring in the primary leisure activity only. Differences between the settings was caused by differences between the primary leisure setting (rather than the secondary leisure setting) and the non-leisure setting.

Discussion

There are a number of limitations to this study. Foremost is that the small and non-random sample limits the generalizability of the results. Fur-

TABLE 3
Main Effects Of Sex And Setting On Resource Exchange Scores

	Resource Exchange Mean Scores			N
	Primary Leisure	Secondary Leisure	Non-Leisure	
Females	3.70	3.47	3.26	17
(SD)	(.41)	(.46)	(.57)	
Males	3.20	3.29	3.09	26
(SD)	(.44)	(.37)	(.53)	

Overall Main Effect $F = 3.47$ $P = .041$

Main Effect Sex $F = 8.22$, $P = .007$

Main Effect Setting $F = 4.93$, $P = .009$

thermore, perceptions of resource exchange may be activity specific and this study did not address the comparison of specific leisure activities. Finally, the resource list was developed from the literature review and some resources may be questionable (e.g., self-esteem).

The main resources that were received in leisure were in order, self-esteem (ranked fourth in non-leisure), help and social approval (fifth in non-leisure). Power and status were resources which respondents reported receiving less of than the other resources on the list. This finding suggests that social interaction in leisure may benefit individuals by providing a supportive relational environment and a positive context for self concept development.

In non-leisure settings, resource exchange appeared to be more instrumental in nature, with information/knowledge recording the highest amount received, followed by help and respect (ranked fifth in leisure). Power and status were again towards the bottom of the list. There were significant differences between leisure and non-leisure settings in terms of the amounts of resources exchanged (particularly emotional support, self-esteem, and social approval). In general, in non-leisure settings, there appeared to be smaller amounts received of the resources under examination than in leisure settings (apart from information/knowledge). This result may help explain why social interaction is so often reported as a major reason for engaging in leisure and why non-leisure activities may be perceived as more instrumental in purpose and outcomes. This is an important finding as the use of a social exchange approach has been able to distinguish "leisure from non-leisure within the realm of everyday events" (Samdahl 1988, p. 30).

Perhaps the increased opportunity for self expression in leisure as suggested by Samdahl (1988), is facilitated by or facilitates (the temporal order has not been addressed by the present study), different patterns of resource exchange compared to other types of social interaction. This may be related to increased self disclosure (Berg, 1984; Berg & McQuinn, 1986) and appears to support the concept of leisure as a life space (Kelly, 1983) in which individuals present their identity "without fear of judgement" (Samdahl, 1992, p. 28). However, given the life-cycle stage of this sample, respondents may perceive less opportunity for self identity and self-disclosure in non-leisure settings than would individuals in other life-cycle stages. Rapoport and Rapoport (1975) indicated that the preoccupation of youth is that of identity crystallisation involving the sub-processes of (among others) autonomy and sociability, linked to the central interests of this group (e.g., variety/novelty, sex and fashion). An older sample, further progressed through the life-stage continuum, may provide different results as their preoccupations are likely to be different. For example, Coleman (1990) after reviewing a number of studies, suggested that younger samples generated social activities as a separate cluster of leisure activities.

The approach in the present study was also able to distinguish significant differences between males and females in the amount of resources ex-

changed in their primary leisure activity. Females reported receiving more information/knowledge, help, and emotional support than did males. One interesting trend, despite not being significant, was the apparent likelihood of females to report receiving more resources from social exchanges occurring in all the activities examined. Also worthy of note is that males reported receiving less than an equal amount in some resources from their primary leisure relationships (help and emotional support). This result may be contrasted to the findings of Rook (1987), who reported that such resources were important to older women. The present findings suggest that differences in perceptions of resource exchange may help to explain why differences in activity preference have been found between males and females. This may be due to a range of factors. Henderson (1990) reported a number of studies which indicated that women tended to perceive leisure in the context of the "ethic of care" whereas men may take a less altruistic view. Reciprocation of altruism makes it likely that women will report receiving help and support. As suggested by Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw and Freysinger (1989, p. 3-4) "women may also have a different reality ... than men in their perceptions of leisure."

Henderson (1990) also reported research which suggested that for women, leisure outside of the family focussed on socialising with other women. The concept of "collective personality" (Henderson et al., 1989) may help explain the female's perception of the exchange and interactions that occur (e.g., women have placed more emphasis on the development of relationships across the lifespan). Perhaps this is why females in the study reported receiving more help and emotional support than did males. Some studies suggested that the ability to reciprocate was important to coping and morale of older persons generally and for older women in particular (James, James & Smith, 1984; Stoller, 1985). Rook (1987) found that loneliness in older women was associated with social exchanges that either over benefited or under benefited the respondents. Those with equitable benefits were less lonely. The present results may therefore assist with better defining the contextual nature of leisure (e.g., do perceptions of resource exchange vary between family and friends or between predominantly male and female groups?) and facilitate examination of issues such as the roles of altruism and self interest in the lives of women and how these influence their perceptions of leisure.

Importantly, the findings indicate a possible reason why social interaction is attractive in a leisure setting. For the list of resources included in this study, more social exchange resources are received in leisure than in non-leisure settings. In the context of social exchange theory, this suggests that perhaps some people are willing to receive less from relationships in non-leisure activities because they perceive an alternative reward source in leisure and/or exchange different types of resources in non-leisure. In addition, respondents reported receiving less amounts of resources from relationships in less frequent leisure activities than the most frequent leisure activity (although not significant). It is unclear from this study, however, whether this

is a function of the frequency of participation or if it is the reason that the activity is participated in more frequently.

An issue not resolved is the reciprocal nature of the exchange process and its influence on perceptions of the exchange. Rossman (1989) indicated that intrinsic satisfaction was related to active involvement in the interaction. Does the perception that they are receiving more than they give in leisure settings influence respondent perceptions of the effort or costs involved? Wright (1988) examined this issue in the context of a deteriorating marriage and suggested that there may be a process of inflating costs and depreciating rewards in order to rationalize the experience. Because leisure is intrinsically rewarding, the costs associated with the exchange may be somehow discounted and, the rewards inflated, by the overall sense of satisfaction. On the other hand, the costs of exchange in a non-leisure setting may be inflated because non-leisure is generally considered to be less intrinsically rewarding.

What should be noted is that the present study measured respondents' perceptions of the resource exchange. It may be that the nature of the leisure experience facilitates both partners in the exchange to perceive that they are the net beneficiary of the exchange. Resources exchanged in leisure may not be perceived in a zero-sum manner and this indicates one possible reason why social interaction in this context is so rewarding. As individuals perceive that they receive more from a leisure relationship and thus are the less dependent partner (Molm, 1987), they may be more likely to want to continue in the relationship. Conversely, a person may continue in non-leisure relationship, in which they receive lower levels of resources, because they receive "valued outcomes" elsewhere (Molm, 1987), especially through leisure. Such a theoretical approach may be related to the "patterning" of leisure as discussed by Samdahl (1992) and the positive and negative affects in leisure/non-leisure settings found by Samdahl and Kleiber (1989).

In summary, this study, despite being exploratory in nature with a small and non-random sample, has provided evidence that social exchange theory has potential to better explain leisure behaviour. The results have indicated that respondents can perceive the different resources that are exchanged in social interaction in leisure and provide an estimate of the level of reciprocity that exists in the exchange (as the rational nature of the theory would suggest). The results suggest that there are differences in the nature and amounts of resource exchange between leisure and non-leisure settings and that differences in perceptions of the resource exchange in leisure exist between males and females.

The study has also raised a number of questions for future research. As suggested by Samdahl (1988, p. 29) social interaction is "an inherently restrictive process since actions are molded and modified to fit the patterns of action by others." It may be that perceptions of resource exchange influence the "reduction of interactive role modification" which Samdahl (1988) argued occurs in the leisure context. Perhaps "self expression" means that the resource exchange process (or at least perceptions of the costs and benefits) is altered in leisure. Does a leisure context pattern of resource exchange

provide intrinsic meaning and is it related to self concept? If so, does exchange in this context hinge on "self disclosure" because being oneself in leisure (Kelly, 1983) may mean that one can more readily and willingly self disclose?

Other issues which should be addressed in future research include: the length of time the social exchange relationship has existed, since relationships that are more successful over longer periods may be characterised by reciprocity; possible differences between life-cycle stages; more detailed listings of leisure specific resources (e.g., from focus groups) to elucidate possible differences between specific leisure activities; and, further investigation of the differences between leisure and non-leisure settings and males and females in a range of settings.

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