An Integrative Review of Women, Gender, and Leisure: Increasing Complexities

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Abstract

Research about women and leisure has grown consistently over the past 30 years. This paper extends four previous integrative reviews about research content regarding women's leisure. Research articles appearing from 2006–2010 in selected major English language research journals were analyzed through an integrative review to ascertain patterns and themes. Analyses indicate a continued use of qualitative approaches. New and recurring patterns in the content of the research emerged. Seven themes related to women, gender, and leisure: resistance and empowerment through leisure, feminist frameworks, international cultural descriptions, social support and friendships, family, physical and mental health, and social inclusion. Intersectionality is discussed as a promising paradigm for the future study of women, gender, and leisure.

KEYWORDS: *Empowerment, feminism, intersectionality, methods, resistance*

Research on women and leisure emerged as a body of knowledge approximately 30 years ago (e.g., Deem, 1982; Glyptis & Chambers, 1982). This literature has evolved in content and epistemology. The research about women and leisure in the past five years has continued to highlight leisure and its meanings for women from emerging cultural, theoretical, and methodological perspectives. This evolving research builds from the past to create a broader understanding of human behavior not only for girls and women, but also for other marginalized groups and for boys and men. Newer and established researchers have continued to contribute to this body of knowledge through exploring emerging topics and expanding previous findings.

The purpose of this paper was to extend four past integrative reviews (Henderson, 1990, 1996; Henderson & Hickerson, 2007; Henderson, Hodges, & Kivel, 2002) about women's leisure to include research issues and themes from the past five years (2006–2010). The integrative review was a strategy for analyzing literature focused on inferring generalizations about substantive issues from a set of studies that addresses these issues (Jackson, 1980). Topics and themes associated with theories in the literature were uncovered and described as a means for demonstrating how research related to women and gender is maturing and contributing to a broader discourse about leisure behavior.

Previous Reviews

Henderson (1990) concluded in the first integrative review that covered 1980–1989 that frameworks for understanding women's leisure had emerged using a variety of approaches with a focus on empowering women generically to experience leisure. The content of that literature suggested that commonality existed for women and that a *meaning* of leisure for women was emerging. This analysis demonstrated that women (a) shared a common world in their inequality regarding opportunities for leisure (e.g., Glyptis, 1985), (b) sought social relationships in leisure (e.g., Dixey, 1987), (c) had fragmented leisure time (e.g., Shaw, 1985), (d) found the preponderance of leisure in the home and through unstructured activities (e.g., Bialeschki & Henderson, 1986), and (e) lacked a sense of entitlement to leisure (e.g., Shank, 1986).

The second integrative review (Henderson, 1996) included research published from 1990–1995 and broadened the basis of understanding to address multiple *meanings* of leisure with the notion that "one size doesn't fit all" (p. 139). This body of literature of the early 1990s challenged the idea that a common world of women existed beyond the recognition that women lived in a patriarchal world. Henderson suggested themes were emerging related to (a) gender explanations (i.e., the cultural connotations associated with an individual's biological sex; e.g., Deem, 1992), (b) continua of meanings associated with leisure that were sometimes contradictory for different groups of women (e.g., Karsten, 1995), and (c) a focus on the diversity that existed among women who live in Western cultures (e.g., Harrington, Dawson, & Bolla, 1992). Henderson (1996) recommended that leisure researchers interested in addressing women and gender continue to explore all possible dimensions of women's *and* men's lives. She also recommended that

although individual empowerment was important, collective action might be an important focus if leisure for girls and women was to be better facilitated.

Henderson et al. (2002) summarized the literature about women and leisure from 1996–2000. This integrative analysis resulted in topics that were divided into two broad categories: dialogue (e.g., Aitchison, 1997; Deem, 1992; Kay, 2000) and context (e.g., Dupuis & Smale, 2000; James, 2000; Russell & Stage, 1996). Dialogue referred to the foundations and patterns regarding how women and leisure were studied and understood. Context applied to the emerging research topics and questions (e.g., life span, diverse populations) encompassed in research about women and leisure. The dialogical aspect suggested trends related to feminism, internal critique, and emerging ideologies. This literature was also considered dialogical because of the introspective nature of some of the questions asked. This internal critique underlined how complicated the study of gender related to women's leisure had become. The literature also placed a growing emphasis on the ideologies and hegemonies that shaped the experiences of girls and women and boys and men in society. Contextually, the literature about women and leisure broadened in the latter half of the 1990s with the study of evolving topics such as the intersection of gender with other characteristics related to race and class as well as with emergent global and cross-cultural perspectives. Furthermore, in the literature from 1996–2000, women's role in families was an ongoing area of study, and the notion of whether leisure is inherently good (e.g., Jeffreys, 1999) began to emerge.

The integrative review covering the first five years of the 21st century delineated areas related to premises (i.e., theoretical underpinnings) and performances (i.e., the *doing* of leisure) regarding women and leisure (Henderson & Hickerson, 2007). Five conclusions were drawn about the literature on women and leisure during the early years of the 21st century: (a) aspects of critical theory in analyzing the lives of women pointed to the continued political nature of women's leisure (e.g., Parry, 2003), (b) a focus on resistance acknowledged that gendered leisure is changing and that many girls and women embrace a myriad of potential leisure choices (e.g., Shaw, 2001), (c) constraints to women's and girls' leisure were discussed in more complex ways relative to the context of their lives (e.g., Bedini & Anderson, 2005), (d) leisure in women's lives could not be separated from the social factors that influenced their lives (e.g., Fullagar & Brown, 2003), and (e) physical activity by choice offered a means for examining more about the everyday lives of girls and women as well as their physical and mental health (e.g., Henderson & Ainsworth, 2001).

Thus, in the 25 years leading to 2006, the study of women's leisure evolved from a singular focus on finding the gendered meaning of leisure to a greater recognition of the range and complexities of researching a topic as broad as women or leisure. The range of topics made drawing conclusions more complicated. However, the body of literature from 2006–2010 continued to reflect the thinking of feminist researchers as well as individuals involved in the ongoing examination of the meanings of leisure and leisure behavior. This integrative review revealed not only a growing scope of topics but also the need to explain and integrate these topics with a broader range of theories and perspectives.

Integrative Review Approach

The intent of this integrative review, similar to its predecessors, was to analyze the leisure literature about girls, women, gender, and other related topics to ascertain the status of the research and the directions that researchers have taken in the past five years. With this examination, we offer an analysis about the state of the art of research on women and leisure so that others might draw insight for future research.

Similar to the past four integrative reviews about women and leisure, the research review questions for our analysis related primarily to the topic of study in these articles, the way the research was conducted, and the emerging thematic and theoretical implications. Studies from nine primary English language refereed journals were identified from 2006–2010 with the numbers of articles addressing women and/or gender indicated in parentheses: *Annals of Leisure Research* (*n* = 10), *Journal of Leisure Research* (*n* = 24*), Journal of Park and Recreation Administration* (*n* = 3), *Leisure/Loisir* (*n* = 10), *Leisure Sciences* (*n* = 22), *Leisure Studies* (*n* = 17), *Society and Leisure/Loisir et Societe* (*n* = 1), *Therapeutic Recreation Journal* (*n* = 3), and *World Leisure Journal* (*n* = 12). The *World Leisure Journal* was added in this analysis because the journal has increased its editorial standing in the past decade. One observation about women and leisure research reported from 2006–2010 was that the number of articles had increased. The *World Leisure Journal* (*WLJ*) articles were included in this analysis, which might account for some of the increase except that only 12 articles were identified from that journal. Taking out *WLJ*, 90 articles were analyzed in the past five years compared to 69 from 2001–2005, 74 studies from 1996–2000, and about the same number from 1991–1995.

Because the focus of this integrative review was to understand more about women's lives, gender, and leisure, we examined the content of all articles using the keywords of *women, men, girls, boys, feminism,* and *gender* or related words such as *widow, caregiver, family, gay, masculinity*, or *lesbian* that appeared in the title, in the abstract, or among the identified keywords. Articles that dealt with professional issues regarding women, recreation, careers, and leadership were not included as we chose to focus on leisure behavior as the context and not management issues. Although additional papers have been delivered at conferences and included in book chapters, we focused on only refereed journal articles because they were more readily accessible. Furthermore, we delimited the work to the English language not because no other work is occurring outside English language journals, but because translations from other languages were not available to us.

A total of 102 articles met these criteria and were reviewed and summarized from the journals indicated above. Findings were analyzed using quantitative descriptions of characteristics of the research and researchers as well as qualitative comparisons of the content of the selected articles. The first author read all the articles and identified and categorized them according to characteristics of the research, topic, conceptual/theoretical foundations, and thematic implications. We then examined these preliminary notes and discussed the patterns and themes that were emerging. Content analysis allowed us to compare and contrast the purpose and findings of the articles to one another and to our preliminary analyses focusing on common and divergent topics and themes. We also noted the

methods used and samples that were selected. For this paper, the articles were conceptually grouped and themes were identified that provided a summary of the literature published in these journals from 2006–2010. We also noted the research methods as well as the authorship and sample populations investigated during the five years. In the discussion section of this paper, we offer our synthesis and interpretation of the meanings associated with these aspects of the studies.

Methods Analyses

To provide further detail about how data were collected and summarized, we examined methods, selected author characteristics, and selected sample population characteristics as part of this integrative review. A variety of methods were described in the studies. We counted the research methods used and found the following percentages indicating proportional representation of each method:

- semistructured and in-depth interviews ($n = 39$; 38%),
- conceptual literature reviews and historical/content analyses ($n = 10$; 10%),
- quantitative questionnaires/secondary quantitative analyses ($n = 20$; 20%),
- mixed data/methods ($n = 17$; 17%: mixed qualitative data, $n = 10$; mixed quantitative data, $n = 2$; mixed qualitative and quantitative data, $n = 5$),
- focus groups only ($n = 3$; 3%),
- autoethnography and ethnography ($n = 9$; 9%), and
- action research, single-subject, collective memory work ($n = 4$; 4%).

These methods summaries can be compared to Henderson et al.'s (2002) and Henderson and Hickerson's (2007) previous integrative reviews as well as a review of articles and their theoretical implications conducted by Henderson, Presley, and Bialeschki (2004; see Table 1). The data from the three most recent integrative reviews about women and leisure reflected changes in the number of autoethnographies and ethnographies undertaken from 2006–2010 as well as the growing use of in-depth interviews. Fewer conceptual papers and more data-based papers were evident. Furthermore, compared to the general comparison of four leisure journals (i.e., *Journal of Leisure Research, Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, Leisure Sciences,* and *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*) from 1992–2002, the research about women and gender clearly reflected a greater focus on qualitative approaches to data collection.

The most recent integrative review (Henderson & Hickerson, 2007) described the sex of the authors to ascertain who was conducting the research to compare to the results from Henderson et al.'s (2004) theoretical review. Of the 102 articles reviewed, 89 different first authors were represented (e.g., one author was first on five publications and 12 authors were lead on two articles). For these integrated studies about women, gender, and leisure, 33% were single female authors (37% in the 2007 study), 34% were two or more women (28% in 2007), 24% were mixed sex authors (30% in 2007), and 9% were men only (4% in 2007). These data compared to all the studies published in the four U.S. journals from 1992–2002 indicated, as might be expected, that two thirds of the authors for this integrative review were women compared to 21% women for all leisure literature. Males au-

thored about 43% of the articles in the general leisure literature compared to 9% in our study. Women dominated the literature on women and leisure, but one third of the articles included at least one or more males, which was similar to the data from the previous 2007 women's integrative study.

Table 1

Comparison of Methods of Research Across Four Data Collection Studies

Method	Women 2006–2010 (%)	Women 2001–2005 (%)	Women 1996–2000 (%)	Leisure Literature 1992–2002 (%)
Qualitative Interviews	38	27	28	11
Conceptual	10	24	26	20
Quantitative	20	19	23	49
Mixed Methods	17	19	18	7
Focus Groups	3	6	1	1
Autoethnography	9	--	--	--
Case Studies	--	5	4	3
Experimental	--	--	--	7
Other[1]	4	--	--	2

[1] for example, case study, single subject, collective memory

The populations examined in the empirical studies varied regarding age, sexual identity, national identity, and ability. Almost half (46%) of the studies were based on adult female populations (e.g., Freeman, Palmer, & Baker, 2006; Stalp, 2006) with 10% of the researchers studying adult women in comparison to adult men (e.g., Floyd, Nicholas, Injae, Jin-Hyung, & Scott, 2006; Walker, Courneya, & Deng, 2006). Older women (e.g., Havitz, 2007; Janke, Nimrod, & Kleiber, 2008; Liechty & Yarnal, 2010) made up about 10% of the sample compared to 7% who were girls or young women (i.e., under age 23; e.g., Barnett, 2007; Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006). In our analysis, men analyzed within a gender context (i.e., masculinity; e.g., Gidlow & Cushman, 2008; Kivel & Johnson, 2009) were the subjects in 5% of the studies. In addition, families were included in 9% of the studies including research about the implications of fatherhood (e.g., Kay, 2006) and mixed

family dyads such as couples (e.g., Voorpostel, van der Lippe, & Gershuny, 2010) or mothers and daughters (e.g., Liechty, Freeman, & Zabriskie, 2006; Shannon & Shaw, 2008). Two studies addressed lesbian women (e.g., Taylor, 2007), and two additional studies used gay men (Johnson, 2008) and an LGBT sample (Iwasaki, Mackay, Mactavish, Ristock, & Bartlett, 2006). Although not analyzed in prior years, women outside North America or Europe representing primarily Middle Eastern or Muslim women (e.g., Koca, Henderson, Asci, & Bulgu, 2009; Saad, 2007; Walseth, 2006) and Asian countries (e.g., Lee & Zhang, 2010; Tsai, 2006, 2010) were described in about 14% of the studies. Furthermore, almost 10% of the studies addressed disabilities (e.g., Ruddell & Shinew, 2006) or cancer survivors (e.g., Groff, Battaglini, Sipe, O'Keefe, & Peppercorn, 2009; Parry, 2007).

These summaries of the methods, authors, and characteristics of the samples provided a baseline for examining some of the epistemologies of the research. They also offered insight relative to how knowledge was constructed related to the themes uncovered in the analysis.

Themes and Frameworks

An integrative review does not necessarily quantify the number of articles addressing particular topics or themes, but rather seeks to infer generalizations about substantive issues emerging in the literature. The themes that integrated and provided insight about women, gender, and leisure in the literature were in some cases extensions of previous topics uncovered in earlier integrative reviews and in other ways took the study of women and gender to further levels. The themes were not mutually exclusive, but rather reflected variations and nuances in the literature. The themes we identified related to resistance and empowerment through leisure, feminist frameworks, international cultural descriptions, social support and friendships, family, physical and mental health, and social inclusion.

Previous research had focused on constraints to women's leisure (Henderson et al., 2002) and with an emerging emphasis on resistance (Henderson & Hickerson, 2007). Our analysis extended these ideas further to emphasize *resistance and empowerment through leisure*. This theme is a key aspect of feminist theories, but in our analysis it reflected specific applications to leisure. The theme was a combination of personal empowerment and collective empowerment, as had begun to arise in earlier research (Henderson, 1996). Literature 20 years ago focused on the lack of entitlement as a theme, which was replaced in recent studies by viewing leisure as means for resistance leading to empowerment. Examples included the work of Raisborough and Bhatti (2007) with their study of women in the garden, Parry (2009) in her study of dragon boat racing and cancer survivors, Delamere and Shaw (2008) in their study of digital games, and Cosgriff, Little, and Wilson (2010) in their study that explored how women were empowered through nature. Furthermore, examples of resistance and empowerment were evident in gender atypical leisure behaviors for women. Leisure was empowering to women through activities such as Harley riding (e.g., Roster, 2007), triathlons (Cronan & Scott, 2008), boxing (Cove & Young, 2007), rugby (Murray & Howat, 2009), bodybuilding (Probert, Palmer, & Leberman, 2007), climbing (Dilley & Scraton, 2010), gambling (Casey, 2006), consuming alcohol in bars (Brooks, 2008), and solo traveling

(Jordan & Aitchison, 2008). In many of these studies, leisure was empowering because women were resisting traditional norms and gendered opportunities for leisure. In addition, these gender atypical activities that were studied provided new spaces for leisure and opened up expanded opportunities for leisure.

In the latter half of the 20th century, critique had emerged about the invisibility of feminist theories in the women-centered leisure literature (Henderson et al., 2002). The literature of the past five years saw the emergence of research that specifically identified the use of different *feminist frameworks,* including an increased presence of post-structuralism. Ways of thinking about gender and leisure in the context of post-structuralism in particular emphasized multiple identities, the reflexive self, and the breakdown of divisions between concepts such as constraints and benefits (e.g., Fullagar, 2008; Jordan & Aitchison, 2008). This intentional integration of feminist frameworks also allowed for explanations related to gender stigmas (e.g., Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006) as well as changing parental roles (e.g., Harrington, 2006), which extended the political implications of women's leisure that had begun in the previous early 21st century analysis (Henderson & Hickerson, 2007). Feminism was explicitly related to an exploration of hegemonic masculinity among gay men in a country-western bar (e.g., Johnson, 2008) and how mobile phones enabled adolescent women entry into public space that may have been limited in the past by the male gaze (Foley, Holzman, & Wearing, 2007). The explicit identification of feminist theories provided an epistemological foundation for research on women, men, and leisure. In addition, these theories enabled possibilities for different methods and provided a basis for how research was conducted.

A third area that was evident in the past but more prominent in the current review was the *international cultural descriptions* of women's leisure. Although a limitation of this integrative review about women and gender was that only manuscripts published in English language journals were reviewed, the importance of women's leisure from outside the Western world emerged in our integrative review. For example, Arab-Moghaddam, Henderson, and Sheikholeslami (2007) found that Iranian women had some of the same constraints to leisure as women in Western countries, but the lack of opportunities and facilities was clearly a difference within their culture. Invitation days (i.e., regular occasions when women hosted other women in their homes) were a specific type of opportunity for Turkish women to find leisure and social support (Sönmez, Argan, Sabirli, & Sevil, 2010). For young Muslim women, sport involvement was seen as a challenge to their ethnic identities (Walseth, 2006). Tsai (2006) explored the influence of Confucianism on women's leisure in Taiwan, and Lee and Zhang (2010) found a significant relationship between Chinese women's leisure satisfaction and their perceptions of freedom to access leisure, time for leisure, and expectations for the future. Although commonalities occurred across cultures, the exploration of different perspectives appeared to be enriching a greater global understanding of leisure beyond ethnocentric biases (Roberts, 2010).

Social support and friendships have consistently permeated research about women and leisure for over 30 years (Henderson, 1990; Henderson & Hickerson, 2007) and have remained salient in this integrative review. The role of leisure

in facilitating and strengthening social support and friendships among women was evident in the literature from 2006–2010. This friendship was explored by researchers such as Kerstetter, Yarnal, Son, I-Yin, and Baker (2008); Son, Yarnal, and Kerstetter (2010); and Yarnal, Chick, and Kerstetter (2008). The importance of social support for girls and women with disabilities was emphasized by Ruddell and Shinew (2006) as well as Anderson, Wozencroft, and Bedini (2008). From another perspective, Glover and Parry (2008) examined how friendships among women might emerge in the wake of stressful life events. Mulcahy, Parry, and Glover (2010) showed how mothers' groups allowed for opportunities to get together but also resulted in gendered assumptions. Relationships women formed through leisure, with other women and with men, consistently remained a key area of interest among researchers.

The context of women and *family* was expanded in our most recent literature review. Implications for family leisure were evident in the research of the 1980s that examined women primarily in the context of the home (Henderson, 1990), and family leisure with a gender analysis came to the forefront as a topic of study toward the end of the 20th century (Henderson et al., 2002). More recently, families in specific contexts were explored such as rural women. For example, Churchill, Plano Clark, Prochaska-Cue, Creswell, and Ontai-Grzebik (2007) assessed the contextual factors affecting rural family fun, and Trussell and Shaw (2007) explored the changing meanings of leisure on farms where the father was not present because of changing work responsibilities. From another cultural perspective, Dilbaghi and Dilbaghi (2007) studied farm families in India and found that women worked hard yet still carved out time for leisure. Family was also explored related to fatherhood (e.g., Harrington, 2006; Kay, 2006; Such, 2006) and grandfatherhood (e.g., Scraton & Holland, 2006). Furthermore, an exploration of the leisure of couples (e.g., Voorpostel et al., 2010) as well as the relationships in family dyads such as mothers and daughters (e.g., Liechty et al., 2006; Shannon & Shaw, 2008) was a new area for examination within the family context. Thus, family was expanded to include broader structural and cultural dimensions.

Although the topic of active leisure for women has developed over the past decade (Henderson & Hickerson, 2007), an evolving theme was the influence and importance of *physical and mental health* as a dimension of leisure. Health is not a new benefit associated with leisure, but its relationship to women and gender received greater recognition in our integrative review. For example, Iwasaki et al. (2006) explored how coping with stress using active leisure involved spiritual, social, and cultural meanings related to gender and other identities. Somewhat similarly, Fullagar (2008) used post-structuralist feminist theories to investigate how leisure practices were counter-depressants. Lloyd and Little (2010) examined women's psychological well-being outcomes from involvement in physical activity, and Nagla (2006) specifically researched the health effects of yoga for women. In addition, specific populations were examined related to physical activity such as Latina women (Skowron, Stodolska, & Shinew, 2008), young women (e.g., Craike, Symons, & Zimmermann, 2009), aging women (e.g., Son, Kerstetter, & Mowen, 2008), and women/girls with disabilities (e.g., Anderson et al., 2008).

Finally, the recognition of the identity markers of women's lives relative to other characteristics beyond gender became a topic of greater awareness in the recent literature. The idea of *social inclusion* appeared more evident in this integrative review than in the past. This emphasis on recognizing that gender was not the only influence on women's leisure is a precursor to what will be discussed later about intersectionality as a future direction for research. The juncture of gender and class was a prominent theme in the early research done in the United Kingdom (e.g., Deem, 1982), but over the past five years discussions about including characteristics related to gender, race, class, sexuality, and ability have been emphasized to initiate a more comprehensive dialogue within leisure analyses. An ethnography by Atencio (2008), for example, explored dance cultures and how racial, ethnic, gender, and class discourses and power relations intersected. Floyd et al. (2006) used a multiple stratification hierarchy (i.e., the concept that the combined interaction effects of age, gender, race and ethnicity, and socioeconomic status influence quality of life) to study recreational fishing among men and women. In addition, Anderson et al. (2008) examined the "double whammy" of being female and having a disability (p. 183). The importance of studying other identities in addition to gender has been recommended consistently in the past two decades by feminist African American scholars (e.g., Hill-Collins, 1990) and feminist leisure scholars (e.g., Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw, & Freysinger, 1996), but researchers only recently seem to have begun to integrate the complexities of inclusion into studies of women, gender, and leisure.

Discussion

Because a similar integrative review has been used for almost three decades, parallels as well as new ideas were evident in this most recent review. Interpretations of the characteristics of the articles and the content themes provided implications for future research.

Characteristics of the Research/Researchers

Henderson and Shaw (2006) suggested a perceived slowdown in the research and writing about women and leisure, which did not seem to be true during the 5-year period from 2006–2010. The inclusion of a gender analysis of men's leisure accounted for a few more articles during the most recent 5-year period. The growing number of articles is heartening in that much remains to be explained about women and their leisure, how leisure is gendered for both women and men, and implications for understanding intersecting identities related to leisure, women, and gender. The increased number of articles about women and gender from outside North America, the United Kingdom, and Australia was also important to note.

Although some journals focus more on leisure behavior in general and the gendered nature of leisure contexts (e.g., *Journal of Leisure Research, Leisure Sciences, Leisure Studies*), other journals have a more practical (e.g., *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*) or a more targeted focus (e.g., *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*) and seem to have fewer articles with a focus on gender. Nevertheless, all journals reviewed for this study had at least one article about leisure, women, and gender

with one journal having a special issue during this 5-year period devoted to one dimension of gender (i.e., fatherhood in *Leisure Studies*). These findings suggest that the examination of women and gender has become a topic that is prevalent in a mainstreamed way in recent leisure research and that was also represented by a plethora of possible methods.

The methods summaries in our study were similar to past studies about leisure and women. Qualitative approaches, especially in-depth interviews, were most used in the articles reviewed. Although qualitative methods are often justified when little is known about a topic, the continued use of these approaches to study women suggested to us that qualitative data have ongoing importance in giving individuals *voice* (Henderson et al., 1996). The diversity of populations investigated also required opportunities for new voices. Although more is being learned about women, gender, and leisure, the nature and quality of experiences is often more fully explained using qualitative data. Furthermore, as noted previously, autoethnographies and ethnographies emerged, which also emphasized how personal identity and positionality were reflected in the methods employed.

The approaches and mixing of data in the studies we reviewed highlighted the diversity of questions asked as well as the possible *ways of knowing*. In the 1980s and early 1990s, quantitative surveyed-based research seemed to be the accepted method for doing leisure research, at least in North America, and women were largely invisible in this research (Henderson, 1994). Qualitative interpretive approaches were subsequently adopted by many feminist researchers and, as noted, remained popular going into the 21st century. However, the diversity of methods and the use of mixed methods, in particular, may be another indicator of the growing maturity of this area of study about women and the need to answer pertinent questions using the most appropriate methods. The utility of quantitative methods for feminist research (Westmarland, 2001) and in studies of leisure and gender (Shaw, 2010) should not be underestimated in the contributions that they can make in addressing important research questions.

Fewer conceptual papers than in the past were manifested in the publications during the past five years. Although conceptual papers are useful, empirical studies added to more specific understanding of new populations and activities. Sometimes fewer data-based papers are published early as foundations and underpinnings for a line of research are explored. Papers about the need to focus on women's leisure and also debates about different approaches and theoretical perspectives were common up until the late 1990s and early 2000s. Perhaps since then these debates have reached saturation, and the need for further research, which was often cited in papers, is actually underway with the greater prevalence of data-based papers.

Articles about women, gender, and leisure remained predominantly authored by women from Western countries, although the number of men contributing doubled compared to the previous review (Henderson & Hickerson, 2007). Women provide an important standpoint position and representation that is needed in leisure research. On the other hand, more diversity of authors may also mean a greater variety of topics and populations explored as well as broader interpretations of the findings. The growing presence of feminist researchers from non-

English speaking and non-Western countries was encouraging. The presence of these authors and the insights they provided regarding the gendered experiences of leisure outside of the Western world has made valuable contributions to the knowledge base over the past decade. This research regarding women and gender also mirrors a growing call in leisure studies more generally to address the hegemony of Western perspectives (Roberts, 2010).

As in the past, however, the ghettoization of women and leisure (i.e., setting aside or isolating research about women and gender without making its examination a part of all leisure research; Deem, 1999; Henderson & Shaw, 2006) is an issue that should be addressed regarding characteristics of researchers and the topics being studied. This integrative review pointed to the value of having a diversity of researchers using a variety of methods to study women in numerous contexts.

The Meanings of Leisure for Women

In addition to the structure of the research (i.e., researcher characteristics, methods, populations studied), the multiple meanings of leisure for women were marked in the research published from 2006–2010. The breadth of ways that women enjoyed leisure ranged from everyday family and friendship experiences to resistance and empowerment through gender atypical opportunities such as some types of physical activity, the outdoors, and entertainment. The seven themes uncovered in this integrative review had similarities to previous reviews, but as would be hoped and expected, multilayered insights were also evident in the interpretations of the findings particularly related to health, family, and feminist perspectives.

Similar to the most recent integrative review (Henderson & Hickerson, 2007), this review found that physical activity and health connected to leisure continued to be a growing topic. From a leisure perspective, one of the values of this physical activity research is that it has enabled researchers to move beyond sports as the major connection between girls, women, and physical activity. The opportunities for girls and women to experience empowerment in outdoor activities as well as in other forms of exercise attested to the physical and mental connections between leisure and health for women of all ages. The growing focus on older women's participation in active leisure was particularly noteworthy because it countered Vertinsky's (1995) often-cited finding that strenuous physical activity historically was perceived as dangerous for older women. Today's cohort of older women appears to be taking part in a range of activities that may not have been sanctioned as recently as 20 years ago (e.g., Auster, 2008; Parry, 2008).

A new generation of studies about leisure and the family also emerged. A difference between the early research and recent studies about families appeared related to implications for parents as contrasted to women-only analyses. Social expectations about parenting roles for men and women relative to their leisure emerged in our review and clearly warrant additional investigation in the future. Another theme related to the family was the issue of work–life balance, which also seemed to be a growing focus outside leisure studies (e.g., Epstein & Kalleberg, 2006; Lewis, Gambles, & Rapoport, 2007). In addition, new directions addressing wider societal trends may warrant additional investigation relative to families. For example, foundational work regarding retirement and child care (e.g., Scraton &

Holland, 2006) reflected the roles and responsibilities in a wider family unit and the potential conflicts about the ideology of what retirement is supposed to mean.

Henderson et al. (2002) described in the third integrative review at the end of the 20th century that critical theory and gender resistance were emerging, but lamented that fewer studies seemed to be grounded explicitly in feminist theory. This observation did not appear to hold in this most recent integrative review. Researchers were more likely to emphasize feminist theory as a basis for findings related to empowerment and resistance. A recurring emphasis on resistance provided a means for exploring leisure opportunities for girls and women. In addition, we noted that the research seemed to be moving away from a focus on the negative aspects of constraints to leisure toward the more positive emphasis on empowerment. This empowerment, partially due to an emphasis on resistance, seemed to focus on individual empowerment as well as collective empowerment (Shaw & Henderson, 2005). It also reflected the explanations of leisure and sport that Aitchison (2003) termed the *social-cultural nexus*. This nexus was defined "as both a site and a process of construction, legitimization, reproduction, and re-working of gender relations" (p. 1). This nexus suggested the need to examine how perceptions and attitudes are influenced by organizational structures and cultures.

The themes uncovered in the integrative review (i.e., resistance and empowerment through leisure, feminist frameworks, international cultural descriptions, social support and friendships, family, physical and mental health, and social inclusion) pointed to the complex nuances of leisure for women and men. Henderson's conclusion in 1990 that women shared a common world in their inequality regarding leisure opened a dialogue into the 21st century that has moved far beyond ascertaining a single *meaning* of leisure for women. The research underscored how leisure in different forms can be empowering across cultures and social networks (i.e., friends and family) when embodied in feminist frameworks that acknowledge the transections of people's lives. The analyses suggested possible areas to consider in future research on women, gender, and leisure.

Future Emphases for Research

We believe that in addition to the continuing analysis of the meanings described above, two new directions are indicated related to future research about women, gender, and leisure. These directions pertain to cultural perspectives and intersectionality.

The first direction relates to expanding cultural perspectives about leisure specifically from international perspectives. We noted the growing and continuing focus on gender and leisure in non-Western countries, particularly Middle Eastern and Asian countries. Although some of the conceptual perspectives adopted for studies in the West may be relevant, a *one size fits all* approach likely will not work when explaining the social structures and values inherent in other countries. Just as the exploration of women's leisure resulted in broader perspectives about leisure in general, research projects emerging from non-Western countries may help rethink traditional assumptions about leisure for women and men. Leisure is dynamic, and interpretations from non-Western perspectives can further strengthen the potential value associated with leisure for all people (Roberts, 2010).

A second direction we identified was intersectionality as an organizing paradigm and a new area or phase for future research about women, gender, and leisure. Henderson (1994) proposed that five areas described the past and potential of leisure research, and Aitchison (2001) further expanded on these phases. The first area regarding *invisible women* in the leisure literature has been addressed to some extent. For example, in the literature examined over the past five years, slightly less than 10% of all articles appearing in the major English language journals addressed women and/or gender directly. The second area of *add women and stir* also has been debunked in that the discussion of women in the literature is no longer merely a token activity in the literature. Although 10% of the research in these major journals about women and gender may not be enough, it clearly represented a body of literature that is being published. The third aspect of *sex/gender differences* related to distributive justice was important in some studies, but most comparisons have moved beyond differences as conclusions to identifying gender explanations as key to understanding differences. The study of *women only* (i.e., examining women's experiences without comparing them to men) from feminist perspectives remains important to understand the nuances of leisure more broadly especially for specific groups of women. Finally, as noted in the second integrative review (Henderson, 1996), the discussion of *gender* and its implications has become a major area as evidenced by explorations of masculinity and femininity as well as gender roles in the past 20 years. Based on our integrative review, we propose the next logical step is to identify a sixth focus of study related to *intersectionality*. This exploration of the interaction of gender, race, and class as well as other identities such as sexuality and ability acknowledges the evolving complexities of women, gender, and leisure.

Intersectionality focuses on interconnections among the multiple dimensions of social categories such as gender, race, age, sexuality, ability, and class (Choo & Ferree, 2009). The idea reinforces that women are not a homogeneous group with the same life experiences. Furthermore, intersectionality shows how feminism is a broader project that addresses more than gender and women. Intersectionality asserts that forms of oppression such as sexism, racism, classism, colonialism, or homophobia do not act independently of one another, and this interaction contributes further to social inequality. This examination of intersectionality can lead to a greater understanding of women's and men's leisure. Feminist researchers studying leisure, for example, must take into account racism, imperialism, or other forms of oppression that limit the leisure opportunities of individuals.

McCall (2005) described intersectionality as a major paradigm that can influence research. McCall as well as others (e.g., Choo & Ferree, 2010; Davis, 2008; Knudsen, 2007), however, have also emphasized the complexity of the concept. The concept of intersectionality appears frequently in feminist scholarship according to Choo and Ferree (2010), and Davis (2008) has described it as a buzzword because often the specifics of what intersectionality means are unclear. Nevertheless, our integrative review uncovered social inclusion as a theme of the recent published literature about women, gender, and leisure. Knudsen (2007) described this acknowledgement of inclusion as *additive* intersectionality, and Choo and Ferree called it *group centered*. This type of analysis focuses on specific sociocultural

categories but not necessarily their influence on one another. The next step is to focus on perspectives that emphasize the power implications and ways that gender, sexuality, nationality, and other categories might interact. Different social categories not only affect one another but also work together to exert a combined influence on individuals related to oppression and power at social, structural, and systemic levels.

Intersectionality offers theoretical promise in expanding understandings about leisure for and about women by moving beyond essentialism or simplified explanations. However, intersectionality can be unwieldy and difficult to operationalize in research (Choo & Ferree, 2010; Davis, 2008). Nevertheless, possibilities exist for using the applications and implications of intersectionality in research in critical and reflective ways. This proposed sixth area called intersectionality also underlines how social justice can be furthered through the recognition of identity categories as they relate to oppression and power. Other leisure researchers have also called for approaches related to intersectionality that highlight "the fluidity of identity and identity categories…that shift the paradigm of how we study race and the leisure experience" (Kivel, Johnson, & Scraton, 2009, p. 489), that use intersectional mapping to challenge how diversity is conceptualized and how whiteness works (McDonald, 2009), and that enhance leisure research to address values and ideologies that can lead to social justice (Stewart, Parry, & Glover, 2008). Shifts in thinking such as these will be important in further examining the social context of women's leisure, developing methods to examine oppression and power, discovering new knowledge, and taking action to address social justice and change.

In summary, we emphasize that research about women's leisure has shown an evolution over the past 30 years that indicates consistent movement toward acknowledging the complexities and potential of leisure. The focus on gender has advanced, as has the acknowledgement of the interconnections and potential intraconnections among intersecting identities and leisure. Gender is only part of understanding how leisure can reproduce hegemony or lead to social change through resistance. The increase in the quantity and quality of the literature as well as interpretive perspectives about women, gender, and leisure has provided a foundation for further study in the coming decade.

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