

Research Notes

A Systematic Review of Non-Western and Cross-Cultural/National Leisure Research

Eiji Ito
Gordon J. Walker
Haidong Liang

University of Alberta, Canada

Abstract

This study reviewed non-Western and cross-cultural/national research published in five major leisure studies journals between 1990 and 2009. Of 1,891 total articles, 4.1% were non-Western and cross-cultural/national in nature. Overall: (a) Greater China was the most frequently studied culture/nation (24.4%); (b) survey research was the most often employed method (33.8%); (c) (b) perceived benefits, motivations, and leisure meanings was the most common theme (14.1%); and (d) although articles on this topic increased fivefold over 20 years, over 90% of recent leisure articles still focused, in whole or in part, on only slightly more than 10% of the world's population. Culture/nation, methodological, and thematic differences across the five journals are described and implications for leisure theory and practice are outlined.

Keywords: *culture; leisure; non-Western; systematic review*

Eiji Ito and **Haidong Liang** are doctoral candidates, and **Gordon J. Walker** is a professor on the faculty of Physical Education and Recreation at the University of Alberta. Preparation of this article was supported by a grant to the second author from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. This article is based on an abstract presented at the 2012 NRPA Leisure Research Symposium. Please send correspondence to Gordon J. Walker, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta, E-488 Van Vliet Centre, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2H9, Canada, gordon.walker@ualberta.ca

Arnett (2008), after conducting a systematic review of articles published in six prestigious psychology journals, found that 73% of first authors were based at American universities, 14% were based at universities in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, or the United Kingdom, and 11% were based at (continental) European universities. Additionally, 68% of the samples were in the United States; 14% were in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, or the United Kingdom; and 11% were in Europe. Because of a perceived bias toward using American (particularly undergraduate) participants, he held that researchers had restricted “their focus to less than 5% of the world’s total population. The rest of the world’s population, the other 95%, is neglected” (p. 602). Similarly, Henrich, Heine, and Norenzayan (2010a) stated that researchers routinely publish broad claims about human behavior “based on samples drawn entirely from Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) societies” (p. 61). A review of the comparative database across the behavioral sciences led Henrich et al. (2010a) to conclude that “overall, these empirical patterns suggests that we need to be less cavalier in addressing questions of human nature on the basis of data drawn from this particularly thin, and rather unusual, slice of humanity” (p. 61. See also Henrich et al., 2010b).

Empirical evidence suggests a similar pattern may exist in leisure studies. For example, after conducting a systematic review of cross-national research in three major journals (i.e., *Journal of Leisure Research*, *Leisure Sciences*, *Leisure Studies*), Valentine, Allison, and Schneider (1999) identified only 20 (1.5%) germane articles. On the basis of this result, they concluded that it was “abundantly clear that cross-national research is almost nonexistent in the leisure field” (p. 243), and they subsequently added that “we know very little about the leisure behavior, policies, and practices of *non-Western* countries” (p. 244; italics added). Valentine and associates’ article spawned some interesting give (Fox, 2000; Walker, 2000) and take (Allison, Schneider, & Valentine, 2000) at the time, and certain issues still seem pertinent, including: (a) confusion between cross-national (e.g., an American who conducted research in England; Valentine et al., p. 243) and non-Western research; and (b) curiosity about which leisure themes (e.g., behaviors, policies, practices) did garner researchers’ attention and to what degree. In spite of these initial and on-going concerns, Valentine’s et al. work appears worthy of being updated and expanded and, as we will briefly outline below, being re-focused specifically on non-Western and cross-cultural/national leisure research.

Anecdotal evidence also suggests that, to date, the majority of leisure research has been conducted in Western countries and by Western researchers (e.g., Chick, 1998; Iwasaki, 2008; Iwasaki, Nishino, Onda, & Bowling, 2007). Consequently, our current understanding of leisure in non-Western countries is extremely limited. Such knowledge is important not only for theoretical and practical reasons but also to answer fundamental questions such as “whether or not leisure...is itself a human universal” (Chick, 1998, p. 116). Although some studies have reported cultural variation in various aspects of leisure—including meanings of (Chick, 1998; Ito & Walker, in press; Iwasaki, 2008), constraints to (Chick & Dong, 2005; Liang & Walker, 2011), experiences during (Kleiber, Walker, & Mannell, 2011), motivations for (Walker & Wang, 2008), and participation in (Jackson & Walker, 2006), leisure—replication and extension in most if not all of these cases is lacking.

Before commencing new, or replicating and extending extant, non-Western and cross-cultural/national studies, however, there are benefits to be accrued by establishing where we currently stand. One way of doing so is by conducting a systematic review. In an analogous study on race and ethnicity in leisure studies, Floyd, Bocarro, and Thompson (2008, pp. 3-4) proposed that undertaking such a review could lead to a more objective statement on the state of a litera-

ture on three levels: (a) an examination of the quantity of articles published assesses the extent to which leisure scholarship is engaged with the topic, (b) an examination of research methods highlights how existing research has been conducted and its sources of data, and (c) an analysis of research themes reveals existing gaps and omissions in the literature.

Floyd and colleagues' (2008) propositions not only guide our research but their article's proviso that "examples of studies and topics that were omitted include investigations of cross-national comparisons or cultural studies without a race or ethnic dimension" (p. 4) also served as the genesis for it. Having acknowledged this debt, we are also cognizant that we must make clear that we use an alternate term, *cross-cultural/national*, based on the premise that "people living within a country are likely to have shared experiences and common histories, which are crucial in the formulation of a common culture" (Tov & Diener, 2007, p. 707). In fact, some of the studies we reviewed used nation as an indicator of culture and focused on specific cultural norms (e.g., religion in Iran, Arab-Moghaddam, Henderson, & Sheikholeslami, 2007; self-construal in Canada and China, Walker, Jackson, & Deng, 2008).

In conclusion, the purposes of this study are to: (a) review non-Western and cross-cultural/national research in five major leisure studies journals, (b) identify trends in their research methods and thematic patterns, and (c) discuss the implications for both leisure theory and practice.

Method

As per Valentine et al. (1999), this study reviewed the *Journal of Leisure Research*, *Leisure Sciences*, and *Leisure Studies* because "(a) they are arguably among the most prestigious [leisure] journals in the Western world, (b) they address issues related to general leisure behavior in a host of contexts, and (c) they primarily represent the work of scholars on two continents" (p. 243). Our study also included two Canadian journals (i.e., *Leisure/Loisir* and *Leisure et Société*) to mitigate perceived shortcomings in Valentine and associates' study (see Walker, 2000). We reviewed all of the English-language articles published in these five journals between 1990 and 2009. Although systematic reviews in our field have generally examined a single 10-year period, at least two of these are better construed as being ongoing investigations of a specific topic (e.g., Henderson, 1994, and Henderson, Presley, & Bialeschki, 2004, on leisure theory; Jackson, 2004, and Walker & Fenton, 2011, on institutional research productivity). Thus, by conducting our systematic review of non-Western and cross-cultural/national leisure research over two decades, we believe longer and more stable trends in publication rates, research methods, and research themes may become evident.

The criteria for inclusion of an article in our systematic review were that it examined leisure in either (a) a country or countries *not* defined by the United Nations (n.d.) as a member of the Western European and Other States group, or (b) a country or countries *not* defined by the United Nations as a member of the Western European and Other States group *and* one or more countries in the Western European and Other States group. Although Turkey is part of this UN group, we excluded it because it is also part of the Asian States group. Because Israel was, when we developed our criteria, considered a temporary member of the Western European and Other States group for political reasons, it too was excluded.

Our data analyses consisted of four steps. First, the total number of articles meeting the above criteria in each of the five leisure journals was examined. Second, the cultures/nations represented in the selected articles, and the number of nations alone, were determined both overall and in each journal. Third, a directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of the selected

articles was conducted to identify the research methods that were employed, and each was coded into Floyd and associates' 11 methodological categories. Fourth, a directed content analysis was also conducted to identify research themes, and the results were coded into the same non-exclusive thematic categories used by Floyd et al. (2008). Regarding the last two analytical steps, the first and third authors initially coded the articles separately and interrater agreements (Tinsley & Weiss, 1975) or Cohen's kappa for research methods and themes were calculated (0.80 and 0.75, respectively). A kappa coefficient of 0.61 to 0.80 is considered to be indicative of "substantial agreement" (Landis & Koch, 1977). Remaining rater disagreements were then resolved through discussion.

Results

As reported in Table 1, of 1,891 total articles published in the five selected leisure journals between 1990 and 2009, 77 (4.1%) met our criteria for being non-Western and cross-cultural/national. Of this total, seven (9.1%) articles were published between 1990 and 1994, 17 (22.1%) between 1995 and 1999, 14 (18.2%) between 2000 and 2004, and 39 (50.6%) between 2005 and 2009. When the number of articles meeting our criteria was divided by the total number of articles published in the five journals, an apparent trend emerged. Specifically, non-Western and cross-cultural/national articles represented 1.4% of all articles published between 1990 and 1994; 4.0% of articles between 1995 and 1999; 3.3% of articles between 2000 and 2004; and 7.0% of articles between 2005 and 2009.

Of the 77 articles that satisfied our criteria, 67 (87.0%) were non-Western and 10 (13.0%) were cross-cultural/national. Seven of the 10 (70.0%) cross-cultural/national articles were published between 2005 and 2009.

Leisure Studies published 32 (8.1%) non-Western and cross-cultural/national articles, thus accounting for 41.6% of the total. The *Journal of Leisure Research* ($n = 17$, 3.6%) and *Leisure et Société* ($n = 16$, 7.2%) followed, with *Leisure Sciences* ($n = 7$, 1.5%) and *Leisure/Loisir* ($n = 5$, 1.5%) publishing the fewest number of articles.

A total of 82 non-Western cultures/nations were examined in the 77 articles. Greater China, which includes Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Mainland ($n = 20$, 24.4%), followed by Japan ($n = 11$, 13.4%), were the most frequently studied. Armenia, Brazil, Kenya, and South Africa (all $n =$

Table 1

Number of Articles on Non-Western and Cross-Cultural/National Research

	# of Articles Published on non-Western Research	Total # of Articles Published	% of total
<i>Journal of Leisure Research</i>	17	470	3.6%
<i>Leisure Sciences</i>	7	461	1.5%
<i>Leisure Studies</i>	32	397	8.1%
<i>Leisure et Société</i>	16	222	7.2%
<i>Leisure/Loisir</i>	5	341	1.5%
Total	77	1,891	4.1%

4, 4.9%), and Georgia, Poland, Russia, and Singapore (all $n = 3$, 3.7%), composed the next largest groupings.

The total number of article authorships was 152. Slightly more than half ($n = 82$, 53.9%) of all authors were based in the West (i.e., North America, Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand).

Regarding methods (Table 2), survey research (i.e., mail, telephone, and on-site combined; $n = 26$, 33.8%) predominated. Qualitative methods ($n = 12$, 15.6%) were the next most common followed by literature review/commentary ($n = 11$, 14.3%). Survey research was the most frequently used method in all of the journals except *Leisure Studies*. In contrast, articles in *Leisure Studies* largely employed literature review/commentary ($n = 7$, 21.9%), ethnography ($n = 7$, 21.9%), and qualitative methods ($n = 6$, 18.8%). Interestingly, secondary data analysis was relatively common in *Leisure et Société* ($n = 3$, 18.8%), more so in fact than in all four of the other leisure journals combined. We can only speculate on why this may have occurred, but it could be because there is a “follow-the-leader” phenomenon in effect such that subsequent authors are more likely to submit to a journal that has already proven its editor and reviewers are supportive of less commonly utilized methods or researched topics.

The directed content analysis identified 18 research themes (Table 3). Two of Floyd and colleagues' (2008) categories (i.e., interracial interaction/race relations, immigration) were dropped from our study because no article was coded into these classes. Instead, a new category that included articles focusing on consumer behavior, economic impact, or marketing, called “consumer behavior and economy,” was developed. Perceived benefits, motivations, and leisure meanings ($n = 20$, 14.1%) was the primary theme found in the 77 non-Western and cross-cultural/national articles, followed by activity participation and preferences ($n = 17$, 12.0%), and travel/tourism ($n = 13$, 9.2%). Whereas travel/tourism was frequent across all five journals, and perceived benefits, motivations, and leisure meanings was common in all but *Leisure/Loisir*, activity participation and preferences was particularly prevalent in *Leisure et Société* (i.e., 9 of 17 articles, 52.9%). In addition to these themes, the *Journal of Leisure Research* focused more on constraints ($n = 5$, 14.3%), gender ($n = 4$, 11.4%), and research methods ($n = 4$, 11.4%) whereas *Leisure Sciences* focused more on outdoor and forest recreation ($n = 3$, 30.0%). *Leisure Studies* attended more to commentaries and theoretical discussions ($n = 9$, 15.0%) and consumer behavior and economy ($n = 8$, 13.3%). *Leisure et Société*, in contrast, concentrated more on social class ($n = 4$, 13.8%) with, in fact, 50.0% of all articles on this theme being in this journal.

Discussion

The purposes of this study were to: (a) review non-Western and cross-cultural/national research in five major leisure studies journals; (b) examine trends in their research methods and thematic patterns; and (c) discuss the implications for both leisure theory and practice.

General Trends

On the one hand, both the number of non-Western and cross-cultural/national leisure research articles published as well as the percentage of such articles published across all five leisure journals increased fivefold between 1990 to 1994 and 2005 to 2009. On the other hand, this also means that during the most recent five year period over 90% of leisure articles remained focused, in whole or in part, on only slightly more than 10% of the world's population.¹ It seems reasonable to state, therefore, that leisure studies has made perceivable—but not yet pronounced—progress toward overcoming its sample WEIRD-ness (Henrich et al., 2010a, 2010b).

¹Population figures are based on data from Nations Online Project (2013).

Table 2*Non-Western and Cross-Cultural/National Articles Categorized by Research Methods*

Methods	<i>Journal of Leisure Research</i>		<i>Leisure Sciences</i>		<i>Leisure Studies</i>		<i>Leisure et Société</i>		<i>Leisure/Loisir</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Survey (telephone & mail)	1	5.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	2	2.6
On-site survey	8	47.1	7	100.0	3	9.4	4	25.0	2	40.0	24	31.2
Literature review / commentary	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	21.9	4	25.0	0	0.0	11	14.3
Experimental design	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Direct observations	1	5.9	0	0.0	1	3.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.6
Mixed methods	2	11.8	0	0.0	3	9.4	1	6.3	0	0.0	6	7.8
Qualitative methods	2	11.8	0	0.0	6	18.8	3	18.8	1	20.0	12	15.6
Case studies	1	5.9	0	0.0	4	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	6.5
Historical / content analysis	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.1	1	6.3	0	0.0	2	2.6
Ethnography	1	5.9	0	0.0	7	21.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	10.4
Secondary data analysis	1	5.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	18.8	1	20.0	5	6.5
Total	17		7		32		16		5		77	

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100.0% due to rounding errors.

Table 3*Non-Western and Cross-Cultural/National Articles Categorized by Research Themes*

Themes	<i>Journal of Leisure Research</i>		<i>Leisure Sciences</i>		<i>Leisure Studies</i>		<i>Leisure et Société</i>		<i>Leisure/ Loisir</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Neighborhood/community-based leisure	1	2.9	0	0.0	2	3.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	2.1
Outdoor and forest recreation	2	5.7	3	30.0	1	1.7	1	3.4	1	12.5	8	5.6
Cultural identity and self-construal	1	2.9	0	0.0	3	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	2.8
Commentaries/theoretical discussions	1	2.9	0	0.0	9	15.0	3	10.3	0	0.0	13	9.2
Activity participation and preferences, leisure behavior, and time use	3	8.6	1	10.0	3	5.0	9	31.0	1	12.5	17	12.0
Gender	4	11.4	0	0.0	2	3.3	1	3.4	0	0.0	7	4.9
Children and youth	3	8.6	0	0.0	3	5.0	2	6.9	0	0.0	8	5.6
Perceived benefits, motivations, and leisure meanings	5	14.3	3	30.0	8	13.3	4	13.8	0	0.0	20	14.1
Constraints	5	14.3	1	10.0	2	3.3	0	0.0	1	12.5	9	6.3
Services and program delivery/ managerial issues	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.0	0	0.0	1	12.5	4	2.8
Environmental and social justice	1	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	12.5	2	1.4
Leisure and sport	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.7
Travel/tourism	2	5.7	1	10.0	5	8.3	3	10.3	2	25.0	13	9.2
Physical activity, health, and wellness	2	5.7	0	0.0	2	3.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	2.8
Aging/older adults	1	2.9	0	0.0	3	5.0	1	3.4	0	0.0	5	3.5
Research methods	4	11.4	1	10.0	1	1.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	4.2
Social class	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	6.7	4	13.8	0	0.0	8	5.6
Consumer behavior/economy	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	13.3	1	3.4	1	12.5	10	7.0
Total	35		10		60		29		8		142	

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100.0% due to rounding errors.

Leisure Studies published well over a third of all non-Western and cross-cultural/national leisure research articles. This result adds credence to Valentine's et al. (1999) contention that global awareness may be more prevalent among leisure researchers in Great Britain where this journal is situated. Valentine and colleagues' also held that the diversity (in terms of geographical representation) of the *Leisure Studies* editorial board might be a contributing factor. Currently, for example, there are three scholars from non-Western countries serving on the journal's board, with two of these individuals also acting as regional editors for Africa and East Asia. Potentially, therefore, having non-Westerners on an editorial board could facilitate non-Western and cross-cultural/national research; although it is worth adding that another reason why *Leisure Studies*' percentage was so high could be because our criteria classified East European nations as non-Western countries.

A large number of the non-Western and cross-cultural/national articles focused on China and, to a lesser extent, Japan. There are three possible reasons for this. First, cultural and cross-cultural psychologists have largely focused on comparisons between North America and East Asia when examining cultural similarities and differences (Kitayama, Duffy, & Uchida, 2007). The extent of this psychological research may, in turn, have encouraged leisure researchers to also focus on China and Japan. Second, this result may also reflect the growing number of East Asian, particularly Chinese, graduate students attending Western universities. For example, the number of graduate students from China studying in the United States increased from 47,617 (17.9% of the total, second only to India) in 2005/2006 to 88,429 (29.4% of the total, and foremost overall) in 2011/2012 (Institute of International Education, n.d., 2012). Potentially, this trend may also be true in leisure studies and, therefore, this could help explain the large and growing number of studies involving Chinese people. Third, Pella and Wang (2013) reported that there is great pressure on Chinese professors to publish in Thomson Citation Index-listed journals (of which the *Journal of Leisure Research*, *Leisure Sciences*, and *Leisure Studies* are the only Western ones in our field) to obtain promotion and monetary rewards. Unfortunately, according to these two lecturers, one consequence is decreased collegiality in Chinese academe.

In spite of the above, Western researchers still accounted for more than half of all of the article authorships. This finding may reflect not only Western researchers' curiosity about leisure phenomena outside the West, but also the importance of collaboration between Western and non-Western researchers. We will discuss this issue more fully in the following sections.

Research Methods

The most frequently employed research method identified in our review was mail, telephone, and on-site surveys. There are some concerns about the use of surveys for this type of research as this approach is typically unable to provide the "thick description" desired by anthropologists (Geertz, 1973) and cultural psychologists (Shweder, 1991). Conversely, however, surveys may be less affected than other research methods by certain scarcer-than-usual resource issues common in non-Western and cross-cultural/national research, specifically: (a) time, (b) money, and (c) collaborators. First, conducting this type of research takes at least 100% more time for every additional culture/nation included. This multiplicative effect may be problematic for Western scholars who are often pressured to "publish or perish" to get tenure, promotion, or annual salary (Valentine et al., 1999; Walker & Fenton, 2013). Second, such research is usually more expensive (e.g., for instrument translation, data collection, etc.), and it can be difficult to justify the use of public funding for projects that are not deemed to directly benefit the taxpayers who provide these monies (Y. Iwasaki, personal communication, September 13, 2012). However,

some funding institutions do acknowledge the contributions brought about by non-Western and cross-cultural/national research. For instance, the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science, which was established by Japanese national law to promote scientific advancement, provides various types of funding for international collaborations including “supporting international joint research, seminars, and exchanges” and “inviting researchers from other countries to Japan” (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, n.d.). Similarly, the first two authors have been collaborating with Japanese scholars and have received funding for two cross-cultural studies from the Sasakawa Sports Foundation (n.d.). Although this type of funding is still too rare, we believe that conducting more cross-cultural/national research and demonstrating its significant theoretical and practical implications will lead to an increase in such opportunities. Third, collaboration is critical for this kind of research (Heine, 2008). Without a rich understanding of the cultures/nations they are studying, Western researchers’ interpretation of their results might be misleading or even biased. Cooperating with non-Western and cross-cultural/national researchers could help overcome all three of these issues which, in turn, could result in highly beneficial research outcomes.

Finally, regardless of which method is used, non-Western and cross-cultural/national leisure research typically involves translation (Brislin, 1970) and issues of bias and equivalence (van de Vijver, 2011). Without careful attention to these and other alike concerns (Henderson & Walker, 2014), reliable and valid results cannot be obtained and, consequently, greater understanding of similarities and differences in leisure across these groups cannot occur.

Research Themes

The two most common research themes identified in our review were: (a) perceived benefits, motivations, and leisure meanings; and (b) activity participation and preferences, leisure behavior, and time use. One possible reason for this finding is that these topics are well developed in the West and, therefore, they may (incorrectly) be viewed as easily “transferred” to the non-Western world. This type of research, done correctly, is critical if we wish to answer Chick’s (1998) fundamental question of “whether or not leisure...is itself a human universal” (p. 116), but there are also benefits for Western research and practice. For instance, in the concluding chapter of *Race, Ethnicity, and Leisure*, Floyd, Walker, Stodolska, and Shinew (2014) identified key trends and research needs. One of the former concerned the important role leisure plays in immigrants’ lives, whereas one of the latter concerned the need for more research on leisure in these individuals’ source countries in order to better understand how they adjust and adapt to new cultures. Given that a growing number of immigrants to the West are from non-Western countries (e.g., over 80% of arrivals in Canada between 2006 and 2011; Statistics Canada, 2013), studies such as those identified in our review could prove useful in this regard.

Travel/tourism was the third most common theme, likely because this topic is greatly valued by non-Western policy makers. For example, the Japanese government inaugurated the Japan Tourism Agency in 2008 to enhance the country’s tourism industry (Japan Tourism Agency, n.d.a). The resulting Tourism Nation Promotion Basic Plan’s objectives were to increase domestic travel consumption by 30 trillion yen (approximately \$30 billion USD) and the number of foreign visitors to 18 million people, by 2016 (Japan Tourism Agency, n.d.b). Similar tourism initiatives exist in other non-Western countries, but the benefits of research on this topic may also extend to the West. For example, a recent report (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2013) found that outbound travel from China to Canada has tripled over the past decade. Potentially, by better understanding what a non-Western inbound tourist wants, or how Western and non-Western outbound tourists are similar and different, the tourism industry in Canada, the United

States, and other Western nations may be better able to meet the wants and needs of the growing number of visitors from China, Japan, India, Brazil, etc.

Commentaries/theoretical discussions were studied as much as travel/tourism, albeit most often in *Leisure Studies*. Stodolska (2000) proposed that studying ethnic and racial “minority groups provides a rare opportunity for expanding theory applicable to human leisure experience in general” (p. 158) because these frameworks could be validated and previously overlooked relationships might be detected. We fully agree with her proposition, but we would submit that such validation would be even more generalizable, and such detection would be even more likely, if leisure theories were examined among the “neglected 90%” of the world’s population.

The next most common theme was consumer behavior and economy. This topic was also particularly prevalent in *Leisure Studies*, perhaps in part because, as Floyd and associates (2008) noted when discussing their review’s results: “university research funding within the United Kingdom is dependent on the perception as to whether it will make a contribution to the economy” (p. 12). Thus, it would not be surprising to find that non-Western researchers, whose national governments are likely at least if not more interested in leisure as discretionary income and its subsequent impact on the domestic economy, would be inclined to publish in this journal.

Finally, one of the stated purposes of this study was to discuss the implications of our findings for leisure theory and practice. In doing so we have tried to address the “So what?” question sometimes asked of leisure researchers who conduct non-Western and cross-cultural/national studies. Kleiber and colleagues (2011, p. 313) similarly responded to this query, with one of their replies being that the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims that everyone has the right, for example, to equality before the law (Article 7); free movement (Article 13); freedom of thought, conscience, and religion (Article 18); free choice of employment and equal pay (Article 23); and, most importantly here, “the right to rest and leisure” (Article 24). For Westerners, who may too often take the above for granted, there is a responsibility to ensure that those in the non-Western world whose human rights are deficient or denied are not overlooked. For Westerners in leisure studies, as experts, advocates, and professionals in this field, there is an even greater responsibility to ensure that those in the non-Western world whose “leisure right” is deficient or denied are not ignored.

Conclusion

As with all research, this study has certain limitations. Primary amongst these is that not all Western leisure journals (e.g., *Annals of Leisure Research*; *Managing Leisure*; *World Leisure Journal*) were included. Thus, when examining the 2010 to 2019 (or even the 2010 to 2014) time period, a future researcher should consider increasing the number of journals she or he reviews so to better determine not only the degree to which (hopefully) progress has been made but also the breadth of this change in other outlets besides the “big three” and two Canadian leisure journals. Two related research topics that could prove fruitful would be to conduct reviews of non-Western leisure journals (e.g., *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism, and Leisure*; *Creativity and Leisure: An Intercultural and Cross-Disciplinary Journal*; *South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education, and Recreation*) and non-English leisure journals (e.g., *Japan Journal of Leisure and Recreation Studies*; *Japan Journal of Lifelong Sport*) to investigate (a) the leisure themes, guiding theories, epistemological and methodological approaches, etc. that predominate; and (b) whether cross-cultural/national research involving other non-Western, as well as Western, cultures/nations is being reported in these outlets.

We would also recommend more non-Western and cross-cultural/national leisure research be conducted specifically on health and wellness, physical activity and inactivity, and subjective well-being and quality of life. Although leisure has been found to positively affect a person's psychological health and wellness—including one's personal growth, identity formation and affirmation, and ability to cope with stress—Mannell (2007) voiced concern that not all of these positive outcomes might be universal. If correct this could have implications for practice because, without knowing the cultural context, "leisure practitioners may unknowingly harm clients instead of helping them experience the benefits of leisure" (Walker, Deng, & Dieser, 2005, p. 93). Additionally, comparisons across nations could help identify global leisure-time physical activity and inactivity patterns that, in turn, could lead to the establishment of priorities for improving physical activity levels and serve as benchmarks for physical activity within individual nations. Lastly, though Western research has long established and clearly demonstrated that leisure participation and satisfaction positively affect quality of life (Kleiber et al., 2011; Newman, Tay, & Diener, 2013), and though the field of culture/nation and subjective well-being has grown rapidly over the past two decades (Suh & Koo, 2008), our review did not identify a single study that examined the intersection between the two. Research on this topic seems highly overdue.

We would also recommend future non-Western and cross-cultural/national research employ other, heretofore untried, methodological approaches when appropriate. For example, none of the articles in our review used either an experimental design or the experience sampling method (ESM: Hektner, Schmidt, & Csikszentmihalyi, 2007). The former deficiency may reflect the fact that a person's race, ethnicity, and/or culture cannot be manipulated (Heine, 2008); although some manipulations hypothesized to be related to cultural knowledge are possible (e.g., cultural icons, Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000; self-construal priming, Gardner, Gabriel, & Lee, 1999). Because of this, research on these topics is prone to certain methodological challenges; however, there are some psychological methods that are particularly well-suited to the study of culture (e.g., situation sampling, Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakunkit, 1997). The latter deficiency may be because ESM studies are resource intensive, but if these issues can be overcome, non-Western and cross-cultural/national ESM studies could provide a unique picture of leisure meanings, behaviors, and experiences (Walker & Wang, 2008).

In conclusion, in terms of the number of non-Western and cross-cultural/national studies published in the 1990s, the Japanese saying *senri no michi mo ippon kara* ("A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step") was then apt. In terms of the number of such studies published more recently, progress has been made but the Chinese saying *lu chang er dao yuan* ("There is a long way to go;" Gao, Ting-Toomey, & Gudykunst, 1996, p. 293), cited by Walker, Deng, and Dieser (2001) over a decade ago, remains apt. In terms of the number of such studies that will be published in the future, we look forward to the next systematic review as we feel confident that Westerners and non-Westerners will have become better able and more willing to conduct theory enriching and practice informing non-Western and cross-cultural/national leisure research.

Footnote

¹Population figures are based on data from Nations Online Project (2013).

References

- Allison, M., Schneider, I., & Valentine, K. (2000). Response to comments by Drs. Gordon Walker and Karen Fox. *Leisure Sciences*, 22, 65–67.
- Arab-Moghaddam, N., Henderson, K. A., & Sheikholeslami, R. (2007). Women's leisure and constraints to participation: Iranian perspectives. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 39, 109–126.
- Arnett, J. J. (2008). The neglected 95%: Why American psychology needs to become less American. *American Psychologist*, 63, 602–614.
- Brislin, R. W. (1970). Back-translation for cross-cultural research. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 1, 185–216.
- Canadian Tourism Commission. (2013, January). *China market profile*. Retrieved from <http://en-corporate.canada.travel/research/market-knowledge/china>
- Chick, G. (1998). Leisure and culture: Issues for an anthropology of leisure. *Leisure Sciences*, 20, 111–133.
- Chick, G., & Dong, E. (2005). Cultural constraints on leisure. In E.L. Jackson (Ed.), *Constraints to leisure* (pp. 169–183). State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- Floyd, M. F., Bocarro, J. N., & Thompson, T. D. (2008). Research on race and ethnicity in leisure studies: A review of five major journals. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 40, 1–22.
- Floyd, M. F., Walker, G. J., Stodolska, M., & Shinew, K. J. (2014). Conclusions: Emerging issues. In M. Stodolska, K. J. Shinew, M. F. Floyd, & G. J. Walker (Eds.), *Race, ethnicity, and leisure* (pp. 297–305). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Fox, K. (2000). Response to “The one-way mirror.” *Leisure Sciences*, 22, 33–35.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *Interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gao, G., Ting-Toomey, S., & Gudykunst, W. B. (1996). Chinese communication processes. In M. H. Bond (Ed.), *The handbook of Chinese psychology* (pp. 280–293). Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
- Gardner, W. L., Gabriel, S., & Lee, A. Y. (1999). “I” value freedom, but “we” value relationships: Self-construal priming mirrors cultural differences in judgment. *Psychological Science*, 10, 321–326.
- Heine, S. J. (2008). *Cultural psychology*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.
- Hektner, J. M., Schmidt, J. A., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2007). *Experience sampling method: Measuring the quality of everyday life*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Henderson, K. A. (1994). Theory application and development in recreation, park, and leisure research. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 12, 51–64.
- Henderson, K. A., Presley, J., & Bialeschki, M. D. (2004). Theory in recreation and leisure research: Reflections from the editors. *Leisure Sciences*, 26, 411–425.
- Henderson, K. A., & Walker, G. J. (2014). Ethnic and racial research methods. In M. Stodolska, K. J. Shinew, M. F. Floyd, & G. J. Walker (Eds.), *Race, ethnicity, and leisure* (pp. 21–36). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010a). The weirdest people in the world? *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 33, 61–83.
- Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010b). Most people are not WEIRD. *Nature*, 466 (7302), 29.
- Hong, Y., Morris, M. W., Chiu, C., & Benet-Martinez, V. (2000). Multicultural minds: A dynamic constructivist approach to culture and cognition. *American Psychologist*, 55, 709–720.
- Hsieh, H-F., & Shannon, S. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15, 1277–1288.

- Institute of International Education. (n.d.). *International students in the United States: Level of study information for the top 10 places of origin 2005-2006*. Retrieved from <http://www.iie.org/~media/Files/Services/ProjectAtlas/Excel%20Tables/Top-10-Origin-USA-2005-2006.ashx>
- Institute of International Education. (2012). *International students in the United States: Level of study information for the top 10 places of origin 2011-2012*. Retrieved from <http://www.iie.org/~media/Files/Services/ProjectAtlas/Excel%20Tables/Top-10-Origin-USA-2011-2012.ashx>
- Ito, E., & Walker, G. J. (in press). Similarities and differences in leisure conceptualizations between Japan and Canada and between two Japanese leisure-like terms. *Leisure/Loisir*.
- Iwasaki, Y. (2008). Pathways to meaning-making through leisure-like pursuits in global contexts. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 40, 231–249.
- Iwasaki, Y., Nishino, H., Onda, T., & Bowling, C. (2007). Leisure research in a global world: Time to reverse the Western domination in leisure research? *Leisure Sciences*, 29, 113–117.
- Jackson, E. L. (2004). Individual and institutional concentration of leisure research in North America. *Leisure Sciences*, 26, 323–348.
- Jackson, E. L., & Walker, G. J. (2006). A cross-cultural comparison of leisure styles and constraints experienced by Chinese and Canadian university students. In *Ninth World Leisure Congress Abstracts: Oral and Poster Presentations* (p. 28). Hangzhou, China: World Leisure.
- Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. (n.d.). *Japan Society for the Promotion of Science*. Retrieved from <http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/index.html>
- Japan Tourism Agency. (n.d.a). *About the JTA*. Retrieved from <http://www.mlit.go.jp/kankocho/en/about/index.html>
- Japan Tourism Agency. (n.d.b). *The Tourism Nation Promotion Basic Plan*. Retrieved from <http://www.mlit.go.jp/kankocho/en/kankorikkoku/kihonkeikaku.html>
- Kitayama, S., Duffy, S., & Uchida, Y. (2007). Self as cultural mode of being. In S. Kitayama & D. Cohen (Eds.), *Handbook of cultural psychology* (pp. 136–174). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Kitayama, S., Markus, H. R., Matsumoto, H., & Norasakkunkit, V. (1997). Individual and collective processes in the construction of the self: Self-enhancement in the United States and self-criticism in Japan. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 1245–1267.
- Kleiber, D. A., Walker, G. J., & Mannell, R. C. (2011). *A social psychology of leisure* (2nd ed.). State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- Landis, J., & Koch, G. (1977). The measurement of observer agreement for categorical data. *Biometrics*, 33, 159–174.
- Liang, H., & Walker, G. J. (2011). Does “face” constrain Mainland Chinese people from starting new leisure activities? *Leisure/Loisir*, 35, 211–225.
- Mannell, R. C. (2007). Leisure, health and well-being. *World Leisure*, 49, 114–128.
- Nations Online Project. (2013). *List of countries with their population figures*. Retrieved from <http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/>
- Newman, D. B., Tay, L., & Diener, E. (2013). Leisure and subjective well-being: A model of psychological mechanisms as mediating factors. *Journal of Happiness Studies*.
- Pella, J., & Wang, L. (2013). *How China's push for world-class universities is undermining collegiality*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/blogs/worldwise/how-chinas-push-for-world-class-universities-is-undermining-collegiality/32141>

- Sasakawa Sports Foundation. (n.d.). *Outline of activities*. Retrieved from <http://www.ssf.or.jp/english/service.html>
- Shweder, R. (1991). *Thinking through cultures: Expeditions in cultural psychology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Statistics Canada. (2013). *Immigration and ethnocultural diversity in Canada*. Retrieved from <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-010-x/99-010-x2011001-eng.pdf>
- Stodolska, M. (2000). Looking beyond the invisible: Can research on leisure ethnic and racial minorities contribute to leisure theory? *Journal of Leisure Research*, 32, 156–160.
- Suh, E., & Koo, J. (2008). Comparing subjective well-being across cultures and nations: The “what” and “why” questions. In M. Eid & R. Larsen (Eds.), *The science of subjective well-being* (pp. 414–427). New York: Guilford Press.
- Tinsley, H. E., & Weiss, D. J. (1975). Interrater reliability and agreement of subjective judgments. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 22, 358–376.
- Tov, W., & Diener, E. (2007). Culture and subjective well-being. In S. Kitayama & D. Cohen (Eds.), *Handbook of cultural psychology* (pp. 691–733). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- United Nations. (n.d.). *Information networks of Western European and Other states*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/esa/govwest.htm>
- Valentine, K., Allison, M. T., & Schneider, I. (1999). The one-way mirror of leisure research: A need for cross-national social scientific perspectives. *Leisure Sciences*, 21, 241–246.
- van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2011). Capturing bias in structural equation modeling. In E. Davidov, P. Schmidt, & J. Billiet (Eds.), *Cross-cultural analysis: Methods and applications* (pp. 3–34). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Walker, G. J. (2000). Response to “the one-way mirror.” *Leisure Sciences*, 22, 37–38.
- Walker, G. J., Deng, J., & Dieser, R. B. (2005). Culture, self-construal, and leisure theory and practice. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 37, 77–99.
- Walker, G. J., Deng, J., & Dieser, R. B. (2001). Ethnicity, acculturation, self-construal, and motivations for outdoor recreation. *Leisure Sciences*, 23, 263–283.
- Walker, G. J., & Fenton, L. (2011). Institutional concentration of leisure research: A follow-up to and extension of Jackson (2004). *Journal of Leisure Research*, 43, 475–490.
- Walker, G. J., & Fenton, L. (2013). Backgrounds of, and factors affecting, highly productive leisure researchers. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 45, 537–562.
- Walker, G. J., Jackson, E. L., & Deng, J. (2008). The role of self-construal as an intervening variable between culture and leisure constraints: A comparison of Canadian and Mainland Chinese university students. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 40, 90–109.
- Walker, G. J., & Wang, X. (2008). A cross-cultural comparison of Canadian and Mainland Chinese university students’ leisure motivations. *Leisure Sciences*, 30, 179–197.
- Walker, G. J., & Wang, X. (2009). The meaning of leisure for Chinese/Canadians. *Leisure Sciences*, 31, 1–18.