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Family Leisure

An Integrative Review of Research from Select Journals

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Abstract

Understanding the relationship between leisure and families has been and will continue to be an important area of study. The purpose of this study is to review existing family leisure research from four select journals between 1990 and 2012. Articles are examined for sample characteristics, methods, analytical approaches, and thematic trends. Overall, 181 articles regarding family leisure, leisure in context of family life or roles, and individual experiences of family leisure are identified. Findings suggest scholars made strides toward expanding methods, analyses, and sampling diversity, though more diversity in sampling and analytical approaches is needed. Three major research themes are present: promoting family well-being through leisure, the costs and constraints to family leisure, and family leisure in the margins.

Keywords: *constraints, costs, family recreation, family well-being, well-being*

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Over the past several decades, leisure scholars have learned much about how leisure affects families, and other disciplines have examined the effect of *daily activities* and *free time* on families. On a broader social scale, *family togetherness* and *family time* have become cultural watchwords (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988) as scholars, politicians, practitioners, and families themselves have sought to enhance family life and well-being through the various concepts falling under the umbrella of family leisure. Family leisure has been defined as the "time that parents and children spend together in free time or recreational activities" (Shaw, 1997, p. 98). Before 1990, limited research was dedicated to understanding leisure in families, and only a small percentage of that research was published in leisure journals (see Hawks, 1991; Holman & Epperson, 1984). In the following two decades, an upsurge in family leisure research ensued. Current perspectives on family leisure may, however, largely depend on family structures, functions, and social contexts. Therefore, leisure scholars need to assess extant research from time to time to ensure they are asking research questions and using methods and analyses that engage the larger social issues of evolving family structures and functions, as well as shifting contexts. Such reviews of literature can help direct and shape relevant future research.

Integrative reviews are an essential part of shaping future research, and can be used to examine trends in existing literature, including methods, analytical approaches, and thematic trends in research (Jackson, 1980). An integrative review of prominent journals can serve as a cross section of scholarly activity and provide insight into ways future research could augment the field's knowledge base. Examining a limited number of prominent journals can also provide a foundation for additional systematic reviews or meta-analyses of family leisure literature—neither of which has not been attempted since before 2000. Therefore, the purpose of this paper was to review existing family leisure research from four select journals over the past 23 years (1990–2012). Specifically, this integrative review acted as a cross-section of family leisure research by exploring publication frequencies, methods, analyses, and prominent research themes in these four journals. By so doing, this review aimed to point scholars toward additional rigorous evaluations of the field, and future lines of family leisure research.

Background

Kelly (1997) advocated that "what people do together is central to life" (p. 34), and a nontrivial amount of what couples, parents, children, siblings, and other family members do together constitutes leisure or recreation. Research suggests family leisure is related to increases in perceptions of family functioning, family cohesion, family bonding, family adaptability, family life satisfaction, and family communication (Holman & Epperson, 1984; Orthner & Mancini, 1990; Poff, Zabriskie, & Townsend, 2010; Smith, Freeman, & Zabriskie, 2009; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2003). At the same time, however, tensions in family leisure have also emerged as scholars have critically examined leisure in family life. Shaw and Dawson (2001) noted that parents valued family leisure and its associated beneficial outcomes, but also acknowledged it was unlikely to be enjoyed by all family members. Other tensions have surfaced as scholars have examined individual family roles in leisure from a critical perspective.

Changing social contexts, and family structures and functions are evident in population trends in the United States. For example, overall family size in the United States is decreasing as couples marry at older ages and have fewer children (Cherlin, 2010). Between 1990 and 2010, age of first marriage for men and women increased by more than two years from 26.1 to 28.2 years and from 23.9 to 26.1 years, respectively (Elliott, Krivickas, Brault, & Kreider, 2012). Marriages frequently experience disruption (Cherlin, 2010), and a growing number of single-parent house-

holds in the United States create new family dynamics as children and nonresident parents must navigate their relationships (Laosa, 2009). Similarly, more people are living longer, and a growing older population introduces new family dynamics between grandparents and grandchildren, adults caring for aging parents, and intergenerational relationship development (Hebblethwaite & Norris, 2011). Changing workforce patterns also affect family structure and function. Specifically, more women are delaying marriage and childbearing to engage in work outside the home and earn advanced degrees (Cherlin, 2010). Ongoing demographic changes also have implications for family leisure research. For example, the Latino population in the United States has more than doubled since 1990 (Rodriguez, Larsen, Latkova, & Mertel, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012a) and, in 2012, Asians were the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). Slightly more than half of all children younger than one year in the United States in 2011 were considered minorities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013).

These changes in family structure and function, and changing social contexts will have important implications for family leisure research. Therefore, research methods, analytical approaches, and trends must be evaluated to demonstrate that even as "conceptualizations of family and leisure are constantly being reconstructed" family leisure scholars achieve "continuity" and "consistency" in their research (Freysinger, 1997, p. 3). Hawks' (1991) review of family leisure research from 1930 to 1990 is one example of an evaluation of the body of literature. To our knowledge, no integrative review of trends in family leisure research has been published in more than 20 years. Therefore, the purpose of this paper was to review existing family leisure research from four prominent and relevant journals from 1990 to 2012. Specifically, this integrative review acted as a cross-section of family leisure research by exploring publication frequencies, methods, analyses, and prominent research themes. By so doing, this review aimed to point scholars toward additional rigorous evaluations of the field, and future lines of family leisure research.

Methods

Integrative reviews frame ongoing and future research (Jackson, 1980). Integrative reviews help "develop a more comprehensive account of a specific phenomenon or relationship than each of the related basic research reports separately" (Cooper, 1989, p. 13). They provide an objective account of the state of a body of literature by assessing the quantity of articles published and identifying predominant themes or gaps in existing research and methods (e.g., Floyd, Bocarro, & Thompson, 2008). While related to literature reviews, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses, integrative reviews focus on discovering and evaluating the current state of a body of knowledge, the quality of that knowledge, and clarifying future research directions (Russell, 2005). Other literature review methods have been identified as meaningful ways to synthesize and summarize research, yet some scholars have expressed concern about the potential over-emphasis of quantitative research in these methods (Evans & Pearson, 2001). Meta-analyses exclude descriptive and interpretive research methods entirely (Evans & Pearson, 2001). Thus, methods for an integrative review were used in this study with the intent to spur additional to forthcoming systematic reviews and meta-analyses of family leisure research.

Article Selection

Articles were limited to a 23-year span (1990–2012). In 1991, Hawks published a review that synthesized and analyzed trends in family leisure research from the early 1900s to 1990. His review identified key themes, and methodological, analytical, and theoretical contributions in

research by decade. While not the only review of family leisure literature, his synthesis provided important directions for future research, and it was the most recently published (see Holman, 1984 for comparison). Therefore, our integrative review built upon that review by addressing research published in the 23 years since then. Unlike Hawks' review, however, ours is not intended to be comprehensive. Rather, this update focused on specific publication outlets as well as the continuing social and cultural revolutions that affect family processes therefore providing an examination of family leisure research in context of changes in social climates over the last 23 years. Therefore, it should be viewed as an important step toward understanding the status and direction of family leisure research, and as a cross-section of literature that can serve as a precursor to ongoing and additional systematic reviews and meta-analyses.

Similar to integrative reviews in the leisure field (see Bocarro, Greenwood, & Henderson, 2008; Edwards & Matarrita-Cascante, 2011; Floyd et al., 2008), four journals were selected for review: *Journal of Leisure Research (JLR)*, *Leisure Sciences (LS)*, *Leisure Studies (LStd),* and *Family Relations (FR)*. *JLR*, *LS*, and *LStd* are primary and longstanding outlets for leisure research that emphasize social science research including the social and psychological aspects of leisure inherent to family leisure. Moreover, these three journals are the three top-ranked general leisure publication outlets as identified by SCImago Journal and Country Rank. *FR* focuses on diverse families and family issues and emphasizes innovative, interdisciplinary research (Family Relations, 2014), and was therefore selected for review. Furthermore, as an integrative review is intended to reflect or represent the broader picture, without any representation of family journals making even preliminary recommendations for future research would be limited, particularly since 80% of the articles from Hawk's review were drawn from family journals.

Articles included for review were identified using key word searches and manual review (Edwards & Matarrita-Cascante, 2011). Keyword searches were used when online journal access was available. Keyword searches included *family*, *parent*, *child*, *adolescent*, *mother*, *father*, *sibling*, *grandparent*, *leisure*, *recreation*, *family time*, *family togetherness*, *quality time*, *family fun*, and *family recreation* and their derivatives. The term *family* was applied broadly to encompass multiple family structures (e.g., two- and single-parent families) and life stages (e.g., families with young children and adult children caring for aging parents). Such a broad application represents an inclusive approach that better reflects dynamic contemporary families.

In addition to keyword searches, we manually reviewed each issue of each journal either electronically or in print (Edwards & Matarrita-Cascante, 2011). Article inclusion was based on title, keywords, abstract, and content (Bocarro et al., 2008; Floyd et al., 2008). Articles were included if their primary focus was (a) multipoint examinations of family leisure processes or outcomes, (b) individual leisure in context of family life or a family role, or (c) broader contexts of family leisure. Articles with peripheral references to family or leisure were not included.

Analyses

Following similar integrative reviews (see Bocarro et al., 2008; Edwards & Matarrita-Cascante, 2011; Floyd et al., 2008), Jackson's guidelines for effective integrative reviews, and steps for content analyses (Babbie, 2013), total number of articles published in each of the four journals were counted by year. Similarly, the number of family leisure-specific articles in each journal was also counted by year. These counts were amassed in five-year increments. After counts were completed, article content, methods, analyses, and sample characteristics (e.g., race or ethnicity, social class, family structure, etc.), were examined and counted using spreadsheet software. Methods were first coded by specifics (i.e., ethnography, photo elicitation, or survey) and then assigned to larger categories (i.e., qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods). Data characteristics

(e.g., longitudinal or secondary data) were also coded. Similarly, quantitative analyses were identified and coded as individual (i.e., data collected from only one person or analyzed using non-nested, non-hierarchical approaches), dyadic (i.e., data collected from two people and analyzed as such), or system (i.e., data recognized as nested in either families, systems, or time series and analyzed using hierarchical or multilevel approaches). Finally, sample characteristics were coded by marital status, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class, and life stage. In the cases of samples with multiple categories of any given characteristic, the article was coded by majority except in cases where categories were equal or nearly equal (e.g., Philipp (1999) reported a sample of 170 European American households and 124 African American households).

The primary goal of the review was to identify key research themes. To facilitate thematic analysis, articles were listed in spreadsheet software for coding and theme development. Similarly, articles were entered into online reference software, and tagged according to article title, keywords, and content using the online software. Preliminary coding of individual articles facilitated the development of broader coding categories: (1) impacting family, couple/marital, individual outcomes positively; (2) impacting family, couple/marital, individual outcomes negatively; (3) identifying emerging family structures/composition; (4) socializing through leisure; (5) identifying or negotiating constraints to family leisure; (6) identifying family as a leisure constraint; (7) focusing on specific family relationships or members; (8) understanding social, systemic, and structural elements or processes of family leisure; and (9) examining family or parenting ideologies. These preliminary categories were reviewed and condensed into three non-exclusive thematic categories. The non-exclusivity in themes best reflected the articles by allowing them to represent various aspects of family leisure.

Findings

Of the total 2,948 articles published in these four journals from 1990–2012, 181, or 6.1%, focused on family leisure processes or outcomes, individual leisure in context of family life or family roles, or contexts of family leisure (see Table 1). *LStd* had the most family leisure-related publications ($n = 61$), which may be partly attributable to a special issue on fatherhood and leisure in 2006. *LStd* also had the highest percentage of publications related to family leisure of the four journals (11.8%). *JLR* had the second highest number of articles ($n = 58$) and percentage (9.4%). When the four journals were considered together, the total number of family leisure publications increased from 4.1% in 1990–1994 to 7.1% in 2008–2012. When examined individually, *LS*, *LStd*, and *FR* reported increases in the percentage of family leisure related articles, with the greatest increase occurring in *LStd* (7.8% in 1990–1994 to 11.7% in 2008–2012). *JLR* however, saw a decrease in the percentage of family leisure related articles (from 8.5% in 1990–1994 to 7.1% in 2008–2012).

Methods in Family Leisure Research

Survey research was present in 85 articles (47%; see Table 2). A small number of studies used secondary data ($n = 14$, 8%; e.g., Craig & Mullan, 2012; Hodge et al., 2012; Voorpostel, van der Lippe, & Gershuny, 2010; Warner-Smith & Brown, 2002; Zick & Allen, 1996), and another small contingency of articles used longitudinal methods ($n = 12$, 7%). One article reported using an experimental design (Wells, Widmer, & McCoy, 2004). Qualitative methods were equally present in research ($n = 85$, 47%) when including mixed methods ($n = 20$, 11%). Qualitative approaches spanned phenomenology (e.g., Shannon & Shaw, 2005; Thompson, Rehman, & Humbert, 2005), ethnography (Dempsey, 1990; MacPhail & Kirk, 2006), auto-ethnography (Havitz,

Table 1

Comparison of the Number of Family Leisure Articles as a Percentage of the Total Number of Articles Published by Journal in Organized Increments (1990–2012)

	Journal of Leisure Research			*Leisure Sciences*			*Leisure Studies*			*Family Relations*			*Total*		
Year	Family Leisure Articles	Total Articles	% Total	Family Leisure Articles	Total Articles	% Total	Family Leisure Articles	Total Articles	% Total	Family Leisure Articles	Total Articles	% Total	Family Leisure Articles	Total Articles	% Total
1990-1994	11	129	9.3	4	103	3.9	8	96	7.3	4	342	1.2	28	670	4.2
1995-1999	20	122	16.4	5	109	4.6	10	90	11.1	3	264	1.1	38	585	6.5
2000-2004	7	136	5.1	8	111	7.2	10	98	10.2	5	231	2.2	30	576	5.2
2005-2009	13	154	9.1	10	158	6.3	20	141	12.8	10	239	4.2	53	692	7.7
2010-2012	7	88	8.0	7	89	7.9	13	92	10.9	6	156	3.8	33	425	7.8

Table 2

Methods Used in Family Leisure Research from Four Selected Journals from 1990 to 2012

Method	*Journal of Leisure Research*		*Leisure Sciences*		*Leisure Studies*		*Family Relations*		*Total*	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Survey	30	52	17	50	17	28	21	75	85	47
Secondary Data Analysis	4	7	2	6	5	8	3	11	14	8
Longitudinal	1	2	3	9	4	7	4	14	12	7
Literature/Integrative Review	8	14	0	0	12	20	0	0	20	11
Experimental Design	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	1
Mixed Methods	3	5	4	12	10	16	3	11	20	11
Qualitative	21	36	21	62	34	56	9	32	85	47
Case Studies	1	2	1	3	5	8	1	4	8	4
[Auto]ethnography/Narratives	0	0	2	6	5	8	1	4	8	4

Note: Articles were cross categorized when various methods were reported. This plus rounding error may render percentages that do not equal 100 and totals that do not correspond to reported sums.

2007; Hultsman, 2012), photo elicitation (Kyle & Chick, 2004; Lincoln, 2005; Quinn & Stacey, 2010), video elicitation (Beck & Arnold, 2009), hermeneutic inquiry (e.g., Hebblethwaite & Norris, 2010; Trussell & Shaw, 2012), and case studies (Anderson & Doherty, 2005; Peterson, Hull, Mertig, & Liu, 2008).

Levels of Analyses in Family Leisure Research

Within the last decade, family leisure scholars have called for more robust quantitative analyses that address systems and levels within family leisure processes (Agate, Zabriskie, Agate, & Poff, 2009; Poff et al., 2010). Overall, most quantitative or survey-based research in this review used individual-level analyses when examining family leisure research (n = 58, 68%). Examinations of family dyads such as committed couples, mothers and fathers, parents and children, and in a few cases, siblings, occurred in slightly more than one-fourth of all quantitative or survey-based research (n = 23; 27%). A limited number (n =7; 8%) used a hierarchical, nested, or systems perspective (see Table 3). Analyses in this set of articles ranged from a series of hierarchical multiple regression analyses (Anderson, Sabatelli, & Kosutic, 2007) to assess family, community, and peer influences on adolescent development, to multilevel regression to account for between- and within-person differences in time series data (Larson, Gillman, & Richards, 1997), to multilevel regression models accounting for shared variance in parent and child respondents from the same family (Hodge et al., 2012).

Table 3

Levels of Analyses Included in Family Leisure Research from Four Selected Journals from 1990 to 2012

Level of Analyses (no. survey articles)	*Journal of Leisure Research (30)*		*Leisure Sciences (17)*		*Leisure Studies (17)*		*Family Relations (21)*		*Total(85)*	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Individual	18	60	12	70	16	94	12	57	58	68
Dyad	8	27	6	35	1	6	8	38	23	27
System	4	13	0	0	0	0	3	14	7	8

Note: Articles were cross categorized in cases where more than one level of analyses were used. This plus rounding error may render percentages that do not equal 100 and totals that do not correspond to reported sums.

Sample Characteristics of Families in Leisure Research

Factors such as race or ethnicity, marital status and family structure, life stage, and social class play significant roles in family processes and well-being, and may have important implications for family leisure research. While the sample characteristics included in this review are not comprehensive, they do provide meaningful insight into who family leisure scholars are studying. When examining family leisure publications reporting empirical data (n = 168), 101 articles identified a specific race or ethnicity as part of reporting their research (60%). Of those 101 articles, White or ethnic majority families were featured more than any other group (n = 67, 66%). Black families were the focus of five studies (6%; e.g., Outley & Floyd, 2002; Thomas, 1990), two additional studies included almost equal sample sizes of White and Black families (3%; e.g., McMeeking & Purkayastha, 1995; Philipp, 1999), and one study focused on biracial couples (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). Hispanic families were the focus of four studies (4%; e.g., Christenson, Zabriskie, Egget, & Freeman, 2006; Shaull & Gramann, 1998). Other ethnicities and nationalities were the focus of 21 (21%) additional studies, and included Taiwanese and Chinese families and women (e.g., Tsai, 2006; 2010; Yu & Berryman, 1996), South Asian women (Scraton & Watson, 1998), Afghan families (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009), Spanish families (Gutierrez, Caus, & Ruiz, 2011), Australian women and families (e.g., Dempsey, 1990; Warner-Smith & Brown, 2002), Canadian families and women (e.g., Shaw, 1992; Trussell & Shaw, 2007), Indo-Canadian women and their families (Tirone & Shaw, 1997), Iranian families (Arab-moghaddam, Henderson, & Sheikholeslami, 2007), Israeli women (Nimrod, 2007), Turkish families (Aslan, 2009), and several Western European countries (e.g., Craig & Mullan, 2012; Dilley & Scraton, 2010; Harinen, Honkasalo, Ronkainen, & Suurpää, 2012; Kitterød & Lappegård, 2012).

When reporting family structure, 108 (64%) articles reported marital status of participants, 63 (38%) reported the sexual orientation of participants, and 128 (76%) provided data related to the life stages of participants. In general, research appeared to focus primarily on married (n = 89, 82%), heterosexual (n = 61, 97%) families with a child or adolescent (n = 68, 53%). Leisure in single-parent families was the focus of 10 articles (9%; e.g., Hornberger, Zabriskie, & Freeman, 2010; Irving & Giles, 2011; Jenkins, 2009)

Three articles (3%) included samples with equal numbers of two- and single-parent households. The remaining seven studies (7%) reported samples with various marital statuses or unspecified ratios of respondents' marital status. For example, Dilley and Scraton's (2010) examination of women climbers included married, partnered, dating, and single respondents, and Robertson's (1999) examination of family leisure among delinquent male adolescents included

both single- and two-parent households in unspecified ratios. Same-sex couples, their families, and their leisure were the focus of two (3%) studies (Bialeschki & Pearce, 1997; Pritchard, Morgan, Sedgley, Khan, & Jenkins, 2000). Same-sex couples were also mentioned in four (6%) studies. Life stage, specifically age of children, was sometimes difficult to discern, as samples including children or adolescents were commonly described in terms of school grade rather than numerical age. Moreover, researchers often did not theoretically distinguish between development stages of children, and there was overlap in several of the categories such as adolescence to emerging adulthood. Therefore, matching developmental stages categories such as child, adolescent, and emerging adult across studies was a significant challenge. As noted earlier, samples of families with a child or adolescent were most common (n = 68, 53%). Other samples included families with an emerging adult or adult child (n = 12, 9%). Middle age and older adults or grandparents were the focus of 17 studies (13%). Thirty-one studies (24%) referenced various life stages. For example, Stack and Iwasaki's (2009) study of leisure and adaptation among Afghan refugees included men and women ranging from 19 to 60 years, some adult children living with siblings and parents, and some parents with children ranging from 1 to 13 years.

Eighty articles (47%) reported their participants' social class. Research examining leisure in middle class families accounted half of all studies (n = 40; 50%). Leisure in low-income and working class families were the primary focus of 14 studies (18%). Twenty-six studies (33%) referenced a range of incomes. Finally, of the total number of articles examining family leisure, women in the capacities of mothers, caregivers, and decision-makers were the focus of more than three times the number of articles (n = 41; 22%) as men in their roles of fathers (n = 13, 7%).

As suggested by the data reported above, sample characteristics were not consistently reported across articles, or some sample descriptions were unclear, which limited the ability to analyze and report the characteristics of study participants. For example, race, marital status, and social class were not included in some articles' sample descriptions. It is scholars' prerogative to use their own discretion when deciding which variables to analyze; however, including these basic descriptors may aid synthesizing existing family leisure research.

Prominent Research Themes

Three dominant themes emerged from this review of family leisure research. These themes were not mutually exclusive, meaning articles could be categorized under multiple themes. Theme one (*promoting family well-being through leisure*) encompassed the benefits perspective of family leisure, or the positive outcomes individuals, dyads, and family groups perceived related to family leisure. Theme two (*the costs and constraints to family leisure*) examined family or family roles as constraints to leisure as well as constraints to family leisure. Finally, theme three (*family leisure in the margins*) included research identifying and examining diverse family structures and characteristics, and the implications of experiencing family leisure in marginal contexts. Complete descriptions and examples of each theme are presented below.

Promoting family well-being through leisure. This theme included research demonstrating the benefits of family leisure as perceived by families, couples, parents and children, and individuals. Two areas of research development that contributed to the benefits perspective in family leisure research were (a) building frameworks for positive family leisure outcomes and (b) considering the individual leisure experience in families.

Building frameworks for positive family leisure outcomes. Orthner and Mancini's (1990) connection between shared leisure and family stability, bonding, interaction, and life satisfaction was foundational in framing positive family leisure outcomes. Perhaps the most significant development in understanding family leisure from a benefits framework was the Core and Bal-

ance Model of Family Leisure Functioning introduced by Zabriskie and McCormick (2001) that suggested there was a direct relationship between different kinds of family leisure experiences and different aspects of family functioning and wellness. The model indicates there are two basic categories of family leisure, core and balance, which families use to meet needs for both stability and change, ultimately facilitating outcomes of family cohesion and adaptability which are the primary components of family functioning. Subsequent research expanded the model to include family functioning and satisfaction with family life (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2003), communication (Smith et al., 2009), and satisfaction with core and balance family leisure (Agate et al., 2009). Scholars further used the model as a framework to assess parent and adolescent child perspectives of family leisure and family outcomes. Overall, research demonstrated a positive relationship between core and balance family leisure involvement and core and balance family leisure satisfaction, and parent and youth perceptions of family cohesion, adaptability, functioning, and satisfaction (see Agate et al., 2009; Smith et al., 2009; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001; 2003). Core family leisure satisfaction was subsequently identified as one of the strongest and most consistent predictors of positive family outcomes (Agate et al., 2009; Buswell, Zabriskie, Lundberg, & Hawkins, 2012). Indeed, this model and its subsequent line of research further emphasized the benefits perspective and identified family leisure as a way to promote family well-being.

Since its introduction, publications have applied the Core and Balance Model to various family contexts including families with a child with a developmental disability (Dodd, Zabriskie, Widmer, & Eggett, 2007), single-parent families (Hornberger et al., 2010), Mexican-American families (Christenson et al., 2006), and in nationally representative U.S. samples (Poff et al., 2010; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2003). While most parent respondents in the aforementioned studies were mothers, other studies have singled out fathers. For example, Buswell et al. (2012) examined fathers' perspectives on leisure involvement, and Harrington (2006) also used the model to examine fathering through leisure and sport in Australian families. Jenkins and Lyons (2006) used the model to frame their qualitative examination of nonresident fathers. Across these populations, scholars reported positive relationships between family leisure and family outcomes from both parent and youth perspectives. It is important to note application of the model has been primarily limited to populations in the United States, and consistent recommendations among scholars using this framework include calls for more international studies (including English and non-English speaking countries) and the use additional analyses including nested or hierarchical approaches. Overall, the Core and Balance Model frames family leisure in a benefits perspective.

Scholars used additional frameworks to identify benefits of leisure to families. Shaw and Dawson (2001) connected Orthner and Mancini's (1990) work to the way parents used leisure in a goal-oriented way to improve cohesion, communication, and family functioning, and to socialize and teach their children moral values and healthy lifestyle traits (Shaw & Dawson, 2001). Their definition of purposive leisure was one that has been influential in the overall development of family leisure research. For example, Palmer, Freeman, and Zabriskie (2007) built upon the idea of purposive leisure in their examination of family service expeditions as contexts for *family deepening* through leisure. Family deepening defined and influenced families and their identities even several years after the trip had ended. The construct of family deepening also captured several concepts Orthner and Mancini identified (i.e., family strength and bonding) as well as Shaw and Dawson's concept of purposive leisure.

Family systems theory has been an overarching and guiding framework in exploring the benefits of family leisure. Much of the research related to the Core and Balance Model has been

couched in the general understanding that families are best studied holistically and that understanding individuals is contingent upon understanding the whole family. Outside of research applying the Core and Balance Model, scholars used family systems theory to explore media-based recreation and positive family outcomes (Hodge et al., 2012; Padilla-Walker et al., 2012). Finally, Wells and colleagues (2004) used collective efficacy, an extension of the concept of self-efficacy, to examine leisure as a context for developing and improving parent-adolescent interaction. No additional research identified in this review applied the collective efficacy framework, and future use and development of this framework in family leisure research may contribute to greater understanding of the benefits families experience related to their recreation.

Research also expanded frameworks for understanding the benefits of couple leisure. Orthner (1975) categorized couple leisure as individual, parallel, or joint, each with a different relationship to marital satisfaction. Joint leisure encouraged communication, interaction, and role interchange, and was therefore positively related to marital satisfaction. Conversely, individual leisure was assumed to have a negative relationship to marital satisfaction; however, research between 1990 and 2012 provided additional insight. For example, scholars demonstrated negative effects of individual leisure on marital satisfaction could be moderated by spousal support in individual long-distance running (Baldwin, Ellis, & Baldwin, 1999; Goff, Fick, & Oppliger, 1997; Goodsell & Harris, 2011), and in individual participation in Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games (MMORGPs) (Ahlstrom et al., 2012). When examining spouse involvement in family vacationing, research also connected more egalitarian couples to more positive perceptions of family vacations (Madrigal et al., 1992). These findings helped expand extant frameworks for understanding benefits of couple leisure.

Considering the benefits of individual leisure experience in families. Understanding the individual leisure experience in families may be somewhat of an oxymoron, since research has demonstrated the inherent interconnectedness of leisure experiences in families. For example, parents' personal perspectives on the value of leisure shaped adolescents' individual perspectives on participation in sport (Green & Chalip, 1998; Gutiérrez et al., 2011; Shannon, 2006; Shannon & Shaw, 2008), nature-based recreation (Shaull & Gramann, 1998), and overall free-time use (Hutchinson et al., 2003). Adult siblings also reciprocally influenced leisure enjoyment and sense of control, though not necessarily leisure interests or knowledge (Siegenthaler & O'Dell, 2000).

Still, advances in research since 1990 have demonstrated a need to identify and examine the benefits of individual leisure experiences in families. For example, leisure was the primary context in which fathers built relationships with their children (Kay, 2006a), even when fathers were not living with their children (Jenkins & Lyons, 2006; Jenkins, 2009) playing sport with their children. When mothers took time away from their children and engaged in a group exercise program, they reported improved feelings of well-being and increased ability to cope with their responsibilities as mothers (Currie, 2004). Individual leisure experiences in families were also connected to family benefits. Specifically, when children from low-income families experienced individual, child-centered vacations provided by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), they and their families experienced social benefits (Quinn & Stacey, 2010). Overall, this theme of promoting family well-being through leisure demonstrated an increase in exploration and documentation of frameworks for understanding benefits of family leisure and the value of individual experiences.

The costs and constraints to family leisure. Additional research documented the costs and constraints families or individual family members associated with their leisure. Interestingly, this was especially apparent as scholars considered *family* as a cost or constraint to *individual* family

leisure experiences. Costs and constraints referred to any factors that inhibited family leisure, but not necessarily monetary costs. Two areas of research development contributed to this theme: (a) applying and developing frameworks for identifying and negotiating costs and constraints, and (b) examining social ideologies.

Frameworks for identifying and negotiating costs and constraints. Feminist theory was instrumental in identifying costs and constraints of family leisure to women when women's voices and perspectives in leisure research were strikingly absent. Henderson (1990; 1991) demonstrated that traditional definitions of and outcomes associated with leisure frequently did not accommodate the position of women as caregivers, decision-makers, and mothers (Henderson, 1990; Khan, 1997; Shaw, 1992, 1997). Shaw (1997) called for greater examination of gender and gender-related power differentials within family leisure to facilitate greater understanding of both positive and negative aspects of family leisure through deliberate exploration of contradictions and conflict. Shaw (1997) also called for inclusive research addressing diverse family structures. These studies spurred greater research attention aimed at understanding gendered leisure ideas and definitions (Harrington & Dawson, 1995), as well as apparent contradictions (Hunter & Whitson, 1991) and inequalities (Freysinger, 1994) in women's family leisure experiences.

The critical perspective of women's leisure in families applied by Henderson (1990; 1991; 1993), Shaw (1992; 1994; 1997), and others, also led to critical examinations of family leisure from couple and comparative perspectives (e.g., Firestone & Shelton, 1994; Kay, 1996). In couples, costs and constraints to their leisure included lack of time and presence of children, and negotiating these constraints largely fell to women, except in couples who adhered to relatively traditional gender roles (Dyck & Daly, 2006). Research on dual-earners or dual-career couples revealed gender-based differences in negotiating time constraints with women cutting back on more of their leisure than men (Schnittger & Bird, 1990). Interestingly, mothers' involvement in the workforce did not always constrain their leisure. In fact, in one study, part-time employment was related to an increase in daily recreation time (Hill, Märtinson, & Ferris, 2004). Similarly, part-time employed women derived more meaning from their leisure time than did full-time employees and homemakers (Harrington & Dawson, 1995). However, a later study found that highly religious women who were homemakers felt fulfilled in their leisure, and cited spousal support as the facilitating mechanism of their leisure satisfaction (Freeman, Palmer, & Baker, 2006). Egalitarian approaches to division of labor in Norway—a country that emphasizes gender equality—were associated with more equal sharing of leisure activities with children (Kitterød & Lappegård, 2012). Similarly, egalitarian and cooperative strategies facilitated reduced family-leisure conflict, but such negotiations were typically initiated by wives (Goodsell & Harris, 2011). Lesbian couples consciously used role and responsibility negotiations to navigate their constraints and create meaningful leisure as individuals, couples, and families (Bialeschki & Pearce, 1997). In this case, the couples negotiated their roles according to their interests, availability, and ability to pay for household and other services. These couples relied on communication and structured agreements to meet the demands of raising children and facilitate individual, couple, and family leisure time (Bialeschki & Pearce, 1997). Thus, scholars began to identify ways in which couples negotiated constraints to family and individual leisure.

Scholars also considered adolescents' constraints in family leisure. Adolescents reported lower levels of intrinsic motivation and positive affect in their family leisure experiences (Larson, Gillman, & Richards, 1997), suggesting a higher level of perceived constraints. Parents' influence and monitoring also constrained adolescent leisure participation (Outley & Floyd, 2002), and adolescent dependency on parents for access and transportation to leisure (McMeeking &

Purkayastha, 1995) was also constraining. Likewise, purchase decisions and consumptive leisure behaviors were more likely to be specified as a parent's role (Howard & Madrigal, 1990). In this sense, parents became gatekeepers to adolescent leisure (Caldwell & Darling, 1999; Outley & Floyd, 2002), which adolescents perceived as a constraint.

In addition to constructing frameworks for understanding family role constraints, scholars also began examining external social and structural constraints that increased the cost of family leisure for some populations. For example, families with a child with a disability faced a higher degree of leisure constraints, particularly regarding youth sports participation (Fitzgerald & Kirk, 2009), timing and scheduling of leisure (Mactavish, Schleien, & Tabourne, 1997), and vacation planning and construction (Mactavish, MacKay, Iwasaki, & Betteridge, 2007). These families made several adjustments and adaptations that created a leisure process unique to those families (see Fitzgerald & Kirk, 2009). Finally, families living in rural communities also adapted their leisure to accommodate the structural constraints they experienced (Trussell & Shaw, 2009). Overall, frameworks for examining costs and constraints to family leisure increased in breadth and depth as scholars applied new perspectives to family roles, and social and structural contexts.

Examining social ideologies. The intersection of social ideologies and family leisure also emerged as a context for family leisure costs and constraints. Examinations of social ideologies surrounding women, and their familial roles, spurred additional research examining a broader range of social ideologies as constraining to family leisure. Scholars identified family leisure as a mechanism for potentially reproducing parenting ideologies. For example, organized youth sports were identified as a site for conspicuous or public parenting practices (i.e., intensive mothering and involved fathering) that created expectations for *good parenting* (Trussell & Shaw, 2012). For mothers, the prevailing *ethic of care* often negatively affected their individual and family leisure (Brown, Brown, Miller, & Hansen, 2001; Miller & Brown, 2005). In fact, the work to create family leisure was more intensive for women than men (Shaw, 1992), and men achieved greater parenting satisfaction through leisure than women (Freysinger, 1994). This disparity may be better understood by examining parenting ideologies. Changes in masculinity and family structure reshaped fathering ideologies (Kay, 2006b) and were described in terms of *leisure-based parenting,* whereas motherhood ideologies separated parenting from leisure (Such, 2006). Fatherhood ideologies, or being a *good father*, required spending time with children (Daly, 1996), and using leisure (e.g., sports) to engage in good fathering (Coakley, 2006). Nonresident fathers reported feeling constrained in leisure time with their children and perceived expectations to conform to social and cultural definitions of fatherhood (Jenkins, 2009). Other social ideologies surrounding race were identified as constraining to leisure experiences (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002; Philipp, 1999).

Family leisure in the margins. Examining social ideologies also helped scholars identify and focus on families in the margins. Families in the margins were defined as emerging or minority family structures, or previously unexamined roles and relationships. This area of research appeared to develop from the application of feminist and critical theory to family leisure, which called for greater examination of gender and gender-related power differentials within family leisure also included a call for more research addressing leisure in diverse family structures (see Henderson, 1991; Shaw, 1997). Several scholars responded to this call. For example, scholars studied family leisure among single-parent families (Azar, Naughton, & Joseph, 2009; Hornberger et al., 2010; Irving & Giles, 2011; Jenkins, 2009), families living with low incomes or in poverty (Churchill, Clark, Prochaska-Cue, Creswell, & Ontai-Grzebik, 2007; Dattilo, Dattilo,

Samdahl, & Kleiber, 1994; Outley & Floyd, 2002; Quinn & Stacey, 2010), widows (Patterson & Carpenter, 1994), nonresident fathers (Jenkins & Lyons, 2006; Jenkins, 2009; Troilo & Coleman, 2012), Latinos (Christenson et al., 2006), African American families (Dattilo et al., 1994; Outley & Floyd, 2002; Thomas, 1990), same-sex couple families (Bialeschki & Pearce, 1997), families in which an individual lived with a disability (Dodd et al., 2009; Emira & Thompson, 2011; Fitzgerald & Kirk, 2009; Mactavish et al., 1997), older adults and grandparents (Hebblethwaite & Norris, 2010, 2011; Nimrod, 2007; Scraton & Holland, 2006), families with paternal alcohol abuse (Haugland, 2005), families dealing with serious illness such as cancer (Shannon & Shaw, 2005; Radina, 2009), and biracial couples (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002).

Overwhelmingly, what the previously identified studies found was that families operating in the margins had distinct leisure experiences from the more commonly studied White, middle class, two-parent family. This was uncovered as scholars began to consider more deeply the contexts of family leisure, meaning the social, systemic, and structural elements or processes that were both similar and unique across the leisure experiences of varying families. Kelly (1997) called these "the lived conditions of life in real and varied social contexts" (p. 133). When considered from this perspective, leisure for families operating in the margins became a function of the interaction between normative social values regarding many of the sample characteristics described previously in this article. For example, biracial couples in which one partner was African American and the other was European American often felt socially isolated, wary of some leisure activities and locations, and consequently engaged in a pre-leisure vetting process (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). Philipp (1999) reported African American families felt less welcome when participating in leisure activities. In addition to race, transitions across life stages were examined by Iwasaki and Smale (1998), specifically examining interactions between life transitions, leisure importance, and well-being among men and women. Overall, this theme drew attention to the need for more research examining families outside the middle class.

Scholars also identified and addressed some marginalized family roles. As noted in the previous section, women's perspectives in leisure research were largely absent, and the line of research Henderson (1990) instigated helped scholars make significant progress toward recognizing and acknowledging women's perspectives. Interestingly, research examining women's and mother's perspectives led scholars to recognize that fathers' voices were also missing. Kay's (2006a) article—part of a special issue on fathering and leisure—noted that changes in family structure and social expectations of fathering was driving a need for greater research attention to the complexities of parenting ideologies, particularly among fathers. Other roles received less attention. Grandparents' roles were examined in a limited number of studies (see Havtitz, 2007; Hebblethwaite & Norris, 2010, 2011; Nimrod, 2007; Scraton & Holland, 2006) while sibling roles were fairly absent from this discussion, and remained in the margins.

Interestingly, the scholarly response to the need to include a greater diversity of family structures and relationships—while rendering an important growth in research volume—did not appear to identify an overarching or cohesive framework for understanding the unique lived experiences of these populations. Continued work in this area, guided by previous research, could contribute to such crucial conceptual development.

Discussion

The purpose of this paper was to review existing family leisure research from four select journals from 1990 to 2012. Specifically, this integrative review acted as a cross-section of fam-

ily leisure research by exploring publication frequencies, methods, analyses, and prominent research themes in family leisure in these four journals. By so doing, this review aimed to point scholars toward additional rigorous evaluations of the field, and future lines of family leisure research. While relatively few articles (6.1%, see Table 1) addressed family leisure, the growth and development of family leisure research since Hawks' (1991) review must be acknowledged. Hawks identified 83 articles in a six-decade time span that pertained to recreation in families. By comparison, 1990 to 2012 (approximately one-third the time span of Hawks' review) saw a more than 200% increase in the number of family leisure publications in only four select journals, whereas Hawks reviewed articles in many journals. Moreover, scholars have expanded their approaches and perspectives to family leisure research. For example, Hawks found scholars were primarily using surveys to gather data, and he recommended future research incorporate qualitative methods to increase scholars' understanding of the meaning of family recreation. As noted in the current findings, qualitative approaches (n = 85) were equally present as quantitative approaches (n = 85). Hawks also encouraged scholars to use more longitudinal research, as well as research designs and analyses that can establish causality. Findings from this work suggest scholars have begun to do so within the past 23 years, though these types of studies were still fairly limited. Therefore, when considering the progress made since Hawks' review, family leisure research has made great strides. At the same time, when considering the research from these four journals in context of concurrent significant and rapid changes in family formation, structure, and function, there remains much to do. More than simply increasing research *quantity*, however, we need to increase research *relevancy*. The following sections outline suggestions of specific directions for future family leisure research.

Improving sample description consistency. A relatively simple way to begin to increase relevancy in future research is to improve the consistency with which sample characteristics are reported in publications. Hawks (1991) noted the ways in which scholars reported sample characteristics and sampling methods steadily improved; however, there remained some inconsistencies regarding sample descriptions in the last 23 years of research. In some cases, key identifiers such as race, marital status, and social class were missing from sample descriptions making them inconsistent and somewhat arbitrary. At minimum, families should be described in terms of structure including marital status, size, race or ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and life stage (theoretically defined) to facilitate comparing and synthesizing findings into general research trends. Hawks noted that many structural and sociodemographic indicators, particularly socioeconomic status, had significant effects on family leisure. Family leisure scholars should therefore include these important indicators when designing studies and reporting findings.

Increasing sample diversity. Hawks (1991) also recommended including a wider range of family types and family sizes. Similarly, Holman and Epperson (1984) suggested scholars examine different family structures and types, a suggestion echoed by Freysinger (1994) in the introduction to a special issue on family leisure research in *JLR*. Overall, families included in family leisure research since 1990 were predominantly White, heterosexual, married (i.e., two-parent), middle-class families. Some scholars responded to Hawks' recommendation, and Freysinger's (1997) more recent call to "redefine their notions or concepts of family to be reflective of reality" (p. 1) by intentionally studying other populations. For example, scholars examined historically marginalized family types such as single-parent families (Hornberger et al., 2010; Jenkins, 2009), families living with low-incomes or in poverty (Dattilo, Dattilo, Samdahl, & Kleiber, 1994; Quinn & Stacey, 2010), Latinos (Christenson et al., 2006), African American families (Dattilo et al., 1994; Outley & Floyd, 2002; Thomas, 1990), same-sex couple families (Bialeschki &

Pearce, 1997), families in which an individual lived with a disability (Dodd et al., 2009; Emira & Thompson, 2011; Fitzgerald & Kirk, 2009; Mactavish et al., 1997), and biracial couples (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). These steps toward increasing sample diversity are crucial, because studying largely homogenous samples of families may inadvertently limit the generalizability and applicability of what is known about family leisure. It may also contribute to the reproduction of social ideologies such as the middle class ideal (Trussell & Shaw, 2012), and family leisure as an idyllic and exclusively fun activity (Shaw, 1992).

Researchers should continue to be aware of and sensitive to family structures and roles that have been overlooked. Future researchers should continue to seek out family leisure experiences in nonnormative contexts, and examine leisure in low-income or working-class families, racial and ethnic minority families (i.e., African-American, Latino, or Asian families), same-sex couples and their families, families in which a parent or child has a disability, and single-parent families. Scholars should specifically consider the potential differences in the processes and outcomes of family leisure in these understudied populations. This approach will enable scholars to better understand how these families perceive family leisure, the constraints they experience, and the benefit they derive from engaging in family leisure.

Expanding the research scope. Expanding the scope of family leisure research applies to the family relationships and stages scholars study. Hawks (1991) noted future research should examine meanings of leisure and recreation for all family members and not just one or both parents. Some important family relationships, however, have still been overlooked. For example, grandparent perspectives were included in only a few studies, and siblings only peripherally. The absence of siblings in family leisure research means models and frameworks explaining the reported benefits and constraints of family leisure have been largely based on studies involving couples, and parent-child relationships, and limited to a relatively finite range of life stages, which makes such frameworks potentially incomplete. Social trends further emphasize the importance of understanding sibling relationships because children are now "more likely to live in a household with a sibling than with a father" (Feinberg, Sakuma, Hostetler, & McHale, 2013, p. 97). Moreover, there is some indication that "family's shared leisure events—the extent that siblings and parents engage in activities together—are linked to positive sibling relationship qualities" (Updegraff et al., 2005, p. 383). If sibling relationships are the longest lasting, then more research needs to examine how leisure in families can be used to promote positive, stable, and sustainable sibling relationships across life stages. Similarly, life stages reported in the literature reviewed here were fairly homogeneous, and often researchers allowed overlap between or did not theoretically distinguish between developmental stages of children. Transitions across life stages were also only rarely considered, but provide important context for understanding family leisure processes and outcomes (Iwasaki & Smale, 1998). Examining both a broader range of theoretically distinct life stages as well as transitions across life stages will have important implications for the continued social relevancy of family leisure research.

Translating research into practice. In addition to ongoing conceptual work, there is a need to begin or increase translation and application of family leisure research. By building on existing conceptual frameworks and research to engage in social-problem focused translational research, the family leisure field can strengthen its relevancy and ensure meaningful interdisciplinary contributions. Of the literature included in this review, only a few examples of intentional, theory based programming and evaluation were included (e.g., Wells et al., 2004). Future research can use existing family leisure frameworks and theory to address social problems such as the physical and psychological health and well-being of families. For example, children from

single-parent households are more likely to engage in health risk and socially delinquent behaviors (Blum et al., 2000) and be obese (Huffman, Kanikireddy, & Patel, 2010). Some family leisure behaviors such as regular family dinner are associated with decreased adolescent delinquent behavior (Griffin, Botvin, Scheier, Diaz, & Miller, 2000), especially when relationships between parents and children are positive (Meier & Musick, 2014), and decreasing adolescents' sedentary leisure time may reduce the risk of obesity (Liou, Liou, & Chang, 2010). These are only a few opportunities to promote family leisure as a solution to a significant social problem through translational research.

Model and theory development. Shaw (1997) suggested conceptualizing family leisure was inherently contradictory, and though the intent of this article was not to create a dichotomy of the positive and negative aspects of family leisure, research seemed to congregate around ends of a spectrum: either the benefits or the constraints or costs of family leisure. Creating a more cohesive conceptual model that spans both benefits and costs of family, and that also accounts for the lived experiences (Kelly, 1997) of a diverse range of family structures and relationships, should be a focus of future research. Social ecological models may be one way that future research can connect research on increasingly broad ranges of family types, relationships, and life stages. Social ecological models also capture the individual, dyadic, and systemic perspectives and experiences that exist in families as well as the environments in which families operate. In other fields, such as family studies, scholars have delved into the interactions between the multiple social contexts in which humans exist (Perry-Jenkins, Newkirk, & Ghunney, 2013). Those authors and this review have demonstrated that context and individual and family-level characteristics play significant roles in family leisure experiences. Indeed, as Bronfenbrenner (1994) and others have suggested, "the action is in the interactions" (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2013), and future family leisure research must continue to expand upon previous research on the interaction between various levels of systems in which families exist that shape and are shaped by human behavior. Overall, we would recommend that future research engage in continued conceptual and model development that seeks to connect and span the major themes identified in this paper: promoting family well-being through leisure, the cost and constraints to family leisure, and family leisure in the margins.

Limitations and Recommendations

As an integrative review of four select journals, there are inherent limitations to the findings and recommendations included here. First, had this article been a full-scale meta-analysis of family leisure research, a greater range of publication outlets would have been considered, not only from the leisure and family studies fields, but from all other relevant fields. The intent of the authors, however, was not to provide a broad-scale review, but rather a cross section that could serve as a starting point for such large-scale reviews. Second, not all scholars may agree with the themes and research recommendations presented in this review. It is important to note again, however, this synthesis of family leisure research is not intended to serve as the final word on the status of the field but rather to create an open dialogue in which scholars can begin additional, rigorous evaluation of research in the field. Such evaluations should include additional systematic reviews and meta-analyses addressing specific subtopics identified in the findings and discussion of this article.

Overall, within the broader concept of leisure experiences, family leisure is a highly relevant social phenomenon. Family leisure research is an intricate interweaving of human behavior, family processes, social and systemic influences, and is highly salient to the well-being of

families. Researchers should therefore concern themselves with the "real life conditions" (Kelly, 1997, p. 34) in which families exist that affect their leisure to ensure continued relevancy and capacity for contribution.

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