

Investigation of the Leisure Participation and Leisure Satisfaction of Urban Career Women in Guangzhou, China

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Abstract: Leisure is an indispensable part of social life. More and more career women in urban have to bear both the family pressure and workload at the same time, so taking part in the leisure activities is an important way to improve their quality of life and well-being. This study aims to investigate the status of leisure participation and leisure satisfaction of career women in urban. Particularly, we will explore the relationship between different type of leisure activities and leisure satisfaction of career women. This empirical study is based on data from a representative sample of Guangzhou citizens (N=404). First, we described the leisure participation and leisure satisfaction of participants. And further analyzed the relationship between leisure participation and leisure satisfaction of career women who differ by gender, age, education, job occupation, marriage and income. Afterward, we identified the relationship between leisure participation and leisure satisfaction. Overall, results show that the leisure satisfaction of professional women in Guangzhou is low and leisure participation is relatively not enough. We also found that differences in the leisure satisfaction of different demographic characteristics of occupation women. Finally, some suggestions were put forward about how to improve the urban professional women leisure satisfaction.

Keywords: career women, leisure participation, leisure satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

With the rapid development of China's economy and the continuous advancement of science and technology, the living standard of urban residents has been gradually improved, and leisure time has gradually increased. Leisure has become a normal and important way for urban residents to relax themselves. In February 2013, the General Office of the State Council promulgated the "National Tourism and Leisure Outline (2013-2020)", which for the first time provided national documents in the form of national tourism and leisure development goals, tasks, and safeguard systems [1]. It means that China's leisure industry and people's leisure activities have entered a new era of development. However, such strong policy support and a good leisure environment have not directly translated into a high rate of female leisure practices. According to the data from the China Leisure Development Annual Report 2013-2014, Chinese women only spent 211 minutes per day in sports and TV, shopping and other recreational activities in 2013, 27 minutes per day less than men (248 minutes/day). In 2011, women's leisure time was 240 minutes a day, compared with 297 minutes for men [2]. It can be seen that the continuous development of the society does not significantly increase women's leisure time, which also reflects the existence of certain problems in

women's leisure. At the same time, due to the physiological and psychological differences in gender, women are at a disadvantage compared to men in leisure participation, and are affected by many limiting factors and leisure [3].

Women's leisure is not only a social issue, but also the mechanism of its production, external driving factors, and development paths are concerned by Chinese and Western scholars. As early as the late 1970s, women's leisure studies have emerged [4]. Women's leisure research explores various aspects of women's groups in the leisure life from the perspective of feminism. The existing research focuses mainly on women's leisure time, leisure space, leisure quality and content, leisure influencing factors, leisure function and leisure consumption. Many researches have gradually expanded the depth and breadth of women's leisure research from a broad theoretical perspective using a variety of research methods.

Although research on women's leisure is abundant, there is less concern for this group of women- career women. With the development of society, career women's groups are constantly expanding. Relative to other groups, career women's leisure activities face more constraints. How to find

leisure opportunities in busy urban life has become an important issue for them. Leisure participation and leisure satisfaction have a direct and important impact on quality of life, and the quality of life can further affect individual health and overall development, and even affect the country's or society's civilized development. Therefore, it is very necessary to study the leisure participation and leisure satisfaction of career women in the city. Through this research, we can deeply understand the problems of female leisure in China and improve the quality of female leisure. This study takes Guangzhou's career women as examples to investigate the leisure participation status and leisure satisfaction of urban working women through questionnaires and statistical analysis methods, with a view to providing suggestions for improving the leisure satisfaction of urban professional women.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leisure participation

Regarding to the concept of leisure participation, there are mainly two perspectives. One is the emphasis on the participation of leisure activities. The definition is represented by Ragheb. He believes that leisure activities refer to the frequency of individuals participating in a certain type of leisure activities or the type of leisure activities that individuals participate in [5]. This definition has been widely by accepted, but it ignores the time that must be supported by leisure participation. For example, Liu's definition of leisure participation refers to the individual's participation in leisure activities, the frequency, the psychological experience [6], or the type of leisure activities the individual participates in. It also emphasizes leisure activities and ignores leisure time. A leisure activity that takes care of leisure time. For instance, Yang defines leisure participation as the choice of leisure activities, frequency, and time when individuals are relatively free in time and space. Some scholars have also integrated the concepts of leisure activities and leisure time. For example, Tan believes that leisure participation refers to the items, hours, and frequencies of leisure activities that individuals use to manage their free time [7]. This article defines leisure participation that refers to the type, frequency, and time of leisure activities that you participate according to your willingness in your free time.

In addition, more emphasis is placed on the type and frequency of leisure activities in existing studies, while leisure time is neglected. Leisure time provides the necessary time carrier for leisure participation. There is not enough free time, leisure activities cannot be discussed, and leisure satisfaction is also affected. Therefore, this study incorporated leisure time into the category of leisure participation.

Leisure satisfaction

The study of leisure satisfaction began in the 1980s and research in China began in the 1990s. The

most classic concept of leisure satisfaction is the definition of Beard and Ragheb. They believe that leisure satisfaction is the result of a positive feeling formed, induced, or obtained when an individual participates in or selects a leisure activity, and is the degree to which an individual feels satisfied with a general leisure experience or situation. This positive sense of satisfaction comes from the unawareness of the individual's perceived needs, including psychological, educational, social, relaxation, physiology, and aesthetics. Most researchers have adopted this concept, or on this basis to do some extended explanation. For example, Guinn believes that leisure satisfaction is a positive experience of individuals participating in leisure activities through leisure, and leisure satisfaction is an important relevant variable for life satisfaction [8]. Jin pointed out that leisure satisfaction refers to the subjective evaluation of the quality of leisure activities by residents, including the subjective satisfaction of participating in leisure activities and the evaluation of subjective satisfaction of the leisure environment [9]. It is a psychological activity of participants in leisure activities. An indicator that shows that leisure activities need to be satisfied. Based on the definition of Beard and Ragheb, this study believes that leisure satisfaction is an individual's assessment of their overall satisfaction with leisure participation, including the perception of leisure activities and leisure environment.

The relationship between Leisure participation and Leisure satisfaction

Research on the relationship between leisure participation and leisure satisfaction is mainly divided into two main views. Most scholars believe that there is a positive correlation between leisure participation and leisure satisfaction, while some scholars have found that there is a negative correlation between them, and a few scholars believe there's no relationship between them. Lajib pointed out that the leisure activities most closely related to leisure satisfaction are interest, culture, sports, social, outdoor and mass media leisure activities, and leisure satisfaction has a stronger influence on leisure participation than leisure attitude and demographics variable on it. Some scholars have also found that there are significant differences on the social dimension of leisure satisfaction between different types of leisure participation [10]. Lin indicated that the participation of leisure sports and the intensity of participation are related to leisure satisfaction. The frequency of leisure sports participation and are related to psychological, physiological and the levels of relaxing of leisure satisfaction [11]. A large number of studies have also proved that leisure participation and leisure satisfaction are positively correlated. The higher the degree of leisure participation, the higher the degree of leisure satisfaction and vice versa. Therefore, leisure satisfaction can predict leisure participation [12]. However, some researchers have found that leisure

participation has a negative impact on leisure satisfaction. That is, the higher the participation frequency of leisure activities, the more types, and the lower the degree of leisure satisfaction [13].

In summary, leisure participation and leisure satisfaction are closely related, and it is universally believed that they are positively correlated. In addition, many studies have also proposed that leisure satisfaction may also be affected by many other factors, such as leisure motivation [14]. and leisure experience [15]. This study mainly focuses on the urban working women, discusses their leisure participation and leisure satisfaction and explores the relationship between them.

RESEARCH METHODS

Sample

Data collection was implemented from March to June 2017 in Guangzhou. The sample of 404 individuals was contacted via email with a formal invitation to participate in an on-line survey and random interviews in different locations in CBD of Guangzhou. The questionnaire aims to measure the leisure participation and leisure satisfaction of career women in urban.

Measures

The leisure participation scale was derived from the work of Ragheb and adjusted it into six dimensions, namely recreation, health, sports, tourism, social, and culture. In addition to leisure activities, leisure time has also been added. Leisure time is outside the working hours, and after the removal of living expenses such as meeting physiological needs and family labor needs, the remaining individuals are free to spend time [16]. The measure used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always). Leisure satisfaction is measured by Beard and Ragheb's leisure satisfaction scale [3], including six statements representing psychology, education, socialization, relaxation, physiology, and aesthetics. The measure also used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis included a three step process to address the research questions. First, descriptive statistics, including the respondents' sociodemographic characteristics, leisure participation and leisure satisfaction characteristics. The second step in the analysis examined the differences of the perceived leisure satisfaction according to the respondents' sociodemographic characteristic, including age, occupation, education level, and marital status. Finally, correlation analysis between leisure participation and leisure satisfaction, the Pearson correlation coefficient were calculated for each study variable. All analysis were performed using SPSS 20, and only significant

findings were selected for presentation in this article because of length limitations.

RESULTS

Respondents' sociodemographic and leisure participation characteristics

Results of demographic and leisure participation statistics are presented in Table-1. From the sample collection, the mean age of respondents was approximately 35 years old. The majority of respondents was working full-time (85.6%), had completed a bachelor's degree (70.5%), and were single or living alone (63.9%). In terms of leisure participation, the results show that the recreation activities ranked in first with the highest score (M=3.462), followed by socializing (M=3.338), tourism (M=3.334), culture (M=3.305), and social (M=3.338), the lowest is health activities (M=3.281). This result indicates that working women in urban areas enjoy more recreation and social activities (such as dating, watching a movie, etc.), and these are the important ways for working women to get rid of work and life stress. In addition, in the tourism activities, the score of local visits is higher than traveling outbound. This reflects the fact that professional women are less likely to travel outside due to various reasons such as time, money and family. One thing interesting is that career women in Guangzhou are knowledgeable and skillful in their cultural activities (such as paintings, photography, musical instruments, etc.). This shows that respondents are more concerned with self-development and ability development and this may be related to the highly competitive work environment in Guangzhou. The lowest is the health activities. Despite the current trend of national fitness, career women still spend less time on sports activities because of workload, family issues and leisure preferences. In general, the content of leisure activities for career women in Guangzhou is relatively abundant, but the majority is often get involved in some traditional daily leisure activities such as shopping, socializing, etc. Some unconventional or emerging activities, such as religious activities and extreme sports are less frequent in this study. Regarding to leisure time, the results show that the majority of career women in Guangzhou spend 2-4 hours on weekdays and over 4hours on weekends, indicating that career women have less leisure time during the workdays. According to the survey of career women leisure participation in Shanghai, Tianjin, and Harbin, the average leisure time for career women is 288.41 minutes (about 4.8 hours) on weekdays, and the average leisure time is 387.87 minutes (about 6.5 hours) on weekends [17]. By comparison, the leisure time of respondents in Guangzhou is much lower and this may be related to the overall economic development level of cities and the occupation, age and marital status of respondents. The "Middle Class Leisure Satisfaction Survey" conducted by Tsinghua University Media Survey Lab in 2013, shows that the overall level of people's

weekly free time has increased compared to 2012, but nearly half of people feel that they have less leisure time than last year. Except the need for overtime work,

high technology and urbanization also affects people's leisure time [18].

Table-1: Demographic characteristic of respondents

	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
Age			Education level		
Under 26	91	22.5	Some college or less	54	13.4
26-35	165	40.8	Bachelor's college	285	70.5
36-55	98	24.3	Master's degree	56	13.9
Over 55	50	12.4	PhD or doctorate degree	9	2.2
Occupation			Marital status		
Full-time employees	346	85.6	Single or living alone	258	63.9
Part-time employees	25	6.2	Married or living with partner	146	36.1
Other	33	8.2		Frequency	Percentage
	Mean	SD	Leisure time on weekday (Daily)		
Leisure activities			Below 2 hours	28	7.1
Recreation	3.462	.844	2-4 hours	301	74.5
Sports	3.281	.861	Over 4 hours	75	18.6
Health	3.279	.813	Leisure time on weekend (Daily)		
Tourism	3.334	.809	Below 2 hours	13	3.2
Socializing	3.338	.780	2-4 hours	178	44.1
Culture	3.305	.907	Over 4 hours	213	52.7

Respondents' perceived leisure satisfaction

As shown in Table 2, the mean of general leisure satisfaction of respondents is 3.376, and the standard deviation is 0.922. It can be seen that the leisure satisfaction of career women in Guangzhou is not very high and it needs to be improved in overall. This result is similar to another survey conducted by Qin in 2005; indicating that 32.4% of Guangzhou citizens are not satisfied with their current leisure life, 7.0% feel very unsatisfied and only 9.0% of people feel very satisfied [19]. The data shows that the average scores of five dimensions of leisure satisfaction is between 3.3-4, and the relaxation satisfaction has the highest score (M=4.133), followed by socialization satisfaction, aesthetic satisfaction, education satisfaction, psychological satisfaction and physiological satisfaction. According to the analysis of specific questions, it can be found that "joyful for me", "helping to relax myself", "helping to relieve stress", "can interact with others", "can understand myself better" in the leisure satisfaction of professional women in Guangzhou.

Group differences in leisure satisfaction were tested by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and these differences were further examined by Least Significant Difference (LSD) test. When comparing the

perceived leisure satisfaction of respondents, three significant differences were found (1) career women aged at 26-35 and 36-55 are more satisfied with relaxation leisure activities than those aged at under 26 and over 55 ($F=2.787, p=0.002$), (2) there were significant differences in the level of aesthetic satisfaction ($F=3.218, p=0.010$), educational satisfaction ($F=0.532, p=0.03020$) among respondents with different education levels, and a further post-hoc comparison by LSD analysis found that career women with bachelor's degrees had higher levels of satisfaction on the aesthetic and educational levels than those had higher or lower degree, (3) a significant difference between psychological satisfaction ($F=0.732, p=0.05$) and relaxation satisfaction ($F=0.187, p=0.01$) among respondents with different marital status, single women had higher levels of social and relaxation satisfaction than other married women. This may be due to the complexities of marriage and family relationships and the shift in the focus of themselves to children. In particular, as women, it is inevitable to switch between multiple roles such as a wife and mother. Pressure from many roles will cause them a certain negative impression. Therefore, there are differences in psychological and relaxation satisfaction between different marital statuses.

Table-2: leisure satisfaction characteristics of respondents

Dimension	Mean	SD	Ranking
Psychology	3.292	0.926	5
Education	3.332	0.995	4
Socialization	3.932	0.911	2
Relaxation	4.133	0.982	1
Physiology	3.278	0.944	6
Aesthetics	3.487	0.889	3
General leisure satisfaction	3.376	0.922	

Correlation analysis between leisure participation and leisure satisfaction

The result of the correlation analysis explained the correlation between leisure satisfaction and leisure participation. The data shows that the psychological dimension of leisure satisfaction was significantly positive related to recreation ($r = .29, p < .05$), tourism ($r = .221, p < .05$), social activities ($r = .198, p < .05$), indicating that the more career women participate in recreation, tourism, and social activities, the higher their psychological satisfaction. The educational dimension of leisure satisfaction was significantly higher than that of tourism ($r=.168, p<.05$), social activities ($r=.033, p<.05$), and cultural activities ($r=.241, p<.01$). Positive correlations indicate that the more career women participate in tourism, social and cultural leisure activities, the more educational satisfaction they have. The social dimension of leisure satisfaction was significantly positive related to sports ($r=.292, p < .05$), tourism ($r =.111, p < .05$) and social activities ($r=.266, p < .01$). The more frequently working women participate in sports, tourism, and social activities, the higher their

social satisfaction is. There was also a significant positive correlation between the level of relaxation satisfaction and recreation participation ($r=.210, p<.01$), sports ($r=.109, p<.05$) and health ($r=.231, p<.05$). The more frequently career women participate in sports, sports, and physical activities, the higher their physiological satisfaction. The physiological level was positively correlated with leisure participation in sports ($r=.278, p<.01$) and health ($r=.179, p<.05$), indicating more frequent participation of career women in sports and health activities, the physiological satisfaction was higher; the aesthetic level was positively correlated with leisure participation in social ($r=.124, p<.05$) and cultural activities($r=.234, p<.05$), indicating that the more frequently working women participated in social and cultural activities, the higher their aesthetic satisfaction. Overall, there is a significant positive correlation between leisure satisfaction and leisure participation in all dimensions. It shows that when the career women in the urban are more involved in leisure activities, their leisure satisfaction is higher.

Table-3: Correlation matrix of variables of leisure satisfaction and leisure participation

	Recreation	Sports	Health	Tourism	Social	Culture
Psychology	0.027	0.059	0.125	0.221	0.198	0.112
	0.046*	0.607	0.231	0.050*	0.038*	0.133
Education	0.008	0.021	-0.121	0.168	0.033	0.241
	0.939	0.066	0.748	0.022*	0.014*	0.010**
Socialization	0.341	0.192	0.021	0.111	0.266	0.098
	0.214	0.046*	0.512	0.021*	0.010**	0.033*
Relaxation	0.210	0.109	0.231	0.172	0.034	0.111
	0.010**	0.023*	0.044*	0.421	0.271	0.410
Physiology	0.231	0.278	0.179	0.532	0.134	-0.022
	0.342	0.010**	0.045*	0.293	0.062	0.283
Aesthetics	0.187	0.289	0.253	0.445	0.124	0.234
	0.113	0.421	0.351	0.124	0.028*	0.041*

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

CONCLUSION

Overall, the results of this study provide show that leisure activities that urban working women are often involved in are recreational, social, tourism, cultural, health, and sports activates. Specifically, the leisure activities that professional women in Guangzhou frequently participate in include social activities, shopping, watching TV movies, walking and other general sports, chatting, listening to music, playing computer mobile phones, learning and local knowledge. In real life, professional women in urban areas have rich leisure activities, and enjoy more general and more traditional leisure activities such as recreation and social networking (such as dating, dinner, etc.). There is a great way to get rid of the stress of work and life, and there are relatively few extreme and emerging activities. The professional women in urban areas spend about 2-4 hours in their

leisure time on weekdays and over 4 hours on weekends.

According to the data, the overall leisure satisfaction of career women in urban is at a medium level and needs further improvement. Among the various dimensions of leisure satisfaction, the levels of satisfaction were relaxation satisfaction, social satisfaction, aesthetic satisfaction, education satisfaction, psychological satisfaction, and physiological satisfaction. The career women with different sociodemographic characteristics have significant differences at all levels of leisure satisfaction. Overall, there is a significant positive correlation between leisure satisfaction and leisure participation in all dimensions. It shows that when the career women in the urban are more involved in leisure activities, their leisure satisfaction is higher.

DISCUSSION

This study investigated the leisure participation and leisure satisfaction of career women in Guangzhou, and found that there's a positive relationship between leisure participation and leisure satisfaction. These indicate that the more career women participated in recreation, sports, tourism, health and cultural activities, the greater relaxation, social, aesthetic, education, psychological, and physiological satisfaction they will perceive. Amongst the women in this study, women worker in Guangzhou were likely to report less perceive leisure satisfaction in sports activities and health activities and less leisure time than the average level in China. Based on the results of this study, in addition to a lot of participation in leisure activities, we must also pay attention to improving the quality of leisure. On the one hand, career women are suggested to pay attention to strengthening their own leisure and leisure skills, follow the pace of the times, accept new concepts, new cultures, new arts, new techniques and new knowledge, provide ways to expand interest, and rationally plan their own leisure time. On the other hand, community may also advocate positive concepts and values, use high-level spiritual culture to lead career women's leisure consumption behavior, and guide women to gradually convert from material and enjoyable leisure consumption to spiritual and knowledge-based leisure consumption. Working women are self-elevated and self-actualized in their leisure life.

While this study does make several contributions to the study of leisure participation and leisure satisfaction in an urban career women context, there are several limitations that must be recognized. This study does not address the impact of hours of work, remuneration, occupational status and family status on the relative leisure experience of career women. Therefore, more works can be conducted in the future studies on women career in urban and their leisure constraints.

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