

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Leisure and recreation are inherent to human beings both, individually and socially. Anthropological and historical research testifies that human beings in all parts of the world, had lived, not only to work to survive but also engaged in amusement, arts, drama, music and play as pastimes to enjoy and to feel happy. Archaeological excavations in different parts of the world have yielded sufficient evidence to show that even primitive people had engaged themselves in various forms of entertainment (Kando, 1975).

In the pre-literate societies, for example, people engaged in activities such as fishing, hunting, swimming, skiing, boating, horseback riding, combative activities and arts and crafts (like pottery, weaving and leather work). They did not sharply differentiate between work and leisure (Kraus, 1990). As time passed, however, leisure began to be distinguished from work.

Historically, all societies before the industrial revolution had been considered pre-industrial societies that had, by and large, similar economies, similar ecologies and similar patterns of life and leisure. Historians have traced records of old civilizations, deciphered and reconstructed their patterns of work and leisure and the philosophies that guided these patterns. From a study of these historical accounts, it transpires that in pre-industrial times, leisure was seen in terms of work. It

compensated for the stresses and strains of work. Leisure was also seen as a privilege of the ruling or leisure class who had the taste, means and time to afford leisure and to enjoy its benefits (Durant,1966). Furthermore, leisure was controlled by economic, political, religious and social factors. It is recorded that

“Pre-industrial leisure was more limited by isolation than by lack of space. Leisure, therefore, tended to be either integrated into the work and survival patterns of life or to be related to special events. Holidays were, for the most part, “holy days” in which people would gather for whatever celebrations were customary. The gathering itself provided the possibility of games, play, spectacles and various forms of social interaction that would not be generally possible with the dispersed population...(Kelly, 1990)

But industrialization systematically changed all aspects of the pre-industrial cultures including the patterns of work and leisure. Industrialization first emerged in England, in the eighteenth century, and gradually spread, in the nineteenth century, to other parts of the world. With industrialization, the days of the agriculture society were over. Instead modern cities with factories, as centers of production began to mushroom.

Factories attracted labor and immigration of workers from home and abroad set in motion. Some workers were recruited and transported by manufacturers while others left their villages and traditional societies to find better-paid employment in cities. As factories spread, space in the industrial cities became scarce. Wage laborers dwelled in areas near the factory so as to go to work and came back home in the shortest time possible. New means of public transport, railways and buses, spread and changed the contours of the countryside. Working hours were long starting very early in the morning and stretching to hours after sunset. Industrial cities soon became

crowded with little sanitation. Pollution and waste were common as were deprivation and disease. Life became monotonous, machine - like, boring and robbed of a sense of purpose. People began to need outlets for leisure and recreation badly. But, there was hardly time or space for leisure for poor workers who labored long hours in factories, mines and shipyards (Kraus, 1978).

In due course began the movement for the creation of public parks and playgrounds (for public recreation and leisure) some inspired reformers, who became seriously involved in the depressing conditions of life of the working classes. They urged their local and central governments to provide lands for the creation of public parks where people could relax after work and enjoy their leisure time (Frye, 1980). Thus Municipal, National and State Parks were constructed in various cities in countries like England, Canada and the United States in the latter part of the century (Kelly, 1990). Gradually, leisure came to be recognized as an essential part of life. Its benefits began to be appreciated while the barriers and constraints that prevented people from developing leisure habits and making use of leisure facilities were studied.

But life in the under-developed countries continued to run on traditional culture and within the normative framework of the religious and social systems that reflected life-styles of the pre-industrial, feudal era. As the European countries colonized the Arab world and the North African countries like Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, they introduced a modicum of the western style city life and western education. These influences, in turn, helped evolve in colonized countries a middle class that was prone to copying the modes and manners of their colonial

masters including their habits and styles of leisure participation. The introduction of modern concepts and styles of leisure in the Arab world is therefore a colonial legacy. The colonized countries have continued to follow the systems of leisure participation as developed in advanced industrialized countries.

Unlike Egypt and the rest of North African countries, Libya, remained outside the pale of early colonization by the British and the French. However, in 1911, Italy occupied Libya. But, the Italian colonial regime was not interested in promoting education, culture, sports and leisure participation of the colonized Libyan people. Therefore, Libya suffered serious educational and cultural setback during the Italian, French and British colonialism. When national independence was achieved in 1949 it brought in new thinking in education.

With the onset of the Great Libyan Jamahiriya (Peoples' Democratic) Revolution in 1969, Libya took a gigantic step forward toward development and modernization. The revolutionary regime initiated fundamental changes in the country. Education and sport were considered to be important for building up the nation. Physical education and sport became compulsory in schools and higher institutions of learning. Playgrounds and sports facilities were built in all parts of the country. Latest media networks such as radio, television and satellite discs were installed to promote greater awareness among the Libyan people of international affairs and as promote greater use of leisure and recreation activities. With these developments cultural borrowing from outside countries became very popular within the society. The Libyan government keen to utilize imported technologies and cultural influences to inculcate healthy habits of leisure participation and fitness

culture among the Libyan people. But, the people indulge in passive leisure habits instead of taking part in vigorous sports and outdoor activities. Also it transpired that cultural and leisure concepts in the country were not able to adapt other countries pattern of leisure. Hindrances soon began to appear and acted as constraints to young adolescents because leisure as leisure participation was seen as a waste of time. It was especially problematic for young female adolescents to participate in leisure as they were traditionally required to devote themselves to studies at school as well as at home in free time, to obtain professional or vocational qualifications and skills to work as teachers, nurses, doctors and social workers, and prepare themselves to be good wives, mothers and daughters, in keeping with the traditional Arab norms of family life. No study had been carried on leisure activities among Libyan school adolescents. It is therefore important for such a study to be carried out, specially to investigate the benefits and constraints of leisure as perceived by school adolescents in Libya and the relationship of these perceptions to their actual and desired participation in various leisure activities.

1.2 Leisure in Advanced Countries

Leisure now has become a right and not a luxury. This generation has been defined as a 'work hard, play hard' generation which seeks opportunities for continuous growth, personal and physical development, and increased spiritual awareness through participation in day-life activities." (Edginton, Jordan, DeGraaf and Edginton, 1995, p.3-6).

Interest on the subject of leisure has suddenly grown. Leisure is now regularly researched in various Western universities where the quality and range of professional expertise has increased significantly. The relevance of leisure has spread across a wide spectrum of human desires, interests and needs. Besides educational and motivational interests, there are also psychological concerns that may be compensatory and therapeutic their outcome. Hence, people are interested to know more about the benefits of leisure.

Studies of leisure participation, are often classified into amateur and professional approaches (Stebbins, 1979). In the amateur approach, a leisure activity is considered more as a hobby that an individual engages for relaxation, diversion or development. In contrast, people engage in leisure for specific business or working related objectives. Professionals may have academic, journalistic, media and commercial interest in the organization, planning and delivery of leisure services. Clearly, commercialization of leisure is on the increase. Large commercial corporations have set up leisure facilities mainly for profit. Some large business organizations, shopping stores and complexes have provided complimentary leisure facilities for their customers and communities in the area.

Academic interest in leisure involved the preparation of leisure professionals and coaches who actually train people in the use of leisure facilities. It also extends to studying questions relating to physical fitness, counseling and advice. So, leisure has many implications and becoming a focus of interest and investigation.

Driver (1996), however, his study of Benefits of Leisure showed that, all leisure uses and programs are not inherently good, some may be used for morally

unsound and socially harmful purposes. Nash (1953) has devised a hierarchy of leisure values ranging from creativity as being the highest value to criminality as the lowest. Therefore, leisure planning and organization should be selective and related to the culture and value systems of a country.

1.3 Technological Revolution and Leisure

The twentieth century marked the dawn of what has been called the post-industrial, technological revolution and the information era. The use of new technologies has made dramatic impact upon peoples' social conditions, health and welfare, family life, care of the child, care of the elderly, education and employment.

Health has become one of the most sensitive areas of concern of people through the world. Modern life and work are full of stress and strains generated by the demands of technological changes. Processed and refrigerated foods have replaced fresh natural foods and have become health risks. Smoking, drinking and drug taking have become widespread addictions and large sections of populations suffer from ill-health and life-threatening diseases. HIV and AIDS are of the public concern and have brought great sufferings to individuals and families (Wilkinson, 1989).

Even more serious is the deterioration of social health of the young and the old. Teen pregnancies increase as young people search for excitement and gratification and the void for love-and-belonging continues (Edginton Jordan, DeGraaf and Edginton, 1995).

For all these negative side-effects and trends of the technological and information eras, the importance of leisure has become crucial to all sections of people, men and women and the young the and old. Therefore the concept of leisure for the contemporary society has undergone fundamental changes. Whereas, previous eras, including the industrial era, saw leisure for its instrumental value, leisure now is being seen as an end in itself and, desirable for all people, in all situations. As Kelly has highlighted,

We have moved from a society harnessed by a work ethic that demanded toil fourteen to sixteen hours per day, six days a week, to one in which the average industrial worker works a five-day, less-than-forty-hour work week. Meanwhile, attitudes towards play and leisure –once seen as frivolous, non-essential activities, or at best, amusements or diversions—have changed so that leisure is viewed as a central focus in life that helps individuals define their self-concept.

At the same time that expectations for material comfort and security have risen so that refrigerators, automatic washers and automobiles have come to be regarded as necessities, expectations for leisure appear to be rising as well. New housing developments are advertised featuring opportunities for recreation such as swimming pools, tennis courts, and game rooms that are available to owners and renters. Apartment complexes, especially for young singles and couples and the retired, are around the pool, the party room, and sauna. (Kelly,1990, p. 25).

Leisure may be viewed as purchased opportunities and possessions as well as non-materialistic values. Modern societies seem to be shifting from a focus on production to a multi-dimensioned valuing of the quality of life. Within this shift, leisure is emerging as a significant dimension of overall values and priorities of those who are moving toward the twenty-first century. As Kelly (1990) asserts:

Paradoxically, this rise in leisure expectations may be combined with a loss of time for non-obligated activity...Pressures on the daily and weekly schedule from work, household, and family may be increasing, especially for the greatly increased number of employed women.

In fact, 'time famine' is considered to be the common complaint of people in technologically advanced countries like Britain, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and the United States. It is being visualized that quality time will become 'a status symbol or luxury item as Americans continue to feel overworked and overwhelmed. Also, new standards or lack of resources often push people to do more in less actual time.' (Edginton, Jordan, DeGraaf and Edginton, 1995, p.19-27).

But it is also becoming increasingly possible for most people to stagger time. People can now work in varying hours. Holidays and weekends could be so planned that people could have frequent shorter breaks to enjoy leisure more often and continuously.

1.4 Importance of Leisure

Leisure today is understood as a proactive urge to create one's inner world. Therefore, today's generation considers leisure as something vital for their growth and their identity. Leisure is now considered a right, not a luxury. Under this approach, "leisure experience is a function of one's state of mind, a subjective attitude, an experience that is based on an individual's own perspective, feelings, values and past life experience." (Edginton, Jordan, DeGraaf and Edginton, 1995,p. 22).

This generation has been defined as a 'work hard, play hard' group. They want to have meaningful, creative, fulfilling lifestyles both on and off the job. Fitness activities are common leisure pursuits of this generation. This generation seeks opportunities for continuous growth, personal and physical development, and increased spiritual awareness. Today, people can use leisure to build life satisfaction and to enhance the well-being of individuals; it can serve as a positive force to enhance society and culture as a whole.

In the West, interest on the subject of leisure has gradually become so widespread that leisure is now regularly researched in various Western universities where the quality and range of professional expertise on various aspects of leisure has increased significantly. Kelly (1990) pointed out that there were more than 300 programs for the study of leisure and recreation. In the past, these programs were targeted at those who were to be employed in parks and other recreation services. Now a days leisure programs are included in the education and training of special groups of people who organize leisure activities in places like hospitals, prisons and other residential institutions. The largest increase in enrollment in such programs has been for students who intend to enter recreation businesses. There is also interest among students who wish to know more about the leisure and its uses in present day life. Kelly stresses, "The field (of Leisure and Recreation Education) has expanded so that universities with graduate programs have often been unable to keep up with the demand for able teachers and scholars" (1990, p.320).

In view of the widespread significance of leisure, Murphy (1981) has devised a spiritual concept of leisure in which “ elements of leisure are to be expressed all aspects of human behavior – in work, play, education and other social sphere.

1.5 Benefits of Leisure Participation

Major benefits of leisure participation had lead to improvement in human condition and to social good, have been listed as physiological, health, social, and psychological (Driver, Brown, and Peterson, 1991). Healthy bodies produce healthy minds. Healthy and happy citizens show improved performance at work and create friendly environment around them. Regular exercises such as aerobics, jogging and swimming make the heart strong, reduce cholesterol and increase high-density lipids in the blood stream. Physical exercise builds up muscular strength and endurance. Easy limb movement that begins to weaken with age and physical inactivity results in such ailments as arthritis. Exercises like Yoga and gymnastics help to restore flexibility in the joints. Similarly, weight-bearing exercises help maintain bone strength and reduce bone decalcification and osteoporosis. Well-planned exercises also help reduce body fat and preserve muscles.

Among health benefits participation in regular active leisure activities reduce symptoms of mild or moderate depression and anxiety neuroses by improving self image, social skills, mental and perhaps cognitive functions and a total well-being (Kelly and Godbey, 1992).

Social benefits from participation in leisure activities include inculcation of pride in peoples’ ethnic, community and national identities. These participants spend

much time and money in supporting their national football, cricket, hockey, rugby or baseball teams. Leisure activities also bring together certain groups of people with special needs like the elderly, single parents, children, teenagers and the physically disabled. Those activities provide them with opportunities to enhance their social well-being and reduce their isolation. It is also recorded that systems of social support and companionship contribute to longer, more disease free, and higher quality life (Driver, Brown, and Peterson, 1991).

Psychological benefits of leisure participation enhance self image and sense of personal good than any other category of benefits. Under the 'holistic' approach to leisure, psychologists have described psychological benefits of leisure participation as self-actualisation, self-identity, personal enjoyment, personality growth, mental hygiene, alleviation of mental illness and gaining of spiritual inspiration. (Driver, 1995). The Academy of Leisure Sciences has recorded a much wider field of psychological benefits of leisure. Their list includes perceived sense of freedom, independence and autonomy, enhanced self-competence, improved sense of self-worth/esteem, self-reliance and self confidence, improved leadership skills, better ability to relate to others.

Studies have shown that psychological benefits are real and of immense importance to enhancing their abilities to live adjusted lives and contributing to the good of the society.

1.6 Adolescents and Leisure Participation

Adolescence known as the “teenage” years that covers roughly from 12 to 18. Like other stages of human life, adolescence has some basic needs that must be met to enable them to grow into healthy and positive adults. Adolescents want independence, autonomy and recognition. They need positive social interaction with adults and to be meaningfully involved in family, school and the community. They need a creative self-expression and a sense of competence, achievement and control. In addition, they need plenty of physical activity, free time for leisure and opportunities to have fun and socialize with their peers. Among their own age groups, they want to communicate and exchange views on things specific to their own age such as friendship, love, marriage, children and other life issues.

Of particular interest with regard to adolescents and leisure is the learning outcome of leisure participation. Educational psychologists have indicated seven possible such outcome, they are behavior change and skill learning, direct visual memory, information (factual) learning, concept learning, schemata learning, meta-cognition learning, and attitude and value learning. (Driver, Brown, and Peterson, 1991).

Leisure activities involve learning both attitudes and values. Personal histories of many participants in picnicking, camping and wilderness experiences reveal clear indications of inculcation of attitudes and knowledge about nature (Driver, Brown, and Peterson, 1991). Pierce (1980a) in his survey of urban adolescents in the United States, recorded the following types of satisfactions from their leisure activities: intimacy, relaxation, achievement, power, time filling and intellection. The

intellection factor included responses such as “ It was intellectually stimulating”. “It enlivened my mind” and “I learned something new”.

Beard and Ragheb (1980) developed a leisure satisfaction scale designed to measure the extent to which individuals perceived that certain personal needs were met or satisfied through participation in leisure activities. The scale assessed six types of leisure outcomes. These are psychological, educational, social, relaxation, psychological, and aesthetic. Students rated relaxation outcomes as the most important benefit. Educational benefits, intellectual stimulation and learning about selves and surroundings tied for fourth position in importance with aesthetic benefits.

Like adults, adolescents also participate in leisure activities for social benefits (Duncan,1978; Nills, 1985; Nias, 1977; Ritchie, 1975 and Witt, 1971). Adolescent leisure activities are often organized around friendship or family groups (Cheek and Burch, 1976). The social benefits of adolescent leisure include being with friends, enjoying companionship, making new friends, developing closer friendships and meeting new associates and partners. Studies have also reported that adolescents who became more involved in sports and leisure developed larger networks of friends, received more social support. They were also more likely to socialize with a variety of people and enhance their social standing (Chalip, Thomas and Voyle, 1992).

Shaw, Kleiber and Caldwell (1993) examined the role of leisure activities in adolescents' identity formation. Their findings suggested that socialization with friends had a positive although insignificant effect on male adolescents' identity development. However, for female adolescents, the effect of socialization is significant but negative. Time spent with friends seems to be associated with the lack

of involvement in other activities. Nevertheless, the study by Biddle, Sallis and Cavill (1998) has affirmed that participation in active leisure pursuits enhances social development and identity of young people on the whole. Research has shown that adolescents also obtained physiological, health and psychological benefits from their participation in leisure activities (Corbin and William, 1973).

1.7 Adolescents' Participation in Passive Leisure

In spite of substantial benefits obtained from participation in leisure and the availability of a variety of facilities, studies show that most young people are becoming increasingly passive in their participation in leisure. It appears that more often than not they prefer to be spectators rather than players and they prefer to watch events on television.

It is true that most passive leisure activities such as watching television, listening to music and reading magazines, can generate a sense of pleasure and provide relaxation. They can also provide relief from stress and strengthen relationships of the young with their peers. But they may not be beneficial to their physical health. The 1990 National Commission Report in the USA, stressed that, for their indulgence in passive rather than active leisure activities, the young people have, for the first time in the history of the US, become less healthy and less prepared to take their place in society than their parents. This finding has obvious implications for leisure service organizers who must plan to improve the quality of physical health of the young people.

Similarly, Jennings (1989) has indicated that, because of their idleness and growing indifference to active and healthy leisure activities, the state of social conditions of youths in the US has deteriorated to the extent of 50 % within the last twenty years. Research of Ooms and Herenden (1989) had also stated that, for the same reason, approximately one half of youths aged ten to seventeen were at risk for drug abuse and had become adolescent parents and displayed delinquent behavior.

To add to the concerns over the growing deterioration of physical and mental health among the young in the US, the 1996 study by the Department of Health and Human Services highlighted that the American children and adolescents had not followed satisfactory patterns of physical activity and fitness that would enable them to achieve healthy lifestyles as adults. In fact, this confirmed that the fitness level of American youths had significantly deteriorated over the last 10 to 20 years. This study also stressed that the growing decline in physical activity among the young was a serious nationwide problem as nearly half of the young people living in the USA were not vigorously active in leisure on a regular basis.

According to Chiam (1994), participation in games and sports enables adolescents to develop a healthy mind and body, social skills, discipline, and inculcate the ability to compete as well as to co-operate. These findings of Chiam (1994) were consistent with the findings of Corbin and William (1973), which indicated that physical, psychological and continual overall development was the overall purpose of leisure participation.

1.8 Planning Leisure for Adolescents

Gordon (1976) emphasized that it is in the nature of the adolescents particularly the older ones to seek and promote autonomy from parents while they strengthen the bond between friends. Therefore, leisure planning for the adolescents ought to allow for 'their freedom within institutionalized constraints to increase their self-esteem. Edginton, Jordan, DeGraaf and Edginton, (1995) advises that:

“ programs and facilities should offer adolescents a safe place to hang out, places where teens can have the opportunity to establish socio-sexual relationships, and desired independence. While leisure programs should offer variety and be sensitive to ongoing teen fads, they need to invest in people who can build a relationship with teens. Many successful programs built on relationships with people teenagers feel they can trust and share confidence, rather than on activities or facilities” (p.147).

Therefore, it may be stated that to promoting leisure activities and provide of facilities for participation of school adolescents, are important means of ensuring their overall well-being. This is especially important fact that school adolescents have 'competing uses of time that interfere with their use of available recreational opportunity' (Willits and Willits, 1986). Hence school leisure planners and physical education teachers must devise well-integrated and comprehensive program of work and leisure within the school curricula.

1.9 Constraints of Leisure

As it is crucial for the authorities concern about the provision and management of leisure services, it is important to understand the range of constraints that prevent individuals from benefiting from their leisure participation. A number of

authors have referred to described hindrances to leisure participation as barriers rather than constraints. The term barrier however, denotes those factors that intervene between the preference for an activity and participation in it (Crawford and Godbey, 1987). Constraints, on the other hand, are not considered to be absolute: they can potentially be overcome or reduced while barriers inhibit participation. Also, it has been widely considered that all constraints are reasons but not all reasons are constraints (Henderson, Stalnaker, and Taylor 1988).

According to Jackson (1991), constraints could be *antecedent constraints* which may be beliefs or socially imposed gender roles that may be seen to work against one's preference in participation. They could also be *intervening constraints* that may come between a person's preferred activity and his/her actual participation in (Edginton Jordan, DeGraaf and Edginton, 1995. p.22-23). Age, gender, education, income level of parents, type of household, size of household and length of residence in a locality may reveal differences in constraints to participation.

Searl and Jackson (1985) studied non-participation and constraints to participation in leisure activities and found that work commitments, family commitments and lack of opportunities were the major constraints to participation. Coleman (1992) also suggested that adults could play an important part in adolescent's sports and leisure activities.

1.10 Desire for Leisure

A desire has been defined as a strong feeling that a person may have toward an object, a person or an activity. As defined, desire appears to be a very subjective

inclination which entails freedom of choice. Leisure and participation in leisure are also considered to depend upon freedom of choice. (Godbey and Parker, 1976. p.175). The presence of the desire for participation in leisure itself becomes a strong motivation for participation in leisure. Studies stress that, among the adolescents, the desire to participate in leisure is an important need. (William,1984). Quoting Mueller and Mitchell (1960. p.5), William, asserts that “ for the intramural sports program, all the students need is the desire to participate; the degree of skill is the least important prerequisite”.

Obviously the desire for participation in leisure is closely related to the benefits that the participants derive from it. But, desire for leisure participation may or may not be offset by constraints to leisure. In his study on “*Variations in the Desire to Begin a Leisure Activity: Evidence of Antecedent Constraints*”, Jackson (1990) examined the assumptions (1) that only two meaningful groups of non-participants exist, those who do not wish to participate, and those who do wish to participate but for whom a constraint or a combination of constraints precludes participation; (2) that lack of interest is the only factor which explains the lack of desire among the former group. Jackson concluded that constraints on leisure negatively affected participation by intervening between desire or preferences and participation.

But Jackson also raises the issue that it is assumed that those people who do not express the desire to participate in leisure activities are not affected by constraints on their leisure.

1.11 Leisure Problems of Libyan Adolescents

Libya like other Arab States decided to modernize itself quickly. Borrowing the latest technologies and institutions of the Western countries became necessary. Keen to develop its leisure and sports program among its people and particularly among the school adolescents, the country decided to emulate some of the latest leisure concepts and services prevalent in developed Western countries. Its National Policy on Sports, designed in the wake of the 1969 Great Peoples' Democratic Revolution, declared that sports in Libya should be for the masses and not purely for professional sportsmen. It was also a part of the national policy to promote public awareness on national and international current affairs and to give the public a wider access to information media. Therefore, the country imported new information technologies such as computers, computer games, televisions, satellite discs and videos for use in homes and at public places. As a consequence, television viewing became widespread in homes and public places like cafes, restaurants and others. It soon began to attract large-scale public participation in television viewing for a variety of program including sports.

As in the developed countries, television also makes a strong impact upon the leisure habits of school-going adolescents who spent more time watching television than taking part in active leisure activities. Most of the programs were imported either from neighboring Arab countries like Egypt, Jordan Syria or from European countries and the United States of America. Rarely are the program locally produced. Therefore television programs and particularly those that are related to leisure, do not reflect the Libyan culture. Families are particularly worried about the consequences

of young school adolescents in listening to music and viewing television. Like parents everywhere else, they are keen for school-going adolescents to devote their extra time to their studies and obtain the educational and professional qualifications. Debates take place, almost daily, on television, radio and in newspapers on the role of schools in Libya. Some support the principle that schools must help adolescents devote their full attention to studies and prepare themselves thoroughly for their examinations and career development. Others argue equally strongly that schools ought to prepare adolescents for their life including physical and aesthetic development through participation in sports and extra-curricular activities. Also the technology transfer has given rise to cultural conflicts in society and among educators, community leaders and the elders.

Debates also take place about the question of participation of the Libyan female adolescents in different kinds of sports, extra-curricular and leisure activities. Traditionally, the parents and people at large in Libya have been so conditioned that they do not willingly and wholeheartedly permit young female adolescents to spend time, in the way that their Western counterparts do, in outdoor leisure activities. For both boys and girls, parents expect them to prepare for life and their future family roles that imply that they should spend more time and effort at studies. Parental and societal pressures and objections constitute family-related constraints.

1.12 Theoretical Framework of the Study

The theory of this study comprises three major leisure concepts which are frequently investigated in previous leisure and recreation participation research: (a) benefits of leisure participation (Kelly, 1990; Edginton, Jordan, DeGraaf and

Edginton, 1995; Driver, 1996); (b) constraints of leisure participation (Searle and Jackson, 1985 and (c) desire for participation in leisure activities (Jackson, 1990). The studies have investigated only one of these concepts and their implications. But this study will investigate all three variables and their relation to participation in leisure activities. Therefore, the model in this study is based on the relationship among the following three elements:

- i) perceptions of leisure benefits i.e. what motivates adolescents to participate in leisure activities;
- ii) constraints to leisure participation i.e. what prevents adolescents from participating in leisure activities, and;
- iii) desire for leisure participation i.e. do adolescents have a strong desire for taking part in leisure activities.
- iv) Relationship of these three elements (desire, benefits and constraints) to participation in leisure activities.

The first relationship underlying the model (Figure1) is that desire for participation, actual participation in leisure activities and perceptions of leisure benefits of leisure are directly related. Adolescents are hypothesized to participate in a leisure activity because they have a desire for it and because the activity contains inherent benefits leading to special physical, social or intellectual attainments. Thus the more the adolescents perceive the benefits of participating in an activity the more they participate in it. Also, the greater the desire for leisure the greater the participation in leisure activities in spite of any constraints that may be associated with participation in leisure. As an example if young or old people who are

recommended to participate in specific leisure activities as an effective solution to some physiological and health problems and then will be keen to participate in such activities, regardless of constraints. In the same way, the desire for participation in active sport, motivates them to further participate in these activities. Also, the desire for reading newspapers and magazines, watching television or listening to radio related to sports can influence them to gain more information about that particular active leisure activity and lead to greater participation. It follows that as one's desire for participation in a leisure activity grows it leads one to participate more and derive more benefits from participation in leisure activity.

The second relationship in the theory is that the constraints that adolescents perceive to exist may reduce their actual participation in a desired leisure activity and lead to reduced participation or non-participation. However, adolescents may participate in leisure activities in spite of the constraints because of their desire and perception of benefits of participation in leisure activities. Therefore, according to the theoretical model, the relationship between constraints and desire for leisure and between constraints and actual participation is weak.

Based on the above theoretical model, the study investigates the relationship of the perceptions of Libyan school adolescents' desires for leisure; the benefits accruing from participation in those leisure activities; and family, school-related and personal constraints that prevent their participation in leisure activities. It also investigates gender and SES with relation to adolescents' perceptions of benefits and constraints of leisure and their actual participation in leisure activities.

Theoretical Model of the Study

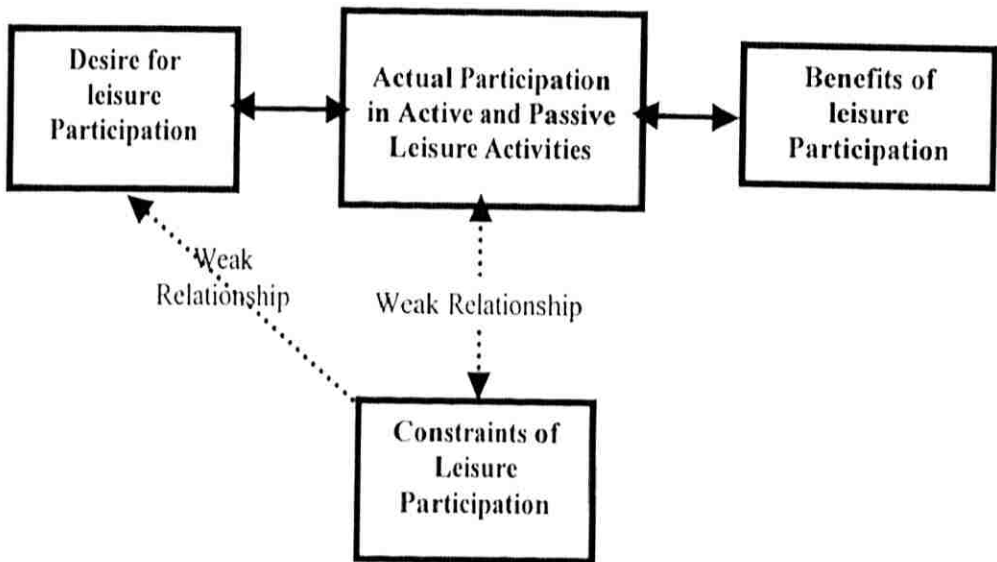


Figure (1); Relationship between desire for leisure, benefits of leisure, constraints of leisure and actual participation in active or passive leisure activities

1.13 Statement of the Problem

This study is concerned with the relationship between Libyan school adolescents' leisure perceptions and their participation in leisure activities. It aims to investigate the relationship that exists between adolescents' perception of constraints and benefits of leisure and their desire and actual participation in leisure activities. It also aims to study the differences among gender, grade levels and SES in adolescents' leisure perception and participation. The study is divided into the following sections:

- i) The relationship between school adolescents' desire for leisure and their actual participation in leisure activities.
- ii) The relationship between school adolescents' perceived benefits of leisure and their actual participation in leisure activities.
- iii) The relationship between school adolescents' perceived constraints of leisure and their actual participation in leisure activities.
- iv) The relationship among school adolescents' gender, grade levels and SES and their desire for leisure, their actual participation in leisure activities and their perceptions of constraints of leisure.
- v) The relationship among school adolescents' gender and SES and their perceptions of benefits of leisure activities.

1.14 Major Research questions

On the basis of what this study attempts to investigate four research questions are posed:

- (a) What are the relationships among adolescents' desire for participation in leisure, their perceptions of benefits and constraints of leisure and their actual participation in active and passive leisure activities?
- (b) Do school adolescent boys and girls differ significantly in (1) the actual participation in active and passive leisure activities and (2) the desire for participation in leisure activities?
- (c) Do school adolescent boys and girls differ significantly in (1) the perceptions of school, family and personal constraints and (2) the perceptions of physical, psychological, social and learning benefits of leisure?
- (d) Do Forms 1, 2 and 3 students differ significantly in (1) the actual participation in active and passive leisure activities, (2) the desire for participation, (3) the perceptions of school, family and personal constraints of leisure?

1.15 Definition of Terms

Adolescence: Adolescence is defined by chronological age, from 12 to 18 years (Coleman, and Adamson, 1992; Edginton, Jordan, DeGraaf and Edginton, 1995). This study focuses on high school adolescents (age from 15 to 18 years)

categorized into the following three grade levels according to the Libyan Educational system:

- (a) Form 1 Students of ages 15 to 16, are students in the first year of high schools;
- (b) Form 2 Students of ages 16 to 17 are second year students in high schools;
- (c) Form 3 Students of age 17 to 18 are Form 3 Students are in the third and final year of high schools.

Leisure: Although the work of various researchers on leisure studies has led to a better understanding of the theories of leisure, there are still no precise definitions of leisure among leisure professionals and researchers, Researchers have accepted three basic approaches to defining the concept of leisure. These three approaches are (a) the time approach, (b) the activity approach and (c) the experience approach.

The time approach defines leisure as the spare or free time. It is the time left after other commitments and obligations such as school and social obligations have been fulfilled. Generally speaking the activity approach defines leisure as non-work activity in which people engage during their free time. The experience approach defines leisure as the satisfaction of inner feelings that is derived from an activity – such as benefits, values and sense of meanings which gained from participation (Edginton, Jordan, DeGraaf and Edginton, 1995; Kelly,1990)

In this study, leisure refers to any form of active or passive activity (in school and out of school) which school adolescents participate by their free choice. The activity is not related to their academic work or family-related responsibilities.

Participation is engagement in a leisure activity or activities, individually or in a group.

Active leisure participation (ALP) is engagement in any physical activity, vigorous or non-vigorous in which adolescents take part during their free time. These include sports, picnicking, scouting, and gardening.

Passive leisure participation (PLP) refers to any audio-visual activities, printed media activities and social activities in which adolescents engage during their free time. Among them are watching sports and games, watching television, reading newspaper, magazines, listening to music, spending time with family or friends.

Constraints of leisure participation (CON): This study used the definition of Ellis and Rademacher. They have defined constraint of leisure as " any factor which precludes or limits an individual's frequency, intensity, duration, or quality of participation in recreation activities"(1986, p.33).

In this study, constraints of leisure are categorized as school, family and personal constraints.

School constraints (SCHOLCON)) refer to such school obligations that adolescents perceive to prevent them from participating in leisure activities. These include school assignments, pressure for preparation of examination and fear of interference to academic study.

Family constraints (FAMCON) refer to family responsibilities or chores which adolescents perceive to inhibit their participation in leisure activities. These are family restrictions and parental discouragement of adolescents from participation in leisure activities..

Personal constraints (PERCON) refer to personal reasons that adolescents perceive to inhibit their participation in leisure activities. These includes physical or psychological illness, lack of desire for and interest in leisure participation, lack of time, lack of experience and skills, and some religious beliefs.

Benefits of leisure participation (BEN) The word “benefit” refers to any change that is viewed to be advantageous – an improvement in condition, or a gain to an individual or a group, or to another entity (Brown 1984 and Driver and Peterson 1986).

In this study, “benefits” refer to adolescent’s perception of advantages of leisure in improving their physical, social, psychological and learning conditions as a result of their participation in leisure activities, that is to say, these activities contribute to their growth and development as individuals and as members of society.

Desire for leisure participation (DLP) A desire for some thing refers to a strong feeling that one may have toward an object, or an activity. In this study, the desire for leisure participation (DLP) refers to strong, positive feelings that school adolescents may have towards taking part in a leisure activity or activities.

Professional fathers in the Libyan context refer to those fathers who are university graduates or whose occupation have higher professional status such as

accountants, bank managers, doctors, engineers, schoolteachers, lecturers and educational administrators belonging to this group.

Non-professional fathers in the Libyan context are those fathers who have lower academic qualifications or technical and vocational skills and their occupation low in status. Example are technicians, clerical employees, skilled and unskilled worker.

1.16 Significance of the Study

Developed Western countries, especially the English-speaking countries, the United States, Canada and Great Britain, have historically evolved sophisticated ideas, technologies and values relating to work and leisure that are also considered useful and important for the developing countries like Libya. But, in spite of their apparent success in the Western social order, not all aspects of the Western model of leisure would be acceptable to Libyan people.

Libya has not been able to create its own leisure models that can suit culture and value systems. Therefore, Libya must operate the modern western leisure systems for the benefit of its people and towards their perfection and eventual integration within its own society in spite of some initial or continuing obstacles and cultural constraints. As Godbey and Jung argue, “the leisure styles of modern nations, particularly North America, have about them series of qualities which are widely desired among developing nations. The sense of individual freedom, mobility, style, and relative independence from church, state, and family are widely admired. Additionally, the opportunity to consume vast amounts of leisure facilities during

leisure time is not only admired but also emulated whenever possible...” (Driver, Brown, and Peterson, 1991.p.43).

Though this is not the main purpose the study, it will be significant in making the Libyan policy makers and academicians to become involved in the understanding of how Libyan school adolescents perceive the benefits and constraints of leisure and what type of leisure activities that they participate in, or have a desire to participate. The findings of this study are important for Libyan authorities to reflect and formulate sound policies in order to realize the fundamental aims of leisure today. For example, the study highlights the increased exposure of the Libyan adolescents participation in passive leisure activities and shows how they are becoming addicted to passive leisure participation. Their persistence in this habit is an indication of their ‘easy’ choice for passive leisure instead of participation in active physical leisure activities.

The findings of the study also highlight the delicate situation of female adolescents who have special personal, family and school constraints of leisure participation. This study would stress the importance of encouraging female adolescents to participate more in leisure activities through recruiting more female PE teachers to train them for providing proper leisure activities for their physical, psychological and social health, so that they play their various adult roles in the society as good wives, good mothers and good citizens.

Similarly, through the specific variables that this study is investigating such as the desire for participation in leisure among adolescents, the perceived benefits and constraints of leisure are also essentially those that have been formulated from the

inculcate among the Libyan adolescents the habits of active participation in the proper leisure activities fitness culture and to fulfill the National fitness ideals as laid down in the constitution and in the National Objectives for Public Leisure and Sports.

The study could also inspire the Research Departments of various Libyan universities to engage in research on leisure studies and to make it a permanent subject of study. Being the first study of its kind, it has the significance to be a trendsetter in innovative thinking in the field of leisure and on the question of inventing of appropriate leisure services according to the Libyan culture and norms. Research and innovations in this respect would go a long way to promote the habits of participation among school adolescents in various leisure activities. The study will also contribute in actualizing the declared policies of the Libyan government on making sports and fitness culture popular among adolescents true to the national motto of "Sports for the masses".

1.17 Limitations of the study

The following factors limit the findings of the study:

- (1) Since students from Tripoli high schools were chosen as participants in the survey, and since high schools from the rural areas as well as technical and vocational high schools were not included, the results cannot be generalized to all high schools in the country.
- (2) School adolescents' leisure activities are those activities in which Libyan school adolescents usually participate, in school and out of school.

(3) Leisure activities are classified into active and passive leisure activities but they are not representative of all the types of active and passive leisure activities.

(4) Since the subjects of the study are school male and female adolescents, the selected constraint variables are limited to only school, family and personal constraints.

The selected benefit variables include physical, social, psychological and learning benefits that are generally discussed in various leisure studies and theories of adolescent's needs and development. They do not apply to other benefits that may be political, economic, ideological and religious.

Finally, this study is limited only to investigate adolescents' perceptions of benefits and constraints for leisure of the Libyan school adolescents, and also how these variables are related to age, gender, grade levels and SES variables. There are other aspects of leisure participation by the Libyan adolescents which ought to be examined by future studies such using facilities of leisure, with whom and where adolescents spent more time for leisure, days of the week adolescents spent more time in leisure and the average number of hours spent in active and passive leisure activities.