

## THE LEISURE AND SPORT PARTICIPATION PATTERNS OF HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS IN POTCHEFSTROOM

Jaco FOURIE, Elmarie SLABBERT & Melville SAAYMAN

*Institute for Tourism, Wildlife Economics & Leisure Studies, North West University,  
Potchefstroom, Republic of South Africa*

### ABSTRACT

*Leisure and sport activities are thought to be developmentally important because it provides opportunities for skill development and the formation of social relationships during adolescence. Added to this the number and variety of leisure and sport activities create ample opportunities for participation. However, it became evident that leisure behaviour of adolescents today is not always constructive or positive and that the learners are becoming more passive. This passivity is influenced by various factors such as lack of time for leisure, too much exposure to technological means of spending leisure time, changing lifestyles and other influences. Leisure can be seen as an activity chosen in relative freedom for its qualities of satisfaction, whereas sport can be seen as organised activities focused on physical effort with some relative measurement of outcomes. The aim of this article is therefore to determine the leisure and sport participation patterns of high school learners and to indicate differences in preferences for leisure and sport activities based on socio-demographic variables. A survey was conducted at six high schools in Potchefstroom resulting in 1 036 questionnaires being used for statistical analysis. The results revealed that high school learners experience boredom in Potchefstroom, even though they have little time available per week for participation in leisure activities. When participating in leisure activities, they prefer socialising with friends, watching television or spending time on the computer. In terms of sport, respondents prefer typical school sports such as athletics, soccer and hockey. It was also noted that a large proportion of the learners visit a gymnasium. Correlations were determined between gender and sport, gender and leisure, race and sport, as well as race and leisure. It was noted that rugby and soccer were more associated with males. Although there were small practical significant differences between gender and leisure activities, it was found that males and females do not necessarily differ in their preferences of leisure activities. Females participated in leisure activities more than males. Soccer was preferred by predominantly black respondents and visits to the gymnasium by predominantly white respondents. Watching television, movies, visiting boys and socialising with friends were preferred by white respondents whereas black respondents enjoyed reading, studying, religious activities and visiting girls as leisure activities.*

**Key words:** Recreation; Leisure; Adolescents; Needs; Behaviour; Correlation analysis

## INTRODUCTION

Research concerning the youth, leisure and recreation has spanned decades and has been approached from sociological, economical, psychological, recreational, physiological and philosophical perspectives (Caldwell *et al.*, 1999; Mahony *et al.*, 2004). More extensive educational participation (Furlong & Cartmel, 1997), lifecycle changes and cultural influences have led to changes in lifestyle patterns of youth. Adolescents, according to Piko and Vazsnyi (2004) not only have more free time, but also a greater variety of leisure activities from which to choose. Leisure activities play a very important role in forming an identity, providing interaction with peers, well being, health and problem behaviour.

Being an adolescent (between 11 years old and the early twenties) refers to that stage in life where a person is neither a child nor an adult (Edwards & Louw, 1998). High school learners can therefore be considered as adolescents. Willits and Willits (1987) state that adolescence is a unique part of life where young people worry about schoolwork and relationships, they dress differently and listen to contemporary music. Their greatest concern according to Willits and Willits (1987) is their future and purpose in life and they prefer to spend time with friends and to partake in group activities.

Evans and Poole (1991) state that leisure activities among adolescents are diverse and play an important role in the forming of adolescent self-perceptions. However, negative leisure participation can lead to negative behaviour (Trainor *et al.*, 2010) and therefore knowledge concerning leisure participation enables pro-active strategies focusing on positive leisure participation. Therefore, the aim of this article is to determine the leisure and sport participation patterns of high school learners and to indicate differences in preferences for leisure and sport activities based on socio-demographic variables. In order to achieve the latter, the article will be structured as follows: the literature review follows the introduction; thereafter the methodology will be explained; the results and implications of the study follow; and where after conclusions will be drawn.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

According to statistics provided by the Medical Research Council (*Die Burger*, 2004), a quarter of all substance-abusing patients in South Africa are younger than 20 years. Results from a survey completed in the United States (US) in 2000, indicate that children and adolescents between the ages of two and 17 years spend an average of five hours and 29 minutes on all media combined (including music and reading) per day (Gillespie, 2002). The distinctive US adolescent watches an average of three hours of television per day (Hampl *et al.*, 2004). This situation is very similar to that of the youth in South Africa (Fourie, 2006). Hampl *et al.* (2004) purports that most media tools have a negative influence on adolescents regarding their impressions of bodyweight, sex appeal and food and beverage consumption. At least three quarters of adolescents eat fast food once or more times a week (Anon, 2004) and obesity, from an early age, is increasingly becoming a problem worldwide (Troiano & Flegal, 1998; Lajunen *et al.*, 2009). Added to this is the fact that most schools do not offer physical education as they formerly were required to do. This contributes to a lack of physical exercise and to the development of unhealthy lifestyles. There is also an increase in

aggressiveness that researchers ascribe to a lack of activities that could serve as an outlet for children's frustrations (Piko & Vazsnyi, 2004).

Caldwell (2005) state that practitioners and scientists consider positive usage of leisure to be completely beneficial. Conversely, today greater consideration is given to the fact that leisure can be negative as well. Caldwell (2005) further explains that negative leisure patterns can be influenced by negative experiences (for example, boredom, over scheduling, loneliness and leisure addiction) and negative behaviour (for example, substance abuse and risky sexual behaviour). Leisure serves as a central life force that the individual can shape to have either positive or negative consequences (Edgington *et al.*, 2006). Sport and recreation, on the other hand, can be seen as organised activities focused on physical effort with some relative measurement of outcomes. For some individuals, sport is considered leisure (passive or active), while for others it is work, education and development (Edgington *et al.*, 2006).

According to Caldwell *et al.* (1999: 1) leisure boredom is a 'complex phenomenon' and is defined as "the subjective perception that available leisure experiences are not sufficient to instrumentally satisfy needs for optimal arousal" (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990: 4). This may be the main reason for negative leisure experiences and behaviour, but is definitely not the only one. Other significant causes can be due to pressure from peers, low self-esteem, broken families and trauma. Gordon and Caltabiano (1996) note that leisure boredom and dissatisfaction have been implicated in substance abuse.

Positive leisure behaviour is influenced and encouraged by the availability of leisure activities and facilities (Edgington *et al.*, 1998). It is therefore important that there are a sufficient variety of activities and facilities available in a city such as Potchefstroom in order to satisfy the needs of various groups (Fourie, 2006). Saayman (1993) and Mogajane (2005) indicated the following problem areas in the provision of sport and recreation in South Africa:

- Lack of transport to events and facilities;
- Lack of leisure time;
- Safety and security;
- Lack of trained staff to present activities and to manage facilities;
- The differences in cultural preferences;
- Lack of facilities;
- Vandalism and lack of proper maintenance of facilities; and
- Lack of finances.

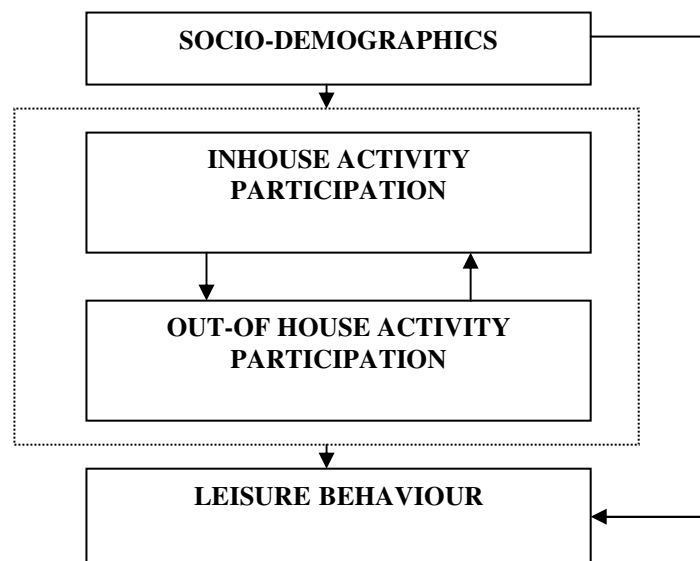
Therefore, according to Edgington *et al.* (1998) the social, cultural and individual context in which adolescents live have an enormous influence on them in terms of how they spend their leisure time. Edgington *et al.* (1998) note that the foundation of leisure behaviour is both intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation means that the behaviour is based on the enjoyment of the behaviour itself, rather than relying on or requiring external reinforcement. Hence, people engage in leisure of their own choice. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation refers to the desire or drive to perform in order to gain external rewards from the leisure activity.

According to Murphy *et al.* (1991) there are different leisure behaviour dimensions, such as motives, individual differences, social relationships and attitudes and beliefs. This may lead

to the fact that individuals pursue leisure for different reasons and these reasons may vary from person to person, depending on each person's unique personality, lifestyle, goals and needs. Many participants pursue leisure primarily for fun and enjoyment. Leisure programmes can help the youth in meeting developmental needs such as a need for positive social interaction, safety, belonging, creative expression, physical activity, a sense of competence and a sense of individualism (Edginton *et al.*, 2006).

Floyd *et al.* (1994) state that race and ethnicity also influence the leisure preferences of people. Therefore, the socio-demographics (gender, race, language, etc.) of participants influence leisure behaviour. Different cultures prefer different leisure and recreation activities. South Africa is diverse in culture and race and this diversity can influence leisure behaviour and motivation as an external driving force (Lumsdon, 1997; Page *et al.*, 2001). Thus, research concerning the leisure participation patterns of different cultures is important. Murphy *et al.* (1991) state that leisure behaviour is a complex phenomenon; a dynamic, fluid, on-going process that changes continually amongst adolescents, both for peer groups, as well as for individuals.

In summation, Lu and Pas (1999) state that a combination of socio-demographic determinants play a role in leisure behaviour. The following model (Figure 1) can assist in conceptualising a framework in order to determine leisure needs and preferences. The model makes provision for in-house and out-of house activity participation and the impact thereof on leisure behaviour. The model is also supported by numerous studies (reflected in Table 1), indicating how different people, countries and cultures participate in different activities. The relevance of this is that one approach to sport and recreation provision could address everybody's needs.



**FIGURE 1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND LEISURE BEHAVIOUR MODEL**

**Source:** Adapted from Lu and Pas (1999)

A literature review on leisure needs and leisure behaviour research conducted in South Africa revealed the following publications as indicated in Table 1.

**TABLE 1: PREVIOUS STUDIES WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Title and purpose of the study</b>
HRSC (1982)	<i>National survey of sport and recreation in South Africa.</i> The first and the only national survey conducted on sport and recreation needs and provision in the country. It was found that adults staying in cities do not participate in sport due to a lack of time and facilities.
Scholtz <i>et al.</i> (1989)	<i>The need for a sport and a recreation centre for the Nelspruit region</i> A needs assessment study was done for Nelspruit City Council for a sport and recreation centre. The results showed that there was an immense need for a sport and recreation centre.
Scholtz (1989)	<i>The sport and recreation participation and needs of Soweto</i> This study aimed at listing all the preferred sport activities of the black communities. A need analysis was undertaken regarding the requirements for a Sport and Recreation centre in Soweto.
Scholtz <i>et al.</i> (1990)	<i>The provision of leisure services and resources for Verwoerdburg</i> The aim of this study was to determine the sport and leisure needs of the residents of Verwoerdburg. It was, however, found that there was a shortage of information on how to provide the needs of the residents and that more studies similar to this one need to be conducted.
Hattingh (1990)	<i>Ontspanningsfasiliteit vir swartes: Behoeftes en voorsiening / Leisure facilities for black people: Needs and provision</i> This study demonstrated that participation in recreation is influenced by various factors.
Pistorius (1990)	<i>Rekreasievoorsiening vir swart werknemers: 'n Behoeftebepaling / Recreation provision for black employees: A needs analysis.</i> The study determined that the availability and accessibility of facilities could inhibit participation. It was also found that television is the favourite recreation pastime, followed by church activities.
Wilson (1992)	<i>Sport, recreation and tourism in South Africa: Preferences and participation patterns</i> This study indicated that community members participate in activities focused on culture, and that participation in recreation led to an improved quality of life. Wilson indicated that culture or ethnical differences play a role in sport and recreation choices.
De Man (1992)	<i>Rekreasie en sport voorkeure van swartmense in die Suid-Oranje Vrystaat / Recreation and sport preferences of black people in the Southern Orange Free State</i> The aim of this study was to plan recreation and sports activities as well as facilities according to identified preferences.
Kohler (1992)	<i>Sport, recreation and tourism in South Africa: A review of theory, demography and patterns of preferences and participation</i> This study indicated that people want to participate in recreation activities close to home due to mobility and safety.
Scholtz <i>et al.</i> (1992)	<i>A strategic plan for the provision of leisure services and resources for Randburg</i> The focus of this study was to develop a strategic plan to provide leisure services and resources to the community of Randburg. It was therefore necessary first to identify leisure services and resources that answered to the needs of the community and to develop a varied leisure program for the entire Randburg community.
Scholtz <i>et al.</i> (1993)	<i>A strategic plan for the provision of leisure services and resources for Potchefstroom</i> A strategic plan for the provision of leisure services and resources was developed for Potchefstroom.
Scholtz (1993)	<i>Leisure preferences and needs of South Africans between 15 and 30 years of age</i> The aim of this study was to investigate and analyse the sport and recreation preferences and needs of South Africans in the identified age groups.

Saayman (1993)	<i>Rekreasiebestuur in swart plaaslike owerhede/ Recreation management in black local municipalities</i> A comprehensive analysis of recreation services in South Africa was conducted in order to identify areas that need attention.
Saayman (1994)	<i>A strategic plan for the provision of leisure services and resources for Klerksdorp</i> A plan was developed for Klerksdorp to implement reconstruction and to determine objectives and action steps regarding better facilities and the implementation of the plan.
Wessels (1995)	<i>Leisure needs of young people in Pietersburg</i> This study aimed to determine the current, as well as latent, patterns of leisure participation and the demand of youths in Pietersburg. It also focused on the market strategies and leisure products or services of the Department of Parks, Sport and Recreation.
Scholtz <i>et al.</i> (1995)	<i>Sport and recreation provision for Promosa</i> This extended study focused on gathering scientific data regarding the sport and recreation needs of Promosa with exceptional focus on the youth population. A development plan was compiled for systematic implementation.
Saayman & Van den Berg (1995)	<i>Sport and leisure provision for the township of Mohadin</i> This study aimed at identifying the sport and recreation needs of the Mohadin community and the specifically people between the ages of 12 and 19 years old.
Saayman & Muller (1996)	<i>Sport and recreation needs and preferences for the community of Reitz/Pestana</i> It was the focus of this study to obtain scientific information regarding the sport and recreation preferences and needs of the community members in Reitz/Pestana.
Scholtz (1997)	<i>Gross list of leisure activities</i> The purpose of this study was to identify the leisure activities people preferred and in which they participated.
Meyer (1997)	<i>Recreation provision in the North West Province</i> This study aimed to determine the role of local government in providing Parks and Recreation services, as well as identifying leakages to improve the current provisioning systems of Parks and Recreation in the North West Province.
Mogajane (2005)	<i>Leisure and tourist behaviour in rural areas in North West Province</i> This study focused on determining the ways in which the accessibility of leisure and tourist behaviour patterns can be improved to ultimately improve the quality of life of people in rural communities in the North West Province
Wegner <i>et al.</i> (2006)	<i>Leisure boredom and substance use among high school students in South Africa</i> This study aimed to determine whether leisure boredom is a predictor of high school dropout among high school students in Cape Town (South Africa).

The majority of the studies summarised in Table 1 concluded firstly that it is important to determine leisure, recreation and sport needs as this assists in decision-making regarding planning of future developments and improvement of current facilities. Secondly, that needs differ from culture to culture. Thirdly, that needs change over time. Fourthly, that the world is changing at a rapid pace and this affects leisure behaviour. These changes include technological, political, environmental, economical and cultural changes, to name but a few. However, with few exceptions, most of these studies were conducted in the 1980's and 1990's, which may make them irrelevant to the generation of today as needs are changing and are directly influenced by internal and external forces. Finally, these studies also showed that very little has been done to accurately determine the leisure needs of the youth.

Having taken the above in consideration, Mogajane (2005) indicated that sport and recreation provision is also a responsibility of municipalities, schools and sport and recreation departments. However, these organisations cannot provide the leisure needs of a community or its youth if they do not know what the needs are. Therefore, the current research is important as it can assist the local government, private sector or schools in the planning and development of the most appropriate leisure facilities and activities for the youth in

Potchefstroom. This insight can engender more positive, emotional, physical and healthy leisure behaviour patterns in a safe environment that may lead to an increase in the quality of life of adolescents.

## METHOD OF RESEARCH

Quantitative research has been conducted by means of a survey in 2006. There are approximately 5 850 high school learners (Grades 8 to 12) in Potchefstroom, distributed amongst eight high schools that formed part of the sample framework. However, the study only focused on Grade 10 (9%), Grade 11 (67%) and Grade 12 (15%) learners. The sampling procedure was twofold. Firstly, all high schools were approached to determine their willingness to take part in the survey. Six of the eight schools were willing to be part of the research. The selection of the sample members was therefore based on saturation sampling, indicating that sample members (schools) were chosen on the basis of their being readily available. The primary data was gathered by means of questionnaires, distributed by the Life Orientation teachers of Grade 10, 11 and 12 learners as agreed with the headmaster of each school. Questionnaires were only distributed in the Life Orientation classes as it is a compulsory subject. Therefore, the second part of the sampling procedure was also based on saturation sampling, meaning that those learners willing to participate and attending class on the day of distribution were included. The questionnaires were anonymously completed by the learners. Approximately 1 500 questionnaires were distributed amongst participating schools and 1 036 questionnaires were usable for data analysis. This gives a return rate of 69%.

The questionnaire design was based upon a similar questionnaire developed by Scholtz *et al.* (1995). However, changes were made according to the needs and particular purpose of this study. The questionnaire obtained information with regard to the socio-demographic profile (gender, race, age and language) of the respondents, as well as their leisure (boredom) preferences, frequency of participation and sport profiles (preferences and frequency of participation).

The researchers collected the questionnaires at each school after which the data was captured and analysed on the Statistical Package for Social Sciences 14 (SPSS) by Statistical Consultation Service (SCS). The statistics obtained included descriptive statistics focusing on one-way and two-way frequency tables in order to determine correlations between variables.

## RESULTS

The results consist of two sections – a socio-demographic and a leisure profile of respondents, followed by the correlation analysis.

### Section A: Socio-demographic and leisure profile

As shown in Table 2, there was a fair distribution regarding gender, with 52% of respondents being male and 48% being female. Similarly with regard to race, 41% were white and 59% were black respondents. Most of the respondents were 17 years of age, followed by the

second largest group that were 16 years of age. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of the respondents were Afrikaans-speaking followed by 27% Tswana-speaking respondents.

**TABLE 2: THE SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Percent: N = 1036</b>
<b>Gender:</b>	
Male	52%
Female	48%
<b>Race:</b>	
White	41%
Black	59%
<b>Age:</b>	
< 16 years	10%
16 years	20%
17 years	43%
18 years	17%
>18 years	13%
<b>Language:</b>	
Afrikaans	59%
English	6%
Tswana	27%
Other	8%

It is evident from Table 3 that most respondents experienced boredom (63%) and almost unanimously, they would enjoy more things to do (97%). Wegner *et al.* (2006) confirms that boredom among South African adolescents is high. The respondents felt that weekends were fairly interesting (32%), or interesting (34%). Time for leisure seemed to be scarce with 22% having only 3-4 hours free for leisure time and 21% having only a half day available per week. Even though they did not seem to have that much time available for activities they were still bored at times. Concerning leisure activities, respondents preferred socialising with friends (29%), watching television or spending time on the computer (26%). Respondents listened to the radio (73%), watched television (71%) and socialised with friends (54%) on a daily basis. In terms of sport activities, respondents preferred to partake in athletics (43%), followed by soccer (32%) and hockey (31%). However, they visited the gymnasium (68%) and took part in netball (48%), rugby (38%) or tennis (38%) on a daily basis. The results confirmed research conducted by Trainor *et al.* (2010) who indicated that young people appeared to be active in their leisure time and they preferred going to clubs and parties, visiting restaurants, listen to music and playing sport. Activities such as reading did not appear to be so popular although 38% of respondents enjoy reading.



TABLE 3: LEISURE PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS (N=1036)

ATTRIBUTE		%	
<b>Experiencing boredom in Potchefstroom:</b>			
Yes		63%	
No		37%	
<b>Preference for more things to do in Potchefstroom:</b>			
Yes		97%	
No		3%	
<b>Experience of weekends in Potchefstroom:</b>			
Very interesting		18%	
Interesting		34%	
Fairly interesting		32%	
Boring		12%	
Very boring		4%	
<b>Amount of leisure time per week:</b>			
No free time		4%	
More than a day		9%	
One day		11%	
Half day		21%	
Approximately 3-4 hours per week		22%	
Approximately 3 hours per week		18%	
Approximately an hour per week		9%	
Less than an hour per week		6%	
LEISURE PROFILE			
<b>Leisure preferences:</b>		<b>Frequency of participation:</b>	
Socialisation	29%	<b>Almost daily:</b>	
Audio-visual media	26%	Radio	73%
Leisure activities	14%	Television	71%
Going out	11%	Socialisation	54%
Sport	9%	Studying	52%
Art	4%	Reading	38%
Other	7%	<b>Once a week:</b>	
		Religion	53%
		Visiting girls/boys	34%
		Video's	32%
		Movies	31%
SPORT PROFILE			
<b>Sport preferences:</b>		<b>Frequency of participation:</b>	
Athletics	43%	<b>Almost daily:</b>	
Rugby	29%	Gymnasium	68%
Hockey	31%	Rugby	38%
Cricket	28%	Hockey	37%
Soccer	32%	Soccer	37%
Netball	18%	Netball	48%
Swimming	8%	Tennis	38%
Tennis	12%	<b>Once a week:</b>	
Gymnasium	11%	Swimming	38%
Other	33%		

### Section B: Correlation analyses

The purpose of the correlation analyses was to determine the relationships between the different variables by means of two-way frequency tables. The following relationships were determined: between gender and sport; between gender and leisure; between race and sport; and between race and leisure.

In this case, the effect size (importance of the relationship between two variables) is given by  $w = \sqrt{\frac{X^2}{n}}$ , where  $X^2$  is the usual Chi-square statistic for the two-way frequency tables and  $n$  is the sample size. In the current case, a medium effect of  $w = 0.3$  might indicate practical significance and  $w \geq 0.5$  is considered as a large effect and of practical significance.

### Gender correlations

Table 4 shows the relationships between gender and various sport activities. The percentages indicate the level of participation by each gender group according to sport. It is evident that females indicated lower levels of interest in sport activities than males. According to the Phi Coefficient, there was a medium effect between rugby and gender (-0.44) and soccer and gender (-0.47) (highest Phi coefficient), which indicated a practical significance between gender and the identified sport activities. There was a small effect between cricket and gender (-0.34) and between netball and gender (0.35). It is therefore clear that rugby, cricket and soccer were associated with males, while netball was associated with females. These sport codes seem to remain gender specific even though women can participate in rugby, soccer or cricket and males can take part in netball. Previous studies found that boys prefer competitive sport (e.g., soccer and weight-lifting) and girls low intensity sport (e.g., aerobic dance, swimming) (De Man, 1992; Saayman, 1994; Delaney & Lee, 1995; Sallis *et al.*, 1996; Mogajane, 2005). In the current study, however, the females preferred swimming, which contradict most of the previous research.

TABLE 4: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND SPORT

SPORT	MALE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	FEMALE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	PHI COEFFICIENT
Athletics	49%	35%	-0.14
Rugby	<b>49%</b>	8%	<b>-0.44</b>
Hockey	36%	25%	-0.12
Cricket	<b>43%</b>	12%	<b>-0.34</b>
Soccer	<b>54%</b>	9%	<b>-0.47</b>
Netball	0%	<b>23%</b>	<b>0.35</b>
Swimming	6%	3%	0.05
Tennis	6%	9%	0.06
Gymnasium	4%	8%	0.08

The relationship between gender and various leisure activities is recorded in Table 5. The percentages indicate the level of leisure participation by each gender group. According to the Phi Coefficient, there was only a small effect between visiting girls and gender (-0.18) (highest Phi coefficient) and visiting boys (0.12) and gender, as well as listening to the radio and gender (0.11), which might indicate practical significance. It is therefore clear that males and females did not necessarily differ in their preferences of leisure activities. In general, females participated more in leisure activities than males, especially religious activities and socialisation. Respondents were, however, more involved in leisure activities (Table 5) than in sport activities (Table 4).

### Race correlations

Table 6 records the relationship between race and various sport activities. The percentages indicate the level of participation by each race according to sport. According to the Phi Coefficient, there was only a medium effect between soccer and race (0.31) (highest Phi coefficient) and a small effect between visiting the gymnasium and race (-0.20), which might indicate practical significance. Soccer was mostly preferred by black respondents, while visits to the gymnasium were preferred by white respondents.

**TABLE 5: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND LEISURE**

LEISURE	MALE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	FEMALE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	PHI COEFFICIENT
Reading	72%	78%	0.01
Radio	81%	<b>89%</b>	<b>0.11</b>
Television/Computer activities	84%	90%	0.08
Movies	83%	89%	0.08
Parties	80%	80%	0.00
Visiting girls	<b>84%</b>	69%	<b>-0.18</b>
Visiting boys	67%	78%	<b>0.12</b>
Socialising with friends	87%	92%	0.07
Religion	87%	94%	0.07
Hobbies	79%	80%	0.02
Studying	83%	87%	0.06
Night clubs	70%	67%	-0.03
Doing nothing	73%	75%	0.02

The current research therefore supports previous studies conducted by Scholtz *et al.* (1992), Wilson (1992) and Scholtz (1993). White respondents participated more in athletics, hockey, netball and visiting the gymnasium. These findings are similar to results by Saayman (1993). On the other hand, black respondents participated slightly more in rugby, hockey, cricket, soccer and tennis. The latter confirms research by Mogajane (2005).

**TABLE 6: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RACE AND SPORT**

SPORT	WHITE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	BLACK LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	PHI COEFFICIENT
Athletics	47%	37%	-0.01
Rugby	28%	30%	0.02
Hockey	31%	30%	0.00
Cricket	26%	31%	0.06
Soccer	20%	<b>50%</b>	<b>0.31</b>
Netball	13%	9%	-0.05
Swimming	5%	5%	0.01
Tennis	7%	8%	0.02
Gymnasium	<b>10%</b>	0%	<b>-0.20</b>

Table 7 shows the relationship between race and various leisure activities. The percentages indicate the level of participation by each race according to leisure. According to the Phi Coefficient, there was a small effect between doing nothing and race (-0.25) (highest Phi

coefficient) as well as nightclubbing, socialisation and parties and race (-0.22 each respectively) indicating practical significance. There was also a small effect between television (-0.15), religion (-0.15), hobbies (-0.14), studying (-0.13), movies (-0.12), visiting boys (-0.11) and race indicating practical significance. Watching television, movies, visiting boys and socialising with friends were thus preferred by white respondents, whereas black respondents enjoyed reading, studying, religious activities and visiting girls as leisure activities. The latter contradicts research by De Man (1992), Wilson (1992) and Mogajane (2005) who found that television is the most preferred recreation activity by black respondents.

**TABLE 7: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RACE AND LEISURE**

LEISURE	WHITE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	BLACK LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	PHI COEFFICIENT
Reading	72%	79%	0.08
Radio	87%	82%	-0.07
Television/ Computer activities	<b>91%</b>	81%	<b>-0.15</b>
Movies	<b>90%</b>	81%	<b>-0.12</b>
Parties	<b>87%</b>	69%	<b>-0.22</b>
Visiting girls	75%	81%	0.07
Visiting boys	<b>95%</b>	66%	<b>-0.11</b>
Socialising with friends	<b>94%</b>	81%	<b>-0.22</b>
Religion	<b>84%</b>	84%	<b>-0.15</b>
Hobbies	<b>89%</b>	72%	<b>-0.14</b>
Studying	<b>78%</b>	79%	<b>-0.13</b>
Night clubs	<b>83%</b>	57%	<b>-0.22</b>
Doing nothing	<b>83%</b>	61%	<b>-0.25</b>

## IMPLICATIONS

Based on the results of the research, the following implications were identified.

Firstly, the research support the findings of Lu and Pas (1999) who found that a variety of socio-demographic variables determine leisure behaviour. In the case of the youth in Potchefstroom, it was found that gender and race had a profound impact on their needs and leisure behaviour. Sports such as rugby, cricket and soccer were associated with males whilst females participated in netball. However, the current study found no significant differences between gender and leisure activity preferences. Black respondents preferred participation in soccer, cricket and tennis, while white respondents participated in athletics, hockey, netball and visiting the gymnasium. Watching television, movies, visiting boys and socialising with friends were preferred by white respondents, whereas black respondents enjoyed reading, studying, religious activities and visiting girls as leisure activities.

Secondly, compared with previous research, this undertaking also confirmed that there have been changes in leisure and sport behaviour over the past two to three decades. Regarding leisure, there was a greater focus on the use of technology at leisure, on socialising with

friends and in participation in more passive types of activities (e.g., watching television or computer related activities). Sport participation was not exclusive, but still gender specific and more focused on general health and socialisation. Even though respondents participated in both sport and leisure activities, there was a greater demand for leisure than for sport activities. It was interesting to note that respondents also had a wider variety of activities which they participated in compared to more than 20 years ago.

Thirdly, adolescents were experiencing boredom in Potchefstroom and would have liked a greater variety of activities in the city. This was especially the case over weekends. The current research therefore confirms that the youth have a need for organised sport and leisure activities, which was also indicated by Scholtz *et al.* (1995), Wessels (1995) and Mogajane (2005). Therefore, municipalities, schools and recreation departments should take note of these findings and should provide for the leisure needs of the youth of South Africa. Failing to do so could increase negative leisure behaviour and unhealthy lifestyles that influence the well-being of both families and societies. This project supports the view that research of this nature is important for activity planning and for facility development decisions.

Fourthly, the research confirmed that even though adolescents had very little time available for leisure, they regarded leisure as important. It is therefore crucial to provide quality activities in the limited time available to learners. According to Caldwell (2005), provision of quality activities can lead to positive behaviour and reduce the participation in negative activities such as substance abuse, boredom and the like. The lack of time for leisure is confirmed by the research of Scholtz (1989), Hattingh (1990), Pistorius (1990), Scholtz *et al.* (1990) and Mogajane (2005) amongst others. However, it seemed as if learners of today have even less time for leisure. Contributing factors here might be the changed school curriculum and system that allows learners very little time for sport and leisure, as well as the absence or lack of physical education (McKenzie *et al.*, 2000) that formerly contributed to the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

Lastly, socialisation and the use of audio-visual media formed an important part of the learners' daily activities. The media, for example, Facebook, the Internet and SMS messaging can be used to communicate with the youth to make them aware of recreation, leisure and sport opportunities. The media can therefore serve as tools to communicate with the youth.

## CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to determine the leisure and sport needs of high school learners in Potchefstroom. A survey was conducted at six high schools in Potchefstroom. The results revealed differences in the leisure and sport needs of males and females, as well as black and white learners, even though most learners were exposed to all available activities. The results identified the leisure and sports profiles of learners. From this research, it is evident that municipalities, schools and recreation departments need to undertake further research to determine the leisure and sport needs of learners, since these needs are continually changing. The literature review also clearly showed a decline in this type of research which could have a profound impact on the youth of South Africa. Coupled to this, facility providers also need to be aware of changes in aspects of the technology, economic and political

environments that affect how learners use their leisure time. If society do not address these issues, they could have serious consequences for the future of the country.

The results can primarily be used to develop and plan appropriate activities and facilities and secondly, encourage healthy lifestyles through increased participation. It is recommended that this research should be expanded through all secondary school levels and to conduct such research on a regular basis in order to develop a complete framework of leisure and sport needs for the youth of South Africa.

## REFERENCES

- ANON. (2004). Scene from a mall: A study of teens and fast food. *Eating Disorders Review*, 15(4): 4.
- BURGER, DIE. (2004). Ek wéét ek het my kind verloor, p.13, 11 Augustus.
- CALDWELL, L.L. (2005). Leisure and health: Why is leisure therapeutic? *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 33(1): 7-26.
- CALDWELL, L.L.; DARLING, N.; PAYNE, L.L. & DOWDY, B. (1999). "Why are you bored?" An examination of psychological and social control causes of boredom among adolescents. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 31(2): 103-121.
- DELANEY, W. & LEE, C. (1995). Self esteem and sex roles among male and female high school students: Their relationship to physical activity. *Australian Psychologist*, 30: 84-7.
- DE MAN, L.A. (1992). Recreation and sports preferences of black people in the southern Orange Free State. Unpublished PhD dissertation. Bloemfontein: University of the Orange Free State.
- EDGINTON, C.R.; DEGRAAF, D.G.; DIESER, R.B. & EDGINTON, S.R. (2006). *Leisure and life satisfaction. Foundational perspectives* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- EDGINTON, C.R.; HANSON, C.J.; EDGINTON, S.R. & HUDSON, S.D. (1998). *Leisure programming: A service-centered and benefits approach* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- EDWARDS, D.J.A. & LOUW, D.A. (1998). *Sielkunde: 'n Inleiding vir studente in Suider-Afrika* (2<sup>de</sup> uitgawe). Johannesburg: Heinemann.
- EVANS, G. & POOLE, M. (1991). *Young adults: Self-perceptions and life contexts*. London: Falmer Press.
- FLOYD, M.F.; SHINEW, K.J.; MCGUIRE, F.A. & OE, F.P. (1994). Race, class and leisure activity preferences: Marginality and ethnicity revisited. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 26(2): 158-173.
- FOURIE, J. (2006). Tourism and leisure needs of high school learners in Potchefstroom. Unpublished M thesis. Potchefstroom: North West University.
- FURLONG, A. & CARTMEL, F. (1997). *Young people and social change. Individualisation and risk in late modernity*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- GILLESPIE, R.B. (2002). The physical impact of computers and electronic game use on children and adolescents: A review of current literature. *Work*, 18: 249-259.
- GORDON, W.R. & CALTABIANO, M.L. (1996). Urban-rural differences in adolescents' self-esteem, leisure boredom and sensation-seeking as predictors of leisure-time usage and satisfaction. *Adolescence*, 31(124): 883-901.
- HAMPL, J.S.; WHARTON, C.M.; TAYLOR, C.A.; WIHAM, D.M.; BLOCK, J.L. & HALL, R. (2004). Primetime television impacts on adolescents' impressions of bodyweight, sex appeal and food and beverage consumption. *Nutrition Bulletin*, 29: 29-98.
- HATTINGH, P.S. (1990). Ontspanningsfasiliteite vir swartes: Behoeftes en voorsiening. Ongepubliseerde navorsingsverslag. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.

- HRSC (HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL SPORTS INVESTIGATION) (1982). Sport in Suid-Afrika. Verslag nommer 1. Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing-ondersoek. Pretoria: Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing.
- ISO-AHOLA, S.E. & WEISSINGER, E. (1990). Perceptions of boredom in leisure: Conceptualisation, reliability and validity of the Leisure Boredom Scale. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 22: 1-17.
- KOHLER, K.L. (1992). Sport, recreation and tourism in South Africa: A review of theory, demography and patterns of preference and participation. Pretoria: South African Federation for Movement and Leisure Sciences.
- LAJUNEN, H.; KESKI-RAHKONEN, A.; PULKKINEN, L.; ROSE, R.J.; RISSANEN, A. & KAPRIO, J. (2008). Leisure activity patterns and their associations with overweight: A prospective study among adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*, 31: 421-431.
- LUMSDON, L. (1997). *Tourism marketing*. London: International Thomson Business Press.
- LU, X. & PAS, E.I. (1999). Socio-demographics, activity participation and travel behaviour. *Transportation Research Part A*, 33: 1-18.
- McKENZIE, T.L.; MARSHALL, S.J.; SALLIS, J.F. & CONWAY, T.L. (2000). Leisure-time physical activity in school environments: An observational study using SOPLAY. *Preventive Medicine*, 30: 70-77.
- MAHONY, J.L.; STATTIN, H. & LORD, H. (2004). Unstructured youth recreation centre participation and antisocial behaviour development: Selection influence and moderating role of antisocial peers. *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, 28(6): 553-560.
- MEYER, C. (1997). Rekreasievoorsiening in die Noordwes Provinsie. Ongepubliseerde navorsingsverslag. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir CHO.
- MOGAJANE, V.S. (2005). Leisure and tourism behaviour in rural areas in the North West Province. Unpublished M thesis. Potchefstroom: North West University.
- MURPHY, J.F.; NIEPOTH, E.W.; LYNN, M.J. & WILLIAMS, J.G. (1991). *Leisure systems: Critical concepts and applications*. Champaign, IL: Sagamore.
- PAGE, S.J.; BRUNT, P.; BUSBY, G. & CONNELL, J. (2001). *Tourism: A modern synthesis*. London: Thomson Learning.
- PIKO, F.P. & VAZSONYI, A.T. (2004). Leisure activities and problem behaviours among Hungarian youth. *Journal of Adolescents*, 27(6): 717-730.
- PISTORIUS, J.H. (1990). Rekreasievoorsiening vir swart werknemers: 'n Behoeftebepaling. Ongepubliseerde M tesis. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.
- SAAYMAN, M. (1993). Rekreasiebestuur in swart plaaslike owerhede. Ongepubliseerde PhD proefskrif. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.
- SAAYMAN, M. (1994). A strategic plan for the provision of leisure services and resources for Klerksdorp. Unpublished research report. Potchefstroom: Institute for Tourism and Leisure Studies.
- SAAYMAN, M. & MULLER, M.L. (1996). Sport and recreation needs and preferences for the community of Reitz/Petsana. Unpublished research report. Potchefstroom: Leisure Consultants and Publications.
- SAAYMAN, M. & VAN DEN BERG, M. (1995). Sport and leisure provision for the township of Mohadin. Unpublished research report. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom University for CHE.
- SALLIS, J.F.; ZAKARIAN, J.M.; HOVELL, M.F. & HOFSTETTER, C.R. (1996). Ethnic, socio-economic and sex differences in physical activity among adolescents. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, 49: 125-134.

- SCHOLTZ, G.J.L. (1989). Sport- en rekreasiedeelname en behoeftes van die stad Soweto. Potchefstroom: Ongepubliseerde navorsingsverslag. Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir CHO.
- SCHOLTZ, G.J.L. (1993). Leisure preferences and needs of South Africans in the age group of 15-30 years. Unpublished research report. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir CHO.
- SCHOLTZ, G.J.L. (1997). *Gross list of leisure activities* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Potchefstroom: Instituut vir Toerisme en Vryetydstudies.
- SCHOLTZ, G.J.L.; MEYER, C. Du P.; DE VILLIERS, B.A. & SAAYMAN, M. (1993). Strategiese plan vir die voorsiening van vryetydsbronne en –dienste vir Potchefstroom. Ongepubliseerde navorsingsverslag. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir CHO.
- SCHOLTZ, G.J.L.; MEYER, C. Du P.; DIPPENAAR, G.J. & WESSELS, A.C.J. (1989). Die behoefte aan 'n sport- en rekreasiesentrum vir Nelspruit en omgewing. Ongepubliseerde navorsingsverslag. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir CHO.
- SCHOLTZ, G.J.L.; MEYER, C. Du P.; SAAYMAN, M.; HUGO, M.L.; HATTING, P.S.; ODENDAAL, S.S.C. & DE WET, N.H. (1992). Strategiese plan vir die voorsiening van vryetydsbronne en –dienste vir Randburg. Ongepubliseerde navorsingsverslag. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir CHO.
- SCHOLTZ, G.J.L.; VAN ROOIJEN, L.; BOUWER, E.M. & BOUWER, I. (1990). Voorsiening van vryetydsbronne en –dienste deur Verwoerdburg. Ongepubliseerde navorsingsverslag. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir CHO.
- SCHOLTZ, G.J.L.; VAN TONDER, H. & SAAYMAN, M. (1995). Sport en rekreasievoorsiening vir Promosa. Ongepubliseerde navorsingsverslag. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir CHO.
- TRAINOR, S.; DELFABBRO, P.; ANDERSON, S. & WINEFIELD, A. (2010). Leisure activities and adolescent psychological well-being. *Journal of Adolescence*, 33: 173-186.
- TROIANO, R.P. & FLEGAL, K.M. (1998). Overweight children and adolescents: Description, epidemiology and demographics. *Pediatrics*, 101(3): 497-504.
- WEGNER, L.; FLISHER, A.J.; MULLER, M. & LOMBARD, C. (2006). Leisure boredom and substance use among high school students in South Africa. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 38: 249-266.
- WESSELS, J.C. (1995). Leisure needs of young people in Pietersburg. Unpublished M thesis. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- WILLITS, W.L. & WILLITS, F.K. (1987). Adolescent leisure patterns. In A. Graefe & S. Parker (Eds.), *Recreation and leisure: An introductory handbook* (177-181). State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- WILSON, G.D.J. (1992). Sport, recreation and tourism in South Africa: Preference and participation patterns. Unpublished research report. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.

---

Mr. Jaco Fourie: Institute for Tourism, Wildlife Economics & Leisure Studies, North West University, Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom 2520, Republic of South Africa. Tel.: +27 (0)18 2991806 (w), Fax.: +27 (0)18 299 4140, E-mail: jacofourie25@gmail.com

(Subject editor: Prof. J. Bloemhoff)