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PERCEPTIONS OF LEISURE PARTICIPATION IN THAI PEOPLE

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Introduction: Positive relationship of leisure and health has been reported in occupation therapy research, but different cultures influence occupation across life span as seen from the role of different types of leisure associated occupational performance and health. Therefore, perceptions of leisure participation in Thai people have been surveyed.

Objectives: This pilot study aimed to understand perceptions of leisure participation in three groups of Thais including students, adults, and elders.

Methods: This study recruited 30 students, 30 adults, and 30 elders in both genders aged over 18. The Classification of Leisure Participation (CLP) Scale - Thai healthy version was used. Participants were asked to classify each activity representing mostly physical, social, creative, or passive leisure and to report frequency of participation for each activity. The resultant dendrograms identified the most representative activities for each type of leisure using Hierarchical Cluster Analysis. Frequency of leisure participation per cluster was averaged for each group of the participations.

Results: Different dendrograms emerged from the three groups. Thai students and adults classified 2 clusters whereas elders classified 3 clusters. A clear perception of leisure participation was shown in the elders (physical leisure) and in the adults (passive leisure). However, the rest of classifications included a combination of physical, social, creative, or passive leisure. Maximal means of frequency of leisure participation (days/week) were $3.49 + 0.73$ for the students, $5.46 + 1.19$ for the adults, and $3.17 + 1.09$ for the elders.

Conclusion: Thai people may not have clear understanding about health benefits of leisure participation; they then have perceived many combined types of leisure activities. Balancing participation in those types is a key issue of good health across the ages.

Contribution to the Practice: Types of leisure participation appears to play different roles on culture, age, and health. This has important implication for future practices of occupational therapy interventions.