

Social Development and People's Leisure Time Changes in Korea During 1970 - 2000

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I . Introduction

Leisure is frequently defined simply as "time free from the demands of work or duty"¹⁾ as the term has originated from the Latin word "licere," meaning "to be permitted," or "to be free" to do something for its own sake. As such, leisure is considered the antonym of work, and the two activities are thought to be mutually exclusive. Leisure usually connotes freedom, liberty and unconstrained, voluntary and tension-easing activity while work means something restraining, involuntary, tedious and arduous.

However, with the development of human society, the concept of leisure has evolved. In modern societies, leisure is often conceived not as a simple pastime or free time but as a "meaningful activity" which is an end in itself (Kelly, 1982). Many researchers of leisure argue that leisure is what truly characterizes a modern society where

1) The Random House Dictionary of English Language(1987), New York, Random House.

everybody enjoys leisure.

Unlike in ancient Greece where only the aristocrats enjoyed their free time as the only "leisure class" to do something they wanted, in modern societies leisure has become a basic mode of life, and it constitutes a culture of its own.

Dumazedier (1967:16-17), the French sociologist and an authority on leisure, asserts;

"Leisure is activity apart from the obligations of work, family and society, to which the individual turns at will, for either relaxation, diversion, or broadening his knowledge and his spontaneous social participation, the free expression of his creative capacity."

Leisure enhances people's quality of life, as Cohen stresses, by facilitating their individual self-fulfillment and self-actualization as well as promoting social innovations and cultural creativity (Cohen, 1991). And according to Diener (1984), people's quality of life depends more on the subjective assessment and satisfaction of their lives rather than objective conditions or material wealth, and leisure, especially the autotelic leisure, is what influences people's sense of subjective satisfaction, happiness and psychological well-being most significantly. In this sense, many researchers emphasize that the main difference between advanced societies, or the so-called "post-industrial societies," and developing societies may be the degree of people's satisfaction with their leisure and their perception and valuation of the activity (Williams, 1983: 120-122).

For example, Yankelovich (1978) reports that, in 1955, 33% of the Swedish people believed work to be most important in their lives while only 13% of them thought leisure was more important. But, in 1987, 27% of them thought leisure to be most important in their lives while only 17% thought work was most important, reversing the trend.

Brooks and Elliott (1971) report that people who enjoyed active leisure such as sports, arts and crafts or travel were more satisfied with their lives than people who preferred passive leisure like watching TV or movies.

As some theorists of leisure foresee, people's success with leisure may become more important in the future than their success in work. In a highly technological society, as Williams explains, the general trend of work may be the standardization and conformity rather than individual expression. And people will have more time and demand for leisure as automation of industry and the trend toward a post-industrial information economy will bring about shorter work weeks (Williams, 1983: 121).

Leisure in this context seems to be an index of quality of life in a society, and it may also reflect to a certain extent the degree of social development.

Can some of the society's developmental characteristics be ascertained by analyzing people's leisure and its quality? Or conversely, do people's leisure patterns reflect the level of social development in that society? More specifically, how does social development influence people's leisure patterns in a society in terms of their use of time? This paper purports to shed some light on these questions by analyzing Korean people's leisure patterns utilizing a series of time-use surveys data during the period of 1981-2000 when the country has undergone a truly remarkable social change.

II. Social Changes in Korea

Korea is one of the few countries that have undergone truly profound social change during the last three decades. From a typical agricultural society in the 1960s, the country has grown into a

full-fledged "newly industrialized economy (NIE)," and joined OECD, the prestigious club of advanced countries, in 1995. The most remarkable change in Korea during this period has been in its economy. As the following <Table 1> shows, GDP has gone up more than fifty times from the mere \$ 8 billion to more than \$ 461.7 billion between 1970 and 2000. The export total has skyrocketed from the minuscule \$ 30 million in 1960 to more than \$ 143 billion in 2000, an increase of almost 5,000 times during the forty-year period.

The country's GNI per capita in 1970 was only \$ 249, and \$ 1,598 in 1980, but it soared to \$ 10,823 in 1995. It fell down somewhat to \$ 9,770 in 2000 due to a foreign exchange crisis in 1997, but the country has successfully overcome the setback in three years and was able to pay back all its loans to IMF by August 2001. Since 1980 the total number of employed people has increased from about 13.6 million to more than 22 million.

With the rapid industrialization and the consequent urbanization, the rural population was reduced to about 12% of the total population in 2000 from some 63% in 1960, and the number of the farming people account for fewer than 7% of the population in 2000, signifying the demise of an agricultural economy and the passing of a traditional society. These social changes naturally have brought about changes in traditional customs and social values. Traditional large families where three or even four generations lived together in a household have broken down into numerous small "nuclear families," and the Western individualism has taken root replacing the traditional family values. The number of households has almost doubled in twenty years since 1980. Social participation by women, as shown in their number of employed persons, has also more than doubled since 1970.

While life expectancy has notably increased, the birth rate, the biggest social problem in the 1960s, has declined so sharply that the country is now contemplating some plans to boost population growth

<Table 1> Changes in Social Indices of Korea

	Unit	1970	1980	1990	2000
population					
total	1000	31,435	37,406	42,869	45,985
density/km ²	person		385.1	431.8	463.0
rural	1000	15,654	11,460	7,498	5,600
rural%	%	49.80	30.64	17.28	12.18
life expectancy	Year		65.8	72.8	76.4
birth rate			2.83	1.59	1.47
divorces	case			45,694	119,982
divorces per 1000	person			1.1	2.8
GDP	\$ billion	8.0	62.2	252.5	461.7
GNI	\$ billion	8.0	60.9	252.3	459.2
GNI per capita	\$	249	1,598	5,185	9,770
export	\$ million	840	17,505	65,016	143,685
import	\$ million	1,980	22,292	69,844	119,752
employed					
total	1000		13,683	18,085	22,244
female	"		5,222	7,376	9,242
male	"		8,461	10,709	14,002
unemployed	"		748	454	626
households	"		7,969	11,355	14,312
houses	"		5,319	7,160	10,960

Source: Compiled from the data by Bank of Korea, Statistical Office of Korea and other sources.

again. Divorce, a taboo in the 1960s, is so common that the divorce rate is 2.8 per 1,000 people which is the third highest in the world, only after the U.S. and the U.K. Recently the rate between marriages and divorces is soared to 2.33 to 1, meaning while 2.33 marriages are held, one divorce is registered at the same time²⁾.

2) *The Chosen Ilbo*(Daily), 2002. 10. 3.

Korea has experienced very turbulent political changes as well during the same period. In 1961, a military coup d'etat toppled the democratic government since the nation's independence in 1948, and an authoritarian military dictatorship had lasted thirty-two years even though it changed hands in 1980. In 1993, the military was finally forced out of power and a popularly-elected civilian government was fully restored bringing back democracy once again.

Despite such a political turmoil and tremendous social change, the country, nevertheless, has been able to manage its substantial economic growth. During the last twenty years, the average GNP growth has been more than 7% per year. The economic boom has boosted Korean people's quality of life, at least in material terms, and the country is rapidly taking shape as a "post-industrial society," or the "information society" since 1995.

The following <Table 2> is a brief rundown of a few of these growths.

<Table 2> Diffusion of Telecommunications and Appliances in Korea

Item \ year	unit	1980	1990	2000
automobiles	1000	528	3,395	12,059
telephone lines	"	2,705	13,276	21,932
mobile phones	"	2.7('84)	80.1	30,887('02)
Internet users	"		366('95)	25,650('02)
color TV sets	"	139	14,427	19,020
refrigerators	"	12,459	13,387	15,929
washing machines	"	9,754	12,214	12,750
PCs	"	1,097	7,824	9,316

Source: Compiled from home pages of Korean Broadcasting Commission, Bank of Korea, Electronics and Telecommunication Research Institute.

Automobiles and many convenient home appliances are as common and abundant as in any advanced society. The numbers of personal

computers and the Internet users, as well as the percentage of the ADSL users and mobile phones are one of the highest in the world.

The number of the ADSL users was more than 10 million at the end of October, 2002, the highest rate in the world. And the number of the Internet domains is 457,450 which is the fifth largest in the world. The average hours of the Internet use per month per person was 19 hours 20 minutes which again is the first in the world³⁾.

These social changes are believed to have affected people's life styles, quality of life and their leisure patterns gradually but profoundly.

III. Time-Use Data in Korea

The data for the present analysis were a set of time-use surveys data collected throughout the country since 1981. These surveys were conducted regularly by Korean Broadcasting System(KBS) as public service. KBS, the nation's biggest and flag-carrying public broadcasting corporation, has sponsored the survey once every five years. The five surveys in 1981, 1985, 1990, 1995 and 2000 were almost identical in their sample sizes and data collection methods.

1. Sample and Sampling Method

In each survey, a sample of 3,500 respondents over 10 years of age was selected. A multi-step stratified quota sampling was done using the country's latest census data. In doing this, 100 sampling points throughout the nation were first selected according to their population sizes, provincial locations and the types of communities. In each sampling point, 35 respondents were selected to represent their

3) National Computerization Agency (2002), *2002 Korean Internet White Paper*.

sex, age and occupational groups.

2. Survey Contents

The surveys were to collect two kinds of data on the people's time use patterns. First, the total amount of time people spend in a day for various activities such as sleep, meals, leisure, work and the like. This was to tabulate what people do with their time. Second, the temporal locations of various activities, or the timing, was also measured to find out when people do what they do. Specially, the percentage of the people engaged in particular activities were tabulated at the 15-minutes intervals. For example, the percentages of the people sleeping, moving, eating or TV watching and so forth were measured every 15 minutes throughout the survey period.

3. Survey Period

Each survey was conducted during a period of three days because of some budgetary constraints. Until 1995, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays had been chosen to represent both weekdays and the weekend. But in 2000 Monday was chosen to represent the weekdays as Friday is fast becoming a part of the weekend in Korea recently.

4. Classification of Activities

People's various daily activities were categorized as the following <Table 3>.

Three new categories of activities were added in 2000 to the previous categories to tabulate the recent "new media" usage including the time spent on CATV, DBS, PC communication, on-line games and the Internet.

IV. Changes in People's Time Use

The five surveys have clearly delineated a few patterns of people's time use as well as the changes therein since 1981. The following <Table 4> summarizes some of the key results of these five surveys.

The table clearly reveals the following several traits of change in time use during the period.

1. Sharp Division Between Weekdays and Sunday

The most notable trait in Korean people's time-use pattern is a sharp contrast between weekdays and Sunday. The 2000 survey data show that Korean people work quite less (169 minutes less), sleep much more (63 minutes more), spend significantly more time on leisure (174 minutes more) on Sunday than a weekday. This, of course, is nothing unique. But what is notable is that this division is being widened as the country develops.

For example, the difference of the sleep time between a weekday and Sunday in 1981 was only 36 minutes, but it has increased to 63 minutes by 2000, widening the gap further. The same difference for the leisure time in 1981 was 123 minutes, but it also has risen to 174 minutes by 2000. This trend seems to reflect the "time famine" people experience during the weekdays. People work on the Saturday morning, and thus Sunday is the only day off and the true weekend in Korea.

People seem to postpone almost all other activities except work until Saturday afternoon because of their time crunch. Thus people's "free time" activities are heavily concentrated on Sunday. This pattern seems to be very similar with that of many advanced countries.

2. Increased Work

Another feature of change in Korean people's time-use pattern is

<Table 4> Key Results of Five Time-Use Surveys (total averages)
(unit : hours/minutes)

		1981	1985	1990	1995	2000
sleep	Week.	7/38	7/32	7/56	7/41	7/35
	Sat.	7/38	7/34	8/02	7/56	7/40
	Sun.	8/16	8/15	8/55	8/59	8/38
meals	Week.	1/35	1/35	1/41	1/34	1/46
	Sat.	1/34	1/37	1/41	1/35	1/44
	Sun.	1/42	1/44	1/49	1/39	1/49
personal Care	Week.	1/05	1/07	0/59	1/01	0/50
	Sat.	1/07	1/09	1/00	1/02	0/53
	Sun.	1/05	1/08	1/04	1/03	1/01
work	Week.	3/18	3/03	3/37	4/15	4/32
	Sat.	2/58	2/40	3/05	3/29	3/55
	Sun.	1/58	1/38	1/41	1/47	1/43
school work	Week.	3/20	2/58	3/14	2/40	2/03
	Sat.	2/29	2/15	2/14	1/44	1/17
	Sun.	1/13	1/22	1/10	0/49	0/32
domesticwork	Week.	1/56	1/46	1/28	1/20	1/35
	Sat.	2/05	1/52	1/34	1/27	1/39
	Sun.	2/22	2/09	1/38	1/30	1/35
leisure	Week.	4/29	4/21	4/29	4/37	4/25
	Sat.	5/26	5/12	5/33	5/49	5/29
	Sun.	6/52	6/29	7/05	7/26	7/19
moving	Week.	1/13	1/25	1/09	1/09	1/14
	Sat.	1/17	1/34	1/16	1/13	1/22
	Sun.	1/03	1/20	1/02	1/00	1/14
home staying	Week.	14/55	14/25	14/17	13/43	13/44
	Sat.	15/44	15/12	15/14	14/48	14/25
	Sun.	17/47	17/29	17/35	17/14	16/32

the increased work time. Their work time has substantially increased over the same period. Their work time in 2000 on a weekday was 74 minutes more than 1981, and on Saturday 57 minutes more. But on Sunday it was decreased by 15 minutes due to a sharp decline of the number of the people who work on that day. The percentage of the people who work on Sunday in 2000 was only 39%. But it was 62% in 1981.

When only the employed people's work time averages were compared, it was found that the employed Koreans now work 76 minutes more on a weekday, 53 minutes more on Saturday, but 47 minutes less than 1981. But the average work time of the people who work on Sunday is 7 hours 40 minutes, showing a 98-minutes increase. The trend seems to be clear that Korean people's work time has increased remarkably, at least, during the weekdays.

3. Decreased Domestic Work

Another distinct feature is the sharp decrease of the domestic work time while the people's work time has increased substantially. Korean people nowadays spend approximately 95 minutes each day for their domestic work showing no difference between weekdays and the weekend. In 1981, they spent 116 minutes on a weekday and 144 minutes on Sunday respectively. This decrease seems to reflect the two aspects of change in people's life styles. Firstly, women spend less time lately for this type of chores, and, secondly, the wide availability of many time-saving home appliances such as washing machines, dish washers, vacuum cleaners and the like seems to have contributed to the decline.

In a separate analysis when only the women's data were analyzed (Choo, 2001), the trend was even more evident. The averages of women's domestic work time have decreased by 24 minutes (weekday), 29 minutes (Saturday) and 65 minutes (Sunday). And the percentages of

women who do any domestic work at all have also fallen sharply from 85.7% to 72.4% on a weekday, from 89.5% to 74.6%(Saturday) and from 92% to 76.6%(Sunday) during the period. It is apparent that fewer people, let alone fewer women, do their domestic work than before for a quite shorter duration of time, especially on the weekend.

V. Changes in Leisure Patterns

As seen in the previous chapter, Korean people's time use patterns have changed quite drastically. However, the most significant change has occurred in their leisure time.

The following <Table 5> is a breakdown of time spent on various leisure activities.

1. Increase and Concentration of Leisure Time

First of all, the absolute amount of leisure time has increased slowly but steadily over the period. The peak in leisure time was in 1995 when the country's GNP per capita reached the \$ 10,000 mark for the first time. The average amount of time people spent on their leisure in 1995 during a weekday was 277 minutes. They spent 349 minutes on Saturday and 446 minutes on Sunday on leisure. These amounts are 8 minutes(weekday), 23 minutes(Saturday) and 34 minutes (Sunday) more than 1981. By 2000, these averages have somewhat decreased from 1995 because of the country's economic crisis since 1997. But they still are much bigger than 1981, showing a steady increase over the period. Leisure, like many other activities, shows a heavy concentration pattern on Sunday. For example, while the amounts of leisure time on weekdays and Saturday have not risen significantly, Sunday's leisure time has increased(27 minutes) sharply to 439 minutes by 2000.

<Table 5> Breakdown of Leisure Time

(unit : minutes)

types \ year	1981			1985			1990			1995			2000		
	Week	Sat	Sun												
active leisure															
Sports	8	10	16	8	12	8	5	7	8	8	10	10	8	10	11
Games	4	5	8	4	5	5	4	6	5	2	4	3	2	4	3
Walk/hiking	4	7	17	5	8	19	4	8	17	9	17	32	13	20	41
Hobbies	4	4	5	4	5	7	7	7	7	5	6	14	3	5	14
Skills	3	2	2	11	10	8	2	2	1	5	3	2	3	2	2
Plays	3	4	7	1	1	2	2	4	5	1	3	4	1	1	1
socializing	50	64	88	46	59	82	50	73	102	47	64	89	45	65	92
Computer													11	14	15
Sub total	76	98	143	79	100	131	74	107	145	77	107	154	86	121	179
passive leisure															
movies & music	10	12	11	6	7	8	5	7	9	1	2	2	1	1	1
print media	28	29	29	29	28	29	25	25	26	25	26	26	13	14	16
Radio	46	41	34	39	34	31	32	29	25	31	27	22	12	11	9
TV	109	146	195	108	143	190	123	165	220	143	187	242	144	172	226
DBS/CATV													9	10	8
Sub total	193	228	269	182	212	258	185	226	280	220	242	292	179	208	260
leisure total	269	326	412	261	312	389	259	333	425	277	349	446	265	329	439

Again, the table reveals a few trends of change in leisure.

This seems to indicate the "time famine" of the people during the weekdays. This trend of leisure time increase is inferred to be the results of the social and economic development during the period. This point will be further discussed in the ensuing chapter.

2. The Rise of TV and Fall of Traditional Media

The Twentieth Century is often called "the century of mass media," especially the electronic media. This seems to be perfectly the case with the Korean media. During the last two decades, television in Korea has risen to its undisputed dominance, and other traditional mass media including radio, newspaper, books and magazines have

fallen dramatically in their time people spend on them.

Television is taking the lion's share of all leisure time. The average amount of time spent on TV on a weekday in 2000 was 144 minutes. It was 172 minutes on Saturday, and 226 minutes on Sunday. TV watching has gone up by more than 30 minutes a day since 1981. In fact, TV is occupying more than 50% of the total leisure time since 1995 when it reached the peak. Converted into a weekly figure, the Korean people's average TV viewing time per week in 2000 was 159 minutes. This is a 4-minutes decline from 1995(163 minutes). The average is somewhat similar with those of many European advanced countries. For example, according to van der Broek(2002, 10), the average TV viewing time per person per week in the fourteen European countries in 1999 were as the following:

Italy	-	230 minutes	Sweden	-	154 minutes
Germany	-	201 minutes	Finland	-	150 minutes
Greece	-	219 minutes	Norway	-	151 minutes
U.K.	-	241 minutes	Ireland	-	197 minutes
Denmark	-	169 minutes	Netherlands	-	168 minutes
France	-	197 minutes	Portugal	-	165 minutes
Spain	-	218 minutes	Belgium	-	167 minutes

The dominance by TV in these countries appears to be also evident, but Korea seems to be not too far behind. The following <Table 6> shows the trend in Korea.

Television watching comprises more than 80% of the passive leisure time and more than 50% of all leisure time. It truly is "colonizing" people's free time, as Lindner put it (Lindner, 1970). The dominance of television naturally is at the cost of other mass media such as radio and the print media. While television has continuously ascend to its dominance, these other "old media" have fallen almost to

<Table 6> TV's Share of Leisure Time

(unit : minutes)

leisure	1981			1985			1990			1995			2000		
	Week	Sat.	Sun.												
passive leisure	193	228	269	182	212	258	185	226	280	220	242	292	179	208	260
Total leisure	269	326	412	261	312	389	259	444	425	277	349	446	265	329	439
TV watching	109	146	195	108	143	190	123	165	220	143	187	242	144	172	226
TV/total(%)	40.52	44.78	47.33	41.38	45.83	48.84	47.49	49.55	51.76	51.62	53.58	54.26	54.34	52.28	51.48
TV/passive leisure(%)	56.48	64.04	72.49	59.34	67.45	73.34	66.49	73.00	78.57	65.00	77.27	82.88	80.45	82.69	86.92

oblivion. Time spent on radio and the print media has fallen to one half or one third since 1981. The saturation of television sets and the unprecedented increase of the so-called "heavy viewers" are attributed to have caused this explosive trend.

By the end of 1981, less than a year after color broadcasting began in Korea, the total number of TV sets has soared to 1.2 million. The same number in 2000 reached more than 17 million exceeding the total number of households and completely saturating the country. At the same time, the number of the "heavy viewers" who watch TV more than four hours a day has skyrocketed during this period. The

<Table 7> Change in TV Viewing Pattern

(unit : %)

	Weekday					Saturday					Sunday				
	1981	1985	1990	1995	2000										
0 min	13	12	11	10	15	10	10	10	7	13	8	7	7	6	9
15min-1hour	22	24	19	17	15	14	16	14	13	12	10	11	9	9	7
1hour15min-2hours	30	29	29	25	22	25	23	21	18	18	17	18	16	13	15
2hours15min-3hours	21	18	20	20	19	21	21	18	19	19	19	18	16	15	15
3hours15min-4hours	9	10	12	13	12	14	13	15	17	14	16	15	15	16	15
over4hours15min	6	6	9	15	16	15	16	22	26	24	30	30	37	40	39

<Table 7> shows this shift.

The fact that four people out of ten spend more than four hours watching TV on Sunday can be quite a "social phenomenon" which was never imagined just two decades ago. People seem to have become addicted to TV because it involves no costs or efforts, thus, the easiest and cheapest means of pastime.

This heavy dependence on TV is even more surprising considering the fact that television in Korea is broadcast for only about 14 hours during a weekday and 18 hours each during Saturday and Sunday. In a separate analysis (Choo, 2001), these heavy viewers were found to be mainly the people over 60 years of age, teenage students and housewives who have relatively more free time as in other countries. For example, the average of TV viewing time of Japanese people in 2000 were 199 minutes (weekday), 220 minutes (Saturday) and 243 minutes (Sunday) respectively, much more than the Korean average. The trend of Japan showed a small but steady increase in TV viewing time since 1995 unlike in Korea, but the heavy viewers mainly were the people over 60 years of age who watch TV more than 4 hours irrespective of the days of the week (Mitsuya and Nakano, 2001).

But it is surprising that the working Korean people who can hardly find any time due to their increased work and other essential activities during the weekdays are equally being deprived of their precious little free time by television. The sheer amount of time people spend on television, together with much controversial contents, has become a social issue in many countries. Korea certainly seems to have become one of them.

3. Increase of Active Leisure

Although TV watching has become the national pastime of the Korean people, and the amount of time spent with TV has soared enormously, the passive leisure time as a whole, most of which is

consisted of TV watching, has unexpectedly decreased quite substantially during the same period.

But active leisure has gone up remarkably, particularly since 1995. The amount of time for active leisure on Sunday was 179 minutes in 2000 which is 36 minutes more compared with the 1981 figure, and 25 minutes more than 1995 as shown in the previous <Table 5>.

This increase in active leisure is bigger than the total leisure time increase since 1981 which amounts to 28 minutes on Sunday. This indicates that even though the ascendance of TV has been very rapid and sharp at the cost of many other mass media, thus reducing the total passive leisure time, most of the decreased passive leisure time was actually replaced by more autotelic active leisure activities, slowly until 1995 but very rapidly since then.

This transition is very striking in view of the "relative constancy" of leisure time. The theory of the "relative constancy" by McCombs and others posits that people's spending for mass media is relatively constant over a period of time fluctuating with the ups and downs of the general economy or personal income (McCombs, 1992). It was later found that the same constancy holds in people's time spent on media as well. For example, Henley Centre, a British think-tank, found that the U.K. consumers not only spent about the same amount of money but almost the same amount of time as well with media from 1987 through 1997 (Carroll, 2001). What the theory implies is that time spent for specific leisure activity or media is not very likely to abruptly change in a short period. Time is not as flexible as money and does not fluctuate as personal income. Everybody has only 24 hours a day, and excluding the time spent on work and essential physiological activities such as sleeping, eating and personal care, people have only so much time for their leisure each day.

Then a question arises as to how this significant increase in active leisure was possible at all over a relatively short period of time. This

trend of change is believed to be the result of Korea's social development and the consequent people's conceptual and attitudinal changes towards leisure.

Firstly, as described earlier, with the country's continued economic growth and disposable personal income, people have been able to afford many types of convenient home appliances, and thus they could save much more time for leisure than before.

Secondly, the profusion of automobiles which was a luxury item and out of reach of many ordinary households as late as the early 1990s has vastly enhanced the people's mobility and freedom to move around, and thus conducive to more leisure and travel. The number of the cars exceeds that of the households, and more people than ever enjoy the outdoor activities like picnic, hiking and excursion and travel around the country lately. A recent survey by a Korean travel magazine "e-mountain" reports that approximately 1.6 million Koreans are believed to regularly go on hiking or mountain climbing, and about 1.97 million people jog routinely while some 1.74 million people regularly use the health centers or the fitness centers around the country⁴). This shift towards more active leisure is evidenced by a sharp decrease in people's home-staying time. It has fallen about 75 minutes each day since 1981.

However, the strongest impetus for this shift seems to have been provided by the changes in people's concepts and attitudes toward leisure, particularly towards active leisure. For example, Jo (1985) found that three groups of Korean people out of four occupational groups, office workers, school teachers and house wives valued leisure more than their work, but only the blue-collar workers believed otherwise. However, these blue-collar workers acknowledged the importance of leisure in improving themselves more highly than other groups. In a

4 *The Joong-Ang Ilbo*(Daily), 2002. Oct. 2. PS 9.

similar survey, Cho(1995) also found that even the farmers had very favorable attitudes towards leisure and women were more positive than men about leisure. It was also found that the degree of satisfaction with life had a significantly positive correlation with the respondent's attitudes towards leisure. Lee(2000) found that housewives in Korea strongly believed leisure as a means to achieve their self-fulfillment and self-satisfaction. They believed that leisure was "something of their very own" which enables them to demonstrate their true ability and capability. The housewives valued leisure as a bridge that connects them with the outside world(society), and relate them with people other than their family or relatives. Leisure was also viewed as a means to obtain many things that were not available at all at home. These studies seem to substantiate the Korean people's attitudinal change towards more active and autotelic leisure. Korean people certainly seem to have become more keen and conscious about the importance and quality of leisure as the society developed. As Williams(1983) aptly put it, leisure in Korea seems to have become "not just a nonwork," but a necessary and fulfilling part of life, as in other advanced countries.

In sum, Korean people's leisure time has slowly but substantially increased with the country's development. Despite the "colonization" of leisure time by TV, passive leisure is declining. And active leisure, or the more autotelic leisure activities, which is viewed as an end in itself such as hobbies, skills learning, exercises, travel and the like is on the sharp rise, particularly since 1995. The recent boom in Korea of jogging, hiking and the fitness centers is believed to reflect the trend and shows the people's changed attitudes towards leisure with the country's social development.

VI. Summary and Conclusion

This paper has analyzed the changes in Korean people's leisure time patterns during the last two decades in an effort to find out the relationship between social development and changes in people's concepts and attitudes towards leisure. The data for the analysis were a set of five time use surveys between 1981 and 2000. The time-use surveys conducted regularly by Korean Broadcasting System(KBS) have provided most pertinent data for the analysis.

Korea has undergone tremendous social changes during the last three decades, politically, economically and socially. The country has seen the demise of the traditional agricultural society owing to its rapid economic growth, industrialization and urbanization. Many social systems and values have changed into new ones, both positive and negative ones, with social development.

People's life styles, their values have also drastically changed. The number of households has more than doubled since 1970 as a result of the break down of the large traditional families into so many "nuclear families." Individualism has taken root deeply in the country. Life expectancy has risen to about 80 years by 2002 and the birth rate has gone down too drastically. And divorces, once a social taboo, are so common that one out of three marriages is breaking up these days.

Then how has their leisure changed? This paper has traced a few patternal changes in Korean people's leisure time use. The time-use data during this period of profound social change in Korea have revealed the following few general trends.

- (1) A sharp and distinct division between weekdays and Sunday in people's use of time.
- (2) Substantial increase of work time.
- (3) Remarkable decrease of domestic work

- (4) Significant increase of total leisure time, and particularly active leisure.
- (5) TV's dominance and "colonization" of leisure time.
- (6) Drastic downfall of traditional media

Specifically, with regard to leisure, the most striking trend is that despite the overwhelming dominance of TV over all other leisure activities, the total amount of passive leisure time has decreased while quite surprisingly the amount of time spent on active leisure such as hobbies, exercises, and outdoor activities has significantly increased. This increase in more autotelic leisure is believed to be mainly the results of changes in people's conception and attitudes towards leisure.

Many leisure researchers in Korea have found similar trends towards active leisure. It was found that Korean people recognized leisure as uniquely their own time which enables their self-improvement, self-fulfillment and providing a means to relate them with the outside world. They also viewed leisure as providing opportunities to associate with people other than their family members and relatives.

Active leisure was considered a meaningful activity which enhances people's quality of life and an end in itself, thus autotelic. This change in people's conception and valuation of leisure is inferred to have been the results of social development in Korea during the most turbulent period in its history.

Korea seems to be taking shape as a "post-industrial" society as rapidly as any other society at least in people's conception and attitudes towards leisure. Of course, passive leisure still comprises more than 60% of people's leisure time due mainly to the TV's overwhelming share of leisure time, but the trend towards more active leisure seems to be accelerated as society develops.

Time-use data have served as excellent indices in tracing these

changes in Korea. People's time-use patterns are culture-specific and mirror the contexts of a society including their values, attitudes and life styles. In case of Korea, time-use studies since 1981 have provided much valuable data to delve into one of the country's important developmental traits.

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