Leisure Behavior and Theories of Aging: Life in a Continuing Care Retirement Community

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권문배

국문초록

여러 여가사회학 연구논문을 살펴보면 각각의 사회노인학 이론들을 맞받침하기 위한 여러 연구들을 수행하는데 그 대표적 이론이 분리이론 또는 비활동이론(Disengagement theory)과 활동이론(Activity theory)이다. 또한 근래에 주목받고 있는 노인이론인 선택적 보상이론 (Selective Optimization with Compensation theory: SOC)에 대한 관심이 증가하고 있다. 본 연구자는 분리, 활동, 선택적 보상이론 이 세 가지 대표적 노인 이론을 여가 행동양식에 맞추어 공식화함으로써 노인들의 여가활동을 유형화하였다.

종적 구체적으로 보면, 여가활동에 있어서의 행동변화와 세 가지 노인이론의 (Selective Optimization with Compensation: SOC, Disengagement, Activity Theory)의 관계를 공식화된 방법으로 규명하는 방법을 사용하여 연구대상인 실버타운 입주자들을 그들의 여가활동 유형에 맞게 각각의 태입으로 분류하여 여가활동의 행동양식을 규명해 보았다. 노인여가활동 유형중, SOC 태입은 실버타운 입주 후 참가하는 전체 여가활동 종목 수는 증가한 자신의 기호에 맞게 선택한 여가활동에 있어서 더욱 집중적으로 활동하는 유형이고 Disengagement 태입은 실버타운 입주 후 참가하는 전체 여가활동 종목 수에 있어서도 줄지만 선택한 종목의 빈도에 있어서도 줄어드는 유형이다. 반대로 Activity 태입은 실버타운 입주 후 전체 여가활동 종목수가 늘어 나거나 유지되는 유형이다.

본 연구에서 노인들의 여가활동 변화를 알아보기 위하여 LASS-S가 사용되었으며, 펜실베니아주 Cornwall에 있는 실버타운의 166명 입주자들이 본 연구에 참가하였다. 본 연구결과 노인이론을 바탕으로한 여가활동 유형 분류에서 참가자들의 반 이상(51%)이 SOC태입으로 나타났고 그 다음이 Disengagement 태입, Activity 태입 순으로 나타났다. 또한 여가활동 변화에 있어 Disengagement 태입을 나타내는 참가자들의 나이가 가장 높았고 그 다음은 SOC태입, Activity태입 순이었다. 실버타운 입주 기간과 관련해서는 SOC태입의 입주기간이 가장 긴것으로 나타났다.
I. Introduction

The increasing number of older individuals and the large amounts of free time available to them has captured the interest of researchers in leisure and gerontology.

Many literature in leisure and gerontology field have explained the theoretical foundations of leisure activity participation in older adults including disengagement, activity and selective optimization with compensation theories. According to the disengagement theory (Cumming & Henry, 1961), a gradual and mutual withdrawal between the older persons and society is necessary and results in decreased involvement and interaction. This constriction in the space in which one lives and reduction in involvement in society is purportedly satisfying to the older individual. This theory is associated with a gradual decline in leisure activity participation of the elderly. In other words, older people are assumed to gradually slow down their activity levels.

Activity theory (Havighurst, Neugarten, & Tobin, 1968) suggests that old age is an active time of life, with the focus being on continuity where possible, and substitution were necessary. This theory posits that the maintenance of activity, replacement of lost roles with new ones, and continued psychological involvement in society and interpersonal relationships represented the formula for successful aging.

In recent years, many literature have presented information on how selective optimization with compensation (Baltes & Baltes, 1990; Baltes & Carstensen, 1996; Freund & Baltes, 1998) is an essential component in the study of aging. SOC considers gains and losses and their potential interactions conjointly. It offers information on how the interplay between gains and losses plays an integral role in late life and how a new compensatory mechanism is developed which allows those in late life to adapt to declines in other areas of functioning. Some theorists have attempted to apply selective optimization with compensation theory to the leisure studies field. Lawton (1993) tried to explain selective optimization with compensation in view of leisure behaviors. This SOC theory focused on the role that the older person plays in constructing the appropriate environment. Reduced contact with peripheral acquaintances and increased investment in a select few may represent one way that people shape their social environments to generate the greatest gain. According to the SOC theory, residents select high-priority activities in the face of environmental and physical constraints.

The purpose of this study was to determine which of the theories of aging (Selective Optimization with Compensation, Disengagement, and Activity theory) were most closely matched with changes in leisure activity among Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) residents. To accomplish the purpose of this study, the investigator used the Leisure Activity Scale for Seniors: LAS-S (Kwon, 2002), which measures changes in leisure activity participation of older adults.

This study sought to answer the following research questions: