SOCIOLOGY OF LEISURE:
THEMES AND PERSPECTIVES.
CHAPTER 1

SOCIOLOGY OF LEISURE: THEMES & PERSPECTIVES

This study is an attempt to analyse the leisure-time activities of the college students of Delhi University. Based on data gathered from the undergraduate students of three selected colleges in Delhi, the study attempts to explore the significance of various socio-economic factors in determining the leisure patterns of the students. The study also highlights the role of leisure in student life and its influence on their values.

The intent of this study is:

1) To assess the limited previous research and theoretical developments in this area;
2) To report the results of the empirical investigation into the leisure activities of students, and finally;
3) To indicate the relevance and importance for future areas of leisure research.

The study of leisure has yet to find a foothold among the Indian sociologists. For this reason any student of sociology of leisure is handicapped by a surprising lack of systematic studies or relevant literature available in this field of study. Notwithstanding the growth of organised leisure sociologists in India, they have devoted very little attention to this area of study. They have preferred to study those aspects viz. economy, polity, social and educational institutions that have
conventionally been considered to be of paramount importance in determining the nature of the social system; and sociology text books are still being published that carry no reference to leisure. The absence of any significant sociological contribution is possibly one reason why discussion of impact that the growth of leisure is making upon society is still based largely upon speculation. Although research has been conducted into the social characteristics of participants in particular types of leisure behaviour—such as theatre going, attending sports events, concerts etc. such studies provide only fragments of knowledge about the place and importance of leisure in contemporary society. The studies by market research organisations do provide us with some data on the leisure habits of the public but their emphasis is on the commercial aspects. The sociologists would, however, face a number of difficulties in trying to use this data for his own purpose for the simple reason that these investigations highlight what people do rather than why they participate in leisure activities. The reason for this is simply that commercial interests are concerned mainly with how many people prefer a particular medium rather than why people expose themselves to various media. The results of the market research would thus pose a limitation to the sociologist for developing his conclusions about the significance of leisure in society.

Studies that have principally been concerned with other aspects of social life such as the structure of urban
communities and the characteristics of particular occupational groups incidentally do provide fragments of our knowledge about the public's leisure behaviour but the information provided by such studies is not easily integrated. The data produced by market research may be helpful but so far none of the sociologists in India has attempted to utilise it for the study of leisure in society and consequently few, if any, theories relating leisure behaviour of individuals to other aspects of their lives have been developed and tested.

The paucity of sociological literature on leisure research in India would inadvertently force a scholar to hunt for the relevant studies available elsewhere. In countries such as America and Britain though there has been a great deal of theorising about the social significance of trends in the use of leisure here again it is, surprising but true, that very few sociological enquiries have been closely related to empirical research. Meyersohn (1969:53) in his article on "Sociology of leisure in United States" cites pertinent observation made by Bennett Berger: "The sociology of leisure today is little else than a reporting of survey data on what selected samples of individuals do with the time in which they are not working and the correlation of these data with conventional demographic variables? Meyersohn agrees with Berger and observes further that "little of the empirical work carried out by sociologists comes close to testing illuminating hypotheses"
(1969:53). Indeed as he notes later in the same article, "the discovery of correlations of participation in particular leisure activities with social class or occupation are perhaps more valuable to our understanding of the meaning of class than they are towards our understanding of the meaning of leisure" (1969:57). The same can be true of the other variables. Apparently as Meyersohn suggests the sociologists have yet to formulate hypotheses in a manner conducive to developing knowledge about leisure as a sociological entity per se, instead of further verifying the explanatory limits of different variables.

A quick review of published work on the sociology of leisure at the outset would not only:

1) provide a useful theoretical background to our study, but

2) will also enable us to classify the existing leisure studies according to their sociological orientations.

LEISURE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE:

Before attempting a review of the available studies on the sociology of leisure it is important to note that leisure in some form or the other has always been found to exist in all types of societies whatever the level of their development. Expressive forms of leisure behaviour whether music, dance, drama, play, fairs, festivals or religious ritual that one finds associated with all societies irrespective of their level of culture,
tends to show the universal importance of the variety of leisure pursuits through which each society sought amusement, recreation and fun.

Though the concept of leisure, as we understand today, may not mean anything in a tribal society for the simple reason that a tribal society is not clockbound, we do find play and work mingling in a simple rhythm of primitive life. In anthropological studies of tribal life no where do we find any reference to any separate organisations or institutions whose specific job was to provide recreation and entertainment. Tribal religion and social occasions intertwined with the culturally prescribed style of life, that affected the entire community, had elements such as hunting occasions, sports, dance, songs, art etc. which not only had survival value for them but also provided amusement and fun.

Apart from the subsistence activities tribal rites, rituals and ceremonials not only had religious significance but also had recreation value. Religious ritual that signified such natural phenomena as the change of seasons, ripening of crops, birth, life or death were strictly observed. Such occasions involved ritual dance, songs, art and music that evoked emotional participation of the community and was functional in providing relaxation, recuperation and recreation signifying thereby the presence of leisure elements in many of the tribal religious activities. This association of the existence of leisure with the vital community activities like work and religion has been one of the most enduring features of the tribal life.
With an increasing control over his food supply in a peasant society man not only started adding to his possessions, opportunities and comforts but also had increasing spells of relaxation and rest. Through agriculture, organisation and the division of labour, which was essential for the routine tillage and the inherent diversity of men the equality of the simple tribal society gave way to the inequality and complexity of a peasant society. This inequality resulted in the division of society in social classes. According to Veblen (1899) the emergence of leisure class coincides with the beginning of ownership and the possession of wealth. These wealth inequalities found expression in the leisure activities such as arts, music, dance, feasts and fairs pursued by various classes in their search for amusement and fun.

Hunting and jousting were typically regarded as upper class activities the lower orders of society being excluded not only by economic factors but also by the law, since to participate in the pursuits of the upper classes would have indicated that an individual of lower class was attempting to step outside the role in society to which he had been allocated and adopt a style of life that was the prerogative of the higher social strata. The styles of life associated with different positions in society all contained their own patterns of recreational experience. A person's class position was thus central
to the entire pattern of his life that also included his recreational pattern.

The growth of urbanisation and industrialisation brought about remarkable changes in the working life of man who was relieved of much of the drudgery with the introduction of shorter working hours and more leisure. The development of mass media and communication like movies, radio, television became easily accessible and claimed the major portion of the increased leisure of the masses, providing standardised entertainment on a mass scale.

According to Roberts (1970) leisure as it is experienced today is really a product of industrial society. It is not just that the productive power of industrialism has given to the population time and money to cultivate leisure interests on an unprecedented scale, but that it has also created a new cultural awareness of leisure that was previously impossible. Industrialisation has not only created the spare time and surplus income that is available for discretionary spending; it has also instituted a rhythm of life in which set hours are devoted to work, after which man's time is free. Social obligations, centred upon an individual's occupation, are compressed in terms of time, and people are left with a part of their lives to use purely in accordance with their own inclinations and interests. As a consequence of this, institutions have developed to cater for people's
leisure needs in an industrial society, and leisure has therefore become a differentiated element within the structure of society.

Thus leisure in all societies whether tribal, peasant and industrial acquires significance when viewed against the dimension of work. In a tribal society leisure, totally immersed in the social and religious life of simple people, is not recognisable as a separate institution. In a peasant society settled conditions of life, ownership and inequalities of wealth provide greater leisure interludes to man, besides, certain leisure pursuits become identified with certain classes. But it is under industrialised conditions that leisure has acquired an almost equal importance in society as work. With the decline in working time there has been a consequent rise in the leisure time of the masses influencing their behaviour in the choice of activities for spending their surplus time.

STATE OF THE ART:

Since one finds leisure intimately associated with all types of social structures it is not surprising that this elusive theme could have escaped the attention of sociologists for long. Scanning the available literature on sociology of leisure at this stage would thus provide a useful background to our understanding of the growth and importance of leisure in society. On the basis of the review of published reports in the field of sociology
of leisure we can generally classify the leisure orientations of the studies into the following categories:

1) Studies that deal with the social functions of leisure as related to participation in the economy (work) and to system maintenance. For example the study by Bishop & Ikeda (1970) on "Status and Role Factors in the Leisure behaviour of Different Occupations" attempts to describe how certain leisure activities are associated with the occupations of the individuals or their impact on the economic institutions of a society.

But prior to this study the functional orientation of leisure was attempted by Paul Lafargue as early as 1917 in his study of leisure for the worker entitled The Right to be Lazy. But it was in the United States that the foundation was laid for the sociology of leisure by Thorstein Veblen (1899) through his study of The Theory of the Leisure Class. Veblen analysed the different types of idlers that he found among the bourgeoisie; he analysed the conspicuous consumption indulged in by the bourgeoisie in its quest for social status.

The pioneering study in America was that of George Lundberg and his colleagues (1934). It defined leisure as the opposite of those
activities that are on the whole instrumental to other ends rather than ends in themselves. It was the kind of seminal study that might have led to a wide range of replications, refinements, extensions or rejections. Instead, the subject was neglected. Only the inclusion of leisure in several community studies reminded sociologists that people spent a lot of time in activities not strictly economic, political, educational, religious or familial.

After World War II the sociology of leisure took on a new dimension and new level of meanings. America during this period was beginning to grapple with the problems of mass society such as mass consumption and mass culture. In this new context a number of studies on leisure appeared. For instance David Riesman's study *The Lonely Crowd* appeared in 1950 which had a great influence not only in America but also elsewhere. Riesman argued in favour of the hypothesis that modern man, viewed in terms of his social character has known only two revolutions—the first began with the renaissance when the "tradition directed" man (whose whole social character had been derived entirely from the community) began to be governed by the norms and values of the family and so became "inner directed"; the second of these revolutions appeared by the mid of the 20th century in those countries that had entered the stage of mass consumption and mass culture. In this period man begun
to be governed by the mass media of communication on the one hand and by the peer groups on the other. Under such circumstances man becomes "other directed". Reflections on mass leisure were, therefore, central to Riesman's theoretical perspective. A few years later there appeared the first collection of readings on the topic of mass leisure (Larrabe & Meyerson 1958; Rosenberg & White 1957) pointing to a decisive progress made in the empirical verification of these new ideas on the relationship of leisure and culture in mass society.

In 1950s a series of reports from Kansas City Studies of Robert Havighurst & Feigenbaum (1957) seemed to launch another approach to the study of leisure. A number of indepth techniques were employed to discover functional meanings of various kinds of leisure to the participants and a classification of these meanings. Concern for social placement by age, sex and social status was augmented by study of family and community relationships, life orientations and styles and a wide range of non-work activity. The analysis became quite complex and called for many qualitative decisions and interpretative judgements. This complexity alongwith the closure of the Kansas city project seems to have aborted the research efforts that might have been built on this beginning.

In Europe during the same period the Sociology of Leisure made almost equal progress. The work of George Friedmann (1961) in particular gave a special place to the
role of leisure with reference to man in a civilisation dominated by technology. In England Rountree & Laver's (1951) work inspired a whole series of sociological monographs and research studies that have evoked considerable sociological response especially in Holland. Large scale public opinion polls from 1954 onwards on the way in which young people spend their leisure marked the beginning of a vigorous government programme stressing character building and the provision of facilities for leisure.

Writing about British society, Burns (1967) argues that leisure is ceasing to be overshadowed by work and is becoming the element that gives the individuals meaning in everyday life. In his study of The Worker in an Affluent Society, Zweig (1961) discovered that relationships formed at work with both colleagues and supervisors were becoming irrelevant to the worker's own conception of his place in society. The workers felt that the nature of their jobs gave no indications of the type of people that they really were. It was the interests that they cultivated and the styles of life they adopted during their leisure upon which the workers based their self-identity. Indeed Margaret Mead also argues that to have fun and to enjoy oneself have now become mandatory social obligations and many people now regard work functional in providing an outlet or escape from the pressures of the new social values which demand that the
individuals derive the maximum possible enjoyment from their free time. Under such conditions their work provides the necessary resources for preferred leisure pursuits.

In industry there are studies, such as that of Goldthorpe (1968), which emphasise the extent to which industrial behaviour and attitudes are influenced by the sort of lives people wish to lead in their free time. This British study was intended to present a picture of the type of employee who might become typical in the future as the labour force as a whole becomes more affluent, for the workers selected for study all earned incomes in excess of the national average at the time of the investigation. Goldthorpe found that the sample of workers, that he studied together with his colleagues, possessed a predominantly instrumental approach to their jobs. They worked in order to be able to realize a particular style of life that they considered desirable. The sort of work they chose, and the way in which they reacted to it, were only comprehensible in terms of aspirations acquired outside the workplace, based upon a desire to be able to spend free time and money in particular ways. Goldthorpe's (1968) study thus highlights that the instrumental approach that the workers adopt towards their jobs make their occupational behaviour incomprehensible except in terms of the styles of leisure around which employees structure their careers and job attitudes.
In the second category we discuss studies of leisure as time that is a quantifiable part of the clock-schedule, for example Strumilin & Prudenski (1964) and Petrosian (1965).

The first empirical studies of leisure by sociologists appeared in Europe and America around 1920-1930. In USSR work of Strumilin (1925) inspired research on the "time budgets" of individuals and at the same time the Soviet government developed an official policy on the organisation of leisure. International Labour Office (1924) organised the first international conference on the free time of the worker attended by 300 delegates from 18 countries. The delegates expressed a general feeling that as the time spent on work decreased, leisure activities would have to become more organised.

In the USSR during the period 1956-62 the gradual replacement of the eight-hours working day by one of seven-hours, stimulated renewed inquiry in the tradition of Strumilin into time-budgets and leisure time activities (Prudenski 1964; Petrosian 1965). The first empirical study of leisure in a socialist setting that made use of the latest sociological research methods took place in Yugoslavia (Ahtik 1963). The empirical study of sociology of leisure has also taken remarkable strides in Poland due to the efforts of the Centre for the Study of Mass Culture affiliated with the Polish Academy of Sciences. In most of these studies leisure has been viewed against the time factor.
3. Studies dealing with leisure and recreation participation of social aggregates. These are the studies in which leisure and play are interpreted as necessary conditions for the physical, mental and social well-being of the individuals for example, De Grazia's study (1962) on *Time, Work and Leisure* where he has attempted to find answer to the most simple questions—What is work? What is time? What is leisure? He relates "work" that is "un-leisure" to the necessary activity of man, dramatically influenced by the machine, resulting in the shortening of his working time and consequent increase in his free time. It is this free time that has vastly increased man's leisure participation.

Huizinga (1950), the Dutch scholar in his philosophical study of play *Homo Ludens*, observed the importance of leisure in the development of personality. His interest was not in the wider concept of leisure, but in play as part of sport, games or even in fantasy activity—that is those areas where leisure behaviour most intimately involves the personality. He argued that play was a type of activity that met basic human needs and was, therefore, an indispensable element in all human civilisations. Today such cultural attitudes towards play and leisure have been firmly institutionalised.

4. Studies of cultural orientations related to leisure and to leisure that deviates from cultural norms, for example studies by King, Dumazedier and Downes.
In the study *New Survey of London Life and Labour*, King (1935) expresses the view that social problems such as crime, gambling, sexual deviancy etc. occurred as direct result of peoples' failure to find more constructive things to do with their free time. Solving such problems was seen in terms of organising peoples' free time so that their inclination and attention would be directed towards more proper activities and the great stress is placed upon the need to train young people to use their leisure in a disciplined manner.

In France Dumazedier's (1967) study *Towards a Society of Leisure*, is an attempt to examine the place of leisure in the social system. His research in a growing industrial town dealt with work-leisure, leisure as commercial enterprise, leisure as a part of the cultural system and the function of leisure in the workers life. While stressing the importance of leisure within the comprehensive social context of the community's institutions, Dumazedier suggests that leisure is emerging as an important social institution alongside and related to the other social institutions. Dumazedier now proposes an "active sociology" that contributes significantly to the planning of the social system. He also emphasises the need to understand the social determinants of 'leisure' thereby viewing leisure as totally embedded in the overall institutional contexts of the society and functional in providing relaxation.
diversion, entertainment and opportunities for development outside work limitations. He further argues that it is leisure that is the major determinant of men's self-consciousness and the style of life that an individual develops during his leisure forms the basis for the adoption of values and attitudes that affect his behaviour in all other spheres of life. Dumazedier's work is important for it attempts to underlie the importance of leisure as yet another institution that is functionally related to other social systems. It is only unfortunate that the sociologists unwittingly neglected systematic and sustained studies in this field for so long. Realising this lapse John Newlinger (1971) in his article on "Leisure and Mental Health" in the book "Sociology of Leisure" edited by Theodre B. Johannis & C. Neil Bull, also specifically states that "the problem of leisure has reached a stage where the time for piecemeal, isolated studies has passed" (1971:51). What is needed are long-range, systematic research efforts.

This need and desire for a systematic study of leisure sociology that can be useful in planning and prediction is also found in the work of scholars in Eastern Europe. According to them if society is defined as a closed system of functionally interrelated institutions based on a non-contradictory economic model, then leisure behaviour can be profiled, mapped and predicted. The result is not just scientific knowledge but the basis for putting knowledge and social aims together in planning and practice.
In Europe concern for the impact of urbanisation and technology on leisure has led to a significant change in planning.

Criminology is another area of social research in which the central role that leisure plays in peoples' lives is recognised in order to explain the causes of deviant behaviour. Downes (1966), upon the basis of his research amongst young people in London, says that young people do run into difficulties in realising their aspirations which reflect the style of leisure that they want to adopt rather than the educational certificates and jobs that they want to achieve. In their free time Downes found that the young people he studied possessed an urge to experience excitement and to engage in activity of pursuits that cost money. If money and excitement could not be obtained legitimately the young people would resort to deviant methods of obtaining those satisfactions from their leisure that they considered to be important. Like studies in many other areas of social life, this enquiry into the origins of crime was forced to take into account attitudes and values based on leisure in order to render its subject matter comprehensible.

British sociologist Kenneth Roberts (1970) expresses concern for the possible failure of the social system to adapt to new employment conditioning. He discusses the problem of adaptation, education and for better preparation for leisure. He also offers a definition of "normal sociology" and leisure study. In his study he tries to
relate sociological perspective to other aspects of society such as culturally prescribed beliefs, values, economic institutions, the family, system of social stratification, education and the political system and determine how these in turn affect the uses people make of their leisure.

The second British study is a compilation of papers on **Leisure and Society in Britain** (1972). Here most of the contributions deal with leisure as a derivative from the culture, from work relationship and occupations from leisure industries and other institutional frameworks. One section deals with leisure and the life cycle, age status as determined by age and age related role expectations provide an alternative to the usual "social determinants of leisure?"

It is interesting to note that when the Kansas City Project pioneering research in the diverse meanings of leisure was closed, interest in this field also waned for some time. Largely because of the failure of these and other efforts to enunciate sustained research an obscure paperback book became the agenda setting document for leisure sociology in the sixties. A special issue of **Social Problems** (1961:i) edited by Erwin Smigel not only revived the interest in this field but was also expanded into **Work and Leisure: A Contemporary Social Problem** in 1963. In the following years references to this collection seemed to dominate the sparse literature available on the subject.

In Kaplan's (1975) book **Leisure Theory and Policy**,
the system is viewed as changing in its institutional contexts as the forms and cultural meanings of leisure change. Further, he takes a Weberian approach that human activities are constructs and that almost anything can be leisure for an individual.

5. In this category we include those studies of leisure that take a religious (e.g. Pickering) and Philosophical (e.g. Weiss & Paul 1969) perspective and seek the character building potential for individuals of various recreational activities. The object of the studies is to understand the religious and moral development of the individuals and its consequences for a society.

Sociologists working in these diverse fields found it necessary to refer to leisure in order to explain peoples' behaviour in various areas of social life. Pickering (1968), for instance, has argued that the developments that have taken place in the religious behaviour of the population and the functioning of religious institutions since the 19th century can only be understood in terms of the extent to which life has become leisure centred. The importance of leisure in the lives of public, Pickering argues, has transformed religion into a leisure-time activity. Pickering notes the extent to which, since the 19th century, the major Christian denominations have ceased attempting to arouse respect by the use of supernatural fears and threats, and have incorporated new pleasurable elements such as choirs and social occasions into their range of activities. These
developments that religious institutions have been obliged to accept are only explicable once the leisure centredness of the lives of their potential congregation is acknowledged.

6. In this category we classify all those studies that have been conducted on the sociology of leisure in India. Scanning the sociological literature in India the major studies that one finds on sociology of leisure are Modi's (1969) study on *Leisure and Social Structure* which is an attempt to reveal patterns of leisure and recreation in the city of Jaipur in comparison to a few selected villages in Rajasthan, and Zulie Nakhoda's (1961) study on *Leisure and Recreation in Society* which gives an interesting account of the way in which leisure has been used in different communities in the light of the municipal facilities for recreation that are available in the city of Bombay. We also have N.K. Bose (1957) interesting article on the "Effect of Urbanisation on Work and Leisure" in *Man in India*. Gupta (1968) has attempted to study span (leisure time) interests of Hindi speaking villages in Lucknow and Mistry contributed a paper in *Sociological Bulletin* on the "Indian Child and His Play" in the year 1958.

**WHAT IS LEISURE?**

Each of these orientations has yielded some findings and interpretation of data supportive of its position. Yet much ambiguity remains, as reflected in the definitional
attempts in the available writings to distinguish leisure from work and recreation.

Thus Leigh & John (1971) in their study Young People and Leisure suggest that the simplest definition of leisure is that it is not work.

Similarly Klauser & Samuel (1969) in their study Recreation and Social Action - A programme for Outdoor Recreation in Research states that leisure implies temporal dimensions that is free time from moral, formal and obligatory demands of work and recreation implies engaging in mental or physical activity for its own sake.

Though a number of variations may be found most of the definitions tend to share this element in essence that, "leisure is that which remains after work is completed?"

Apart from this consensus the supportive findings in leisure sociology, however, do not suggest any theoretically significant or unique characteristics of this "amorphously defined area of human activity" (Neilson 1969:10).

Perhaps some of the difficulties lies in the implicit acceptance of leisure as a "cafeteria concept" says Cheek (1971) as compared to work.

ASSESSMENT OF PUBLISHED WORKS ON SOCIOLOGY OF LEISURE:

On the basis of the examination of the published literature on sociology of leisure we may draw the following conclusions:
i) There does not appear to be any substantial amount of solid leisure research in progress. 

ii) A substantial amount of effort is being devoted to the development of conceptual schema which appears to go untested. 

iii) The attempt to relate sociology of leisure to the central theoretical and methodological concerns of contemporary sociology is embryonic. 

iv) Descriptive rather than analytic studies are in vogue; and 

v) Indicating where further research is likely to be most fruitful is a task few sociologists have attempted. 

Under this state of affairs any attempt to analyse leisure patterns in a society would provide a promising line of enquiry to a social researcher. 

**NEED FOR STUDY:**

The need for such a study is all the more important as we are aware that there is a significant dearth of sociological enquiries that have been closely related to empirical research. Though various views have been expressed about the effects that the new mass media of communication is having upon the lives of people in a society and the way in which the quality of social life is being transformed by the expansion of leisure. Since
leisure is assuming a great significance in the social life of people the systematic study of the role of leisure in society is a task that needs to be undertaken not only for integrating the fragmented data that is currently at our disposal but to facilitate the development of future research in this field.

Empirical findings from varied sources need to be drawn together so as to make some tentative generalisations possible and to assess value of different theoretical approaches to the study of leisure.

Leisure is publicly acknowledged as being an important ingredient of contemporary life and sociology ought to be making a positive contribution to our understanding of its significance not only for the enlightening of the general public, but also for the sake of sociology itself, for if leisure is an important element in modern life, then explaining its significance will be a pre-condition for developing an understanding of the structure and functioning of contemporary social systems.

STUDY FOCUS:

In sociological study of leisure it becomes important to explore the relationship between leisure and its social context. The study can be confined to any age-group as "Leisure is not a fixed set of activities that are learned in childhood and continued in an unchanging pattern" states Kelly (1974) in his study Sociological Research and Leisure Perspective. He supports this statement by saying that the pattern of a person's leisure tends to
alter as he passes through the various phases of the life cycle. The way in which people use their leisure is strongly related to age roles and associated family responsibilities, according to Roberts (1970:44). He says, "With age an individual's leisure interests and activities undergo dramatic changes" and division in styles of leisure along age lines become much sharper. For example in our society, as in others, adolescence is a period during which young people tend to drift away from the families in which they have been reared.

Explaining adolescence Hollingshead in his study on youth says that:

Sociologically, adolescence is the period in the life of a person when the society in which he functions ceases to regard him/her as a child and does not accord to him full adult status, roles and functions.

In terms of behaviour he further states, it is defined by the:

Roles the person is expected to play, is allowed to play, is forced to play, or prohibited from playing by virtue of his status in society (1967:6-7)

Under this state of affairs Roberts found that in deciding how to use their free time young people are much more strongly influenced by the views of their peers than by the opinion of their parents. The youth in general thus becomes more responsive to peer group norms. The peer group therefore provides not only an important source of leisure values to an adolescent but also tend to become the focal point of the young people's leisure activities.
They begin to spend a much larger proportion of their free time outside the home than is normal in any other age groups. Not only this, they are also most important customers of many of the industries that market amusement and recreational services. This group, therefore, develops a much wider range of interests and pastimes than is found amongst older age groups. Young people are keen to develop new tastes and they are willing to experiment, and as a result of this their leisure is extremely colourful and varied in contrast to the leisure pursuits of their elders. These are some of the significant findings of the studies conducted on youth by Roberts (1970) and Hollingshed (1967).

Roberts (1970) also points out in his study that marriage and parenthood brings about quite dramatic changes in the leisure habits of young people. Their domestic responsibilities increase, with the result that the amount of free time and money available to maintain their leisure interests tends to diminish. The leisure interests of the married couple gradually narrows as their family becomes the focal point of their lives. Few new leisure interests are acquired after marriage.

As adults grow older the range of activities that interests them continuously narrows and the proportion of leisure time spent at home gradually increases. The general trend for leisure interests and activities appears to become increasingly restricted as people pass through retirement and into old age.
In view of the above description it appears that with the young an image has become attached to the ideas of having fun and seeking amusement and the creation of such an image is inevitable in a society where it is principally the younger age groups who are involved in leisure activities based outside the home and who are exposed to the choice between the parents and peers as a frame of reference for their interests, activities and behaviour.

Since this is an important age group in society for the development of interests and activities, the study is confined to the undergraduate students, because it is in college that an individual comes under a strong peer influence and tends to develop distinct pattern of behaviour.

This inadvertently defines the scope and objective of our study that is "to investigate the leisure time activities of college students of Delhi University" and, "to explore the significance of the role of leisure in student life and its influence on their values."

**FRAMEWORK:**

The study includes both male and female students for the purpose of comparison of their leisure activities.

While this approach through the theme of leisure leaves many factors out of the reckoning, it does provide a framework which allows for an interrelated view of many of the things which are happening (and not happening) at the moment in colleges.
To evaluate the merit of this statement it involves focusing attention on the following:

a) College students,
b) their family background, and;
c) their behaviour.

This also specified the task of observing the many ways in which college students spent their time, who their friends were, what they talked about and on which leisure pursuits they spent their major time, money and energies.

This led to the whole gamut of their leisure, recreation, pleasure pursuits, friends, dates as well as smoking, drinking and drugs.

Gathering data on all this involved, besides the pre-coded questionnaire (specifically designed for the purpose), the utilisation of the techniques of observation and interviews so as to obtain all the necessary and relevant information on all aspects of the college students' leisure life.

These methodological details form the subject matter of our next chapter.