UNDERSTANDING CHINESE PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION IN URBAN PARKS: THE CASE OF STANLEY PARK IN VANCOUVER

by

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U N I V E R S I T Y

Understanding Chinese people's experience and satisfaction in urban parks:

The case of Stanley Park in Vancouver

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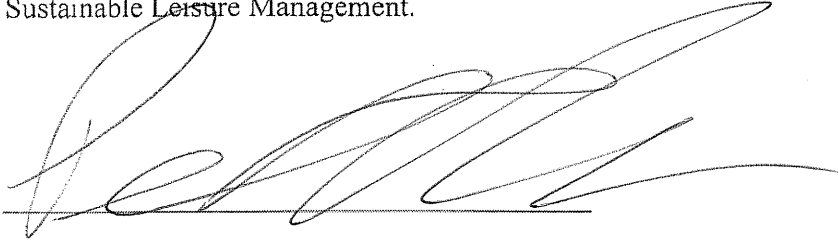
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Abstract

More than half of the world's population lives in urban areas, with little to no contact with the natural environment, including green spaces and urban parks. It is undeniable that urban parks play a significant role in the wellbeing of individuals and the sustainability of cities in social, economic, and ecological ways. Urban parks in Vancouver attract a large number of visitors every day, including Chinese visitors. According to the 2006 census, the Chinese population comprised about 29.7% of the population in the City of Vancouver, with a Chinese international tourist market growing very fast. Chinese people view natural places, including urban parks, based on their culture and values, which differ greatly from the ones held by Canadians. Research on visitor satisfaction, cross cultural leisure, race and ethnicity are becoming increasingly significant in sustainable leisure management, community planning and tourism, creating the need to better understand Chinese attitudes toward green space and parks timely and impellent in Vancouver. This thesis used Stanley Park as a case study to investigate Chinese people's experience and satisfaction in urban parks. Via a convenient sampling strategy, Chinese park visitors were asked questions regarding the importance and satisfaction of different park attributes and leisure satisfaction constructs. Elements of least satisfaction and expectations were also assessed. The data was analyzed using qualitative analysis. The results found that Chinese park visitors identified relaxation as their main motivation for visiting parks and prioritized safety in parks as their primary concern. Physical exercise and harmony between human and natural elements were of moderate importance, while socialization, learning and use of skills in parks were rated as unimportant compared to experiencing nature and having convenient amenities such as washrooms, benches and food nearby. In conclusion, to encourage Chinese visitation, park planning and tourism should focus primarily on relaxation centered activities, followed by physical activity, connection to nature and safety.

Key words: nature, urban parks, Chinese people, experience, satisfaction, Stanley Park, qualitative analysis

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

More than half of the world's population lives in urban areas, with little to no contact with the natural environment, including green spaces and urban parks (Barton & Pretty, 2010). Urban parks play an important role in cities, providing leisure spaces where people can mingle and enjoy a variety of recreation activities, escape high pressure from work, socialize, and get closer to nature (Koon, 2009). Improving access to local green space for both quality of life and the sustainability of towns and cities is therefore important (Chiesura, 2004; Barton & Pretty, 2010). Parks are regarded as "green infrastructure" that provides many ecological services including cleaner air and water, regulation of microclimate, natural beauty and respite from noise and traffic (Bolund & Hunhammar, 1999; Chiesura, 2004, Harnik, 2006). Besides ecosystem services, urban parks have positive influences on people's general wellbeing through restorative components, amenity components and spiritual components (Chiesura, 2004). The restorative components suggest that being in the natural environment can alleviate the stresses of daily life, and re-create people's psychological equilibrium, while the amenity component reflects the experience of nature as an escape from the routine of everyday life, as a break from worries and responsibilities, as a visual diversion from cars and houses, as place to listen to other sounds than those of traffic and human voices (Chiesura, 2004). The spiritual component describes nature as a primary source of energy, the original driving force, the basis and very essence of human existence (Chiesura, 2004). Nature is perceived as a mystic energy giving sense of life, which enrich it and makes it fully worth living (Chiesura, 2004). In Western culture, experiencing nature in a spiritual way also means to be able to get in touch with God (Nash, 2014). Westerners may therefore perceive sublime landscapes as places where humans have the opportunity to glimpse the face of divinity (Nash, 2014).

Natural spaces in cities also provide social benefits; for example, parks encourage people to be outdoors, and can increase social integration and interaction among neighbours (Chiesura, 2004). Parks are important components of nature-based tourism being international visitors' destinations (Eagles, 2002). Valentine (1992) defined nature-based tourism in a relatively simple way as "nature-based tourism is primarily concerned with the direct enjoyment of some relatively undisturbed phenomenon of nature" (p.108). Nature-based tourism is a large and growing global industry, especially in countries such as Australia, Tanzania and New Zealand which have made nature-based tourism a key component of their export market (Eagles, 2002).

Nature-based tourism, especially park tourism, is dependent upon two fundamental attributes: 1) appropriate levels of environment quality and biodiversity, and 2) suitable levels of consumer service (Eagles, 2002). Additionally, leisure scholars have been assessing place attachment to enhance the understanding of leisure behaviours in nature-based tourism (Kyle et al., 2004). Place attachment refers to the extent to which an individual values or identifies with a particular natural setting (Kyle et al., 2004). Place attachment comprises two constructs of place identity and place dependency (Kyle et al., 2004). Place dependency is related to frequency of use, while place identity means that a place may be viewed as an essential part of one's self, resulting in strong emotional attachment to places (Kyle et al., 2004). The concept of place attachment is similar to attitudinal loyalty (Moore et al., 2015). Generally, loyalty is a commitment to a destination, which can be measured by items such as intention to revisit and recommend to others (Moore et al., 2015). Therefore, it is critical for planners and managers to understand the key factors influencing visitor experiences in nature-based tourism. Such an understanding can help providing tourists and visitors a satisfactory, positive and truly memorable experience which may result in future visits and recommendations to other people to include the area in their trip planning (Tung & Ritchie, 2011).

Over the last 40 years a decline in nature-based recreation has been documented (Weiler et al., 2013). Studies suggest that new generations are ignorant about and simply not interested in nature-based experiences, not knowing what they are missing (Weiler et al., 2013). The term "nature deficit disorder" describes children with brains and bodies no longer equipped for nature, and the term "environmental generational amnesia" is used to describe generations which grew up with no memories or experience in nature (Weiler et al., 2013, p.117). Such individuals are disconnected from the natural environment to a point of not having the capacity to enjoy and experience nature. The lack of participation in nature based activities and insufficient time appreciating nature is harmful to both society and individuals (Weiler et al., 2013). Weiler et al. (2013) assert that humans gain many psychological, social, physical and experiential benefits through access to nature that are potentially significant to quality of life; loss of these assets may consequentially be harmful to human society and individuals (Weiler et al., 2013). Research indeed demonstrates that humans have a desire and a need to affiliate or connect with nature (Harnik, 2006; Baur & Tynon, 2010, Weiler et al., 2013). Hence, urban parks play a significant role in the livelihood and wellbeing of citizens, as they are conveniently located and accessible to

all urban residents (Baur & Tynon, 2010). Managers should focus on attraction management to increase societal connection with nature and to enjoy the benefits offered by such natural experiences, especially in urban areas. Attraction is defined as a "named site with a specific human or natural feature which is the focus of visitor and management attention" (Leask, 2010, p.156). Contemporary research about visitor attraction management widely recognises the importance of providing qualified and satisfactory visitor experiences (Connell & Meyer, 2004).

Delivering satisfactory visitor experiences plays a crucial role in achieving the long-term viability and success of tourism attractions and has therefore become a critical area of research within current tourism and visitor management studies (Swarbrooke & Page, 2012; Clawson & Knetsch, 2013). Connell & Meyer (2004) point out that "the visitor experience arises from a combination of visitor emotions and attitudes and objective and subjective assessments of sites visited" (p.185). Visitor experience depends upon a person's unique and individual nature since each individual recall experiences subjectively and uniquely even when they participate in the same events and activities and receive equivalent services (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Connell & Meyer (2004) further support this theory by arguing that satisfactory experience is based on an individual's needs, wants, expectations and experiences. Clearly, access to nature is important to human health and wellbeing and also to the tourism industry. Supporting access to natural parks improves the liveability of cities and also increases their appeal to visitors as desirable destinations able to meet a variety of visitor needs and wants.

1.1 Natural Parks in Vancouver

Vancouver, situated in British Columbia, is consistently regarded as one of the most liveable cities in the world because of its successful management of a large network of green space within the city. Vancouver's Greenest City 2020 plan envisions that all residents live within a five minute walk of a park, greenway or other green space by 2020 (Council, 2009). Vancouver's success with its parks network is especially impressive considering it is the largest metropolitan area in Western Canada with 3.4 million inhabitants (Statistic Canada, 2011). Vancouver is also the most densely populated municipality in Canada and the 4th most in North America. Vancouver has close to 300 municipal parks, beaches, and gardens with recreational facilities, community centres, and amenities such as off-leash dog areas and skate parks (City of

Vancouver, 2015). The iconic world-class urban park for which Vancouver is famous is the 404 hectares (1,000 acres) Stanley Park which is located on prime land beside downtown Vancouver.

Vancouver's park network has been managed by the elected Vancouver Park Board since 1888 to ensure that Vancouver parks and recreation remain accessible to a broad audience (City of Vancouver, 2015). The Park Board's mission is "to provide, preserve, and advocate for parks and recreation services to benefit all people, communities, and the environment" (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2012, p.7). Their vision is "to be leaders in parks and recreation by connecting people to green space, active living and community" (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, 2012, p.8). The board's two main goals are to provide: great experiences, and relevant programs and services. Great experiences are delivered to visitors through: 1) improved inclusivity and accessibility - providing parks and recreation facilities and services that are inclusive and universally accessible; 2) continuous quality improvement - implement a service focused on a continuous improvement process; and 3) enhanced participation and active living - encourage active and healthy lifestyles and promote community involvement (Vancouver Broad of Parks and Recreation, 2012). Relevant programs and services are delivered through: 1) proactive service planning and delivery - assess parks and recreation needs and provide diverse and inclusive services that reflect Vancouver's current and future requirements; 2) sport for life- support the implementation of the Vancouver sport strategy; and 3) vibrant arts and culture experiences - actively facilitate public participation in and access to the arts.

1.2 Chinese Visitation of Vancouver parks

According to Metro Vancouver (2011), over the past 20 years (1989 to 2009), the total number of visits to parks grew by 113%, from 3.68 to 7.86 million visits, while the population grew by only 48%, which suggest that each resident is using the park system more today than in previous years. Besides, Metro Vancouver parks annual visitation is expected to grow from just over 9 million today to 12.7 to 13.2 million by 2031 (Metro Vancouver, 2011). This increased participation in outdoor recreation activity indicate the great importance of leisure studies in parks.

Providing great experiences and relevant programs that encourage participation and benefit all people, communities and the environment through improved inclusivity and accessibility is extremely difficult to achieve. This is especially true in an urban area with rapidly

shifting demographics, such as Vancouver. This city is one of the most ethnically diverse urban areas in Canada with over half of the residents being a visible minority and speaking a first language different from English. The Chinese population is prominent in the Greater Vancouver area of British Columbia (Hung, 2003, p.2) and constitute about 29.7% of the population of Vancouver (Statistic Canada, 2013). In addition, Chinese people constitute 37.1% of the Greater Vancouver Electoral Area A and account for around 47.0% of the population in the nearby City of Richmond (Statistics Canada, 2013). Yet, Chinese people's participation in outdoor recreation is low in comparison to other ethnicities and is hardly understood as contemporary leisure studies have not considered Asian groups in their research (Hung, 2003).

Not only does the Vancouver region host a large Chinese population, it also receives a large amount of visitation from China (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2015). The Chinese tourist market in BC increased by 15.1% in 2014, constituting the second largest market after Britain (20.4%) (Tourism Vancouver, 2014). The Canadian Tourism Commission (2015) found that Chinese tourists are interested in and expecting to see nature and beautiful scenery.

1.3 Significance of This Research

The large and rapidly expanding global Chinese international tourist market has been relatively neglected by researchers (Jie Li & Carr, 2004). As an iconic urban park, Stanley Park is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Vancouver and therefore receives a large number of Chinese visitors, both domestic and international. Given the importance of the expanding Chinese visitor market to Stanley Park, it is crucial to understand their experiences and level of satisfaction with Stanley Park. To address this gap, this study uses Stanley Park as a case study to investigate Chinese people's experience and satisfaction in urban parks.

This study is innovative as it uses Beard & Ragheb's (1980) leisure satisfaction scale which has been predominately applied to a Caucasian North American audience. Additionally, although numerous studies have applied Beard & Ragheb's (1980) leisure satisfaction scale, most studies have been overtly quantified and very few have ever specifically attempted to validate the construct validity among a specific Asian group (Walker, et al., 2011). Furthermore, given that leisure studies are becoming increasingly critical in China, better understanding a minority group such as the Chinese population in Vancouver offers a unique opportunity to expand theories on leisure experience (Walker et al., 2011). This thesis is of great importance to

park tourism and leisure professions because it addresses issues on visitor satisfaction using park attributes and leisure satisfaction constructs. Visitor satisfaction is regarded as one of the research priorities and significant research areas that urgently need additional work by Eagles (2014). Additionally, this study addresses a critical need for research on race and ethnicity in leisure as identified by Floyd et al. (2008). These authors stress the importance of assessing neighborhood/community based leisure including access to urban parks or factors that affect minorities undertaking recreational activities within their community (Floyd et al., 2008).

1.4 Research Objective and Questions

The objective of this study is to apply a commonly used theoretical framework that has predominantly been used among North American white people to a Chinese population, in order to understand Chinese visitors' experience and satisfaction in urban parks. To address this objective, this research focuses on the following research questions:

- What urban park attributes do Chinese perceive as important and why?
- What urban park attributes do Chinese perceive as satisfactory in Stanley Park and why?
- What leisure satisfaction items do Chinese perceive as important in their leisure activities? Why?
- What leisure satisfaction items do Chinese perceive as satisfactory in their leisure activities in Stanley Parks? Why?
- What type of expectations do Chinese hold when visiting Stanley Park?
- What are Chinese people least satisfied with in Stanley Park?

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

A review of the academic literature on the benefits of urban parks helps readers better understand the roles urban parks play in improving individual and community quality of life levels and the overall triple bottom-line sustainability of the city (Slaper & Hall, 2011). The triple bottom line is an accounting based framework that looks at social, environmental and financial performance as core success measures for decision making. The approach includes frequently overlooked but often harder to measure ecological and social values in addition to purely financial measures. The approach is also known as the three Ps, which stands for people, planet and profits (Slaper & Hall, 2011). Additionally, the diverse benefits of urban parks presented can enhance understanding of the leisure satisfaction dimensions and items used in this study.

2.1 Benefits of Urban Parks

Urban parks play an increasingly important role in residents' lives by providing numerous environmental, economic, social and psychological benefits. Unlike remote nature-based recreation, urban green spaces is located in close proximity to populated areas, and is more easily accessible and convenient for the urban residents who may be unable or unwilling to travel to distant natural areas (Baur & Tynon, 2010). Urban parks offer many environmental benefits to the city and its dwellers. Urban parks can help to enhance environmental quality, purify water, stabilize microclimate and filter wind and noise (Bolund & Hunhammar, 1999; Chiesura, 2004; Tzoulas, et al., 2007). In addition, urban parks can conserve and enhance biodiversity by providing ecological reserves for some plants, including rare plant communities (Mahan et al., 2009). Furthermore, urban parks can improve the living environment in the city by providing wildlife refuges, such as habitats for birds (Chiesura, 2004).

The economic benefits provided by urban parks consist of an increase in urban tourism, commerce and sales tax revenue (Harnik, 2006). The historical and recreational values of parks, such as heritage building and historical events, can increase the attractiveness of the city and promote it as a tourist destination (Chiesura, 2004). Urban parks can also generate employment opportunities and revenues. The provincial park system of British Columbia, for example, generated 9,100 jobs directly and indirectly in 1999 (Eagles, 2002).

Apart from the environmental and economic benefits provided by urban areas, visiting parks can go a long way in delivering spiritual satisfaction (Shi, 2008; McNamee, 2012). Nature is perceived as a mystic energy giving sense of life, which enrich it and makes it fully worthy to be lived (Chiesura, 2004). People can learn about themselves, life and nature through their experience in natural environment (Chiesura, 2004). For example, Henry David Thoreau engaged in spiritual reflection while living simply in natural surroundings (Thoreau & Cramer, 2006). By immersing himself in nature, Thoreau gained objective understandings of humans and society through personal introspection, as well as connection with God. Urban parks can encourage the use of outdoor spaces and fulfill social needs by increasing social integration and interaction among friends, and promoting community cohesion and social connection (Chiesura, 2004; Weinstein et al., 2015). Urban green space also plays a significant role in the growth of social capital, as well as community cohesion. Parks provide a place for people to gather together and talk about their shared problems including safety issues, which will improve the neighborhood safety and awareness of community issues (Baur & Tynon, 2010). Similarly, contact with nature is directly and indirectly associated with lower crime through its benefits to community cohesion (Weinstein et al., 2015). Recreational opportunities and amenities have been identified as important human-use services in urban parks; high quality green parks can indeed stimulate a more sustainable and healthy lifestyle (Shi, 2008).

Urban parks also provide higher-order personal psychological benefits, such as joy and a reduction of stress (Shi, 2008; McNamee, 2012; Weiler et al. 2013). Urban parks provide a sense of peacefulness and tranquility to visitors, help people relax and rejuvenate, and reduce aggression and related social problems (Chiesura, 2004). Individuals will have an opportunity to challenge themselves when visiting parks and learn new things from the nature based activities in which they engage (Weiler et al., 2013). Researchers reveal that quality contact with nature can benefit individuals' wellbeing and personal happiness, as well as their performance in the workplace (Weinstein et al., 2015). Another healthy benefit offered by urban p arks is reducing obesity (Baur & Tynon, 2010). Finally, urban parks are good places to express regional culture, because city parks provide opportunity to display the city's historical, natural and cultural characteristics (Huang, 2010).

2.2 Satisfaction Within the Leisure Literature

There are various definitions of satisfaction used in the recent tourism and leisure literature. A marketing definition of satisfaction proposed by Tarrant and Smith (2002, p.70.) is "a state felt by a person who has experienced a performance (or outcome) that has fulfilled his or her expectations." Satisfaction is also defined as "the cognitive or emotional response resulting from the consumption experience, or a comparison of benefits and costs to anticipated consequences" (Yuksel & Yuksel, 2001, p.51). Banyai (2012) states that satisfaction should reflect the connection between the cognitive and emotional processes involved in an experience Therefore a satisfactory experience can be perceived as ''the congruence of need and performance'' while dissatisfaction may be expressed as ''the gap between expectation and experience'' (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, p.1370). Tung and Ritchie (2011) also note the relationship between satisfaction and experience, arguing that "satisfaction is one component of experiences in addition to the hedonic, symbolic and aesthetic nature of experiential consumption" (p.1371). In conclusion, satisfaction is a fulfillment response, a judgment that the product and services provided have led to pleasant or unpleasant experience. Satisfaction is thus a cognitive-affective state derived from a positive experience (Del Bosque & San Martin, 2008).

There are various types of satisfaction: leisure satisfaction, tourist satisfaction, visitor satisfaction, user satisfaction and consumer satisfaction. Leisure satisfaction is important in both leisure studies and related fields (e.g. positive psychology) (Walker et al., 2011). Walker et al. (2011) define leisure satisfaction as:

> "*The positive perceptions or feelings which an individual forms, elicits, or gains*
> *as a result of engaging in leisure activities and choices. It is the degree to which*
> *one is presently content or pleased with his/her general leisure experiences and*
> *situations. This positive feeling of contentment results from the satisfaction of felt*
> *or unfelt needs of the individual*" (p.349).

Walker et al. (2011) also adopted leisure satisfaction constructs and items (psychological, social, education, relaxation, physiological) in his leisure research. Each leisure satisfaction dimension or construct was composed of two items. The items were as follows (Walker et al.; 2011, p. 353):

- **Psychological**:

1. My leisure activities give me a sense of accomplishment;

2. I use many different skills and abilities in my leisure activities;

- **Social**:

1. My leisure activities have helped me develop close relationships with others;

2. I have social interaction with others through my leisure activities;

- **Education**:

1. My leisure activities help me learn about myself;

2. My leisure activities provide opportunities to try new things;

- **Relaxation**:

1. My leisure activities help me relax;

2. My leisure activities contribute to my emotional well-being;

- **Physiological**:

1. My leisure activities develop my physical fitness;

2. My leisure activities help me stay physically healthy.

This study applies the five leisure satisfaction constructs and the related urban park settings studied. The interview questions within this manuscript were based upon these five leisure satisfaction constructs and the specific items associated with each construct.

2.3 Satisfaction as a Multidimensional Construct

As mentioned above, satisfaction is affected by a variety of factors and elements. Tung and Ritchie (2011) focus on personal factors of satisfaction; they argue that different levels of overall satisfaction are due to subjective, emotional, and highly personal responses to different aspects of the service delivery, for example the lodging facilities and interpretation system. Other factors influencing overall satisfaction include behavioral and demographic factors, repeat visitation, visitation pattern, gender and age (Banyai, 2012). Tourist satisfaction is built on the foundation of the interaction between tourists and the dimensions at the tourism sites such as natural environment, facilities, information system and related personnel (Banyai, 2012). Pearce (2005) defines tourist satisfaction as "an attitude which embraces affective, cognitive and

behavioral elements" (p.12). Tourist satisfaction is a crucial element in gaining a better destination image, attracting more consumption of products and services, and generating repeat business and loyalty (Meng et al., 2008). Tourist satisfaction also improves a site value and the site's economic sustainability (Banyai, 2012). Tourists' satisfaction can be affected by the performance of a single or multiple components of the destination (Banyai, 2012). Thus, multiple dimensions and integrated approaches need to be used in satisfaction measurement theories and models because of the variation in tourist's motivations for visiting destinations, and the difference in their satisfaction levels and standards (Meng et al., 2008). Both the elements associated with attraction and the services provided need to be assessed to evaluate tourist satisfaction (Banyai, 2012). Through satisfaction measurement, managers can gain information about the tourist's needs (Banyai, 2012), and how well their needs are met, and thus help the destination marketers to make some changes to improve the quality of products and services (Meng et al., 2008). Since there are multiple elements and components in satisfaction measurement, it is necessary for the researchers and practitioners to anticipate which components or attributes of the products and services need or should be included in the assessment process (Banyai, 2012). Banyai (2012) adds that:

> "*The measurement of satisfaction in tourism provides a platform for organizations to communicate with their customers and find out their likes, dislikes and overall satisfaction, and it is also a means to measure continuous improvement by addressing those elements that represent value-added to consumers, to achieve innovation through consumers, and also to measure competitive strengths*" (p.1).

Understanding the tourists' needs and providing them with a memorable experience is fundamental to generate a competitive attraction and economic sustainability (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Tourist's or visitor's satisfaction with their experience in natural settings is positively related to their satisfaction with site-specific attributes (Banyai, 2012). Therefore, this study will use thirteen park attributes (see Appendix A), which are adopted from the literature and revised by the author, as a guidance to create interview questions.

2.4 Operationalizing Satisfaction

It is recognized that the measurement of satisfaction is complex, multi-dimensional and influenced by a wide range of factors, including previous experience, culture, and emotional and personal characters (Ritchie et al., 2008). Numerous tools of assessment (5-point scales, least satisfaction, expressive and instrumental attributes) regarding satisfaction assessment have been developed in the recent tourism and leisure literature. Lawton (2012) proposed asking open-ended questions about the aspects of the experience with which the visitor is 'least satisfied', which can gauge 'hidden' dissatisfaction in situations where very high levels of satisfaction are revealed by respondents. This forces visitors to reveal those less satisfactory aspects which could potentially develop into dissatisfactory attributes if left unattended (Lawton, 2012). The word 'least satisfying' is more effective than 'dissatisfying' in yielding feedback because it coheres with the individual's 'satisfied' frame of mind (Lawton, 2012). Sometimes, cultural norms may prevent respondents from expressing dissatisfaction, but the respondents are more willing to accept the expression of least satisfying instead of dissatisfaction (Lawton, 2012).

Expressive and instrumental attributes are also commonly used to evaluate satisfaction in natural settings. These two attributes work together to produce overall satisfaction (Uysal & Williams, 2004). Expressive attributes involve core experiences representing the major intent of an act, whereas instrumental indicators serve as actions or behaviors toward facilitating that desired end (Meng et al., 2008). For example, when measuring satisfaction in a park setting, the expressive dimensions include sightseeing, camping, hiking a natural trail, floating down a river, etc., while the instrumental attributes are rental service, restrooms, concession services (Uysal & Williams, 2004). While the expressive factors mainly deal with the emotional aspects of an experience in a park (Tung & Ritchie, 2011), the instrumental factors are more cognitive-oriented, and dissatisfaction would happen without instrumental attributes.

The Importance-Performance Approach (IPA) is another approach used to measure satisfaction. This framework offers diagnostic value and provides potential benchmarking of attributes for managers (Ritchie et al., 2008). In the Importance-Performance framework, scholars apply both importance (a perceived worth of the attributes of the experience) and performance (a perceived condition of the attributes of the experience), when measuring visitor satisfaction (Tarrant & Smith, 2002). The process involves three steps: 1) identifying product/destination attributes or features; 2) asking consumers/tourists to rate the importance of

those attributes and how well the product or service is performed; and 3) calculating the importance and performance scores for each to form a four-cell typology (Meng et al., 2008). The gap between the importance of individual attributes and satisfaction of these attributes is graphically shown in an easily understood way and interpreted in matrices. These approaches represent worthwhile efforts to gain more specific insight into exactly what makes visitors satisfied or less satisfied, instead of compelling respondents to commit to being simply satisfied or dissatisfied.

One advantage of the Importance Performance Approach (IPA) is how this method applies diagrams to present data in a visually appealing way through the use of mean scores and cross hairs consisting of overall mean. Such visual technique helps managers see the change over time in relationship to importance and satisfaction (Ritchie et al., 2008). Ritchie et al. (2008) identified two additional advantages of IPA: 1) IPA is flexible in its application, since it can be adapted for a variety of purposes and survey attributes can be changed as required; 2) IPA can help identify areas where further research and management attention are needed. Linking satisfaction to specific items and showing gaps in satisfaction and degrees of satisfaction allows more specific feedback to be gained, which can support more informed management and planning.

2.5 Visitor Satisfaction and Management Challenges in Parks

Historically, visitor management in parks has been reactive, rather than proactive (Eagles, 2002). Only in the 1990s, it became more common for park managers to measure and monitor visitor's expectations and level of satisfactions (Eagles, 2002). There are many challenges inherent in managing parks based on visitors' expectations and satisfaction. The following are the challenges that managers should notice and make improvements on. Firstly, a fair number of park managers have not adequately invested in staff training, infrastructure and related park resources needed in supporting nature-based tourism (Eagle, 2002). Secondly, most tourism agencies rely on informal feedback from the staff and park users in the forms of letters of complaint or messages. Such feedback is unbalanced toward the negative aspects of park visitations, often offering unclear directions to the agency (Harnik, 2006). Thirdly, some agencies solve the all too common dirty bathroom problem not by cleaning them, but by permanently locking them (Harnik, 2006). Fourthly, parks staff may not be trained to handle international

tourism (Eagles, 2002). For examples, employees may lack the knowledge of foreign languages. Staff in urban parks should be trained to interact and communicate effectively with users from multiple ethnic, and socioeconomic and religious backgrounds (Baur & Tynon, 2010). Therefore, the interviewees in this study were asked, "do you think it is important for the personnel to give help in your own language?". Eagles (2002) further argues that some park agencies cannot control the flow of information being provided to park visitors. Park information systems and interpretation, such as guide books maps and brochures, are regarded as an important component in the visitor experience and their overall satisfaction (Banyai, 2012; Eagles, 2002). Clear and informative sources of information (e.g., signs, brochures, displays, and pamphlets) need to be presented in an environment in order to deliver a mindful experience to visitors (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Mindlessness is ''a single-minded reliance on information without an active awareness of alternative perspectives or alternative uses to which the information could be put'' (Tung & Ritchie, 2011 p.1374.). Thus, it can be an advantage if accurate and appropriate information is provided, but it also can be problematic if the information is incorrect or otherwise misleading (Eagles, 2002). Therefore this research will assess perceptions of interpretive signs, brochures, exhibits and historic information.

2.6 Visitor Experience

Another challenge comes from the multiple dimensions of visitor experience. It is impossible to control all the factors relating to the park visitation experience. It should be recognised that while a visitor may be completely satisfied with the core product and the tangible service elements, an external factor, such as the weather or transport infrastructure, might spoil the experience (Connell & Meyer, 2004).

The concept of visitor experience is somewhat nebulous, making a strategy to ensure visitor satisfaction a challenging matter to address for recreation and tourism managers (Connell & Meyer, 2004). Visitor experience is at the heart of visitor attraction, emerging from "a combination of visitor emotions and attitudes and objective and subjective assessments of sites visited" (Connell & Meyer, 2004, p.185). Experience is always defined in subjective terms, since experience is intangible, continuous, personal and unique to each individual (Weiler et al., 2013). Furthermore, the form and quality of the visitor experience inevitably differs between individual

visitors and for the same visitor at different times, since it is formed through a series of value judgments based on emotional and physical responses to a site (Connell & Meyer, 2004).

Scholars describe experience as a multifaceted phenomenon and psychological outcome, which is very challenging to conceptualize and measure (Weiler et al., 2013). There are a broad range of factors which can influence the visitor experience at outdoor attractions. These elements include: the tangible elements of the product such as retail outlets, cafes, toilet facilities and site cleanliness; the service delivery elements, including accessibility, opening hours and staff service quality; the expectation, behavior and attitude of the visitor; and a large number of factors that are outside the control of either the attraction or the visitor such as climatic conditions and the mix of people using the attraction at one time (Swarbrooke & Page, 2012). Additional components include the mood of the visitor, and the availability and quality of off-site amenities, such as signposting, local accommodation and local services (Connell & Meyer, 2004). Service quality has also been recognized as a major determinant in the various dimensions influencing visitor experience (Wang et al. 2012). It is not easy for managers to determine which factors need to be taken into consideration to ensure a satisfactory experience for park visitors.

2.7 Chinese Philosophy of Leisure and Nature

The measurement of satisfaction is complex and multidimensional, and it is influenced by a variety of factors such as previous experience, culture and personal characteristics (Ritchie et al., 2008). Since the focus of this study is on the Chinese population, it is necessary and important to understand their experiences with and the impact of culture on their perceptions of natural places, including urban parks. Therefore, the following sections will introduce Chinese people's participation, expectations and preferences, consumptive behaviour and experience in natural settings.

Within leisure studies, the flow theory is commonly used to understand visitors' psychological experience. Csikszentmihalyi (1991) states that the optimal experience from a psychological perspective, or flow, is a state of concentration to absolute absorption in an activity that leads to feelings of deep enjoyment. In order to achieve that deep enjoyment state, there are some essential elements, including skill-oriented challenges, the merging of action and awareness, clear goals and feedback, concentration on the task at hand, the paradox of control, loss of self-consciousness, and transformation of time (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991). Skills contribute

a lot to achieving flow, since necessary skills are required to accomplish goals (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991). During flow people typically feel strong, alert, in effortless control, unselfconscious, and at the peak of their abilities. Both a sense of time and emotional problems seem to disappear, and there is an exhilarating feeling of transcendence (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991). The optimal experience is further described by Ritchie & Hudson (2009) as a deep sense of enjoyment that is long cherished and that becomes a landmark in memory for what life should be like. Walker and colleagues (2011) reveal that involvement in activities creating a flow experience can influence lasting happiness which potentially leads to a lasting leisure satisfaction.

Jing Jie is regarded as the most important philosophy of leisure for Chinese people and is somewhat analogous to the Western concept of flow (Wang & Stringer, 2000). Being similar with flow, individuals can not actively pursue *Jing Jie*, but can only experience *Jing Jie* when they pursue other activities, including arts, religious practices or meditation in nature (Wang & Stringer, 2000). According to Taoists, *Jing Jie* is best experienced through nature. Lao Tzu, the father of Taoism, suggested that the individual should withdraw from the affairs of the world and return to nature (Wang & Stringer, 2000). When people concentrate on the beauty and tranquility of nature and the Tao, they can experience *Jing Jie* (Wang & Stringer, 2000). Taoism is one of the most influential philosophies affecting Chinese people's outdoor recreation and natural world experiences (Hung, 2003). From Taoism, contemplation of nature can lead to individual peace, tranquility, and an understanding of the meaning of life (Hung, 2003). Tranquility is the goal among the many benefits found in nature, according to Tao Te Ching (a Taoist book written around 6th century BC by the sage Laozi) (Hung, 2003). Chinese people experience true rest and relaxation, and can understand and experience the harmony between inner spirit and the objective world, through the quiet, solitary appreciation of the natural beauty found in the hills, mountains and rivers (Hung, 2003).

2.8 Chinese Participation in Nature-based Leisure

A significant and positive relationship exists between leisure participation and leisure satisfaction (Walker et al., 2011). There are general differences between the way Chinese and North American people pursue leisure activities in nature. Chinese prefer quiet, more passive activities rather than the strenuous physical activities popular in North American leisure pursuits

(Hung, 2003). Chinese people enjoy the tranquility of the outdoors, appreciating the surrounding beauty of nature, rather than backpacking, rock climbing, or water canoeing (Hung, 2003). This difference is highlighted in a cross-cultural leisure study conducted by Walker et al. (2011), which found Canadian students prefer more "active" experiences (e.g. exercise, team sports), while Chinese students favour more "passive" activities (reading, computer games). These findings are based on an assessment of the measurement of affect and the theoretical constructs of optimal arousal. While the affect theory is about measuring feelings and emotional and psychological responses, the arousal theory focuses on the motivation people have to undertake physiological and psychological activities to maintain an optimum level of arousal (Walker et al. 2011). Active activities have high-arousal affect (i.e., feeling elated, excited, and enthusiastic). On the contrary, passive activities contain low-arousal affect (i.e., feeling calm, relaxed, and peaceful). Relaxation is most important for Chinese people to reach a flow experience within passive activities (Walker et al., 2011). Therefore, this study will assess "relaxation" as one of the leisure satisfaction constructs.

Leisure participation varies across different cultures and within various activity types (Walker & Liang, 2012). Recent research on experience psychology has found that "basic psychological processes are likely to be common features of human life everywhere, but that their manifestations are likely to be influenced by culture" (Walker & Liang, 2012, p.26). Hung (2003) documented how Chinese people in Vancouver held different views of nature, had limited experience of Canadian wilderness recreation, and consequently preferred to engage with more developed and managed park experiences. Lovelock et al. (2010) focused on recent Chinese immigrants' recreation experiences of outdoor nature-based settings in New Zealand. They concluded that Chinese socialization allows for little experience of outdoor nature based recreation in regional or national parks. Such results are related to the philosophical traditions of Chinese immigrants, which hold very different perceptions of the natural, the wild and the beautiful (Lovelock et al., 2010). Unlike the wild, rugged expanses of North American parks and reserves serving recreation purposes, Chinese people prefer well-manicured gardens and nature sanctuaries, emphasizing beauty and aesthetic expression (Hung, 2003). These places are designed to foster nature and simplicity and lead people to self-realization (Hung, 2003).

Chinese people focus on the natural world and its benefits to human beings, trying to find tranquility and peace of mind in their leisure activities (Wang & Stringer, 2000). The emotions

coming from the leisure activities such as calmness and peacefulness are highly emphasized by the Asian religions, which are also positively correlated with satisfaction (Walker et al., 2011). These concept is well described by the term harmonious homeostatic, which is used by Chinese people to describe happiness as peacefulness (Walker et al., 2011). Specifically:

> *"The central thesis is that the universe consists of two basic principles of nature, Yin and Yang; through the change of relationships between these two opposing forces, all creations were born and are still constantly changing, hence keeping a state of homeostasis in nature, societies and human beings. Happiness is but one particular domain submissive to the influences of Yin and Yang"* (p. 359).

The significant role of culture among Chinese visitors can be related to the over 5,000 years of history of this country (Fountain et al., 2010). The close relationship between human and nature is described in the principles of Confucianism and Taoist philosophy, with the concept of harmony as their core principle (Li, 2005). One of the guiding beliefs is that "nature without man and man without nature are incomplete" (Fountain et al., 2010, p.74). It can also be explained that due to the imperfections of nature, Chinese people tend to add buildings and structures to make improvements to the environment and create harmony (Fountain et al., 2010). Therefore, the Western concept of "wilderness" referring to unmodified and untouched nature is a novelty to the Chinese mindset, who find meanings in the physical landscape being permeated with human cultural and historic heritage (Li, 2008). Li (2008) described that as a "culture-scape". Due to the fact that Chinese tourists look at nature from a cultural context, the attractiveness of nature is always assessed by Chinese tourists on the basis of its connections with legend, stories, poems, history, or famous people, not just its natural beauty (Fountain et al., 2010).

2.9 Impact of Chinese culture on expectations and preferences in nature-based leisure

Visitor expectations come from a variety of sources, including the qualities and perceptions obtained from a particular cultural background (Li et al., 2011). Visitors' perceptions and assessments of a situation are influenced by their cultural background, including the position of one's culture in terms of power distance, individualism, and masculinity dimensions (Fountain et al., 2010). Power distance means that power is distributed unequally (China - Geert Hofstede,

2016). The fundamental issue addressed by individualism dimension is the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members, while masculine indicates that the society will be driven by competition, achievement and success (China - Geert Hofstede, 2016). Since culture can affect a person's perception of a situation, it is necessary to recognise culture as a major determinant among Chinese tourist's expectations. "Due to culture and socio-economic differences, Chinese travellers may have particular travel expectations, preferences, and requirements that are not yet well understood by Western marketers" (Li et al., 2011, p.3). Hence, cultural background is a key driver and can assist our understanding of visitor satisfaction (Ritchie et al., 2008).

Numerous studies have shown that mainland Chinese outbound tourists consider "safety" and "beautiful scenery" to be the most important attributes of their travels (Kim et al.2005). Mainland Chinese tourists generally prefer package tours instead of travelling independently, reflecting the Chinese market's concern for safety (Kim et al. 2005, Fountain et al.2010). Therefore, a park should be safe by being free of crime and physical hazards, sidewalk potholes, rotten branches overhead and other perceived risks (Harnik, 2006). Harnik (2006) states that the presence of large numbers of users can be perceived as increasing safety levels because there are more "eyes on the park." On the contrary, crowding has long been recognised as potentially detrimental to a positive visitor experience. Yet, a recent study suggests that congestion not always deteriorates the quality of visitor experience and its benefits in natural settings (Weiler et al. 2013). However, Ditton et al. (1983)'s study on perceptions of recreational crowding identified that being crowded on the river can cause slight reduction in enjoyment for river floaters. In addition, a sense of solitude and wilderness is also discussed in North American leisure research (Hall, 2011). With interviews of 117 groups of hikers, Hall (2011) found out that the lack of people or encounters can contribute a sense of solitude, and providing outstanding opportunity for solitude recreation is highly prioritized in wilderness management. This thesis will therefore assess perceptions of crowding, safety, and security in Stanley Park and in urban parks in general.

When it comes to Chinese visitors' expectations in nature-based tourism, balance is the central notion in their views of nature, which means the presence of humans and their connection to nature must be evidenced by 'manmade' monuments or structures (Lovelock et al., 2010). Lovelock et al. (2010) found that Chinese visitors:

"*Spoke of not having places to stand and take photographs that would be framed by a 'manmade' structure. They spoke of the absence of physical structures which framed and set the landscape to its full aesthetic advantage. They spoke of an absence of planting and manicuring or contrivance in the landscape and how the "wild" was less pleasing because of the absence of human interference. These landscapes were too natural, aesthetically unpleasing and "boring"; they were also "uncivilised" and at times "frightening" and scary places to be*" (p.52).

In Chinese perceptions, artistic rebuilt nature is considered more beautiful than untouched nature based on Confucianism and Taoism (Lovelock et al., 2010). For example, wilderness is also linked to being uncivilized, and where the poor peasants need to forage for food (Lovelock et al., 2010). For the Chinese migrants when they visit regional and national parks in New Zealand they see what is missing and what is missing is defined by their socialization experience or lack thereof. (Lovelock et al., 2010). The list of missing elements includes: nowhere to rest, nowhere to take shelter, nowhere to buy food, nowhere to prepare hot food - and this invariably also means nowhere to be with family. The absence of such elements cause Chinese migrants to experience a sense of imbalance and even to feel that they cannot develop a sense of belonging or have the ability to find themselves in new landscapes (Lovelock et al., 2010).

Chapter 3 - Methods

3.1 Study site - Stanley Park

This study took place in Vancouver, which is a coastal seaport city on the mainland of British Columbia, Canada. This study was conducted in Vancouver's Chinatown, which is Canada's largest Chinese neighborhood. Chinatown is located at 508 Taylor St, Vancouver, which is Centred on Pender Street, and surrounded by Gastown and the Downtown. In Chinatown, there were numerous Chinese restaurants and shops. Therefore, it was easy to find a large amount of Chinese Canadian residents and also Chinese visitors from overseas in Chinatown. Chinatown is about 6.9 kilometres away from Stanley Park (about a 30 minute drive).

The research subject setting was Stanley Park. Stanley Park is a 1,001-acre urban park located at the Northwestern edge of downtown Vancouver. This park is regarded as one of the greatest urban parks in the world and Vancouver's first, largest, and most beloved urban park, attracting approximately 8 million visitors each year. Because it is almost entirely surrounded by waters of Vancouver Harbour and English Bay, there are many lovely beaches in Stanley Park. Besides, it is also featuring miles of trails, lakes, local wildlife, sightseeing spots, seawalls, natural, cultural and historical landmarks, Canada's largest aquarium, dining, the Stanley Park Pavilion and a variety of child-friendly spots (including a pool, waterpark, miniature railway and more). The park offers a wide range of unforgettable experiences for people of all ages and interests. Visitors can explore the 400-hectare natural West Coast rainforest and enjoy scenic views of water, mountains, sky, and majestic trees along Stanley Park's famous Seawall, or take the Stanley park train and explore the history and natural beauty of the park. Stanley Park is also famous for its amazing variety of wildlife with at least 500 species living in the park.

3.2 Interviews

Interviews are an appropriate method to employ in research contexts where individual responses are both valuable and unique in addressing the purpose of the research (Veal, 2011). Interviews allow researchers guide respondents through lengthy, deep and flexible verbal exchanges that encourage respondents to use their own words (Veal, 2011). Obtaining qualitative data on visitor satisfaction through interviews was determined to be the more appropriate

methodology for this study as it could show detailed opinions held and offered by Chinese interviewees, rather than reducing feedback to simple numbers. The leisure satisfaction scale used in this study was adopted from Walker et al. (2011) in their research with participants reporting how frequently their needs and motivations were satisfied by their leisure during the previous six months. While the leisure satisfaction scale was important in this study, it was approached through qualitative, rather than quantitative methods.

The detailed and specific qualitative feedback gained through the interviews provided specific insights on how the leisure satisfaction scale performed in the context of Chinese leisure. This information can form the basis of recommendations for future research when using this scale to study cross-cultural leisure, especially in Chinese groups.

Participants were selected based on their age and gender; male and female numbers were meant to be as equal as possible. Ages were to represent a range of age demographics and not be skewed towards any one particular age group.

The interview questions were designed to assess Chinese peoples' perceptions of both the importance of leisure and their satisfaction with leisure, through leisure satisfaction constructs and site attributes of Stanley Park. Two slightly different lists of interview questions were used, one for Chinese people who have been to Stanley Park (Appendix B) and the other for Chinese people who have never been to Stanley Park (Appendix C). Interview questions were created based on park attributes items and leisure satisfaction dimensions adopted from a review of the literature (Hamilton et al., 1991; Tarrant & Smith, 2002; Akama & Kieti, 2003; Walker et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2012).

This study used the leisure satisfaction scale and its five dimensions of psychological, social, education, relaxation and physiological constructs (Beard & Ragheb, 1980; Walker et al., 2011) to assess the Chinese population's satisfaction and perceptions of the importance of these constructs in natural settings (urban parks). These five constructs were operationalized via the following ten items of the leisure satisfaction scale (see appendix A): 1) my leisure activities give me a sense of peacefulness and tranquility (psychological); 2) I have social interaction with others through my leisure activities (social); 3) my leisure activities have helped me develop close relationships with others (social); 4) I use many different skills and abilities in my leisure activities (education); 5) my leisure activities provide opportunities to try new things (education); 7) my leisure activities help me relax (relaxation); 8) my leisure activities contribute to my

emotional well-being (relaxation); 9) my leisure activities help me develop my physical fitness (physiological); 10) my leisure activities help me stay physically healthy (physiological). The four dimensions of park attributes being assessed include: atmosphere and environment, resource conditions, tourism facilities and related personnel. These items were selected because they are frequently used in other tourism and leisure studies to measure satisfaction in natural-based settings (Hamilton et al., 1991; Tarrant & Smith, 2002; Akama & Kieti, 2003). Besides, these items were regarded as most important factors affecting Chinese population's experience (Walker et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2012).

The interview questions for Chinese participants who have been to Stanley Park contained the following contents: 1) respondents' perceptions of the importance and satisfaction of Stanley Park attributes; 2) respondents' perception of the importance and satisfaction of leisure satisfaction dimensions and items; 3) their least satisfaction about Stanley Park experience. The interview questions for Chinese participants who have not been to Stanley Park contained the following contents: 1) respondents' perceptions of the importance of park attributes for urban parks in general; 2) respondents' perception of importance of leisure satisfaction dimensions and items; 3) their expectations about future Stanley Park experience. Each respondent spent approximately 30 minutes to complete the interview.

Participants remained completely anonymous throughout the entire process. Interview questions were asked in Mandarin, and some interview questions were modified and explained to improve understanding if necessary. All interviews were recorded orally with the consent of the participants and later translated into English. The researcher transcribed the most relevant parts of each interview for data coding and analysis. To maintain confidentiality and protect the privacy of participant identity, all of the names of the participants in this study are made up.

3.3 Sample of Participants

The interviews were conducted in Chinatown in Vancouver, with selected respondents who identify as Chinese (defined as who is born in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan or Macau) and were 18 years or older. The respondents included both new Chinese immigrants to Canada and visitors from China. Most interviewees (n=12) were new immigrants to Canada and resided in Vancouver. The rest (n=8) were Chinese tourists visiting Vancouver. The interviews were conducted whether respondents had been to Stanley Park or not, since measuring

respondents' expected and real satisfaction levels required that questions be asked of visitors and non-visitors (Harnik, 2006). The sample population included 10 Chinese participants who have been to Stanley Park, and 10 Chinese participants who had never been to Stanley Park. The non-response rate was 20% as 5 potential interviewees approached declined to participate in the study. Their main reason to decline was lack of time.

Two questions were asked before doing the interviews. Firstly, participates would be asked what country or region they were born in. Participant who answered Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan or Macau were identified as Chinese. Secondly, participates were asked if they have visited Stanley Park. If the answer was yes, they were selected and invited to participate in the interview using the interview questionnaire 1. If the answer was no, they were selected and invited to participate in the interview using the interview questionnaire 2. In total, 20 interviews were conducted, respectively (10 with visitors and 10 with non-visitors to Stanley Park. The investigator arranged the interviewing time and place with the participants face-to-face in Chinatown.

3.4 Analysis Plan

The raw, unedited data included 20 audio recorded interviews. All interviews were recorded with a recording device and later translated into English. The audio recordings were transcribed to an electronic document. The researcher used a qualitative deductive approach to analyze the data. The deductive approach is a broad method of reasoning informally called a "top-down" approach, since it works from the more general to the more specific topics (Trochim, 2006). On the contrary, the inductive approach is a "bottom up" approach, starting from specific observations to general conclusions and theories (Trochim, 2006). This study used a deductive approach of analysis since the purpose of the study was to test the utility of the leisure satisfaction scale amongst a Chinese population (Beard and Ragheb, 1980). The theoretical constructs provided codes for analysis, which are adopted from the leisure satisfaction scale as well as the park attributes constructs (see appendix A). The data from the interviews were firstly coded deductively using the constructs provided within the leisure satisfaction scale as well as the park attributes constructs (see appendix A). The next step in the research process was to identify the patterns, differences and similarities in the feedback gained from the interviews. The

findings were then translated into the results section for analysis. Finally, the results led to confirmation, non-confirmation, or even refutation of the original theoretical constructs.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter presents the results of 20 interviews conducted during this research to understand Chinese people's perceptions regarding the importance and satisfaction of the park attributes, leisure satisfaction constructs and items. The first section and Table 1 and Table 2 present a socio-demographic profile of both, non-Stanley Park visitors and Stanley Park visitors interviewed during the study. The following sections are organized based on the theoretical constructs used in the research, which include park attributes, leisure satisfaction constructs and items in this study (see appendix A). Park attributes include: atmosphere and environment; resource conditions; tourism facilities; and related personnel. For those sections results are presented into two parts: 1) Chinese perceptions regarding the importance of each park attribute and leisure satisfaction constructs in urban parks in general; and 2) Chinese perceptions of satisfaction with each park attribute and leisure satisfaction construct in Stanley Park specifically.

4.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of participants

Socio-demographic data were collected for all participants to the survey and divided between those who had visited Stanley Park (i.e., Stanley Park visitors) and those who had not (i.e., Non-Stanley Park visitors). The socio-demographic data collected were categorized based on age, gender and residency status of respondents.

4.1.1 Non-Stanley Park visitor socio-demographic data

In the Non-Stanley Park visitor category, of the 10 respondents 7 were female and 3were male. Most female respondents were 20's old (n=4), followed by 50 years old (n=2) and 30 year old (n=1). Among the female respondents, five were tourists and two were residents of Vancouver. Out of the male respondents, two were in their 20's and one was in his 50's. Among the males, one was a tourist, while the other two were residents of Vancouver.

Table 1. Socio-demographic profile of Non-Stanley Park Visitors

Name	Gender	Age	Tourist/ Resident (Years)	Reason for Visiting Favourite Urban Park
Mike	Male	20's	Tourist	Convenient locations and beautiful natural scenery
Yun	Male	50's	Tourist	Strong cultural and human atmosphere, and historic buildings
Hong	Female	50's	Tourist	Convenient locations for taking walks
Jia	Female	50's	Tourist	Spacious green space
Wei	Female	40's	Tourist	Convenient location, large green space, a lake within the park
Helen	Female	20's	Tourist	Beautiful natural scenery and flowers
Sharon	Female	20's	Tourist	Natural beauty, fresh air and birds
Henry	Male	20's	Resident (3 years)	Good natural scenery and environment
Diana	Female	30's	Resident (1 year)	A big fountain with music, good restaurant, and beautiful landscape
Yolanda	Female	20's	Resident (1 year)	Beautiful flowers and wildlife: squirrels

4.1.2 Stanley Park visitor socio-demographic data

In the Stanley Park visitor category, there was an equal split between male and female participants. Out of the female respondents, three were in their 20's, one was in her 30's and one was in her 50's. Among the female respondents, one was a tourist and four were residents of Vancouver. Out of the male respondents, three were in their 30's, one was in his 40's and one was in his 50's. Among the male Stanley Park visitors, all were residents of Vancouver.

Specific visitation patterns by Stanley Park visitors were documented, organized by frequency of visit and timing of last visit. Three visitors to Stanley Park visited the park every 3 months, while other two reported monthly visits. The remaining five visitors ranged widely in the frequency of their visits; one visiting every 5 months, 1 every week 12 years ago, another 5 times every year, one twice per year, and one who only came once per year.

The timing of the last visit was also recorded as part of the data for Stanley Park visitors: three participants visited the park 3 months ago, three 2 months ago, two 1 month ago and one 6 months ago. Just one visitor visited the park 10 days prior to the date of the interview.

Table 2. Socio-demographic profile of Stanley Park Visitors

Name	Gender	Age	Tourist/ Resident (Years)	Frequency of Visits	Last Visit	Primary Reason for Visiting Stanley Park
Carrie	Female	20's	Tourist	Every 3 months	2 months ago	Enjoy the natural views and see flowers
Henry	Male	50's	Resident (12 years)	Every 3 months	3 months ago	Walk around and sit beside the ocean
Howard	Male	40's	Resident (13 years)	Every month	10 days ago	Enjoy the view, walking around and hiking
Dave	Male	30's	Resident (30 years)	5 times every year	3 months ago	Relax and see the view
Hans	Male	30's	Resident (4 years)	Every 5 months	3 months ago	Rest and relax
Mark	Male	30's	Resident (4 years)	Every month	1 month ago	Walking around and get fresh air
Chloe	Female	50's	Resident (12 years)	Every week 12 years a go	6 months ago	Relax and see the views
Docas	Female	30's	Resident (3 years)	Only twice	2 months ago	See natural views
Emily	Female	20's	Resident (1 years)	Only once	1 month ago	See why it is popular and famous
Tracy	Female	20's	Resident (12 years)	Every 3 months	2 months ago	Went to aquarium and cycle

4.2 Reasons for visiting urban parks in general & Stanley Park

Interviewees gave a range of reasons for wanting to visit either urban parks in general or Stanley Park. This section describes and compares the reasons given by interviewees for visiting their choice of urban park or for visiting Stanley Park.

4.2.1 Non-Stanley Park visitors

Reasons given by Non-Stanley Park visitors for visiting their favourite urban parks varied. The most important reasons for visiting a park of choice were experiencing nature, seeing beautiful views of mountains, trees and water in parks, experiencing relaxation and whether the park was accessible and in a convenient location. Half of the respondents identified the beauty of nature as the reason for visiting their favourite park. Seeing human made elements, both modern and historic, such as buildings, monuments or statues, experiencing human culture and engaging in physical exercise were found to be the least of priorities.

More detailed and specific reasons for visiting an urban park of choice were being near a lake, breathing fresh air, viewing birds, enjoying flowers and seeing squirrels. One respondent mentioned culture, history and human atmosphere, and another noted access to park amenities as well as landscape beauty as the main reason to visit the park.

4.2.2 Stanley Park visitors

Reasons given by Stanley Park visitors for visiting the park contained a range of comments, but were more consistent than the range of reasons for visiting a preferred park given by non-Stanley Park visitors. Most visitors (n=7) enjoyed nature and scenic mountain, ocean and forest views, especially related to relaxation, walking or hiking. One participant mentioned rest and relaxation as main reason to visit the park, while another wanted to see why Stanley Park was so famous. The remaining visitor came to the park for the aquarium and cycling.

It was clear from the feedback offered by both non-Stanley Park visitors and Stanley Park visitors that experience of nature and gaining feelings of peace and relaxation were the most frequently reported priorities. A smaller number of respondents were drawn by cultural amenities such as monuments, fountains or built attractions such as restaurants. One visitor was interested in the Vancouver Aquarium, and another simply wanted to see what makes Stanley Park famous. Both non-Stanley Park visitors and Stanley Park visitors placed a strong priority on experiencing nature, beautiful views and relaxation; non-Stanley Park visitors referred to accessibility and culture more than Stanley Park visitors did.

Three leisure satisfaction constructs of psychological, relaxation and physiological were identified by both the non-Stanley Park and Stanley Park visitors. Psychological and relaxation construct could be found from the motivation for peacefully viewing and enjoying the natural beauty and the need to relax in natural surroundings. In addition, engaging in physical exercise was also pointed out by participants, which was directly related to the physiological construct in the leisure satisfaction scale.

4.3 Park Attributes

The four park attributes assessed were: atmosphere and environment; resource conditions; tourism facilities; and related personnel. The most important park attributes

contributing to satisfactory experiences were safety, facilities, appropriate crowding level, wildlife and personnel's help.

4.3.1 Atmosphere and Environment

To assess the importance of atmosphere and environment to park satisfaction, respondents were asked about how overcrowding, feelings of *qiliang* (too few people), and perceptions of safety affect their park experiences.

4.3.1.1 Overcrowding and feelings of *qiliang* for Non-Stanley Park visitors

The number of visitors present in a park significantly impacted Non-Stanley Park visitors' park experience, both positively and negatively. Most respondents (n=8) said they would avoid an overcrowded park due to considerable inconveniences, such as excessive noise, potential for trampling, ruining of photos, increased garbage and long waiting times for restrooms, picnic sites, or other facilities. Overcrowding also annoyed people by infringing on their personal space, reducing feelings of peace and quiet and disrupting their ability to walk or jog on trails. In reference to problems associated with overcrowding, Hong observed: *"It is hard to move in the park if it is too crowded, and I need to wait in the queue for a long time to go to the restrooms. The existing sites, entertainment and fitness facilities cannot meet the needs of all visitors"* Hong's comments point to the merits of avoiding excessive crowding if visitors were to have a satisfying park visitation experience without excessive wait times.

The lack of other visitors had also negative impacts on Non-Stanley park visitors' experiences. The majority of interviewees (n=7) considered *qiliang* (too few people) in the park as dull, boring, not festive, scary, and potentially unsafe. Respondents reported a preference for "a festive atmosphere", noting "*qiliang* is not festive". An empty park felt unsafe - respondents were afraid of being robbed, fall into a lake, or be attacked by a bear. Moderate levels of crowding were favored for creating a sense of belonging to society. Interviewee Wei used Chinese philosophy Yin and Yang to express her feeling about having too few people in the park, which reflected that balance was critical when it came to park attributes; while crowding could be problematic, too few people in the park could also reduce the feeling of life and animation, diminishing the appeal of the park to visitors. Wei noted:

Too few people make the park have a strong Yin atmosphere, which is not festive. In Chinese culture and philosophy, yin and yang can be applied to everything, and they need to be balanced. For me, the presence of a moderate crowding level is very important, and it will decide whether I am going to the park or not. A moderate crowding level for me is where I can see one person every ten meters on the trail. One person every one meter would be too crowded for me. I need personal space from other people.

4.3.1.2 Overcrowding and feelings of *qiliang* for Stanley Park visitors

Most respondents (n=8) were very satisfied with the level of crowding at Stanley Park and identified various levels of crowding that best suited their preferences for either a festive feeling or a more peaceful environment. Carrie expressed her favouring of a festive atmosphere on the beach indicating the importance of adequate levels of human activity for a positive park experience: The ability of positive emotions to be transferred between people were highlighted by her response:

It is good that there are many people on the beach in summer. I see people wearing different colored clothes, such as a bright color swimming suit. I once took a picture of some friends having wine on the beach, it makes me feel festive. It is like other people's joy is contagious, you can feel other people's joy and happiness. People and nature together make a beautiful scene.

Some respondents (n=4) stated there were too few people in Stanley Park, especially in the forests section of the park which often felt deserted. Emily's feedback gave some insight into visitor perceptions of safety, showing discomfort with isolated wilderness conditions as a contributor to lesser levels of satisfaction due to feelings of being unsafe. Emily stated:

There are too few people in the park. It is hard to see many people in the park when you walk in the park and sometimes, it is scary. Especially in the forest, there are so few people. I think more people will be better since the forests in Stanley Park are original and primitive. If you walk in the forest alone, there are no people around, it made me feel very scared.

Despite the fact that several interviewees felt that the forests would be appealing with more people, the majority (n=8) of the interviewees were quite satisfied with the present crowding level in Stanley Park and the atmosphere it creates. The importance of balance for satisfaction in parks with respect to levels of human activity was reflected here in Mark's comment. Peace and quiet, without desolation, may sometimes be just as important to visitors as festivity. Mark pointed out that he liked to think quietly in Stanley Park, noting:

> *With many people around you, it is hard to focus on my leisure activities and sometimes I just want to think. Sometimes when I went to the park, I wanted to think and figure out something in life or work. Too many people being present would distract me and interfere with my process of thinking.*

Both non-Stanley park visitors and Stanley Park visitors saw avoiding overcrowding and avoiding *qiliang* as important. 70 percent of non-Stanley Park visitors raised *qiliang* as a potential concern in parks in general, 80 percent cited overcrowding as deterrent to visitation, while 40 percent of Stanley Park visitors actually felt there was a problem with *qiliang* in Stanley Park, which reduced their satisfaction.

4.3.1.3 Safety in urban park for Non-Stanley Park visitors

All of the interviewees (n=10) considered safety as the attribute most important to their leisure satisfaction in urban parks. The interviewees divided perceptions of safety into two categories: personal physical safety and possession safety. Firstly, participants pointed out a range of safety hazards that might present themselves in parks. These hazards included being robbed, animal attacks, falling tree branches, as well as dangerous people, including homeless people and individuals drinking alcohol or doing drugs. Three interviewees mentioned their car windows were broken by criminal offenders or that they had their purses stolen in parks. Other hazards relating to the park environment included danger of walking on a frozen lake in the winter or swimming in a lake, both of which presented tangible risks to human life and safety. Yun stressed the importance of visitor awareness of park hazards and noted the responsibility of visitors to only engage in safety conscious behaviour, explaining, "*We should be aware of those safety hazards, such as the possibility of falling through the ice when walking on frozen lakes in winter or the possibility of drowning when swimming in lakes, etc.*"

Unsafe park conditions would have a negative impact on visitors experience by causing feelings of worry and lack of relaxation. Noting the link between psychological perceptions of safety and satisfaction, Hong pointed out that "*People need to feel safe psychologically to gain mental pleasure and satisfaction.*" Diana also pointed out, "*Feeling safe mentally is important too, because I can do leisure activities in a relaxing and worry free mood, otherwise I will be worried and anxious about how I can prevent the potential hazards.*" Many interviewees expressed their dislike of embarking on adventures or taking any risks during their park experience. Sharon for example stated, "*Safety is super important to me, I don't like adventures and challenges.*"

4.3.1.4 Safety for Stanley Park visitors

The Stanley Park visitors felt the same way as the Non-Stanley Park visitors (n=10) when reflecting on the importance of perceptions of safety impacting on their leisure satisfaction. Carrie expressed her dislike of going to dangerous places and pursuing adventures, explaining, "*Safety is very important for me on my trip. I won't go out exploring or on adventures, to explore something unknown such as going to a marsh area, or polar region. That is dangerous.*" The majority of visitors noted that they felt very safe in Stanley Park due to the park being so close to the city, their friends telling them it was safe, and their perceptions of Canada as being a very safe country as a whole. Mark mentioned his concern about the safety issue in the forest at Stanley Park, but he still felt safe in the forests since:

> *It is a little bit scary in the forests when no one is around. But that is ok for me, because I can still hear the noise of the cars and traffic on the roads even though I am in the forest.*

Tracy's feedback highlights the potential for reduced safety through perception or presence of environmental dangers, isolation and dangerous animals to reduce comfort in parks and consequently reduce visitor satisfaction. Tracy explained her concerns about safety at Stanley Park, particularly in the forest, stating:

> *I don't think that Stanley Park is safe. First, many trees in Stanley Park are very old. So it is very easy for old branches to fall down and hit the visitors. Second, there are many lonely forest trails (side roads) where nobody is around. If an emergency happens, there are no people to rescue me in a short time. Third, there are many animals in the park,*

some of which may attack people. Safety is very important for me. I think it is necessary

for Stanley Park to have some patrols. That would make me feel safe.

Another participant, Henry, shared the same opinion about the potentially unsafe conditions in the forests, noting the following dangers associated with isolated areas, "*I feel Stanley Park is safe. But I don't feel safe in the forest. There are too few people in the forest, especially on the old abandoned roads in the park.*" This kind of feedback showed how specific hazards created concerns among park visitors, and how the perception of risk may be worsened by the perceived absence of immediate help. Both non-Stanley Park and Stanley Park visitors held similar views on the prioritization of safety, with 100 percent of respondents in each category identifying safety as a priority. Both categories expressed similar concerns around sources of danger, such as environmental dangers such as hazards from trees or ice.

4.3.2 Resource Conditions

To assess the importance of resource conditions for park satisfaction, the respondents were asked how wildlife viewing and learning about culture and history affected their park experiences.

4.3.2.1 Wildlife viewing in urban parks for non-Stanley Park visitors

The majority of interviewees (n=8) stated that wildlife viewing was an important part of their urban park experience. These participants pointed out that wildlife viewing could increase their leisure satisfaction in urban parks, and that they experienced a range of positive feelings in relation to wildlife viewing such as joy, delight and surprise. Noting the pleasure of seeing wildlife, Yolanda explained "*I felt joyful and excited when I saw cute animals, which lightened my mood.*"

The interviewees gave diverse reasons as to why they perceived wildlife viewing to be an important attribute in their urban park visit satisfaction. Many of the Chinese interviewees considered wildlife to be a part of nature. Animals are certainly part of nature and for humans to be close to animals, observing and even interacting with them is a good way to connect with nature. In this way, humans and nature can come together through experiences with wildlife. Hong said: "*Animals are part of nature and being close to animals can make a good combination*

of humans and nature. I think seeing animals can increase the quality of the experience. So it is very important." Diana also noted that nature without animals was incomplete, stating: *"Wildlife viewing is very important. I would feel that something is missing if I didn't see any animals in the parks. I go to parks to see nature, trees and flowers but animals are also a very important part of nature, and nature without wildlife would be incomplete."* Diana's comments highlight the importance of seeing animals as part of a fuller and more satisfying human experience of nature in parks.

Some interviewees considered wildlife viewing as something creating an element of surprise in their park visitation experience. People having less experience with nature may thus appreciate the opportunity to view animals some people would take for granted. For example, Wei noted:

It would be a big surprise for me to see deer on the road. I would take photos of them and send those photos to my friend to share my joys. But unfortunately, I can barely see animals in Chinese parks. I really enjoyed seeing different animals in Canadian parks.

Pleasure in sharing photos shows the potential for memorable animal viewing experiences to become the subject of human conversation. The interviewees provided other reasons why wildlife viewing opportunities in parks were important to their leisure satisfaction. Those reasons included statements that wildlife viewing could expand one's horizon and enlarge one's knowledge, animals were cute and adorable, seeing animals offered a good education, and interacting with animals could make a person more kind and caring. Sharon stated "*Humans can learn a lot from animals,*" while Yolanda observed "*People deal with other people every day. It is good to communicate with wildlife more. Communicating with animals in both physical and oral ways can make people more kind and caring.*"

4.3.2.2 Wildlife viewing for Stanley Park visitors

Just like the non-visitors, the Stanley Park visitors (n= 3) expressed their joy when seeing wildlife. Howard's feedback notes the role both living and non-living elements of nature can play in making human feel healthy and happy. Howard noted that seeing animals could enlighten his mood and therefore help him to know the meaning of life:

I believe animals can bring joy to people. Especially when I see animals and birds in a good weather, combined with the warm sun, clear water, colourful flowers and green trees, I feel that these parts of nature enlightened my mood and made me feel my life is beautiful.

Notably, two interviewees in this group mentioned that wildlife could make natural areas more liveable for humans. Carrie noted "*I only saw animals locked in a cage in the zoos in China. That was very sad. I saw free and living animals in nature at Stanley Park. Seeing them made me feel joyful.*" Additionally, some interviewees (n=3) described seeing wildlife as a new experience offering surprises and real life learning to humans. Hans pointed out: "*Seeing wildlife is to see and know things you never saw or knew of before. It is a memorable experience to see different animals and their different appearance, such as the fish in the ponds and the colourful feathers of different kinds of birds.*" Emily offered a similar answer, stating: "*I feel delighted and happy to see animals when I walk past them. It is a surprise for me since animals just showed up unexpectedly when I was walking.*"

Most of the Stanley Park visitors (n=7) observed diverse wildlife on their trip in the park. The most common wildlife the interviewees identified were geese, ducks, swans, other birds, deer, rabbits and squirrels. The majority of them pointed out that they wanted to see docile and cute animals such as peafowl, rabbits and squirrels instead of fierce and aggressive wildlife, such as the black bear. Emily mentioned that she: "*wanted to see raccoons but didn't see these animals*" and Carrie noted: "*I saw three raccoons crossing the road, but they were at a long distance. I wish I could have seen them up close.*"

In summary, the majority of interviewees in this study, in both urban parks in general and Stanley Park believed that wildlife in parks was very important to their leisure satisfaction experience. Moreover, most of the interviewees stated they were satisfied with the wildlife viewing opportunities at urban parks in general and at Stanley Park, for similar reasons, simply enjoying the sight of cute animals and also experiencing specific positive emotions including surprise and joy from viewing the animals

4.3.2.3 Culture and history in urban parks for Non-Stanley Park visitors

The majority of the interviewees (n=8) did not consider cultural and historic resources as important in their park visitation experience. Learning about culture and history was not a major

motivation for respondents to visit urban parks. Henry noted, "*Personally I am not interested in the culture and history in the parks. So culture in parks is not important for me*." Furthermore, Mark saw cultural and historical park elements as counterproductive to his park experience preferences, as clarified in his quote, "*No, learning culture and history is not important to me. I like to see pure nature without human made stuff and culture*."

A minority of interviewees (n=2) noted that learning culture and history is very important to their ability to enjoy a satisfactory experience in urban parks. Yun's feedback suggested that even if a majority of respondents did not prioritize a specific attribute such as cultural and historical resources as important for their leisure satisfaction, others might respond to the question in a different way, ranking cultural and historic aspects as something of great importance. Recognizing the importance of cultural "dissemination and export" as an aspect of value in urban parks, non-Stanley Park visitor Yun stated:

> *The culture and history in urban parks is the presence of the local costume and traditions. It is very important because people should know their city's culture and history as local a citizen, which can enhance a sense of national pride. Other tourists from other counties can see and know Chinese culture too, when they visit the park. It is called "culture dissemination and export. I think that urban parks play an important role in "culture dissemination and export" since parks offer a huge open space and beautiful natural settings to serve the cultures. Tourists can learn cultures in the same time when they enjoy the natural beauty. Besides, culture is part of human civilization, which is a major difference between humans and animals. So there should be culture in parks.*

4.3.2.4 Culture and history for Stanley Park visitors

When it came to the performance of Stanley Park regarding cultural resources, a large number of interviewees (n=6) identified different types of cultural resources within Stanley Park, such as hollow trees, First Nations totem poles, statues such as the Girl In a Wetsuit, and park signage describing the history of Stanley Park. Yet, such visitors did not consider cultural resources as important in Stanley Park. Only one respondent, Docas, recognized the importance of learning about culture and history in Stanley Park, stating:

> *I think that learning culture and history in parks is important for me, because my experience would be more meaningful if I learned about culture and history in parks.*

Cultural resources can increase my leisure satisfaction in Stanley Park. A park is more attractive with some cultural and historical background.

It is interesting that 60 percent of Stanley Park visitors identified culture and history as recognizable aspects of urban parks, yet only 1 respondent (10 percent) considered culture and history to be important. The number of non-Stanley Park visitors considering culture and history to be important was twice as high (n=2), yet still limited. Culture and history were certainly not ranked highly with respect to importance in contributing to the performance of urban parks in general or Stanley Park by respondents.

4.3.3. Tourism Facilities

To assess the importance of tourism facilities to urban park experience, the respondents were asked about how the park information system (interpretive signs, brochures, exhibits and information to historic sites) and park facilities in natural settings affected their park experiences.

4.3.3.1 Park information system in urban parks for non-Stanley Park visitors

Several interviewees (n=6) indicated that they did not often use the information system in urban parks and considered the information system not to be important as they were already quite familiar with the park they went to. Other interviewees (n=4), instead, noted that the information system in urban parks is important and necessary. Such respondents regarded maps, brochures, guide books and road signs as the most important information resources provided in urban parks. The majority of them explained that such useful park information could assist them in in planning and executing their trips since it could help visitors to accurately and quickly find the location of the places they wanted to go and activities in which they wanted to engage. Diana highlighted the importance of park information and guidance information for a great park experience and for building memories. Diana's comments speak to the potential of written material to draw visitors to parks by explaining their attractions and also to serve as reminders of a visit:

Information is important, especially for a new place. I mostly used travel guide books, where I can find my interested sites, activities [...] It was very convenient and effective to use them to find the must-do activities and must-see places. I also kept the book with me when I left the park and returned home. After the trip, I can just go through the guide

book again, and recall what I did in the park, which can make my experience more
memorable.

Wei offered a similar comment highlighting the value of park information in saving time and preventing visitors from having to take the time themselves or potentially bother other people to for directions, stating:

The information is very important for me. It gives me some directions about places I want
to go. For example, I have to ask other visitors where to go boating if I want to go
boating, but there is no information about the locations of the boating area. It won't be
convenient for me if I have to ask others to get the information I want. The information
system is built to provide convenience to visitors.

4.3.3.2 Park information system for Stanley Park visitors

Half of the Stanley Park visitors (n=5) considered the information system as important. Many interviewees (n=8) mentioned that they needed the maps and road signs in case they got lost in the park. Carrie stated:

The information is useful in Stanley Park, especially the maps and road signs, since it is
quite a huge park. I wanted to quickly find the aquarium, or other places I want to go. So
it is necessary to have a map or brochures. That is very important.

Only three interviewees mentioned the knowledge they gained from the information in parks, such as information about wildlife and park history, as important. Mark said, "*The information is important. The information in Stanley Park is useful. The interpretive signage boards providing information on wildlife such as the Canada goose and park road signs were very clear and helpful.*"

Half of this group did not need the information in Stanley Park, the most common reason being that they were already familiar with Stanley Park. Dave, for example, saw the information as being less useful to residents than it would be for tourists. Similarly, 6 of the non-Stanley Park visitors saw park information as unimportant due to their familiarity with the park they were visiting. In both cases, information in urban parks was thus judged to be important or unimportant largely based on degree to which visitors were familiar with the park visited.

4.3.3.3 Facilities in natural settings to non-Stanley Park visitors

The majority of interviewees (n=8) pointed out that the facilities in natural settings were very important. Yolanda's comments highlight the importance of having a sufficient area of the park dedicated to recreation, and providing a diverse set of recreation facilities to support a range of activities in parks. Yolanda explained:

> *Parks are built for people, so they need to be people oriented. The recreation area (including tour viewing area, a quiet sitting area, cultural and entertainment district, etc.) should account for more than 70% of the park. Modern urban park landscapes should plan cultural and entertainment districts, set playgrounds, dance floors, roller skating rinks, swimming pools and other public facilities and galleries.*

A large number of participants (n=6) stated that facilities could enhance the beauty of natural landscape in urban parks. Noting the importance of facilities to park experience, Hong said "*Facilities can enhance the beauty of landscapes in the park, making it more livable. Such facilities include decorative features such as fountains.*" Jia further pointed out:

> *Urban parks should have decorative facilities, such as fountains, water tanks, all kinds of landscape walls, window and other scenery; display of sketches, such as guide drawing boards, guiding signs, bulletin boards, etc. Those elements not only meet the different needs of the public, but also build a beautiful landscape.*

Mike also highlighted the importance of urban park facilities for bringing nature and human culture together. He spoke to the role parks can play in providing people with places to try out fun activities and to appreciate culturally significant art such as historical statues, stating:

> *I think that modern parks should have not only natural scenery, but also human culture combined together. For example, visitors can make a snowman in winter; also some statures of historical figures such as Chairman Mao can be put in the natural settings, with some simple descriptions.*

Yun mentioned the artistic and aesthetic functions of facilities in natural settings, explaining, "*Human made elements and nature together can be more artistic and aesthetic, making me feel humans are part of nature*".

Most of the interviewees (n=9) remarked that the facilities in urban parks provided different services and functions for visitors. Facilities could satisfy visitor's basic needs, such providing rest areas, drinkable water and food, as well as restrooms and access to shade in summer. Diana highlighted the need for park facilities such as washrooms, rest stops, snack bars and picnic areas and the value of recreational amenities such as swimming pools or skating areas in parks. Noting the diversity of services offered to park users through facilities, Diana remarked:

Facilities provide visitors with different kinds of services. The bench gives people a place to sit. The shelter offers shades in the hot summer. Some facilities like swimming pools, skating area, can give people many choices for entertainment. It will feel boring due to a lack of activities if the park consists only of pure nature without facilities.

The addition of practical amenities for human use to natural parks was clearly a noteworthy contributor to visitor satisfaction. Additionally, urban park facilities such as aquariums, ping pong tables, tennis courts or playgrounds offered entertainment to visitors. Several interviewees (n=4) noted that they were interested in using the fitness facilities in parks.

4.3.3.4 Facilities in natural settings to Stanley Park visitors

The Stanley Park visitors appreciated the facilities at Stanley Park. Many (n=7) felt that the facilities were in harmony with the natural of the park. Some examples cited by participants were the running man statue, the sitting women statue beside the ocean, the First Nations totems and the fountain in Lost Lagoon. The aquarium in Stanley Park was Also widely mentioned and appreciated by participants. Achieving harmony between human and nature elements in parks could clearly benefit from range of artistic elements such as murals or playground facilities which would appeal to different generations. Carrie stated:

The facilities are in harmony with the natural environment, especially the running man beside the ocean. That running man makes the park more alive as it seems that the man is a real person running on the sea wall. I think that statues can make unchanging natural scenery more alive and dynamic. The facilities are important in the park, it can add more vitality and fun to the park. Another example is the fountain. Kids like to play at the fountain in summer which looks fun.

Respondents recognized the ability of aesthetically appealing park features to attract visitors and pointed to the fact that seeing others being active can encourage observers to try an activity themselves. Docas commented:

Yes the facilities are in harmony with the natural settings. The designs of the facilities look nice. I feel comfortable viewing them. Especially the fountain, which makes the park more dynamic and lively. I saw some people jogging beside the fountain which was very nice and I wanted to join them! It made me feel great.

Additionally, Howard noted, *"There is a statue of a women sitting on a stone beside the ocean, the running man is great too. Those statues make the landscape in the park feel more related to humans. It is like humans are part of nature."* Tracy further explained, *"The statues and totems are in harmony with the natural settings. The totems combined with the trees, looked very harmonious and beautiful."*

Many respondents (n=4) pointed out areas of dissatisfaction about the facilities in Stanley Park. Tracy explained, "*People can swim in the ocean; I don't know why they would build a swimming pool beside the ocean.*" Henry hoped there would have been more logs on the beach for people to sit and rest. Clearly, the number of facilities, appropriately located throughout the park should be proportional to the size of the park. Although just one comment, Emily expressed her disappointment over the lack of benches and restrooms in the forests. Her feedback may indicate inadequacies in the extent of park facilities. She stated:

I think that Stanley Park would be better if there are more facilities. Some of the facilities are public infrastructure. You would not be able to find a bench to sit if you were to become tired walking in the forest. That was disappointing. I think that they should add more specially featured benches, such as wooden or stone benches. Bathrooms are necessary, since Stanley Park is so big and people spending as much there time as they do would need to use the bathrooms.

Docas spoke to the importance of being able to access good food in parks and also the value of food facilities as places for friends to gather. Docas expressed her dissatisfaction the lack of physical structures stating:

There are not many restaurants in Stanley Park. I advise you to add more highly qualified restaurants selling sea foods or coffee shops in Stanley Park. I wished to buy food in the park instead of bring food myself, since I didn't have any appetite for the food I brought. I wanted to find a restaurant or coffee shop in the park to have a rest, have some snacks and chat with my friends.

Despite having some specific points of dissatisfaction with the facilities in Stanley Park and their respective recommendations, the four interviewees said they still felt generally satisfied with the facilities in Stanley Park. This kind of feedback suggested that while Stanley Park may be large and offer different opportunities to enjoy nature, adding simple facilities would increase the comfort and thus the satisfaction of Chinese visitors. Not being able to access basic comforts may detract from even the most enjoyable of park environments and leisure activities, potentially reducing satisfaction if amenities are not enhanced. In comparing non-Stanley Park visitors to Stanley Park visitors, it was clear that the majority of both groups valued facilities with a similar level of prioritization between groups, albeit to varying degrees, for different reasons, and with varying degrees of satisfaction. Eighty percent (8) of non-Stanley Park visitors identified facilities as being very important, with 6 of those 8 noting that some facilities such as statues or buildings could enhance the attractiveness of natural landscape. Stanley Park visitors identifying facilities in natural settings as important formed a slightly smaller percentage at 70 percent (7). 4 of the 10 Stanley Park visitors (40 percent) identified specific areas of dissatisfaction with park facilities present in Stanley Park; specific points of dissatisfaction were not raised by non-Stanley Park visitors with respect to any parks visited by those interviewees.

4.3.4. Related personnel

In this section, the importance of related personnel to the urban park experience of non-Stanley Park visitors and Stanley Park visitors is examined. The reasons why park personnel could be important to visitor experience are discussed, together with the benefits park personnel can provide to visitors, including safety and security. Interestingly, assistance from related personnel was not found to be of particularly high importance by majority of Stanley Park visitors (n=7) and half of the non-Stanley Park visitors.

4.3.4.1 Park employee's help in urban parks for non-Stanley park visitors

Half of the interviewees noted that park employees were important to them, while another half of the interviewees considered related personnel not to be important. Park employees were perceived as important to maintain the safety and security of the park. Sharon suggested that park employees are able to resolve any fights among visitors in the park and ensure the safety and security of the park. Another interviewee suggested that the urban park should have patrols to maintain conditions of safety. Additionally, park employees could provide visitors with necessary information about how to find a specific place. Wei spoke to the peace of mind and improved satisfaction offered by easy access to reliable information through sufficient staffing of parks by well trained, knowledgeable employees. Wei explained:

> *[Employees] will give me accurate answers if I have some questions about how to go to a specific place. If there are no staff, I would need to ask other visitors, and they may give me incorrect information. But I believe that the employees' information is 100% accurate. So there should be park employees to provide accurate information. In the park I go to, there are personnel stationed every three kilometers.*

Interviewees felt having employees in urban parks was very important since they needed the park employees to interpret and demonstrate how to use the exercise facilities, and to help them find roads when lost. Knowing that expert staff is available for help increase visitor satisfaction, reduces stress and fears of getting lost or to be unable to reach a specific destination.

The majority of the non-Stanley Park visitors explained that they would not need or expect staff to be able to speak Chinese languages if they visited a park in an English speaking country. While Chinese languages were the first language spoken by interviewees, the interviewees explained that they knew English, and expected to use English in an English speaking country. They did not see interpretation or assistance in Chinese languages as something to be expected from staff in Canadian or other English speaking nation's parks.

4.3.4.2 Park employee's help for Stanley park visitors

Only three Stanley Park visitors thought that park employees were important during their Stanley Park visit. Most of the interviewees (n=8) perceived as not important for parks employee to know the Chinese language. However, some interviewees (n=2) stated that they had friends

and family from China who cannot speak English and would like to visit Stanley Park and have access to interpretation in their own language. Those interviewees considered having Chinese speaking employees as an important feature for Stanley Park.

The reasons for why the Stanley Park visitors found important to have employees in the park were similar to the non-visitors. While many visitors may not feel that they needed park personnel's help for daily matters, it is different for emergencies. The presence of personnel may go a long way to instil confidence in park visitors in regard to safety matters. Firstly, the staff could help visitors in case of emergencies by protecting and providing safety to the visitors. Docas explained:

> *I needed to know I would have park personnel's help for any emergencies. Such as a medical station in case someone has a heart attack. In case someone falls in the water life, a rescuer is important, and also fire rescue and personnel on patrol. I think that the parks need to have some staff preparing for emergency. Emergency measures and patrols are important to make sure parks are safe and operating normally.*

The interviewees (n=4) also mentioned that it was easy to get lost in the forests in Stanley Park, therefore, it was necessary to have staff who were able to provide help in case the visitors got lost in the park. This suggests that greater numbers of personnel could increase visitor comfort and safety, reducing fears of getting lost and feelings that help is far away. For example, Emily recalled:

> *I did get lost once, I used Google Maps, but the directions on the Google map were not correct. There were no personnel. I just asked some people who are jogging for help. I think that Stanley Park needs to add more personnel who are familiar with the trails and roads.*

Tracy added that she might need the park employees' help to get directions or hopefully provide her with a feeling of safety should she feel at risk from any human or environmental dangers in the park, especially when she had her little son with her. She also hoped that there were staff maintaining the trees in Stanley Park, to prevent the old trees from creating danger, such as the risk posed by branches falling down. An increase in park staffing could lead to

increased confidence among visitors to use a larger portion of the park or to feel comfortable to return to more isolated area of this protected area.

The three interviewees advocating the importance of having park employees believed that Stanley Park did not have sufficient personnel to meet the public needs. While these three participants were not satisfied with the personnel presence at Stanley Park, the other interviewees did not consider the presence of related personnel to be a matter of importance. They commonly stated that they would not need any help from Stanley Park staff while visiting the park. All in all, Stanley Park visitors felt that park employee assistance was less important than non-Stanley Park visitors, with 70 percent of Stanley Park visitors deeming employee help to be unimportant, compared to 50 percent of non-Stanley Park visitors. This difference in response percentages may partially be due to the familiarity of Stanley Park visitors with this specific park; visitors to urban parks in general may not be certain about which park they are referring to, or whether they would likely require assistance. Of note, 20 percent of the Stanley Park visitors (2) thought that Chinese language speaking staff would be an asset for visitors not familiar with English and saw Chinese language speaking staff as important. In contrast, none of the non-Stanley Park visitors considered Chinese language abilities of staff to be important.

4.4 Leisure Satisfaction Dimensions and Items

The leisure satisfaction scale included five constructs: psychological, social, education, relaxation and physiological. The top three leisure satisfaction constructs interviewees noted were relaxation, psychological and physical. The following sections were based on these constructs. Each section presented findings from the twenty interviews by separating the non-Stanley Park visitors group and Stanley Park visitors group as:

1) Chinese people's perceptions regarding the item of urban parks in general; and then

2) Chinese people's perceptions about Stanley Park in terms of the item.

4.4.1 Psychological

To assess the importance of the psychological construct, respondents were asked to respond to the following statements:

1) My leisure activities give me a sense of peacefulness and tranquility;

2) I can experience *Jing Jie* through leisure activities in nature; and

3) I use many different skills and abilities in my leisure activities.

4.4.1.1 Peacefulness and tranquility in urban parks for non-Stanley Park visitors

All of the non-Stanley Park visitors agreed that peacefulness and tranquility was important to their leisure satisfaction in urban parks. Eight respondents considered a sense of peacefulness and tranquility as very important, while the other two considered this item as important. The most common reason was that peacefulness and tranquility could help participants relax during their leisure activities. Relaxation, indeed, was the major goal and motivation for respondents to go to urban parks. Relaxation helped respondents to take a break from the busyness and intensity of daily work, carrying them away from the noise and fast pace of the developed human environment and associated stressful experiences. Respondents recognized the relaxation benefits of time in urban parks are shown to extend to other aspects of life, even work, leading to improved mood and workplace performance, as Diana stated:

Feeling peacefulness and tranquility is one of the goals I have when I visit urban parks. Experiencing a feeling of peacefulness can help me relax my nerves and take a break from the business and intensity of daily work. If I feel peaceful in a park, I would say that I will become a brand new me when I return to work.

Many of the interviewees (n=9) pointed out that a sense of peacefulness and tranquility could help them to reduce stress. Some of the interviewees expressed their feelings as "*feeling calm and comfortable*" when spending time in a peaceful atmosphere. Moreover, feeling a sense of peacefulness and tranquility helped the interviewees to calm down and finding solutions to their personal difficulties in life. Furthermore, the sense of peacefulness and tranquility made interviewees feel close to nature. Being surrounded by nature was considered by interviewees to be a good way to relax in urban parks.

4.4.1.2 Peacefulness and tranquility for Stanley Park visitors

All the Stanley Park visitors similarly noted that feeling a sense of peacefulness and tranquility was important to their leisure satisfaction in Stanley Park. Chloe said, "*Having a sense of peacefulness and tranquility is the most important factor for me when it comes to whether I feel satisfied in the park.*" Similar to non-Stanley Park visitors, the majority of Stanley

Park visitors (n=10) thought that feeling peaceful and calm was a major motivation and a driving purpose for their leisure activities in Stanley Park. The reasons for the importance of such feeling were relaxation, reducing stress, enjoying and being close to the beautiful nature.

The majority of the interviewees (n=10) were quite satisfied with the peaceful and calm environment in Stanley Park. They felt that Stanley Park met their expectation for having a sense of peacefulness and tranquility very well. Many interviewees (n=6) explained to have gained peaceful and calm feelings by doing different leisure activities, including walking in the forest and on the seawalls, listening to the sound of the ocean and seabirds, feeling the wind blowing in their face gently, and simply enjoying the beauty of nature. Docas complimented Stanley Park as a leisure destination, "*Stanley Park is like an oasis in a bustling city. I always think of Stanley Park even though I am not there. I feel peaceful in my heart every time I think of Stanley Park.*" Chloe offered a similar comment as a place comparable to a fantasy getaway, saying:

> *Stanley Park is like a fictitious land of peace away from the turmoil of the world to me. When I was in Stanley Park, I felt that I was in a fairyland. The water was so clear, the air so fresh, and lots of trees and beautiful flowers were around*.

In conclusion, the majority of non-Stanley Park visitors and Stanley Park visitors found having a sense of peacefulness and tranquility to be highly important in their leisure satisfaction in urban parks and Stanley Park. No major difference was found in their reasons as to why they felt this item is something of importance. The item received the highest level of recognition possible among both interviewee groups, being rated as important by 100 percent of both non-Stanley Park visitors and Stanley Park visitors.

4.4.1.3 Experiencing *Jing Jie* in urban parks for non-Stanley Park visitors

Non-Stanley park visitors were divided between those who considered *Jing Jie* to be important to their leisure satisfaction and those who did not. The definition of *Jing Jie* differed among the non- Stanley Park visitors group. The interviewees gave many different meanings for *Jing Jie,* such as self-reflection, the experience of flow, a sense of achievement on the mountain, feeling spiritually lifted and so forth. Yun explained the spiritual feeling she gained through park visitation, stating "*some places in parks remind me of history and I will feel spiritually lifted.*" Other interviewees (n=4) compared flow with *Jing Jie,* stating that they forgot time when they

completely enjoyed the natural world, and forgot their worries and troubles in real life. Those feelings were considered to be *Jing Jie,* an important part of their leisure activities in urban parks, by those interviewees. Hong reflected on *Jing Jie* as:

> *I guess Jing Jie is a self-reflection, thinking about the details that been ignored in daily life and see things in a long time vision. So feeling Jing Jie is important to me, since it make me able to live my life in a better way through visiting parks.*

Half of the non-Stanley Park visitors found *Jing Jie* not to be important, not because they did not value positive experiences, but mostly because they were not able to define *Jing Jie* and what experiencing *Jing Jie* in urban parks actually meant to them. Those respondents were not able to provide clear feedback and rate *Jing Jie*. Many of them did not understand what *Jing Jie* was and felt the concept of *Jing Jie* to be very vague. One interviewee noted that *Jing Jie* was a high level and too profound concept to experience, analyze or measure.

4.4.1.4 Experiencing *Jing Jie* for Stanley Park visitors

All the Stanley Park visitors were satisfied with the experience of feeling *Jing Jie* in Stanley Park, mostly due to the scenic beauty and peaceful atmosphere of Stanley Park. For instance, Hans noted "I feel very calm and happy being close to nature, especially when I walk beside the ocean on the seawalls, because that ocean beauty makes feel I am immersed in the tranquil and beautiful nature. Yes it is important for me to feel peaceful and experience *Jing Jie*." Here, a feeling of peace when experiencing the scenic beauty of nature and being surrounded by a peaceful setting was identified for its importance to visitor satisfaction.

The slight majority of Stanley Park visitors (n=6) considered *Jing Jie* as important to their leisure satisfaction. This majority constituted a greater percentage of positive responses in this category compared to the responses of the non-Stanley Park visitors, only 4 of whom considered *Jing Jie* to be in any way important due to their weaker understanding of the concept.

The individual responses about *Jing Je* varied significantly with respect to what this concept meant to the participants. Yet, the most common answer interviewees provided as to the definition of *Jing Jie* was that they gained positive feelings from being in the beautiful natural environments of Stanley Park. They described their positive feelings in the natural surroundings as being worry free, feeling a kind of happiness, feeling relaxed, feeing safe and having a sense

of being peaceful in their heart in nature and a sense of freedom. For example, Carrie noted that *Jing Jie* in Stanley Park came with an experience of flow, an ability to focus on the present and the experience happiness. Her definition of *Jing Jie* centers upon the importance of being in the moment through concentration on beautiful, relaxing surroundings. She specifically stated:

> *I can feel that I just focus on the present, focus on the beautiful views, without worrying about anything in Stanley Park. I guess that it is Jing Jie and a kind of happiness. This is very important, because I feel a sense of urgency and worrying about things too much in my daily life. In Stanley park I was totally intoxicated with nature and it felt so good.*

Among the different perspectives on what could be defined as *Jing Jie,* the absence of everyday stress and pressure when visiting Stanley Park contributed significantly to the satisfaction of this visitor. As a further example of how *Jing Jie* was defined by Stanley Park visitors, Tracy's associated this concept to being surrounded by nature, thus feel peace and tranquility. Even though the definitions of *Jing Jie* given all differed, *Jing Jie* was always seen as something beneficial to park visitors, providing a positive experience. *Jing Jie* was also defined as triggering deep thoughts in nature. Having a place for reflection near to his home and avoiding the hassle of a long trip out of the city was a very important driver of satisfaction for Dave, he stated:

> *I can have deep thoughts in Stanley Park. I think that is very important. When I was younger, I used to always go to Stanley Park, and just think, thinking about life and my personal situation. Stanley Park was just a place I went to during the night when it was very quiet. At night it is not so busy, and it feels very quiet and far away from the city. It feels that you are far away from the city, but you are not far away, you are still in the city. However, you feel you are in nature, far away, with no one around and nothing to bother you. And you can just sit and think about your life.*

In conclusion, half (50 percent) of non-Stanley Park visitors considered experience of *Jing Jie* as important, while 6 (60 percent) of Stanley Park visitors considered it as important. The number of participants who considered *Jing Jie* to be important was similar between the two groups, with the very small difference of 10 percent being the only real variation between the two groups. Non-visitors and visitors to Stanley Park also gave different personnel opinions

about what *Jing Jie* means to them. Lastly, the Stanley Park visitors group was very satisfied with their Ji*ng Jie* experience at Stanley Park.

4.4.1.5 Using skills in urban parks for non-Stanley Park visitors

The interview questions "did you use different skills and how important is for you to use different skills to be satisfied in urban parks or Stanley Park?" were confusing to the Chinese interviewees. The majority of the Chinese interviewees (n=8) could not understand in what ways using skills would contribute to leisure satisfaction.

Half of the non-Stanley Park visitors suggest that they did not use any skills in urban parks. The other half of the group pointed out some skills they used and explained why using skills was important to their leisure satisfaction in urban parks. The skills reported by this second group included having the physical stamina or endurance to engage in prolonged physical activity such as walking, sit ups and push ups and playing ping pong, possessing boating skills, having literacy skills to enable them to read signage, interpret maps, read brochures and follow directions in parks, English speaking skills, interpersonal communication skills, skills gained from *taiji*, singing abilities, and the ability to play badminton and engage in square dancing. Many interviewees suggest that those skills could make their leisure activities more satisfying. Wei noted, *"I did sit ups and push-ups and played Ping-Pong in parks. I am quite satisfied by the use of these skills in parks, and it is very important for me since these skills help me to do exercise well."* Some interviewees also stated that similar skills could help them gain many joys and pleasures from leisure activities. Henry said that *"I used some boating skills, which is important since I use that skill to do boating with my friends and we had lots of fun. If I didn't use that skill, we would not be able to gain pleasure from the experience of boating."* While participants provided mixed responses on the importance of skills for leisure satisfaction in urban parks, it was clear that the capacity to have fun in urban parks can increase with human skill possession, just like built amenities can increase leisure experience satisfaction in parks.

4.4.1.6 Using skills for Stanley Park visitors

Being similar with the non-Stanley Park visitors group, half of the Stanley Park visitors noted that using different skills could help them to achieve more leisure satisfaction in their leisure activities in Stanley Park. The skills they mentioned were hiking skills, cycling skills, and

reading skills. For example, Dave explained that having certain practical skills could improve park visitor experiences:

> *Reading skills are important in the park, because if you are going to go hiking in Stanley Park, you need to be able to read the maps well, or read the signs well, so you know where to go hiking. So reading is important for your enjoyment of the park.*

Specific factors relating to park experience may have relationships to broader constructs. For example, cycling skills were related to matters of safety and ability to use parks in a safe manner. Howard offered his understanding of the importance of using cycling skills in Stanley Park, stating:

> *Sometimes I do hiking and cycling. I would use hiking and cycling skills. Yes. Those skills can make my leisure activities better. Actually, there are lots of to learn when you do cycling and hiking. You cannot just get on a bike and cycle. You need to know how to control the speed, how to protect yourself from danger while cycling…I always need to improve those skills to do a better job of cycling. It is important to use skills in leisure activities in parks.*

Views on the importance of using skills in urban parks were similar between non-Stanley Park visitors and Stanley Park visitors. While half of the non-Stanley Park visitors did not relate to the concept of using skills in urban parks, those that did noted that possessing specific practical skills allowed visitors to pursue activities in parks such as cycling or hiking. General skills such as the ability to read signs and follow maps were similarly valued by the respondents who saw use of skills in urban parks as important. Half of Stanley Park visitors identified the use of skills such as boating, workout or game playing skills as being of importance for park satisfaction, while half did not see the use of skills in urban parks as something of importance.

4.4.2 Social

Through the social construct, social interactions in urban parks were explored through evaluation of how important social interactions were to urban park visitors in general and Stanley Park visitors. However, this question was met with a lack of understanding and answers were generally negative, saying that social interaction as it was understood was not important. All of

the interviewees were confused about what social interaction in urban parks actually means. Most of the interviewees thought that social interaction referred to meeting and making new friends or attending social activities in urban parks. In this case, the investigator explained that the social interactions also include being with and interacting with the companions, such as family and friends in parks.

4.4.2.1 Social interactions in urban parks for non-Stanley Park visitors

The majority of the interviewees (n=7) noted that social interaction is not a main motivation for them to visit urban parks, with only three interviewees noting the opposite. Many of interviewees (n=6) said that they did not do any social activities in urban parks. If they did, the most common social interactions were greeting neighbours, chatting with strangers, being with friends and family and chatting with people about topics of common interest. Joining social activities, such as doing *Taiji*, becoming part of a choral singing team, playing badminton, joining a square dancing group were mentioned by Jia.

The majority of the respondents (n=7) did not consider social activities such as the ones described to be important contributors to their leisure satisfaction in parks. All of the interviewees excepted for the three who considered social interactions to be important stated that they were able to have a satisfying experience in pursuing leisure activities in urban parks without any social interactions. Some of them went even further by stating that urban parks were not the correct places for social interaction.

The three non-Stanley Park visitors who saw social interaction in parks as something of importance provided the following rationale in support of their perspectives. Sharing topics of common interest and joy was seen as important, as well as bonding with others. Yun noted the importance of parks as a place to talk, stating that he felt excited to talk about international news and opinions about policy with other people in parks. Diana felt that having company was important for a satisfied park visitation experience, noting, "*I feel lonely when I go to parks alone, so social interaction is important for me*." Jia remarked that she enjoyed doing activities together with her friends and family, explaining, "*it is more enjoyable to do activities together, since people can share their joy and happiness*."

4.4.2.2 Social interactions for Stanley Park visitors

Like non-Stanley Park groups, the Stanley Park visitors stated that social interaction was not a major motivation for them to go to Stanley Park. About half of the Stanley Park visitors thought that social interaction was important to their leisure satisfaction in Stanley Park, and agreed that social interaction can increase their leisure satisfaction. The most common reason noted was the fact that Stanley Park provided a good opportunity for them to bond with family, friends and coworkers through chatting and shared activities. Carrie felt that parks can be a great place to spend time with those already known including family and friends, but not as a place to meet new people:

> I went to Stanley Park with my family and friends. We chat when we walking and sitting on the beach. Yes it is important and it is a good thing. Since in daily life, we may not have that much time for our family and friends, going to parks provides a good opportunity for us to bond, and have fun together. Bonding with my friends and family makes me feel satisfied. I like to have the company of others to share joy but I do not like to hang out alone.

Parks were not just places where scenery is appreciated; they provided a social and cultural context, a tangible location for people to spend time together and strengthen their relationships. While visitors might not be pursuing new connections, the quality of their conversations and interactions with people already in their lives might be enhanced by the park's beautiful and relaxing environment. For example, Docas stated:

> Chatting with my friends is something I enjoy. I feel closer with my friends in Stanley Park. I would say, chatting with friends in parks is different than chatting with them in offices. It is easier for people to talk in parks since conversation takes place in a pressure free atmosphere and the views are beautiful. People are more willing to talk and bond with each other in parks. Chatting with friends is very important for my leisure satisfaction in parks. You will feel more cheered up with friends being around.

Highlighting the types of activities that could be held in Stanley Park and noting its proven value as a venue for events, Howard mentioned attending a coworkers' picnic party in Stanley Park, Henry, instead, pointed out the hosting of an activity organized by S.U.C.C.E.S.S

in October in Stanley Park. S.U.C.C.E.S.S is an overseas Chinese social service organization which organizes activities aimed at helping Chinese immigrants in Vancouver. Specifically, SUCCESS mission is about helping Chinese who are new to Canada in overcoming barriers and achieving their full potential. Noting the social and cultural benefits of the activity hosted by S.U.C.C.E.S.S in the park, Henry said, "This activity gave me an opportunity to bond with other Chinese people and attracted me to Stanley Park."

Many interviewees (n=4) also stated that their happiness and satisfaction was amplified through sharing with others. Tracy noted that park amenities provided activities over which social bonding could occur, stating "*I went to the aquarium, to the beach and cycling with my friends. It is more fun and joyful to do activities together with my friends, since I can talk with my friends.*" Emily further explained "*Yes. When I was visiting the aquarium, I talked with my friends and strangers about the fish and sea creatures. It is very important to my satisfaction. We can share the joy of watching beautiful fish, which are enhanced when we share them.*"

When the investigator asked "did you develop a close relationship with others through your social activities?" all the interviewees provided positive answers to that question. For example, the social interaction helped them to build a stronger friendship with their friends and strengthen their family bond. Yet, social interactions were not the major motivation for interviewees to go to urban parks.

In conclusion, only a minority of non-Stanley Park visitors (n=3) regarded social interaction as somewhat important, while half of the Stanley Park visitors (n=5) considered social interaction to be important. The reasons beyond such answers were similar between the non-visitors and visitors group. For both, the most important feature of social interactions were bonding with other people, sharing topics of common interest with others and sharing joy. The Stanley Park visitors who regarded social interaction as important were satisfied with the social activities they did in Stanley Park.

4.4.3 Education

The construct of education included three items: 1) my leisure activities can help me learn about myself; 2) my leisure activities provide opportunities to try new things; and 3) my leisure activities can help me learn history and culture.

4.4.3.1 Learning about self in urban parks for non-Stanley Park visitors

This item was confusing to Chinese non-Stanley Park visitors. The majority of the interviewees (n=8) noted that they had no idea how to answer the question "What did you learn about yourself in your leisure activities in urban parks? How important is the learning experience to you?" The interviewees did not know in what ways visitors can learn about themselves from the leisure activities they undertake in parks and did not find this question relatable to their experience. Sharon stated her uncertainty on the importance of learning in parks, stating "*I don't know how to answer this question. I went to urban parks to relax and have fun. I don't think I learned anything about myself.*"

4.4.3.2 Learning about self for Stanley Park visitors

This item was also confusing to Chinese interviewees who were Stanley Park visitors. The majority of the interviewees (n=9) noted that they had no idea how to answer the question. How one could learn about oneself while pursuing leisure activities in Stanley Park was not a question that interviewees found meaningful or something to which they could relate well. Both non-Stanley Park visitors and Stanley Park visitors found learning in urban parks to be generally irrelevant. 10 percent more interviewees in the Stanley Park category found learning in urban parks not to be something to which they could relate.

4.4.3.3 Trying new things in urban parks for non-Stanley Park visitors

The majority of the non-Stanley Park visitors (n=8) noted that they did not undertake new activities in urban parks since they simply did old fashioned activities, such as walking, enjoying nature, resting and other regular activities. Therefore, new things were not considered as important by most of the non-Stanley Park visitors.

4.4.3.4 Trying new things for Stanley Park visitors

The Stanley Park visitors offered the same comments on this item in the leisure satisfaction scale. The bulk of Stanley Park visitors (n=10) explained that they pursued activities such as walking, resting, looking at wildlife among other traditional activities. Therefore, novelty and new activities were not considered to be important by most of the Stanley Park visitors. As

one example, Stanley Park interviewee Dave pointed to the consistency of Stanley Park over the years and its old time traditional value to him:

> *Stanley Park didn't change over the years. So there is nothing really new. Trying new things is not so important. Stanley Park for me is just an old traditional park. I like Stanley Park for its old traditions, since I went there when I was a child.*

In conclusion, the majority of the interviewees did not regard trying new things as important in either urban parks in general or in Stanley Park. 80 percent of the interviewees in the non-Stanley Park category described how they were not seeking anything new, while 100 percent of non-Stanley Park visitors preferred time honoured activities such as walking or appreciating nature.

4.4.3.5 Learning about culture and history in urban parks for non-Stanley Park visitors

The majority of the non-Stanley Park visitors interviewed (n=7) did not consider learning culture and history to be important contributors to their leisure satisfaction in parks. They stated that they did not go to urban parks to learn about culture and history. This result showed that learning culture and history was not a motivation for Chinese interviewees to visit urban parks.

4.4.3.6 Learning about culture and history for non-Stanley Park visitors

The majority of Stanley Park visitors (n=9) did not consider learning culture and history to be important factors in their leisure satisfaction in parks. They also stated that they did not go to Stanley Park to learn about culture and history. This result showed that learning culture and history was not a motivation for Chinese interviewees to visit urban parks. The importance of learning about culture and history in parks was 20 percent lower among Stanley Park respondents specifically than in urban parks in general. It is possible that Stanley Park visitors, being familiar with Stanley Park and talking about this park specifically were more definite in their answers regarding the non-importance of learning about culture and history in parks than respondents talking about urban parks in general.

4.4.4 Relaxation

This section addressed two items based on relaxation, "my leisure activities help me relax" and "my leisure activities contribute to my emotional wellbeing." The importance of relaxation was assessed, together with the level of satisfaction visitors experienced with respect to relaxation in urban parks in general and Stanley Park specifically.

4.4.4.1 Relaxation in urban parks for non-Stanley park visitors

All the non-Stanley Park visitors identified relaxation as very important for their leisure activities in urban parks. Relaxation was considered to be the main purpose of urban park visits by most of the interviewees (n=10). Experiences in urban parks contributed to the interviewees' emotional wellbeing in a variety of ways. Firstly, relaxation in urban parks lowered people's stress, depression and anxiety. Many interviewees (n=10) noted that doing leisure activities in urban parks could alleviate their worries in daily life. Hong noted that urban parks can "relieve the sense of urgency in life due to the fact that time seems to stand still when one is in the park."

Secondly, urban park experiences could contribute to optimism. Two interviewees expressed their happiness and joy gained through simply experiencing the natural scene. Wei remarked that the joys she obtained from the relaxation in parks were "*Positively related to her life quality and life happiness index.*" Yun said that "*The flower blossoms and budding trees in the spring brought hope to him.*" Some other interviewees (n=3) pointed out that visiting parks could provide them with positive energy and get rid of any negative energy.

Thirdly, recharging and refreshment was seen as another way of contributing to people's emotional wellbeing in urban parks. People became tired from the fast-pace of working and life, but going to parks to relax was seen as a good way to refresh and recharge. Some interviewees said that they felt more energetic after visiting parks.

Lastly, visiting urban parks brought happiness and joy to the visitors in two important ways Firstly, urban parks offered a break from sources of environmental stress such as city noise, traffic sounds and the daily routine of work. Secondly, parks offered an increased in quality of life through the opportunity gained by visitors to enjoy the sights and sounds of nature, relax, exercise, see appealing wild animals and take in scenery such as water, trees and mountains. Both of these benefits, one of avoidance and one of gain brought happiness and joy to visitors.

4.4.4.2 Relaxation for Stanley park visitors

Similar results were found for the Stanley Park visitors. All ten interviewees thought that relaxation was important to their leisure satisfaction in Stanley Park. They explained that relaxation lowered levels of stress, depression and anxiety, decreased levels of aggressiveness, allowed for recharging and refreshment, and provided optimism, joy and happiness. Carrie explained "*Sometimes, I am in a bad mood and keep arguing with my family, after visiting the park, I feel calmer and will be more tolerant and understanding to others*." Respondents recognize being in nature as a form of recreation that can rebuild the human mind and body. Spending non-work time in nature in parks could lead to improved performance during work. Howard noted a positive relationship between visiting Stanley Park and performance in the work place, stating:

> *Relaxation is very important. I get very tired from working and daily busy routine. Going to Stanley Park and enjoying nature totally relaxed my stressed nerves and gave me more energy to go back to my work. I am more efficient in my work after rest and relaxation in the park.*

An additional example of how relaxation in parks was seen as important for providing tangible benefits, including enhancing mental health of visitors was expressed by Chloe:

> *I experience thoughts of delight in my mind when I visit Stanley Park. Visiting Stanley Park was beneficial for my physical and psychological health. It was very important. I felt cheered up after visiting Stanley Park but before visiting, I felt depressed and down. Going to Stanley Park was refreshing for me.*

In conclusion, both non-Stanley Park visitors and considered relaxation in natural settings as highly important in their leisure activities and also stated various ways park experience could contribute to individual's emotional wellbeing. All members of groups rated the importance of relaxation highly, with all 10 interviewees in each group rating it as important. Non-Stanley Park visitors expressed appreciation for park attributes such as flowers and scenic views in creating an atmosphere that can reduce stress. The Stanley Park visitors were satisfied with the relaxation gained from enjoying the natural views in Stanley Park.

4.4.5 Physiological

Parks offer visitors a place to take part in physical exercise. A wide range of park activities such as walking or even wildlife watching involve mild physical exertion, while more involved sports pursued in parks include heavier exercise. This section assessed the importance of physical exercise to non-Stanley Park visitors and Stanley Park visitors, looking at how much the opportunity to engage in physical exercise drew visitors to urban parks in general and Stanley Park, what benefits physical exercise offered and whether visitors experienced satisfaction with respect to physical activity in urban parks and Stanley Park specifically.

4.4.5.1 Physical exercise in urban parks for non-Stanley Park visitors

The majority of the non-Stanley Park visitors (n=7) found it to be important to engage in physical exercise and stay in good physical health through leisure activities in urban parks. Yet, most of these interviewees (n=6) noted that doing physical exercise was not the main motivation for them to go to urban parks. They would still go to an urban park and be satisfied without performing any physical exercise. Walking, jogging and using fitness facilities were the most common activities the non-visitors group undertook in parks. Most of them considered urban parks to be a good place for physical exercise due to the open space, fresh air, and accessible fitness facilities. The majority of the interviewees (n=7) identified two benefits arising from their physical activities: staying physiological healthy and maintaining good mental health. Mike noted that he "*Would be able to forget his worries and troubles in his life through physical exercise.*" Diana expressed that she "*Felt excited after sweating from physical exercise.*" Others also stated that they felt mentally calm and comfortable after physical exercise in urban parks. While physical exercise was not the priority or the main draw for visitors to urban parks, urban parks were seen as an excellent place to pursue physical activity and the benefits of physical exercise were well recognized.

4.4.5.2 Physical exercise for Stanley Park visitors

More than half of the Stanley Park visitors stated that the physical activities in Stanley Park were important to them, even though physical exercise was not a major motivation for them to go to this park. Many interviewees (n=5) recalled they did not do physical exercise every time they visit Stanley Park, but it would be great if physical exercise were to become part of the

experience. Dave specified: *"Physical exercise is an awesome part of being in the park, because you feel better about yourself, you get some fresh air and you see some beautiful nature while you are walking around. So the physical exercise just makes you feel better as a benefit gained from spending time in the park."* Interestingly, it can be seen that being physically active increased self-esteem, while seeing nature improved overall mood for this participant.

Benefits from physical exercise for Stanley Park visitors were divided into the same two categories of mental health and physiological health as identified by non-Stanley Park visitors. The connections between engaging in healthy physical activities in a natural park setting and both physical and mental health were highlighted as stated by Howard:

> *I felt that my whole body and mind became relaxed. People's bodies can generate dopamine through physical exercise. That dopamine can make people happy. That is why I felt cheered up after cycling in Stanley Park. Stanley Park is also a good place to do cycling, since it has huge green spaces, fresh air and beautiful ocean views. Nobody would block your way when you cycle.*

Tracy also noted, *"Physical activity is not always my major motivation to cycle in Stanley Park. Sometimes, I went to there just to cycle with my friend. Yes, physical exercise is important for me, because it helps me relax and cycling is fun. Just walking is boring*."

Many Stanley Park visitors (n=7) noted that they also enjoyed walking around on the seawalls and in the forest, getting some fresh air and seeing the beautiful views. The majority of the Stanley Park visitors (n=9) regarded Stanley Park as a great place to pursue walking, cycling, hiking and other sports because of the large open spaces, beautiful views and fresh air.

In conclusion, there were no major differences between the non-Stanley Park visitors group and the Stanley Park visitors group in terms of the physiological construct in the leisure satisfaction scale. Admittedly, physical exercise was not a major motivation for Chinese interviewees to go to urban parks or to Stanley Park. Nevertheless, the majority of each group considered physical excise to be an important and great part in their experience. Lastly, most Stanley Park visitors were satisfied with their physical activities in Stanley Park.

4.5 Expectations for Stanley Park

Expectations of a positive experience bring visitors to parks; but if they are not met, satisfaction levels will drop. Upon leaving a park, visitors will also have areas of least satisfaction, where improvements to the park experience could possibly be made to improve their satisfaction. Stanley Park visitors were asked about their expectations with respect to they wanted most at Stanley Park and also asked what they like least about Stanley Park with respect to the quality of their visitation experience.

This section presented non-Stanley Park interviewee expectations for Stanley Park. The interview question for the interviewees was "If you have a chance to visit Stanley Park, what would you expect from your visit?" Overall, the most common expectation of the Chinese interviewees for Stanley Park was the ability to enjoy the natural beauty of the park in a peaceful atmosphere. Many respondents (n=6) were interested to see different animals, plants and flowers, especially the one they had never seen before. Seeing the beautiful scenery was the most common answer found from the ten interviewees. Some of them wanted to go to the aquarium to see ocean creatures, while others desired to see animals in proximity by feeding squirrels. Sitting on the beach and swimming in the ocean were mentioned by some interviewees as well (n=2).

4.6 Least satisfaction for Stanley Park visitors

This section assessed the areas of least satisfaction for the 10 Stanley Park visitors in their Stanley Park experiences. The interview question for the interviewees in terms of the least satisfaction was "What did you like the least about Stanley Park?" Overall, the least satisfaction dimensions were divided into three categories: lack of facilities, unavailable and expensive parking and concerns about safety. Among the ten Stanley Park visitors, eight interviewees gave at least one aspect with which they did not feel satisfied in Stanley Park, while the other two interviewees could not think of any reason of dissatisfaction. The majority of the interviewees noted that the park lacked facilities, especially restrooms, benches for people to have a rest, restaurants, places to get drinkable water, ice cream and snacks, and road signs. Tracy hoped Stanley Park "*Could have more restrooms for parents with infants in order to provide more convenience for the families with infants.*" Docas provided an example of desire for a low stress experience by park visitors. Having to bring one's own food due to a lack of restaurants or other

food services might reduce satisfaction and imped socialization over a meal. Docas further stated:

> Stanley Park has a lack of restaurants, places to buy water and ice cream and snack stands. I wanted to stay longer in the park, be with my friends in a restaurant and enjoy some food. I am not used to bringing my own food. I don't have an appetite for packed food. I prefer hot food or fresh cooked sea food.

Four interviewees found the parking in Stanley Park to be both difficult to find and expensive. The interviewees said that there were insufficient parking lots to meet the needs of the visitors, especially on weekends and holidays when there were many people coming to the park. Based on the high volume of visitation documented for Stanley Park, it is clear that there is a gap between the number of people wishing to use Stanley Park and the limited parking availability. As a result, the ability of Stanley Park to deliver satisfaction as a destination may be compromised by reduced accessibility through a deficiency in parking spaces and high parking fees. Additional patrols in Stanley Park for the sake of safety in the park were recommended by visitors who felt that help in case of medical challenges, accidents or unsafe park conditions, whether caused by nature or humans was important to visitor safety and satisfaction. Additional patrols, for example, would reduce the time and distance of travel required to get help should it be needed. Increased staff would increase monitoring and surveillance of the park, reducing danger to visitors from strangers and increasing the likelihood of getting help in case of an accident, medical emergency, animal attack or just getting lost.

Chapter 5: Discussion

To understand Chinese visitors' experience and satisfaction in urban parks a theoretical framework commonly used among North American Caucasian people was applied to a Chinese population. This chapter discusses the findings of this research, compares and contrasts the similarities and differences between the findings and the literature review and presents conclusions and implications for future research and for urban park managers. It summarizes the key findings, answers the research questions, and compares the findings of the table of contents rrent research with the findings from related previous studies, explaining why specific similarities and differences might have been found. The contributions of the research are to the field of inquiry around culture and leisure experience and satisfaction. Recommendations based on the research findings are provided for future research. Lastly, this chapter points out the limitations of the research and suggests possible dimensions for use in proposing similar research in the future. The significance of this study is two-fold; firstly, trial steps have been taken to lay the groundwork for further research into cross-cultural leisure satisfaction, qualitative evaluation of constructs and nature-based recreation. Secondly, baseline knowledge with respect to what Chinese people are looking for in leisure satisfaction have been uncovered. Therefore, park planning and tourism development that is looking to cater to our increasingly influential and widespread Chinese population in Canada and overseas tourism market should consider the findings of this study when designing and communicating with Chinese clients.

5.1 Important urban park attributes

The most important park attributes contributing to satisfactory experiences for Chinese visitors were safety, proper facilities, appropriate crowding levels, wildlife, and help from personnel. Numerous similarities were found between this research and other studies using similar park attributes to examine satisfactory experience, even though the research was completed in different natural settings. The following paragraphs relate the key findings of this study to the importance of safety, facilities, appropriate crowding levels, wildlife, and personnel's help. The following section discusses how these research outcomes support, matches or differs from the findings of the literature review and reflects on why the results align or not with the existing literature.

5.1.1 Safety

A primary takeaway from this study was that all of the Chinese respondents regarded safety, both in the form of personal physical safety and also possession safety to be the most important factor and top priority when organizing their trips to urban parks. This finding was fully congruent with the existing literature on mainland Chinese tourists' travelling habits and perspectives on safety. Firstly, numerous studies indicated that mainland Chinese outbound tourists considered "safety" along with "beautiful scenery" to be the most important factor in their travel plans (Kim et al., 2005). Akama & Kieti (2003) found that international safety and security is of paramount importance for successful international tourism and travel. Mainland Chinese tourists generally prefer package tours instead of travelling independently, further reflecting the Chinese market's concern for safety (Kim et al., 2005; Fountain et al., 2010). Consistently, all the interviewees in this study identified safety as the most important factor in their trips to urban parks, defining safety as their primary concern when visiting urban parks. A reduction in safety was related to a drop in satisfaction by interviewees. The main perceived risks with the potential to reduce visitor satisfaction included dangers posed by falling branches, potential risks from strangers, feelings of isolation, animal attacks, risks from deep water and lake ice as well as being too far from medical assistance including first aid. Harnik (2006), for example, suggested to increase park safety by addressing crime, sidewalk potholes, rotten branches and other possible sources of risk. In accordance to the literature, a park should be free of safety hazards in order to create a satisfactory visitor experience.

Human presence had also a direct effect on safety perceptions. Chinese visitors to parks felt that a lack of personnel or insufficient human presence heightened risks to personal safety in parks. These findings support the perspective of Harnik (2006) which describes how sufficient park user presence may be seen as increasing safety levels by placing "eyes on the park." Knowledge of specific risks and the ability of individuals to take personal responsibility for their own safety was recognized as a matter of importance for visitor safety in the current study, supporting Tarrant and Smith's (2002) finding that the presence of "information on conditions and hazards" could improve visitor consciousness of safety issues. Finally, Chinese people expressed their unwillingness to pursue experiences that would include adventures or present challenges, reflecting the importance of safety for them.

These findings suggest that Chinese travellers and visitors to parks hold high levels of safety consciousness. This finding presents important implications with regard to understanding leisure satisfaction in parks. Firstly, other aspects of satisfaction may not matter to Chinese visitors if they feel unsafe. As this sample population caries about health, life and safety, they may be unwilling to place any type of experience ahead of safety. The results and the literature review both indicated that any tours or park information that suggest possible risk or even offer thrills with just a mere feeling of danger will not appeal to Chinese visitors; instead, efforts to reach a Chinese audience should focus on alignment with values of maintaining personal safety, being responsible and avoiding risk

5.1.2 Personnel and interpretation

The diversity in feedback and subjectivity in responses in regard to what was or was not satisfactory about personnel and interpretation echoed the literature which found difficult to measure satisfaction with regard to staffing and interpretation. In the literature, the quality of help available from park personnel was found to have a significant influence on visitor experience in wetland parks in China (Wang et al., 2012). Additionally, personnel was identified as being a foundational element of visitor experience at Parks Canada sites by Banyai (2012). Yet, participants to this research perceived the presence of park personnel to be a matter of lesser importance. This finding was particularly fitting for those respondents who had visited Stanley Park. A slightly higher number of non-visitors to Stanley Park did mention personal as important to enhance their safety perception while visiting an urban park. The reason behind this difference between non-visitors and visitors to Stanley Park is unclear. It is possible that Stanley Park visitors were more likely to be on their own in the park since they could relate their experience to a specific park they visited, rather than being asked about parks in general.

Mostly, Stanley Park visitors felt quite capable of handling their park experience on their own. Such confidence might be due to the type of activities being pursued in Stanley Park, the geography and environment of the park, and individual experience. People visiting Stanley Park may be familiar with the park, feel their skills are adequate to navigate the park, and may not anticipate danger or resulting emergencies from their visit to the park. It is possible that past experiences with personnel lacking adequate skill and training may influence visitor opinions toward park personnel, causing them to rate their presence as less important. It is clear from the

literature that the influence of staff upon visitors may be negative or positive, depending on the appropriate training of staff (Eagles, 2002). Eagles (2002) noted that park agencies cannot control the information flow provided to visitors, despite information provisioning is seen as an important task. If the information provided to visitors is not good, park staff could be seen as a hindrance and not a help. The information accessible to park visitors in our modern world through technology (i.e., phone apps, GPS, Google Maps) may allow individual visitors to pursue a satisfying and well guided park experience separate from the need to request on the ground staff assistance.

A further complicating matter is that experience of parks and park provisions, including staffing satisfactoriness, is a highly subjective matter and variable according to Tung and Ritchie (2011). Banyai, (2012) noted that tourist satisfaction depends on the quality of interaction between tourists and the dimensions at the tourism sites which include the human dimension of related personnel, the natural environment, facilities and information system. Results could vary not only due to specific factors in the nature and quality of tourism site service, but also in relation to diverse and variable human emotions, weather and other factors, indicating the subjective nature of visitor satisfaction (Weiler et al., 2013). As clarified by Connell & Meyer (2004, p.185) "the visitor experience arises from a combination of visitor emotions and attitudes and objective and subjective assessments of sites visited". These considerations could explain some of the variation in responses offered by interviewees in this study. In the case of interpretation, what satisfied one person might not satisfy another visitor in the same way. Furthermore, Connell & Meyer (2004) highlight that the results in studies of satisfaction can be easily affected by a single negative factor, having the potential to skew otherwise positive feedback towards negative perceptions. For example, a park staff member who was direct and to the point might be seen as less friendly by a sensitive or lonely visitor, while a park visitor with a specific goal in mind and limited time might be very satisfied with clear and concise information without unnecessary social interaction. With this diversity of viewpoints and the reality that satisfaction can be subjective, many conclusions can be drawn from the result of these study among which visitors might be more familiar with the park, Stanley Park might have poor staff, or it might be perceived as a safe park.

In certain aspects such as language and culture relating to personnel based components of satisfaction, it became clear that interpretation in Chinese languages was less important than

forecasted. While Baur & Tynon (2010) indicated the importance of being able to accommodate diverse cultures for success in international tourism, yet the respondents to this study did not perceived as important that staff speaks Chinese. It is possible that respondents anticipate that visitor have the ability to interact in English while in Canada or that interpretation in general was not being ranked as important by these participants. If interpretation itself was not valued, then whether the language was Chinese or English could be seen as inconsequential. One can conclude from the literature that adaptability, together with adherence to universal standards of competence and politeness may be key to increasing satisfaction with regard to personnel interactions instead of language capabilities. Adaptability in communication styles and adjusting to different people, their personality and needs may thus allow visitors to feel their own needs are met, even when the personnel does not speak the visitors' native language.

5.1.3 Facilities

The presence of facilities in natural settings was another important park attribute contributing to Chinese peoples' satisfaction in urban parks. Chinese interviewees perceived human and natural element interactions as related to park satisfaction differently from the perspective contained within the literature. While facilities were rated as important, their value was less correlated with ideals of human-nature harmony by Chinese interviewees than the literature suggested. Chinese people's perceptions and expectations for facilities in natural settings in this study were more focused on practical matters of visitor comfort (e.g., proper washroom access) or matters of enjoyment (e.g. having nearby restaurant) rather than an overwhelming desire for facilities to create a harmony between human and nature.

In Lovelock et al. (2010)'s study "balance" was the central notion in Chinese views of nature. Balance was described as the presence of humans and their connection to nature through 'manmade' monuments or structures. Hence, Chinese perceived artistic manufacturing of nature as more beautiful than untouched nature (Lovelock et al., 2010). Fountain et al., (2010) explain further that Chinese people seek to improve nature and enrich harmony by adding buildings and structures to nature to create harmony. This is due to the imperfection of nature as "nature without man and man without nature are incomplete" (Fountain et al., 2010, p.74). The attractiveness of nature is assessed by Chinese people according to its connections with legend, stories, poems, history, or famous people, not just its natural beauty. This was not the case in this

study where Chinese valued untouched nature, views and natural aspects of the landscape, as well as amenities to improve their park experience. Statues, public art and social and recreation facilities installed in harmony with nature were valued for their ability to create harmony with nature and improve park aesthetics and usability, but the concept of the importance of a rebuilt nature featuring human and natural element combination and its valuation by Chinese visitors was weaker than documented in previous literature. Furthermore, the respondents generally praised the beauty of nature, views and scenery for their intrinsic value, regardless of whether harmony between man and nature, manmade facilities or buildings were related to the natural park environment. Nature itself was seen by interviewees as a key motivator for park visitation that also produced positive mental states. The feedback of respondents indicated that facilities could enhance enjoyment of parks by providing places to stop, rest, eat and socialize among other activities. While human additions to the landscape such as statues and structures received some appreciation from participants, they were hardly seen as a reason behind visiting a park. The takeaway from this finding is that the literature may not always reflect what humans are really looking for in a real life experience, especially when it comes to park use and satisfaction. Focusing on practical realities of park use such as access to nature and convenient amenity access may be worth the greatest attention.

5.1.4 Park use and crowding

With respect to human use levels and crowding in parks as related to visitor satisfaction, Tarrant & Smith (2002) found that crowding levels as well as wildlife and parking conditions were very important attributes affecting visitors at outdoor recreation sites. Those findings were congruent with the findings from this study. Appropriate crowding levels were regarded as important by respondents to the study. Overcrowding or *qiliang* (too few people) were perceived as having a negative impact on experiences in parks. Balance was therefore seen as key to visitor satisfaction. In the literature, differing levels of impact associated with crowding levels were noted as the number of people using parks varied. There are potential trade-offs when it comes to crowding. For example, Harnik (2006) documented how large numbers of users in a park can be perceived as increasing safety levels. The literature further highlight that parks offer a place for people to gather, raise awareness and talk about matters of importance, including safety (Baur & Tynon, 2010). With respect to satisfaction in parks in this study, a certain amount of crowding is

important in relation to safety. Additionally, a certain crowding level can create a festive environment, which is highly valued by Chinese interviewees. Such favour for a festive atmosphere is very different from North American wilderness management aspects which consider a sense of solitude and lack of encounters a very important part in the wilderness recreation (Hall, 2011).Yet, feelings of peacefulness and stress reduction (Shi, 2008; McNamee, 2012; Weiler et al. 2013) resulting from time spent in parks and the ability of parks to provide tranquility and reduce social problems (Chiesura, 2004) could potentially be affected if crowded conditions were high.

It is important to acknowledge that the downsides of increased crowding may not always be as extreme as expected. Weiler et al. (2013) noted that while crowding has often been seen as something detrimental to a positive visitor experience, recent research suggests that congestion does not always cause a deterioration in the quality of visitor experience and its benefits in natural settings. While overcrowding was perceived by interviewees to be capable of causing inconveniences, feeling of *qiliang* was perceived as not festive. The ladder was highly emphasized by Chinese participants as an important contributor to their leisure activities in urban parks. Hence, crowding and *qiliang* influence and potentially create conflicts between competing perceptions, such as safety versus unsafety and tranquility versus festivity. The following implications can be extrapolated from these findings. Firstly, it is possible to locate space for activities requiring different and potentially incompatible levels of crowding/*qiliang* in a park. For example, a Zen garden could offer peace, tranquility and solitude, while walking trails or even a restaurant stand where higher levels of crowding are desired could receive higher levels of activity. Secondly, it is worth considering that different personalities could respond to crowding/*qiliang* in different ways; finding ways to accommodate different levels of human activity may serve diverse needs.

5.1.5 Wildlife viewing

Wildlife viewing was another very important attribute, both for its own sake and in relation to the broad emotions generated by experiencing nature. Seeing wildlife in urban parks sharply increased Chinese people's leisure satisfaction. These results echo the work of Tarrant & Smith (2002) indicating that wildlife viewing opportunities are of high importance to park visitors. Furthermore, seeing urban wildlife is one of the ways in which city dwellers can

experience heightened interaction with nature (Baur & Tynon, 2010). The rich ecology of Stanley Park and its diverse range of interesting and appealing wildlife species does allow for such heightened experience, especially for Chinese which have less experience with wildlife in nature than Canadians. The lack of interaction with wildlife in Chines might be due to respondents being from larger cities or lacking familiarity with species such as deer, racoons and other common wildlife in Canada. The ability to see wildlife may have important traditional meanings related to the principles of Confucianism and Taoist philosophy. Such philosophies emphasize the concept of human-nature harmony as a core principle, which is achieved by having a close relationship with nature and wildlife (Li, 2005). Making urban parks accessible to people and enhancing their habitat value to wildlife is a prime example to offer a human-nature harmony experience to visitors (Li, 2005). Lovelock et al. (2010) suggested Chinese culture inclined visitors to shy away from what might be excessively wild landscapes. With respect to animal components of wild landscapes, Chinese people in this study were concerned about the presence of potentially dangerous wild animals such as bears but were very interested in seeing cute, generally safe and less untamed types of wildlife such as squirrels, birds and deer.

The novelty of seeing different wild species at close range was considered a park attribute with great value by participants. Without the presence of such animals, participants felt that something vital would be missing from the natural setting of the park. Furthermore, the positive psychological benefits of wildlife viewing were coupled with the educational and recreational benefits of such an experience. As found in Tung & Ritchie (2011), seeing wildlife is one of the strongest ways in which aesthetic experiences with nature can lead to satisfying human experiences. Being close to animals was seen as the epitome of connection between man and nature. Interestingly, it was this connection between man and animal found in the study in visual, emotional, psychological and experiential terms that was valued more greatly than the supposedly important harmony between human built structures and natural environmental elements.

5.2 Satisfying urban park attributes at Stanley Park

The urban park attributes of Stanley Park generally offered high satisfaction levels to visitors with respect to perceptions of safety, facilities, crowding level, wildlife, and personnel's help at Stanley Park. A priority was placed upon safety and Chinese interviewees generally

found Stanley Park to be very safe, having a low degree of hazards and not being located amongst vast wilderness, but adjoining the city. The concerns over human safety in the wilder forested areas of the parks due to falling branches, wild animals and isolation strongly aligned with the literature, especially with the observations of Lovelock et al. (2010) that raw untamed nature can be uncivilized and threatening to Chinese park visitors. Chinese seek to avoid high risks when visiting parks, as noted by Wang & Stringer, (2000). Crowding level was another highly important park attribute. In the case of Stanley Park, Chinese interviewees valued balance when it came to intensity of human use of parks, wanting to have more crowded, festive areas in some parts of the park and areas with fewer people where they could go to feel peaceful when visiting the park. Stanley Park performed well in the area of crowding, being seen as neither too crowded nor too empty, though the forested areas were seen as overly isolated. The key areas where improvement was wanted consisted of insufficient amenities such as washrooms. Of note was lack of priority placed on park staff presence, and very high priority placed on scenic views of forest, water and mountains for park enjoyment. A lesser priority was placed upon art, culture and human buildings, though monuments and art were seen as having a lot to contribute to Stanley Park and visitor experience. Overall, it was interesting to see how the literature was supported with regards to the importance of safety and peacefulness. This focus translated into many subthemes, such as what kind of animals were liked or how much crowding was desired to ensure there were "eyes on the park" (Harnik, 2006) rather than dangerous, deserted conditions.

5.3 Important leisure satisfaction constructs

In this study, relaxation was found to be the main motivation for Chinese people visiting urban parks. In the academic literature, it was noted that urban parks provide positive influences on people's general wellbeing through provision of a restorative environment that provides relief from physiological and psychological stress (Chiesura, 2004; Baur & Tynon 2010). Nature in parks was found to offer an escape from everyday life, worries, traffic and even the sound of human voices (Chiesura, 2004).

In support of the literature, the current research pointed out three ways in which urban parks contribute to people's emotional wellbeing. Firstly, relaxation in urban parks lowered people's stress, depression and anxiety levels. Secondly, urban park experiences were seen as beneficial in raising an individual's optimism. Thirdly, recharging and refreshment was

described as another benefit contributing to people's emotional wellbeing in urban parks. Parks are clearly places that can tangibly affect human emotion and mental function in a positive manner in the eyes of Chinese visitors.

In relation to the psychological construct, the majority of the Chinese respondents identified peacefulness and tranquility to be very important during their park visit. Similarly, the peacefulness gained from leisure activities was highly emphasized by Chinese in the literature, being closely related to their satisfaction (Walker et al., 2001; Wang & Stringer, 2000). Chiesura (2004) describes the spiritual significance of nature as a primary energy source that supports the essence of human existence, enriching lives and making life worth living. Consistently, Chinese respondents reported gaining a sense of peacefulness and tranquility when surrounded by and able to concentrate with nature. These feelings are referred to as harmonious homeostatic, a term used to describe Chinese happiness as gained from the experience of peacefulness (Walker et al., 2011). Such perceptions also paralleled the observations of Chiesura (2004) on the restorative power of nature and its ability to alleviate stress, improve psychological equilibrium and provide an escape from everyday living conditions through the presence of calming sights and sounds. In this research, respondents stated relaxation from time in nature can help people gain more energy and be more efficient when they return to work. A positive relationship between performance at work and feeling peacefulness in urban parks exists. Other benefits noted by Chinese people in the interviews were increased comfort and improved ability to find solutions to difficulties experienced in life after being in a park.

In addition to enhancing psychological health, staying physically healthy was highly valued by Chinese people participating to this study. Engaging in physical exercise was not the main motivation for respondents to go to urban parks, but most of the interviewees stated that some light exercise such as walking around and using fitness facilities were important contributors to their satisfaction. Lu, McGinn & Sylvestre (2011) found that Chinese immigrants to Canada saw physical activity as something of importance to health, and recommended the pursuit of both Chinese and Canadian sports as a means to stay active, socialize and support physical health and wellness. Respondents to the study who were aware of the health benefit of exercise, identified parks as ideal places to pursue health building physical activities. Yet, they preferred relatively light rather than strenuous physical activities, which was to some extent similar with the literature findings. Specifically, Hung (2003) outlined how Chinese preferred

quiet, more passive activities rather than the strenuous physical activities popular in North American leisure pursuits. This finding is also consistent with the observations of Lu, McGinn & Sylvestre (2011, p. 2) who found that Chinese respondents saw sport as a "component of a healthy lifestyle and a means to maintain and enhance health". This study also highlighted how Chines respondents experienced increases in exercise levels due "encouragement from friends, colleagues, and media; available resources (e.g., facilities, equipment, natural environment); affordable costs; easy access; enhanced awareness about health; and more spare time in comparison to China." (Lu, McGinn & Sylvestre 2011, pp. 2-3). This finding suggest that Canadian culture can influence Chinese recreation perceptions and pursuits, which is worth keeping in mind in future studies.

Interviewees who pursued physical exercises stated that exercise provided them with both physiological and psychological health benefits. Physical exercise was not seen as a way to learn or to use skills, but rather to have a good experience in the park, stay healthy and improve quality of life. Parks provide places in the community where people can easily pursue healthy forms of exercise as noted in the literature and where Chinese can both engage in traditional sports and learn some North American physical activities (Lu, McGinn & Sylvestre, 2011).

In the literature, *Jing Jie* was described as being analogous to flow, forming the most important leisure related philosophy for Chinese (Wang & Stringer, 2000). This study found several major differences regarding the psychological and social constructs of this concept when compared to existing research. In the psychological construct, the major differences were about the importance of feeling *Jing Jie*. In this study it was found that only half of the interviewees perceived *Jing Jie* as the most important aspect to their leisure satisfaction in urban parks. The reasons for the difference between this study's results and the literature was centered upon the lack of interviewee knowledge and understanding of *Jing Jie*. The Chinese phrase *Jing Jie* can be applied to a variety of study fields and aspects of life. Therefore, *Jing Jie* has a vast range of different meanings based upon differing contexts. The fact is, most of the interviewees did not understand what the experience of *Jing Jie* in a natural setting actually meant. Some interviewees even pointed out that the inability to achieve *Jing Jie* was due to the unclear nature of the feelings gained from *Jing Jie,* while two interviewees expressed their perspective that *Jing Jie* was a high level and profound situation and experience which could not be related just to a park experience.

The meaning and definition of *Jing Jie* contained within the literature is vague. This vagueness was somewhat reflected in the varied responses by interviewees on what exactly *Jing Jie* meant to them. It could be seen from the literature review that the experience of *Jing Jie* in nature is based on Taoism. Contemplation of nature can lead to individual peace, tranquility, and an understanding of the meaning of life (Hung, 2003). Through concentration on the beauty of nature, individuals can experience *Jing Jie* (Wang & Stringer, 2000). The literature also found similarities between the concept of flow and *Jing Jie*. But the findings from this study showed that flow is only part of the meaning of *Jing Jie*. Interviewees provided definitions of *Jing Jie* that did not relate to flow but instead described other states of mind and experiences. These ranged from engaging in self-reflection to feeling one had achieved something. *Jing Jie* was even defined as a form of happiness and the absence of worries.

The experience of *Jing Jie* in nature was also described by interviewees as containing a sense of peacefulness and tranquility and having deep thoughts about life, which was consistent with Taoism. Feeling spiritually lifted through cultural and historical inspiration was also considered to constitute *Jing Jie*. Despite the ambiguity of what exactly constitutes *Jing Jie*, the different definitions of this concept provided by interviewees and found in the literature clearly include concepts that are critical to Chinese visitor satisfaction in parks. Yet, without a clear definition of *Jing Jie,* these concepts may be overlooked or fail to be included when describing the meaning of *Jing Jie.* Conversely, the ambiguous definition of *Jing Jie* clearly caused respondents to find it hard to rate its importance and may have caused them to rate key concepts as less important. In light of these findings, efforts to clearly define what *Jing Jie* in natural places is should be pursued in future research. For example, future studies could itemize the different ways in which *Jing Jie* in natural places is defined by participants and determine most common response. Such focused analysis could likely help to uncover any consistent themes around what *Jing Jie* actually means to respondents with regards to human experience of natural places.

Even though the majority of the interviewees considered the psychological construct as one of the three most important constructs, only a few respondents rated using different skills in urban parks as something important to their leisure satisfaction. When the respondents were asked about the construct "psychological", the majority of them did not consider using different skills as an item under this construct. Specifically, it was difficult for the interviewees to link

their use of different skills to psychological abilities and experience in parks. These findings likely reflect a separation between mind and body and the tendency to think of physical abilities when asked about skill use and skill development in parks. Chinese interviewees were evidently not thinking of skill development as a psychological construct and therefore experienced challenges in meaningfully answering this question.

In the social construct, most of the interviewees suggested that social interaction was not all that important to them. In contrast, the literature found that urban parks fulfill social needs by increasing social integration and interaction among friends, and by fostering social and community cohesion by gathering people together (Baur & Tynon, 2010). Chiesura (2004) and Koon (2009) noted that parks facilitate socialization. It is true that urban parks can provide individuals and the society with social benefits. Yet, being social was not the most important aspect influencing Chinese visitors' leisure satisfaction. The findings also reflected the fact that being social was not the main motivation for Chinese people to go to urban parks. While the findings are interesting and reflect a greater focus on individual activity and experience by park visitors over socialization, it is possible that Chinese interviewees felt that the question referred to meeting new people rather than spending time with friends, co-workers, acquaintances and family. Thus, socialization may have been rated higher if this item would have specified socialization with people known to participants or if the item would have been divided in socializing with stranger and non-stranger. Another explanation to this results is that socializing in parks could be seen as incompatible with peacefulness and relaxation by Chinese participants. It is possible that a number of interviewees do not see parks as the primary place to socialize, seeing them instead as a place to exercise, meditate, relax, appreciate nature, unwind and feel peaceful.

5.4 Satisfying leisure satisfaction constructs at Stanley Park

The majority of the interviewees were very satisfied with their experience at Stanley Park in terms of relaxation, psychological factors and physiological factors. Just as safety was most significant attribute for determining visitor comfort in visiting parks, the scenic beauty of nature itself available at the park was the most important factor in actually attracting Chinese people to Stanley Park. Most of the Chinese visitors could gain a sense of peacefulness and deep relaxation from walking around the park and simply enjoying the natural views at Stanley Park, regardless

of gender and age. These findings were consistent with the literature, where the ability to appreciate the scenic beauty of nature was identified in numerous studies as one of the two most important attributes of travel experience for Chinese visitors (Kim et al. 2005). As noted in the literature (Hung, 2003), observation of the beauty of nature, including mountains, hills and waterways can provide humans with relaxation and restoration by creating a sense of harmony between the human spirit and the natural world. Interestingly, this current study shows a markedly higher appreciation of untouched, Canadian nature than expected

5.5 Expectations for Stanley Park

Most of the Chinese interviewees were eager to have the experience of being close to nature, especially given the great environment and scenic natural beauty that Stanley Park possesses. Those expectations reflect Chinese groups' passion and willingness to engage in nature experiences and to connect with nature. This further proves the relevance of the Taoism philosophy "human is part of nature" and "human and nature in harmony." Chinese people's high expectations around the opportunity to experience a beautiful natural setting was congruent with Kim et al. (2005)'s study on mainland Chinese outbound tourists which showed the Chinese tourists view of "beautiful scenery" as the most important attribute of their travels.

5.6 Least satisfaction at Stanley Park

The aspects of Stanley Park Chinese people were least satisfied with can be grouped into: 1) lack of facilities; 2) difficult and expensive parking, and 3) concerns about safety in Stanley Park. Chinese people held the opinion that the park should be people-oriented instead of being wild. Their need for different facilities demonstrated that Chinese people had a limited experience of Canadian wilderness recreation, and consequently preferred to engage in and pursue more developed and managed park experiences (Lovelock et al., 2010; Hung, 2003). Difficulty in finding parking and high parking prices reflected problems with respect to the accessibility to Stanley Park. All of the interviewees rated safety at the highest level of importance in their responses. This result was consistent with numerous studies showing safety to be one of the two most important aspects of consideration in Chinese travels satisfaction (Kim et al.2005). Specifically, the findings concur with the consideration for safety seen in travel

planning, such as the safety and security based preference for package tours of Mandarin Chinese tourists over independent travel (Kim et al. 2005, Fountain et al.2010).

5.7 Theoretical framework

Although most of the results in this study were consistent with the theory contained in the literature around Chinese perceptions of nature, harmony, traditional philosophies and approaches to leisure, there were also several differences. The main difference exists around the cultural and historical aspect s within urban parks. The majority of participants to this research did not consider culture and history resources in urban parks as important, which differed from previous findings. At the same time, nature was appreciated for its own sake far more extensively than the literature suggested (Fountain et al. 2010, Lovelock et al. 2010). In the literature, Chinese perceived the physical landscape as permeated with human cultural and historical heritage and described it as a "culture-scape" (Li, 2008). As stated previously in this manuscript, according to a traditional Chinese mindset the attractiveness of nature is always assessed by its connections with legend, stories, poems, history, or famous people, and not just from its natural beauty (Fountain et al. 2010). However, this was not the case in this study. Instead, nature was appreciated for its own sake in urban parks and Stanley Park.

A reason behind this finding may be the way the question was designed in this study. The interview question was: "is learning culture and history important to you?" This question mainly aimed to test interest in learning about culture and history rather than asking about learning about the natural landscape in parks. This question did not refer to learning in combination with cultural and historical elements or learning about specific regional culture of the area where the park was located, as described by Huang (2010). Another explanation for this finding is that most respondents had been living in Vancouver for a while. Therefore, the perceptions of nature and urban parks of these respondents may have been influenced by Canadian culture and the Canadian natural environment. Since Vancouver has breathtaking natural views, the Chinese interviewees might be attracted by the pristine nature of this area rather than by its cultural and historical scenes. This theory is consistent with the findings of Lu, McGinn & Sylvestre (2011) where Chinese respondents interviewed about health and sport relationships recognized the importance of sport for a healthy lifestyle and then influence of Canadian cultural in pursuing sports. While a cross-cultural leisure study conducted by Walker et al. (2011) further stated that

Canadian students preferred more "active" experiences (e.g. exercise, team sports) than Chinese, the Chinese respondents to this study pointed out biking, hiking and other physical activities as enjoyable activities to pursue at Stanley Park. These results highlight that cultural influences can impact the way Chinese perceive leisure and satisfaction.

5.8 Theoretical Implications

The application of the Beard & Ragheb (1980) leisure satisfaction scale in this study revealed similarities and differences of interest between Chinese and Canadian culture. This study was innovative due to its qualitative, rather than quantitative approach and focus on a specific Asian group, in contrast to the majority of studies which looked at Western groups (Walker, et al., 2011). The leisure satisfaction scale was applied e to the Chinese cultural context with clear and insightful findings being gathered with respect to the importance of the five needs and motivations (Beard & Ragheb, 1980).

The leisure satisfaction scale measured how important psychological, educational, social, relaxation, and physiological factors are to Chinese respondents' leisure activities in urban parks. The scale of leisure satisfaction was commonly applied to Western people (Beard & Ragheb, 1980), therefore, some items may not make sense to Chinese people in an urban park context. In the psychological construct, the item "I use many different skills and abilities in my leisure activities" was confusing to Chinese respondents. The majority of Chinese prefered to observe nature and try to gain peacefulness and relaxation from being in nature. Therefore, it was difficult for Chinese respondents to come up with specific skills that they could use in nature or increased leisure satisfaction. In addition, the respondents could not understand why such skills were important for the leisure activities. Therefore, it appears that this question is simply not right for Chinese, who apparently do not associate the use of skills with the pursuit of nature experience.

In the social construct, the respondents lacked a full understanding of social interactions in urban parks, and did not have many comments and opinions on this construct due to the fact that engaging in social interactions was not the major motivation for Chinese to visit urban parks. Instead, Chinese mostly focused on pursuing relaxation in urban parks rather than being social. In additions, being social is a broad concept that contains a diverse range of activities. It is necessary to narrow the concept and be more specific in any future studies. A future research

question could be about how Chinese develop and maintain close relationships with people they already know, rather than assessing Chinese social interactions with strangers in parks. People whom respondents would know would include families, friends, coworkers, neighbors and so on. In this case, socializing with random people and attending social activities where many strangers were in attendance would be excluded. Chinese would therefore have a more clear understanding of the meanings of being social in urban parks. In future studies, researchers could also focus on how Chinese pursue the development of close relationships with others in order to measure their needs and motivations for engaging in social interaction.

In the educational construct, learning about themselves was also confusing to Chinese interviewees, primarily because Chinese interviewees did not relate to the concept of going to parks to pursue any type of learning. Instead, they sought to have an experience, not to learn anything, thus the question seemed odd to them. The leisure activities in urban parks that Chinese undertook focused on experiencing nature, achieving positive psychological states, pursuing physical exercise or appreciating scenery among other factors. This may reflect a focus on external experience and inner peace, rather than self-learning. Chinese were visiting parks to relax and get away from themselves, rather than learn about themselves. The question of what is learned about ones' self in urban parks may thus have been hard for Chinese interviewees to answer. Most respondents did not think of any educational experiences that they had gained in urban parks and thus did not have anything to share with the investigator. Most of the Chinese interviewees expressly stated that learning in urban parks was not their priority. In future research, the investigator could use the phrases "self-reflection" or "personal thoughts" to help respondents better understand the topic of learning about a person self. Such clarification could elicit feedback from Chinese participants.

In the physiological construct, it was clear that Chinese visitors to urban parks may be focusing more on relaxation than exercise by seeking passive rather than active, low arousal over high arousal experiences. Yet, Chinese visitors may benefit from increased awareness of opportunities to pursue physical activity in parks and physical health benefits. The relaxation construct stood out most strongly among the constructs and fully corroborated the findings in the literature documenting the prioritization of peacefulness, tranquility and restful experiences for Chinese visitors to parks. In fact, this focus on peaceful experiences as the strongest takeaway

relates to the priority placed upon seeing beautiful views, connecting with nature and feeling safe in urban parks.

In conclusion, one can determine that the leisure satisfaction scale and park attributes apply well cross-culturally, but may need further specific refinement to allow Chinese visitors to relate to questions more fully and answer all of them more meaningfully. Furthermore, Chinese visitors to urban parks hold different perceptions of urban parks than those held by Western visitors do. Essentially, Chinese are more safety conscious than Western visitors, valuing safety over the thrill of adventure. Chinese may see adventure as a deterrent rather than a draw, preferring a less stressful experience. They place a great priority upon feeling relaxed and peaceful. This theme of relaxation and safety relates to all aspects of their park experience and prioritization patterns. Socialization, learning and skill development all potentially relate to higher arousal activities and may be prioritized less by Chinese seeking to gain peacefulness through park visitation and relaxation.

It is important to acknowledge that Chinese visitors also valued social experience and physical activity, which might be due to North American culture influence in pursuing physical activity on Chinese living in Canada or even visiting Canada. The literature certainly suggested that Chinese were very focused on experiencing harmony between human and nature in parks as represented by a combination of natural and human built elements. However, the results of this study were different. Chinese interviewees valued pure nature as a mean to achieve relaxation and did not focus nearly as much on harmony between natural and human built elements. A different kind of harmony between human and natural elements was valued in the form of having practical amenities for human comfort such as food or rest stops. Interaction between humans and animals was also valued as a form of contact between humans and nature. It is clear that the manner in which questions are asked can influence the type of responses offered by participants. Making sure participants understand exactly what is being asked forms an important consideration for future research.

The application of the scale to an Asian group versus a Western group was not as different as one might imagine. There were certain areas of ambiguity in regard to certain questions or constructs, such as psychology and skill use, learning in parks or socializing. Such issues might be due to differences in cultural perspectives. For example, a Western audience might think of skills and imagine them to be important for satisfaction in parks when asked about

outdoor recreation (Hung, 2003). A member of a Chinese audience is more focused on gaining relaxation (Walker et al. 2011), thus might relate less closely to skill development seeing park use as a more psychologically experiential matter compared to an opportunity to use or develop outdoor skills. Additionally, there were concepts such as *Jing Jie* that were not universally defined by interviewees and therefore were not easy to measure in a uniform manner in this study. Tweaking the wording of questions on specific matters such as socialization or learning in parks as related to satisfaction to make sure participants can better relate to the questions and understand what is being asked and why is an important step for future research. Better defining core concepts, specifically *Jing Jie,* will allow future studies to meaningfully address this important aspect of visitor satisfaction and obtain clearer and more consistent answers.

Uncertain answers reflect the potential to tweak specific question content or the manner in which they are presented, which does not represent a core problem in the leisure satisfaction constructs. Though some of the answers to questions regarding certain leisure satisfaction constructs were unclear, uncertain responses do not mean that the areas of inquiry are not worth investigating. In future studies, making sure leisure satisfaction questions can be easily and correctly understood by the culture being studied will improve the effectiveness of the results.

5.9 Recommendations for Stanley Park Management

Although Chinese people interviewed found Stanley Park to be quite satisfactory with respect to each park attribute, the interviewees pointed to certain ways in which this park could be improved to better meet Chinese community satisfaction.

Respondents felt that the forested areas of the park would feel safer and more enjoyable with more human facilities and services. Improving the quality of paths, adding new paths, and providing more signage could increase Chinese visitation to the forest areas.

Concerns over falling branches and danger trees were also raised. In order to allow safe and enjoyable access to nature, vegetation should be properly managed and maintained. Removal of danger trees near walking areas would minimize the risk to human safety. Safety could be also increased through additional patrols and park presence. Adding staff patrols with knowledge of the road and trail network would reduce visitors' concern over getting lost. Chinese speaking park staff, while not seen as important by most respondents, could still address the needs of Chinese visitors to Stanley Park who do not speak English.

A lack of facilities raises practical and leisure satisfaction concerns among respondents. Park managers should consider adding bathrooms in convenient locations, particularly in the forest. Placing more benches throughout the park would also increase satisfaction by offering resting opportunities and improving visitor experience. Adding logs to the beach for visitors would help visitors to sit, relax and socialize by the water. Adding more food and drink facilities, particularly those offering seafood, snacks and beverages are ways to allow park users to enjoy the natural scenery and socialize. Such amenities offers places where meaningful social interaction can occur.

Parking is another issue brought up by participants in need of improvement at Stanley Park. Insufficient and overly expensive parking was noted by participants. To address such concerns, creating some additional parking space, ensuring space allocation is efficient and reducing the price of parking could make using Stanley Park easier and encourage increased visitation by Chinese clients.

5.9.1 Limitations of the study

Firstly, the study specifically assesses the Chinese people in Vancouver and their experience and perspectives on urban parks and satisfaction at Stanley Park. The majority of interviewees have lived in Vancouver for some time and have been influenced by Canadian culture to some extent. Additionally, the study sample consisted of only 20 people, which is not a large sample size but one suited to gathering detailed qualitative information from a limited sample population. The study's sample is thus not representative for the entire Chinese population in Vancouver or Canada. The small sample size places limitations upon the findings of this study.

Secondly, the case study subject is Stanley Park in Vancouver. This park cannot comprehensively represent all parks and Chinese visitor satisfaction in parks, since Stanley Park has unique attributes in terms of its geographical, social and cultural context.

Thirdly, factors such as individuals' ages, years living in Canada and gender can affect their experience and satisfaction. Besides, visitor experience also depends upon a person's nature since each individual recalls experiences subjectively and uniquely even when they participate in the same events and activities and receive equivalent services (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). The

limitations brought through socio-demographic and cultural influences are not assessed, which limits the ability to further generalize the outcomes of the study.

Additional limitations included the fact that the sampling area was limited to Chinatown. Participants sampled from Chinatown might conceivably reflect views or habits that are associated with that specific part of Vancouver and not necessarily representative of Chinese in all of Vancouver or the rest of Canada. Views on park satisfaction by those in Chinatown might be different than those expressed by Chinese met in an area less reflective of Chinese culture. Furthermore tourist and residents were not compared in their satisfaction level. Tourists and residents may hold different levels of experience with urban parks in general in Canada and Stanley Park due to the amount of time spent in the area. Secondly, tourists and residents may have different types and levels of expectation with regards to park attributes. A comparative study could conceivably show tourists to be more adventurous, while residents could be more interested in routine activities in parks as part of their long term lifestyle, or perceptions on safety levels in parks could vary between visitors and residents. Those limitations could represent future directions to expand the research conducted in this study.

5.9.2 Recommendations for future researchers

Future research can continue to test the leisure satisfaction scale used in this study and apply this scale to different leisure activity settings besides urban parks. Additional studies on different natural contexts would enhance the understandings of visitors' perceptions of nature, including forests, mountains and shorelines. The researchers can also explore Chinese visitors' experiences in different types of parks, such as theme parks or national parks to understand Chinese motivations and interests in leisure in parks. Furthermore, future research can use loyalty items such as "intention to revisit" and "recommendation to others" to measure visitors' overall satisfaction in nature, and create new constructs to examine the relationship between the sense of place attachment and satisfaction.

A number of recommendations can be made to future researchers. Firstly, the researchers should understand satisfaction and visitors as multidimensional constructs, which means that many factors including personal reasons can affect visitor experience and satisfaction. Therefore, the researchers should select and analyze the major factors affecting the visitors' experience in parks, looking at factors such as their personal interests and biases, to what values and interests.

Park amenities are tailored towards and different aspects of safety and comfort. For example, a visitor interested in wildlife viewing and one interested in jogging might rate the same park differently and what they value personally may vary according to their specific interests. Secondly, the researchers could use a quantitative scale with close ended responses to help the respondents rating the "level of importance" of a statement, thus quantify satisfaction levels. Thirdly, the researchers should revise the items based on the research settings and contexts, helping the respondents understand what the five leisure satisfaction constructs refer to in specific settings. Fourthly, researchers should avoid any bias in sampling by selecting respondents from different ages and genders. It is also important to analyze how socio-demographic variables can impact the results.

Additionally, this study explores Chinese perceptions and expectations for leisure in nature, therefore future research can include exploration of Chinese expectations and participation in nature based activities. While this study did not divide tourists and residents, it is a fact that 40 percent of the participants in this study were travellers from overseas, rather than residents of Vancouver. Future work could focus specifically on the overseas Chinese tourist market, looking into their travelling patterns, habits, likes, dislikes, needs and wants while travelling abroad.

Lastly, this study provides an example of how to fill the gap in research on cross-cultural leisure, race and ethnicity in leisure. As noted by Floyd et al. (2008) this highly incomplete area of research that urgently required further study. This study start addressing this gap by providing a model of how one can link leisure satisfaction concepts to a specific population. This study looks at Chinese leisure satisfaction in parks in British Columbia, where information were even more lacking. The basic study model and specific learning can be built upon by future researchers looking at Chinese people and leisure satisfaction in other areas or in relation to other aspects of leisure or satisfaction relating to Chinese people. Positive and negative results can indicate what specific investigative approaches or even specific questions worked well and which did not work well, which can be taken into consideration by future researchers.

Just as this study sampled a select number of Chinese people permanently or temporarily in Vancouver, future studies could examine other social, ethnic or racial groups in relation to a selected aspect of leisure. For example, a study could look at French tourists and their goals and satisfaction in relation to wildlife viewing opportunities in Canada.

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Appendix A – Park Attributes and Leisure Satisfaction

PARK ATTRIBUTES
- Atmosphere and environment
- Uncrowded and unspoiled park
- Safe and secure park
- Resource conditions
- Unique and diverse wildlife
- Rich in cultural resources
- Tourism facilities
- Interpretive signs, brochures, exhibits
- Information about and access to historic sites
- The facilities are in harmony with the natural environment
- Related personnel
- Listening and providing accurate and correct information

LEISURE SATISFACTION DIMENSIONS AND ITEMS

Psychological
- My leisure activities give me a sense of peacefulness and tranquility.
- I can experience *Jing Jie* through leisure activities in nature.
- I use many different skills and abilities in my leisure activities.

Social
- My leisure activities have helped me develop close relationships with others.
- I have social interaction with others through my leisure activities.

Education
- My leisure activities provide opportunities to try new things.
- My leisure activities can help me learn history and culture.

Relaxation
- My leisure activities help me relax.
- My leisure activities contribute to my emotional well-being.

Physiological
- My leisure activities help me stay physically healthy.

Appendix B - Interview Questions for Stanley Park Visitors

VANCOUVER ISLAND
U N I V E R S I T Y

These interview questions are for Chinese people who have been to Stanley Park. The purpose of this interview is to better understand Vancouver's Chinese population's experience and satisfaction about urban parks, using Stanley Park as an example.

Male/female _____   First-generation immigrant / foreigner _____

- When was the last time you went to Stanley Park? How often do you go there?
- What is the major purpose for you to go to Stanley Park?

PARK ATTRIBUTES

1. Atmosphere and environment
   - How do you feel about the level of crowding in Stanley Park? Will it be better if there are more or less people in the park? Why?
   - Do you feel that Sanely Park is safe? Why or why not? Is safety and security important to you in your park experience? Rate from 1-5

2. Resource conditions
   - Is wildlife viewing an important part in your visit in Stanley Park? How important? Rate from 1-5. Do you feel satisfied about the wildlife viewing in Stanley Park? Which species did you want to see but didn't?
   - Is learning culture and history in parks important to you? Did you see enough cultural resources in Stanley Park? What cultural resources did you see?

3. Tourism Facilities
   - Do you read information about a park when you visit it? Do you find that the information system (Interpretive signs, brochures, exhibits and information to historic sites) in Stanley Park is helpful or useful? Why or why not?
   - Do you feel that the facilities are in harmony with the natural environment? Why or why not? Do you have some advice for Stanley Park to improve their facilities?

4. Related Personnel
   - How much do you need the personnel's information and help? Do you need the personnel to give help in your own language? Why?

LEISURE SATISFACTION DIMENSIONS AND ITEMS:

1. Psychological
   - How important is for you to have a sense of peacefulness and tranquility in your Stanley Park experience? Can you gain a sense of peacefulness and tranquility from your leisure activities in Stanley Park? Why or why not?
   - How important are for your feelings of *Jing Jie* when you visit urban parks? Can you experience *Jing Jie* in your leisure activities in Stanley Park? Why or why not?
   - Did you use different skills (like how to use a map, hiking skills, language skills) in your leisure activities in Stanley Park? What skills did you use?

2. Social
   - How important is to you to have interactions with other people during your visit at Stanley Park? What kinds of social interactions did you have with other visitors at Stanley Park?
   - Did you develop a close relationship with others through your social activities?

3. Education
   - What did you learn about yourself in your leisure activities in Stanley Park? How important is to you the learning experience you had at Stanley Park?
   - What new things did you try in Stanley Park? How important is to you to undertake new experiences while visiting Stanley Park?
   - Did you go to Stanley Park to learn about culture and history? What did you learn during your visit at Stanley Park about culture and history? Do you think that Stanley Parks should provide more cultural and historical experiences to the visitors?

4. Relaxation
   - Do you feel relaxed after visiting Stanley Park? In what ways do you think that your Stanley Park experience contributes to your emotional well-being? How important is relaxation for you?

5. Physiological
   - What kinds of physical exercise did you do in Stanley Park? Do you feel visiting Stanley Park helps you develop your physical fitness or remain physically healthy? How important is physical activity to you?

LEAST SATISFACTION DIMENSIONS

   - What did you like the least about Stanley Park? How can Stanley Park be improved for you?

Respondents will be asked to rank the top 5 park attributes that are important for them. And top 3 satisfaction items that are important for them.

These interview questions are for Chinese people who have never been to Stanley Park. The purpose of this interview is to better understand Vancouver's Chinese population's experience and satisfaction about urban parks in general.

Male/Female _____   First-generation immigrant / foreigner _____

What was your reason for visiting your favorite urban park?

PARK ATTRIBUTES

1. Atmosphere and environment
   - How does over-crowding affect your urban park experience? How do you feel about *qiliang* (a Chinese phrase, means very few people) in an urban park?
   - Is safety important to you in your park experience? How important? Rate 1-5. Why?

2. Resource conditions
   - Is wildlife viewing an important part in your visit in urban parks? How important? Rate 1-5. Why?
   - Is learning culture and history in parks important to you? How important? Rate 1-5. By what means do you learn about culture and history in urban parks?

3. Tourism Facilities
   - How important is to you the information system in a park (Interpretive signs, brochures, exhibits and information to historic sites)? Do you use such information when you visit urban parks? How?
   - How important is to you to have facilities in the natural setting of a park? Why?

4. Related Personnel
   - How much do you need the personnel's accurate information and help? Do you need the personnel give help in your own language? Why?

LEISURE SATISFACTION DIMENSIONS AND ITEMS:

1. Psychological
   - How important is for you to have a sense of peacefulness and tranquility during your urban park experience?
   - How important is for you to have a feeling of *Jing Jie* when visiting an urban park?
   - Did you use different skills (like how to use a map, hiking skills, language skills) in your leisure activities in urban parks? What skills did you use?

2. Social

- What kinds of social interactions did you have with others in urban parks?
- How important is for you to have interactions with other visitors in an urban park?
- Did you develop a close relationship with others through your social activities?

3. Education
- What did you learn about yourself in your leisure activities in urban parks? How important is to you the learning experience you had at urban parks?
- What new things did you try in urban parks? How important is to you to undertake new activities while visiting urban parks?
- What cultural and historical features did you learn about in urban parks? Did you go to urban parks to learn about culture and history? What is your advice for parks to help visitors learn more culture and history?

4. Relaxation
- Do you feel relaxed after visiting an urban park? In what ways do you think that your urban park experience contributes to your emotional well-being? How important is relaxation for you?

5. Physiological
- What kinds of physical exercise do you like to do in urban parks? Do you feel visiting urban parks help you remain physical healthy? How important is that for you? Rate 1-5.

EXPECTATIONS
- If you have a chance to visit Stanley Park, what would you expect from your visit?

Respondents will be asked to rank the top 5 park attributes that are important for them. And top 3 satisfaction items that are important for them.