

The Role of Moral Philosophies, Operational Criteria and Operational Strategies in Determining Equitable Allocation of Resources for Leisure Services in the United States

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(Received February 2006; revised September 2006; accepted December 2006)

ABSTRACT *This paper revises an earlier taxonomy of equity models that was published in this journal in 1988. This revised taxonomy consists of three elements. First, it extends the original taxonomy by proposing a set of moral philosophies, positioning them as antecedents of the operational strategies that determine equity outcomes. Six are identified: Rawlsian, egalitarianism, benefit principle, utilitarianism, libertarianism and paternal professionalism. It is suggested that communitarianism offers a philosophical basis for reconciling some of the antithetical perspectives embedded in these six moral philosophies. A second element in the taxonomy suggests the operational criterion flowing from each of the moral philosophies when it is adapted as the basis for policy decisions regarding the allocation of resources to leisure services. The third element identifies 14 operational strategies that determine equity outcomes. Their linkage to operational criteria and moral philosophies is shown. Potential equity consequences and implications of the operational strategies are illustrated and compared by use of a scenario relating the allocation of resources to park land acquisition.*

KEYWORDS: *equity, leisure services, resource allocation strategies, moral philosophies, operational criteria*

Introduction

When Adam Smith (1937) asked ‘What are the rules which men naturally follow in exchanging...goods?’ (p. 28) he was referring to moral rules (Worland, 1983) for he was a moral philosopher as well as an economist. While Smith recognized and accepted that ‘every man’ was driven by self-interest, he argued this was only

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appropriate 'as long as he doesn't violate the laws of justice' (p. 651) since the underlying justification for economic activity was to provide 'plentiful revenue of subsistence for the people' (p. 397). Smith asserted that economic activity has 'two distinct objects' – to provide (i) subsistence for the people; and (ii) revenue to finance public services. Thus, his pioneering explanation of capitalism was accompanied by a recognition that its virtues should be tempered by the notion of justice or fairness.

In contemporary society, much of the responsibility for interpreting a fair and just allocation of resources is borne by governments, for they are the agents which collect resources from the private sector of the economy and then redistribute them in the form of public services. Public services which contribute to the social income and welfare of individuals through their use value can be classified as pure or impure (Crompton & Lamb, 1986). Pure public goods are those which benefit all members of a society equally. Examples of such goods are air quality and military defense. Impure public services, on the other hand, are inherently distributional. The ability of budgetary, planning, and operational decisions to affect the distribution of impure services, such as leisure services, means that these processes have the ability to render some areas of a community more valuable, amenable, attractive or healthy than others. Because leisure services are a finite economic resource, their allocation to one community neighborhood or clientele group means that others must be deprived of those increments of service. Thus, they have the potential to alleviate, maintain or accentuate disparities in social income and welfare.

The generally accepted standard for allocating impure public services such as leisure is 'equity' (Crompton & Lamb, 1986). Equity is a pseudo-cognate term in that many who use it assume that everyone has the same intuitive definition of it. This is a fallacious assumption. Equity is not necessarily synonymous with equality, which refers to 'sameness', although it can be. Rather, equity refers to fairness and justice. It addresses the question, 'Who gets what?' or in normative terms, 'Who ought to get what?' These questions undergird much political debate and move equity into the multifaceted realm of individuals' value systems, which makes its operationalization elusive. Not only is equity difficult to define, but invariably it is controversial when it is defined. However, 'the difficulties of specifying equity neither obviate the need for equity decisions, nor stop such decisions from being made...If we cannot learn to make, impose and defend equity decisions, we are not going to solve any of our economic problems' (Thurow, 1980: p. 17).

'Every time a tax is levied or repealed, every time public expenditures are expanded or contracted, every time regulations are extended or abolished an equity decision has to be made' (Thurow, 1980: p. 406). The question then becomes, 'Which equity outcome is appropriate?' and 'What resource allocation criterion should be used to facilitate it?' The answer is complicated due to the varying nature of leisure services, and because different people and communities have different value systems. This variability suggests that different resource allocation strategies and equity outcomes will be preferred by different communities and by subcultures within communities, because society is comprised of heterogeneous groups whose perspectives and values are not uniform (Wicks & Crompton, 1987; Crompton &

Lue, 1992). Further, the resource allocation strategy preferred by an individual for a leisure service – such as adult sports – may be different from that which he or she preferred for neighborhood parks. Each individual's notion of what resource allocation strategy is appropriate and what is equitable is tempered by his or her background and value system.

An understanding of the potential of alternate resource allocation strategies to deliver different equity outcomes facilitates the purposeful consideration of trade-offs which should be a key element in selecting the resource allocation criteria deemed to be most appropriate in a given context. Crompton and Lue (1992) suggest:

Whatever particular allocation criterion opinion is presented, there will be some proportion of the population opposed to it. When all the alternatives are presented, the magnitude of this opposition can be placed in perspective relative to the other guidelines. If an administrative goal is to reduce controversy, then selection of the option that receives the most consensus is likely to contribute to this end. (p. 244)

Despite the extensive commitment of resources to delivering public leisure services, the pervasive role of service delivery and the political implications of delivery decisions, resource allocation operationalizations and their impact on equity have remained 'the hidden function of government' (Jones, 1980: p. 2). They have received relatively little attention in the popular press, or in the professional literature. A desire to avoid controversy which would likely accompany overt discussions of equity and the primacy of other criteria such as efficiency and effectiveness probably explain much of this lack of attention. However, the pervasiveness of actions which have equity repercussions, their apparent insignificance, and their 'low-key' ordinariness also contribute to the low profile. Most decisions about leisure service allocations are mundane and routine. It is difficult for most residents to get excited about how staff are assigned, equipment purchases prioritized, or maintenance crews scheduled. Further, differences in service levels among areas within a governmental jurisdiction are rarely debated by residents because they are frequently perceived to be small. They don't realize that the cumulative impact of even small differences can be substantial. Nevertheless, those interested in applying concepts and techniques of marketing and management in the public sector need to understand, address, and investigate the implications of resource allocation decisions on equity since they are central to explaining discrepancies in service delivery, and equity is the fundamental factor differentiating service delivery decisions in the public and private sectors.

Why Revisit Equity?

In 1916 Ryan suggested an equity taxonomy comprised of six 'canons of distribution' that he considered to be 'the chief rules of justice that have been or might be adopted in distributing the product of industry' (Beckley, 1996: p. 69). This early taxonomy illustrated that equity was a pluralistic concept. It also stressed the challenges associated with operationalizing some of the resource allocation strategies that would deliver the equity outcomes ('rules of justice') which he conceptualized. He concluded that only two of his canons were operationalizable (scarcity,

which directed that more resources should be allocated to those with superior talents because such talents were scarce and resulted in 'superior efficiency' for the community; and human welfare, which directed that every individual's needs should be met). The remaining four canons (arithmetical equality, proportional needs, efforts and sacrifices, and productivity) he believed 'could not be universally enforced in practice' (Beckley, 1996: p. 71).

In the 90 years that have elapsed since Ryan's pioneering work, the pluralistic complexity of equity outcomes has not been simplified but the taxonomic conceptualizations associated with resource allocation strategies have become more distinctive and explicitly operationalized. The paper addressing the equity issue that appeared in this journal 19 years ago (Crompton & Wicks, 1988) was intended to codify the state of equity knowledge as it applied to the leisure services' field at that time. It was one of a series of papers concerned with equity in the context of leisure service delivery that were published in the 1980s and early 1990s by the senior author of this paper and his associates (Crompton & Lamb, 1983, 1986; Wicks & Crompton, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990; Crompton & Lue, 1992; Wicks, 1986; Wicks & Backman, 1994). However, to the best of our knowledge, with the notable exception of a paper by Howell and McNamee (2003), no work has been published since that time which has further explored conceptualizations of equity outcomes in the leisure field.

The taxonomy of 'equity models' proposed by Crompton and Wicks (1988) 'specifies four generic types of equity models and suggests that each can be operationalized in one, two, or three different ways' (p. 290). Its elements were (operationalizations are shown in parentheses and descriptions of them are provided later in this paper): compensatory equity (economically disadvantaged); equality (equal benefits and equal inputs); demand (demonstrated use and vociferous advocacy); and market equity (amount of taxes paid, direct price paid, and least cost alternative). In the 19 years that have passed since the original article was published, the equity issue has been discussed by the senior author of this paper in numerous workshops undertaken with leisure service professionals and in forums with academic colleagues. The revisions offered in this paper extend the original taxonomy and discussions in three major ways. First, a set of moral philosophies from which equity outcomes emanate is proposed. As Howell and McNamee (2003: p. 19) observed in the context of the original paper (Crompton & Wicks, 1988):

Whilst Crompton and Wicks, in proposing an equity implementation model, discuss the variability of the narrative distribution stage, they provide no insight into the mechanisms and processes that may lead to this variation.

The equity perspectives presented in the 1988 article were not embedded in a theoretical 'home'. This was an oversight because, for the most part, they emanated from well-established moral philosophies that offered viable philosophical frameworks which were designed to guide public policy decisions. Howell and McNamee (2003) point out that such frameworks offer 'possibilities for rationally and ethically' (p. 18) justifying equity outcomes, and 'valid and defensible schemes or reasons why people should accept given conceptualizations of justice' (p. 28).

Second, the set of operational strategies that determine equity outcomes is much more extensive than the eight listed in the original taxonomy. This revision posits 14 such strategies. There is also a nomenclature change. The original taxonomy purported to describe eight 'equity models' for delivering leisure services. Subsequent conversations suggest that a more accurate characterization is to view it as a taxonomy of alternate strategies for allocating resources.

Third, in the past decade or so in the US there has been a burgeoning literature, an extensive legal body of case law and legislative mandates associated with the field of environmental justice. Ostensibly, the nexus between decisions relating to the environment and those relating to leisure services may not be apparent. The environment may be viewed as a pure public good devoid of inherent distributional qualities, whereas leisure services are impure public goods requiring decisions to be made on how to allocate them. However, the highly contentious and emotional environmental justice debate in the US is centered on equity outcomes relating to such issues as the siting of garbage dumps, nuclear waste deposits, nuclear energy plants, polluting manufacturing plants, prioritization of clean-up funds for polluted rivers/lakes and toxic sites, grazing rights on public lands and similar issues. In all of these decisions there are winners and losers. While equity debates in the public arena have been fairly moribund in leisure services, they have been highly visible in the environmental justice field. Arguments and responses emanating from these debates offer useful insights to discussions of equity in leisure services delivery.

The Emergence of Equity as a More Prominent Concern

Although it was noted earlier that equity has received relatively little attention in leisure services delivery in the US, three imperatives have coalesced to give it greater prominence. They are: (i) the imperative that is inherent in political decision-making; (ii) the pragmatic imperative of scarcity; and (iii) the legal imperative derived from court decisions.

The Political Decision-Making Imperative

Service delivery by private sector organizations is predicated on three principles (Novatorov & Crompton, 2001a, 2001b). First, the organization is an open system enabling it to respond directly and quickly to the demands of interested client groups. Second, services are delivered most effectively and efficiently when an organization's managers and employees, and its users, all pursue their own self-interest. Third, the exchange of an organization's services for a customer's resources is voluntary. In contrast, the three principles underlying the delivery of public leisure services are radically different. First, public leisure organizations are, for the most part, closed rather than open system organizations where the emphasis is on adhering to rules and regulations, with parameters that allow only limited discretionary action. Second, the community is likely to best be served when elected officials, managers and employees pursue the interest of the collective public, rather than their self-interests. Third, rather than voluntary exchange, residents in a community are coerced through the tax system to pool their resources to a central authority which then redistributes them (Novatorov & Crompton,

2001a, 2001b). This means that equity outcomes are inherent in the political implementation of decisions associated with each of these three prescriptive actions. Thus, every time a budget allocation is made or an administrative rule or procedure is formulated, it has implicit equity implications.

The Scarcity Imperative

In the relatively prosperous government spending eras of the 1960s and 1970s, the standard political response to pressures to alleviate perceived inequities in the allocation of public leisure services was to provide additional resources to the area or client group that was aggrieved. However, this strategic response option became politically infeasible in most contemporary contexts because of the constraining effects emanating from the plethora of tax limitation measures that have been enacted in the US over the past 30 years (Crompton, 1999). Confronted with a statutory or politically mandated stable or reduced budget, elected officials and managers have been required to fund perceived inequities from existing resources. The implication of this is a commensurate reduction in resources for other groups or services in the community, and such reductions do not go unnoticed. The scenario was explained by Crompton and Wicks (1988: p. 258):

When a leisure service is offered, a constituency is nurtured and a level of expectation and dependence among members of that constituency is established. Reduction of an accustomed service level may be expected to generate dissent and invite closer scrutiny of the fairness of the service's allocation, because the reduced service offering exerts a direct and visible adverse impact on the quality of the lives of individuals who comprise the constituency. The dissent is likely to be particularly acute in urban areas where heterogeneous groups coexist in close proximity, because in such areas the service levels received by others are relatively visible and perceptions of winners and losers are more easily formed.

Residents who are affected by reduced service levels and vociferously oppose them in so doing raise the consciousness of other residents about the equity of allocation decisions. In recent years, public awareness of equity issues has been reinforced by three developments. First, an improvement in the techniques used to measure the distribution of leisure services, especially the evolution of geographic information systems. The increasing tendency for these mapping techniques to be integrated into planning processes has made equity disparities more obvious and explicit (Nicholls, 2001; Press, 2002). Second, in many communities there is now a plethora of citizen action groups with an interest in how scarce public resources are allocated, and the ability to mobilize quickly and effectively through the internet. These groups mobilize to address allocation decisions relative to existing public assets as well as those relating to monetary resources. This is exemplified in the intense debates over what constitutes equitable use of America's vast public lands. These generally pit supporters of extractive industries, lumbering, off-road vehicles and holders of private grazing rights against conservationists. Third, an increase in the number of forms of service delivery has fueled discussions about their appropriateness in the context of equity. These more contemporary forms include increased acceptance of fees, greater reliance on partnerships with private sector organizations, the evolution of outsourcing, increased

reliance on pricing, development of innovative capital financing mechanisms and greater dependency on coproduction of leisure services.

The Legal Imperative

Evidence of the courts' involvement in leisure service allocation and distribution issues in the US can be found as early as 1898, when a Grand Jury decreed that future acquisitions of parkland by the San Francisco Parks Department should be limited to the city's most crowded districts (Cranz, 1982). A majority of more contemporary cases involving public service allocations have been based on the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution, which maintains that 'no state shall make or enforce any laws which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of residents in the United States...nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws'. In the earliest of these more contemporary cases the US Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled in a landmark case, *Hawkins v. Shaw* ('Hawkins v. Shaw', 1971, 437 F. 2d 1286), 'it is not necessary to prove intent, motive or purpose to discriminate...the arbitrary quality of thoughtlessness can be as disastrous or unfair...' As a result of this case, intentional discrimination, which was difficult to prove in court, no longer needed to be proven in cases involving equity. Instead, prosecutors needed only to prove that existing service allocations were unequal.

Subsequent court decisions, however, curtailed the courts' abilities to limit the discretion of local elected officials and administrators in the allocation of public services by ruling that plaintiffs would need to prove that differences in the distribution of services resulted from 'discriminatory intent' of local officials. The equity case law relating to leisure services was reported in some detail by Wicks (1986) and since his review no additional cases appear to have been filed alleging inequitable allocation of leisure services. In reference to this finding, an attorney experienced with leisure services case law explained:

Unless...you can show inequitable distribution based upon racial grounds or some other suspect class (i.e. creed, color, religion, or national origin) it is unlikely that a federal court would question inequitable distribution based upon economic status. Rather than a legal issue subject to judicial redress, this is more of a political issue to be decided at the ballot box, rather than a federal court room. (Kozlowski, 2002: n.p.)

In the past decade the equity issue has become especially prominent in the emergent environmental justice field, and its evolution in that context provides an instructive contrast to its legal status in the leisure field. Exposure to environmental hazards is a negative situation that affected communities seek to avoid. Debates on these issues spawned the prominent acronym NIMBY – not in my backyard. In this sense they are the antithesis of desirable access to public resources like leisure services. Environmental justice refers to the efforts of people (often ethnic minority groups) seeking to prevent the location of facilities that have negative environmental impacts on their neighborhoods. It is defined by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as:

The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of

environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies. (Liu, 2001: p. 11)

Environmental equity is defined by the EPA as:

The distribution of environmental risks across population groups and our policy responses to these distributions. (Liu, 2001: p. 11)

The key difference between the two terms is the extent to which the focus is on the outcome or on the procedural aspects of distribution. Environmental equity focuses on distributional outcomes across individuals and groups which is consistent with the use of equity in a leisure services context, while environmental justice more heavily emphasizes the ‘goals, policies, laws and legal procedures to ensure fair distribution of environmental risks across social groups’ (Liu, 2001: p. 12). Executive Order 12898 issued in 1994 by President Clinton required that proactive action be taken to facilitate the enforcement of environmental quality. It required studies on the impact of potential negative environmental programs and facilities on human health, and mandated that health risks be assessed on people of different race, origin and income. Actions were required to remove or substantially alleviate adverse outcomes where they were disproportionately placed on minority or low-income groups.

In 1997, a decision by the 3rd US Circuit Court of Appeals, in *Seif vs. Chester Residents Concerned for Quality Living* (1997), set a precedent for environmental equity by allowing a community group the right to seek enforcement of the civil rights statute based on discriminatory effects, without the extremely difficult task of having to prove intention to discriminate. The statute, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, states, ‘No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance’. Chester is a predominantly African-American, low-income community located southwest of Philadelphia. This precedent was in striking contrast to the court rulings subsequent to *Hawkins v. Shaw* (1971) described earlier which declared that in the case of leisure services, discriminatory effects were insufficient and plaintiffs would need to prove that any difference found in service levels was attributable to the ‘discriminatory intent’ of local administrators.

The evolution of equity in the context of environmental justice suggests three implications for leisure services. First, the equity issue incorporates procedures such as goals, policies, laws and legal procedures (justice) as well as distributional outcomes (equity). Second, the Executive Order’s requirement that science be used to identify the potential for negative outcomes suggests that contentious and confrontational debates around leisure service levels should move beyond emotional rhetoric and anecdotal evidence to empirical investigation. Third, the prevention of inequities in the distribution of negative service impacts has more political (and presumably popular) appeal than the alleviation of inequities associated with the distribution of beneficial services such as leisure facilities or programs. Although environmental justice and equity in the provision of leisure

services have different levels of legal protection, the issues are ethically similar. In both cases the central principle is that a community should be required to ensure just and fair treatment of all of its residents and its officials should be required to demonstrate they are doing it. Nevertheless, while Executive Order 12898 establishes the right of US residents to an equally healthy environment, there is no equivalent statute to which leisure services must adhere.

A Taxonomy of Strategies for Allocating Resources

Figure 1 shows six moral philosophies, the operational criteria associated with them, and the strategies that emanate from adherence to those criteria. Potential consequences of applying the six moral philosophies to the allocation of resources for leisure services are illustrated in Figure 2.

The moral philosophies provide frameworks which explain why a particular resource allocation strategy is perceived by its proponents to be fair and just. Each of these moral philosophies has generated a rich body of literature. The discussion here is limited to suggesting their usefulness in exploring and providing a rationale for alternate equity outcomes. Each of these moral philosophies has fervent advocates, and each of them is subject to strong criticism from advocates of the other perspectives. Thus, the adoption of one moral philosophy rather than another is likely to be viewed as inappropriate by some.

The Rawlsian philosophy's gestation was in Rawls' (1971) *A Theory of Justice* in which he argued that the preferred equity operationalization is one in which those who are most disadvantaged fare better than they would under any of the outcomes produced from any alternate approaches. In the Rawlsian scenario in Figure 2, inequality persists because the most advantaged group would still receive more than the least advantaged group, but the Rawlsian is not concerned with reducing existing inequality or even with exacerbating it. Rather, the key point is that this scenario maximizes benefits to the least advantaged group by providing them with more than average leisure resources and a greater amount than they would receive from any of the other five scenarios shown in Figure 2. Since the Rawlsian philosophy directs that resources for leisure services should be allocated so they benefit economically disadvantaged populations as much as possible, its operational criterion is compensatory equity (Figure 1) which 'involves allocating services so that economically disadvantaged groups, individuals or areas receive extra increments of resources' (Crompton & Wicks, 1988: p. 290). Rawls' work spawned extensive comment and criticism. Rawls viewed his philosophy as providing a generic equity framework which was appropriate in all contexts. However, as Howell and McNamee (2003) point out:

Rawls was later forced to abandon his metaphysical claims that the theory of justice provided a rational framework for all just societies and went on to make the more circumspect claim that his account exemplified liberal political commitments and did not therefore represent a metaphysical picture of justice. (p. 22)

Rawls' original universalistic claims for his theory were undermined principally by advocates of communitarianism whose position was articulated by Walzer (1983). Their contention is that notions of what is equitable will vary according to the type

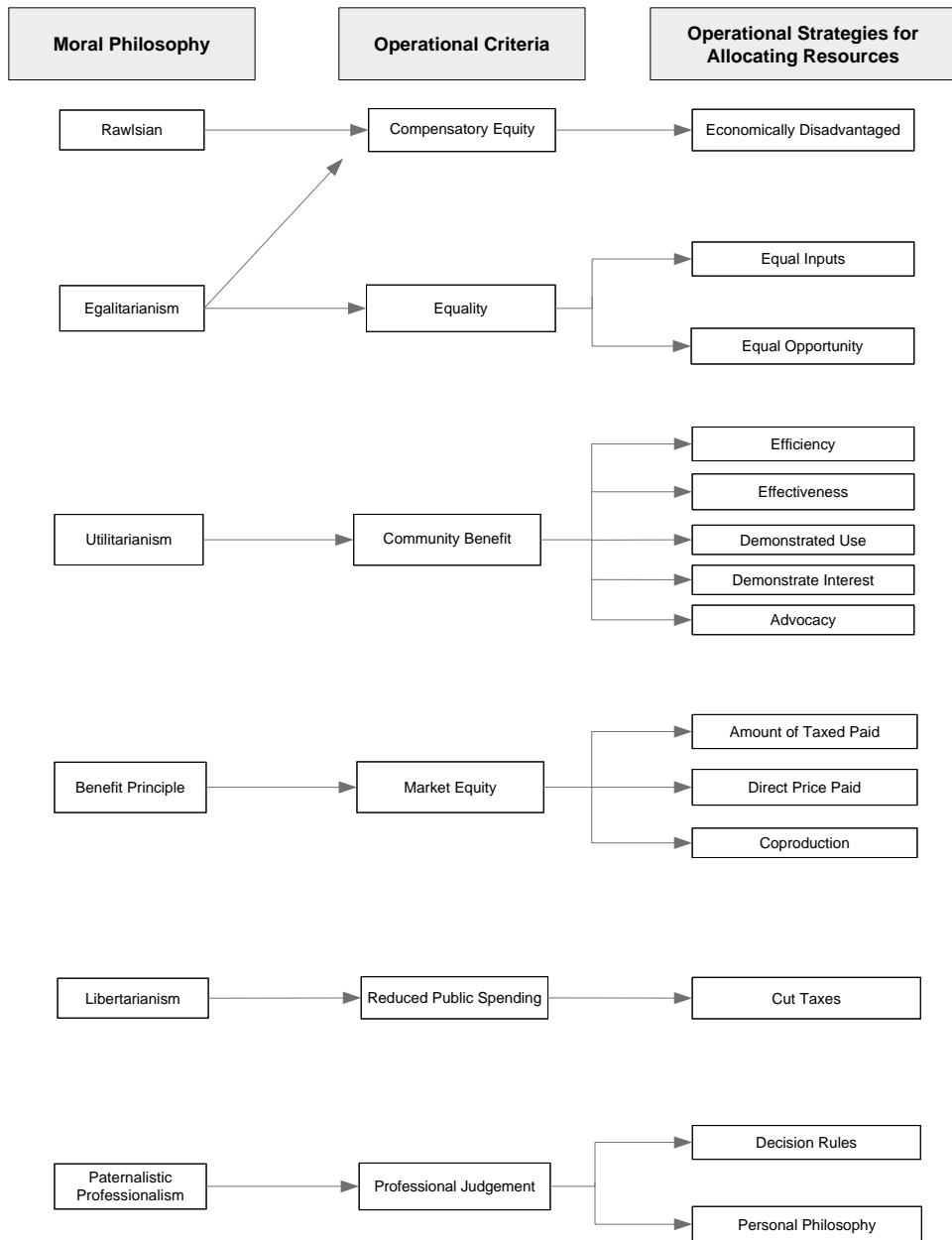


Figure 1. A taxonomy of moral philosophies, operational criteria and operational strategies for allocating resources in leisure services.

of leisure service and the context in which it is being provided. Howell and McNamee (2003) summarize communitarianism in these terms: ‘A Walzerian position, then, is one in which the values, perceptions and images of a particular goal in a particular place need to be considered in the production of political theory

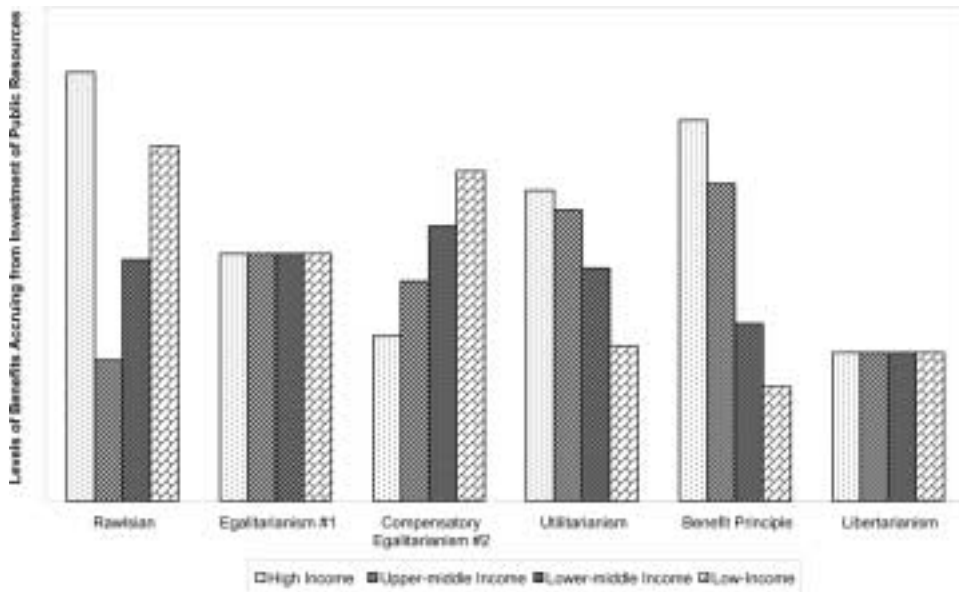


Figure 2. Conceptual implications of adopting alternate moral philosophies of equity.

and policy' (p. 29). Broader implications of communitarianism in the context of leisure services beyond its contrasting position to Rawls are suggested in the concluding section of this paper.

Egalitarianism is similar to the Rawlsian philosophy in that advocates of both seek to improve the lot of the economically disadvantaged. Thus, egalitarians also would be supportive of allocating more resources to low-income groups (Figure 2). However, while the Rawlsian approach focuses on providing the greatest benefits to them, an egalitarian focuses on removing inequities. The egalitarianism scenario #1 in Figure 2 does not take into account existing inequalities and simply allocates equal resources to all groups. Egalitarianism scenario #2 embraces the compensatory perspective and allocates more to lower-income groups. An egalitarian is likely to argue that since these groups are disadvantaged in the resources they receive from the market mechanism, they should receive more public sector resources to equalize this disparity. As Wicks and Crompton (1986) noted:

Equality of opportunity has little to do with equality if it simply enables people with more income, better education and superior leisure literacy to win out over the less fortunate even when the allocation of resources itself is equal. (p. 361)

The operational criterion of egalitarianism is equality. Crompton and Wicks (1988) suggested two resource allocation operationalizations designed to facilitate equality: equal benefits and equal inputs. However, they recognized that 'the pragmatic concern in adopting an equal benefits approach is the difficulty in measuring recreational benefits...the tools are not available to make resource allocation on this criterion a practical alternative for the leisure manager' (p. 292). Coalter (2000) has differentiated between 'whether people *should* participate or should be

able to participate – whether the test is opportunity or outcome. Simply because services are provided out of public funds does not necessarily imply that all sections of the community will want to use them’ (p. 172).

The use of equal opportunity, rather than equal benefits, in the educational system reinforces the legitimacy of its adoption in a leisure context. For example, students are not guaranteed equal outcomes in terms of grades or knowledge. Rather, it is expected that they will be given equal opportunities to learn. Hence, in this revision the equal benefits strategy has been replaced with equal opportunity which suggests that residents should have equal access to leisure resources, for example, having a park within a given walking distance of all houses in the community. Equal opportunity is differentiated from equal inputs because its focus is on ensuring equal amounts of service to all areas of the community regardless of differences in costs which may be associated with their delivery in different areas. In contrast, equal inputs refers to an equal amount of resources being allocated to each area of a community, even if the consequence is disparate access to services because of the different costs of serving different areas. Further, equal opportunity considers inequalities in existing levels of services and would allocate resources to equalize them, while equal inputs of resources may perpetuate existing service level disparities.

Utilitarianism was first proposed by Bentham (Mark, 1969) who stated that ‘the sole foundation, the end and aim of all good government, should be the greatest happiness of the greatest number’ (p. viii). The philosophy was subsequently amplified by Mill (1863) who developed a normative guideline for its operationalization that he termed the ‘highest principle’ which was: ‘Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness’ (p. 10).

Utilitarianism directs that resources for leisure services should be invested so they deliver the greatest net benefit to the community. It favors whatever regime produces the greatest total utility and is analogous to a private firm seeking to maximize profits from its investments. It directs ‘the right action is the one that maximizes utility summed impersonally across all those affected by that action’ (McNamee *et al.*, 2001: p. 175). Thus, in the context of environmental equity, utilitarianism would direct that undesirable sites should be located as far as possible from population centers. In contrast to the Rawlsian and egalitarian philosophies, utilitarianism ignores the distribution of benefits. Thus, for example, in an extreme case a Rawlsian could direct all available resources to the poorest individuals, even if this resulted in relatively low increments of total benefits. Mill (1863) stressed that the principle of utility involves an assessment only of an action’s consequences, and not of the motive or character traits of the agent performing the action. McNamee *et al.* (2001) observe:

One of the major general accusations made of utilitarianism however, is that insufficient attention is given to considerations of justice or fairness in the distribution of goods as individual rights seem to be overlooked by whatever action makes for maximum satisfaction overall. (p. 183)

However, they note that:

Merely maximizing the sum total of utility in society is an inadequate approach for public sector leisure providers since it fails to address issues of distribution. It conflicts with the

conventional understanding of equality in liberal democratic societies where scarce goods are not allocated to only a few people but are spread more evenly or justly throughout society. (p. 177)

Bentham was not insensitive to distribution issues. He was supportive of 'equality-maximizing, or say, more properly, inequality-minimizing' (Mark, 1969: p. 247) in that he believed it could contribute to the greatest happiness principle, but he perceived it to be subservient to the contributions to this end made by his other three principles of utility: providing security, providing subsistence, and maximizing abundance.

Since concern in utilitarianism is only with the aggregated bottom line, there is potential for there to be widely disparate distributions. Thus, in Figure 2, the aggregate benefit accruing from allocating leisure services under this principle is greater than in any of the scenarios representing the other theoretical perspectives. At the same time, Figure 2 also shows that existing inequality could be exacerbated since low-income groups may fare relatively badly, but this is not a primary concern among advocates of utilitarianism.

The operational criterion for utilitarianism is maximum community benefit. This has been interpreted in multiple ways. Figure 1 suggests there are five strategies used for allocating resources for leisure services which meet this criterion: efficiency, effectiveness, demonstrated use, demonstrated interest and advocacy. The units of benefits measured in each case that constitute maximum community benefit are different. The efficiency strategy emerged prominently in the US with the tax limitation movement in the 1980s which was discussed earlier, while in the UK similar shifts in the political climate were manifested by Competitive Compulsory Tendering (CCT). McNamee *et al.* (2001), in reference to CCT, note, 'The Audit Commission explicitly criticized local authorities for their emphasis on social objectives' (p. 186). Efficiency is measured by the cost per unit of service output. Compared to other manifestations of utility it is relatively easy to measure and, thus, is frequently adopted.

Efficiency focuses attention on the cost of service delivery and is frequently operationally interpreted by the use of benchmarks that measure cost per unit of output. Concern is with the extent to which services are being delivered as inexpensively as possible. In their original taxonomy Crompton and Wicks (1988) included an element they termed 'least cost alternative', which they stated 'responds to market forces by seeking out sites where the costs of delivering leisure services is lowest. Thus, for example, a new park would be located in an area where land is least expensive' (p. 294). However, least cost alternative is one manifestation of the broader concept of efficiency which emphasizes allocating resources so the greatest amount of overall service emerges from a given level of investment input. It recognizes that minimizing costs of leisure services per unit output has multiple manifestations and is not restricted to facility location decisions.

Efficiency is always prominent in the minds of elected officials because they are mandated to be good stewards of the tax resources they allocate to leisure services. Inevitably, the least efficient use of funds is to direct them at subpopulations that are unlikely to be very responsive to leisure services. Such segments may include the economically disadvantaged and minority groups. Their lack of responsiveness may reflect a lack of leisure literacy, a suspicion of government, a lack of cultural

assimilation, or a multitude of other factors. If service delivery to such groups was discontinued or reduced and directed only at segments likely to be responsive (which is the private sector model), then efficiency, i.e. cost per person served, would be enhanced.

In the interminable contentious debates about the best use for the extensive public lands in the western USA, the extractors put forth economic rationales while the environmentalists argue the equity case. Invariably, economics wins because:

Equity is not in the domain of economists or private business. Efficiency can be quantified, equity typically cannot...Equity is expressed most directly in the voting booth. But economics often is more than a match for the power of one person, one vote. So, more often than not, what results is inequitable. (Rudzitis, 1996: p. 86)

In short, when the imperative is economic efficiency, there is a danger that accomplishing it may have profound, but often covert, equity implications.

Utilitarianism implies a quantitative orientation in that the aggregated benefits accruing from one cause of action are weighted against those accruing from another. The other four utilitarian allocation strategies (Figure 1) lack the relative ease of quantification associated with efficiency, McNamee *et al.* (2001) observe:

While this moral philosophy recommends itself to policy planning and provision in leisure we have noted how its quantitative bias might mitigate against the achievement of certain qualitative (social) goals whose benefits are difficult to calculate. (p. 194)

Nevertheless, Mill (1863) argued that the greatest good involved the highest quality as well as quantity of pleasure. 'It would be absurd that while, in estimating all other things quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasure should be supposed to depend on quantity alone' (p. 8).

Whereas efficiency is concerned with outputs (i.e. tangible programs, activities, facility use, etc.), effectiveness focuses on outcomes. In an article published over 30 years ago, which is arguably the most influential paper ever to appear in the leisure services literature in the US, Gray and Greben (1974) observed: 'We should have discovered long ago the nature of the business we are in, but we have not...The critical questions are not, How many were there? Or Who won? The critical question is What happened to Jose, Mary, Sam and Joan in this experience?' (pp. 49, 50). In the three decades since the Gray and Greben (1974) article appeared, substantial progress has been made in both identifying and in measuring the benefits people derive from engagement in leisure activities. Much of the work in the US has been undertaken by Driver and his associates and is reviewed in Moore and Driver (2005) and Manfredo *et al.* (1996). It is now possible to identify and measure benefits and compare levels of satisfaction that individuals derive from leisure services. This progress in evaluating their effectiveness is the basis of the Benefit Outcomes Approach to Leisure (BOAL) which is emerging as the primary paradigm for guiding leisure services delivery in the US and for evaluating it (Moore & Driver, 2005).

The other three resource allocation strategies associated with utilitarianism and maximum community benefit are: demonstrated use, demonstrated interest and advocacy. The demonstrated use criterion would mean allocating most resources to those leisure services which attracted most participants, and/or to those groups that most use a given service. Demonstrated interest allocations would be made on

the basis of residents' interests as expressed on a survey or similar measuring instrument. It differs from demonstrated use in that it embraces latent demand as well as actual use. Potential negative implications for distribution of benefits of adopting the demonstrated use operational strategy are illustrated in the following example:

High book circulation may be interpreted as a demand for libraries to provide more books and other resources. In many cities, library expenditures, staff personnel, and new acquisitions are allocated to branch libraries on the basis of circulation rates (Lucy & Mladenka, 1980). The higher its circulation, the greater the share of available resources a branch library receives. If residents of middle- and upper-income neighborhoods read more, then branches in those neighborhoods receive more resources. (Crompton & Lamb, 1986: p. 292)

The inadvertent outcome of providing fewer resources to lower-income groups may also arise with other utilitarianism operationalizations (Figure 1). If better educated people are more prone to complete questionnaires to demonstrate their interest in leisure services or to complain or lobby more aggressively manifesting their advocacy, then they may receive more leisure services. Advocacy may be conceptualized to reflect the quantity and intensity of residents' interest in a leisure service. It may be fallacious because these residents or activists may not be representative of the pervasiveness of interest in the community. The engagement of interested groups or individuals in the democratic process may persuade decision-makers to be unduly influenced by them and make decisions that do not maximize community utility. Nevertheless, budget decisions frequently are 'complaint driven' and it is widely accepted that decision-makers do allocate resources based on this 'squeaky wheel' phenomenon.

The *Benefit Principle* (Figure 1) was first advocated by Thomas Hobbes and John Locke in the 16th and 17th centuries. It directs that the benefits which people receive from leisure services should reflect the contributions they have made to paying for those services. Since it is analogous to the market mechanism used to allocate goods and services in the private sector, its operational criterion is facilitating market equity which Crompton and Wicks (1988) stated, 'entails allocating services to groups or areas in proportion to either the taxes or the fee revenues that they produce' (p. 293).

If the direct price paid strategy is used (Figure 1), it affords residents an opportunity to 'vote' with their wallets for the leisure services they desire. If the price of all services is subsidized by an equal amount or if they are all priced at break-even level, then preferred priorities become apparent. From a utilitarianism perspective, it is argued that this is a more accurate method of ascertaining a community's preferences than alternative non-market mechanisms.

One of Ryan's (1916) original canons of distributive justice was that resources should be allocated in proportion to the amount of labor contributed by recipients of a service (Beckley, 1996). This definition qualifies it as a codicil of the benefit principle and market equity (Figure 1). In the context of contemporary leisure service delivery, this approach is manifested in coproduction which is defined as 'a process in which individuals or community groups participate jointly with a public agency in the production of park and recreation services' (Crompton, 1999: p. 320). The distribution of resources suggested in the benefit principle scenario in Figure 2 recognizes that the wealthy are most likely to pay most property and sales

taxes; are most likely and willing to pay fees for leisure services; are most likely to participate in those leisure activities that charge the highest fees, e.g. golf, opera; and are most likely to have the knowledge, resources and organizational skills to engage in coproduction of services with a leisure agency.

Libertarianism emphasizes individual freedom and voluntary transactions which characterize the free market. The preferred allocation strategy is likely to be that in which individuals are best able to freely exercise their choices and there is least government intervention. Development and business interests frequently are advocates of this perspective since it embraces protection of private property rights. Its operational criterion is a reduction in public expenditures. Its advocates emphasize minimal government investment and believe that tax cuts should prevail over sustaining or increasing existing investments in leisure services (Figure 1). In Figure 2, the aggregate expenditures on leisure services from a libertarian perspective are lower than in the other five scenarios. Equal levels of investment are shown in the figure, but this distribution across the income groups is arbitrary. The key point is not the distribution of these services; rather it is that the aggregate level of investment is lower than in the other five scenarios.

Paternalistic professionalism recognizes that the operation criterion for allocating resources often is the professional judgment of leisure services' managers. This allocation role is paternalistic in the sense that the decision-making is done without the deliberate consent of the population whom the managers serve and that the intent is to foster the community's well being: 'All professional acts of paternalism require that the professional (by commission or omission) intervene to benefit a client without their consent' (McNamee *et al.*, 2001: p. 202). Paternalistic professionalism recognizes that leisure professionals and their institutions may be best equipped to make equity judgments. Their expertise, training, past experiences, knowledge of the community, and ability to see the holistic context in which decisions about equity are made (as opposed to the parochial context of individual users or non-involved citizens) means they may be in the best position to determine 'who ought to get what'. This moral philosophy acknowledges an organizational reality that:

Many of the key decisions concerning service distribution are made by agency personnel, who are not only not elected, but because of civil service systems are often immune from many of the most effective sanctions which might be used by the elected political functionaries to encourage response to citizen demand. (Jones & Kaufman, 1974: p. 12)

Often it has been noted that 'Politicians define need and then ask bureaucracies to allocate benefits' (Lineberry, 1985: p. 411). Substantial credence is placed on professional competence, although that competence is authorized to be exhibited only within prescribed parameters. This means that often variations in resource allocation patterns are attributable to decisions made by bureaucrats. Indeed, Crompton and Wicks (1988) noted, 'Those responsible for administering leisure service departments have been found to have a relatively high level of discretion in determining who will receive what benefits' (p. 297). The emphasis on professional judgment may be entirely appropriate. For example, in his pioneering treatise on carrying capacity Wagar (1966: p. 23) commented that while 'social sciences can measure public opinion...opinion will seldom be based on a thorough

understanding of availability and productivity of the resource' and, therefore, decisions must be 'by legislative directives and by public servants striving to achieve the public good'.

The influence of resource allocations emanating from paternalistic professionalism on equity outcomes may be manifested through decision rules made either by agency managers or by frontline employees. Decision rules are formulated to make the task of allocating resources more manageable and sometimes to facilitate employee convenience. Agency managers typically adopt decision rules to implement policy established by legislative bodies. Decision rules are based on professional judgment and most commonly relate to issues such as allocation of maintenance resources, staff assignments, and equipment purchases.

The procedures adopted by frontline employees, sometimes called street level bureaucrats (Lipsky, 1980) such as sport development specialists, recreation leaders or maintenance staff, are able to influence equity outcomes through their interpretation of allocation decision rules set up by management: 'Decision rules established by managers are likely to be relatively general in order to embrace a wide range of contingencies, so field employees are likely to have discretion in interpreting the decision rules' (Crompton & Wicks, 1988: p. 297). This discretion may be exemplified in how they routinize their schedules, assert priorities, ration services, or limit and control client access. These decisions may reflect personal value systems as well as professional judgments. Hence, the personal philosophies of these individuals are likely to guide some of allocation strategies and the priorities they adopt and thus influence equity outcomes. Employees who work outside the confines of a facility are likely to have especially wide latitudes in discretion as to how they prioritize allocation of resources at their disposal. The empirical studies that have investigated the personal philosophies of leisure service professionals suggest that egalitarianism is most prevalent (Wicks & Crompton, 1986, 1990; Crompton & Lue, 1992).

Since paternalistic professionalism as a moral philosophy defers to the individual professional judgments of those delivering leisure services, generalizations about the potential distribution of resources emanating from this philosophy cannot be made. Individual leisure service professionals could be advocates of any of the other five moral philosophies. Thus, paternalistic professionalism is not included in Figure 2.

Concluding Comments

The scenario in Table 1 has been constructed to illustrate the different equity outcomes that could potentially emerge from the 14 allocation resource strategies which are described in this paper. These outcomes are summarized in Table 2 to facilitate ease of comparison. The scenario outcomes illustrate that notions of distributing leisure services 'equitably' could result in wide ranges in the parkland acres obtained by Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4, varying 0–71.4, 0–66.7, 0–150, and 0–333.3 acres, respectively, depending upon which strategy was used to allocate the available resources.

Although resource allocation strategies are influenced by the particular financial, political and legal environments in the US, their antecedents and the array of equity outcomes are probably applicable in other contexts. Indeed, Howell

Table 1. Scenarios illustrating potential equity outcomes from the application of 14 alternate strategies for allocating capital funds for acquiring and developing new parks

Each of the scenarios presented below uses one of the alternate allocation strategies for resource allocation decisions shown in Figure 1 to determine the allocation of leisure resources in the fictitious town of Equityville, population 40,000. The Equityville council authorized \$10 million to be spent on acquiring and developing new parks. The scenarios below describe how that \$10 million might be allocated according to each of the 14 alternate allocation strategies. Decisions are based on the following profile:

- *Number of residents:* Equityville is comprised of four single-member voting districts with approximately 10,000 residents per district. To simplify the scenarios, an equal number of residents are assumed to reside within each district.
- *Geographic size:* The areas of Districts 1, 2 and 4 are approximately equal (5 square miles each), however District 3 is almost twice as large (10 square miles) as the others.
- *Current park facilities:* At this time, all four districts have an equal amount of parkland and it is of equal quality.
- *Home values:* District 1 is the wealthiest district, with an average home value of \$200,000. Home values average \$150,000 in District 2, \$100,000 in District 3 and \$50,000 in District 4.
- *Cost to acquire and develop parkland:* The cost to acquire and develop parkland is \$70,000, \$60,000, \$40,000 and \$30,000 per acre across Districts 1 through 4, respectively.
- *Park use patterns:* Parks in District 2 are the most heavily utilized averaging 400 daily visits, followed by District 3, District 4 and District 1, averaging 300, 200 and 100 daily visits, respectively.
- *Advocacy levels:* Residents in District 3 are the most vociferous, making approximately 220 complaints about the inadequacy of park provision in their district to the Leisure Services Department each year. Residents from Districts 2, 4 and 1 average 165, 110 and 55 complaints each year, respectively.
- *Shared facilities:* Forty percent of the parks in District 1 are shared with and maintained by the school board, followed by 30%, 20% and 10% in Districts 2, 3 and 4, respectively.
- *Interest:* In a community wide survey of park interest, 50% of District 1 residents indicated they would use additional parkland at least once a week. The percentage of residents from Districts 2, 3 and 4 meeting this criterion was 25%, 25% and 0%, respectively.
- *Community growth:* Based on the amount of developable land available in each district and conversations with local developers, government officials project that over the next ten years District 3 will see the most growth (30%), followed by Districts 1 (15%) and 4 (10%), respectively. The land in District 2 is completely developed with no potential for growth in population.

Allocation scenario 1: economically disadvantaged

This strategy seeks compensatory equity by requiring that resources be allocated based on income levels. Using home values as an indicator of income in Equityville, with the lowest home values reflecting the highest need for compensatory leisure services, District 4 would receive the most new parkland, District 3 the second most, District 2 the second least and District 1 the least. If parkland allocations were to adhere strictly to home value proportions, the allocations from the \$10 million would be: District 1, \$1 million; District 2, \$2 million; District 3, \$3 million; and District 4, \$4 million. As a result, the Districts would receive 14.3 acres, 33.3 acres, 75 acres and 133.3 acres, respectively.

Alternatively, proportional distribution of available new land, rather than the cost of providing that land, could be used as the basis for allocating parkland based on home value. The average cost of acquiring and developing park land is \$50,000 per acre, so 200 acres could be purchased with the \$10 million. Allocating it on the basis of average home values would result in Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4 receiving 20, 40, 60 and 80 acres, respectively.

Table 1. (Continued)

Allocation scenario 2: equal inputs

A strategy of equal inputs means that an equal amount of money, \$2.5m, would be spent acquiring and developing a park in each district. Because acquisition and development costs for District 1 are the highest, it would receive least parkland while District 4 would receive most. District 1 would receive 35.7 acres, District 2 would receive 41.7 acres, District 3 would receive 62.5 acres, and District 4 would receive 83.3 acres.

Allocation scenario 3: equal opportunity

The equal opportunity strategy requires that residents in each community would have equal access to a neighborhood park. Because the area of District 3 is twice as large as the other districts, it would require twice as much parkland to provide equivalent access to residents in that district. The resulting acres of parkland would be 40 acres each for Districts 1, 2 and 4, while District 3 would receive 80 acres.

Allocation scenario 4: efficiency

Allocation decisions based on efficiency are based on input to output ratios. Because the cost of acquiring and developing an acre of land in District 4 is cheaper (\$30,000) than developing an acre of land in Districts 1, 2 or 3 (\$70,000, \$60,000 or \$40,000, respectively) more parkland could be developed there than in the other districts (333.3 acres vs. 142.9 acres, 166.7 acres or 250 acres, respectively). As a result, strict adherence to this criterion would result in all \$10 million being allocated to District 4, which would receive 333.3 acres.

Allocation scenario 5: effectiveness

Results of a survey using the Recreation Experience Preference (REP) scales showed that the benefits derived from suggested facilities and activities in the new parks were distributed among the four districts in the ratio of 17.5, 32.5, 22.5, 27.5. The resulting distribution of money and parkland in Districts 1 through 4 would be \$1.75 million and 25 acres, \$3.25 million and 54.2 acres, \$2.25 million and 56.2 acres, and \$2.75 million and 91.7 acres, respectively.

Allocation scenario 6: demonstrated use

If allocation decisions are based on demonstrated use, most parkland investments will be made in districts where parks are most heavily used. Parks in District 2 were the most heavily utilized, with 400 daily visits, followed by District 3 (300 daily visits) District 4 (200 daily visits) and District 1 (100 daily visits). Based on these daily user rates, allocations for parkland would be \$1 million, \$4 million, \$3 million and \$2 million, for Districts 1 through 4, respectively, resulting in 14.3 acres, 66.7 acres, 75 acres and 66.7 acres, respectively.

Allocation scenario 7: demonstrated interest

Allocations based on demonstrated interest would be made in response to residents' expressed opinions of interest in new parkland, as determined by means of a survey or similar instrument. Twice as many residents in District 1 indicated they would use additional parkland at least once a week, as residents in Districts 2 and 3, while no additional use was projected by residents of District 4. Therefore, District 1 would receive twice as much as money for parkland as Districts 2 and 3 while District 4 would receive none. The resulting distribution would be as follows: District 1 would receive \$5 million, Districts 2 and 3 would receive \$2.5 million each, and District 4 would receive none. In terms of acreage, the Districts would each receive 71.4 acres, 41.7 acres, 62.5 acres and 0 acres, respectively.

Table 1. (Continued)

Allocation scenario 8: advocacy

Advocacy may be operationalized by the number of contacts with the Leisure Services Department each year, such as requests for new parkland or complaints about the amount of existing parkland. Residents in District 3 were the most vociferous, making approximately 220 contacts. Residents from Districts 2, 4 and 1 made 165, 110 and 55 contacts per year. Because residents from District 3 made the most contacts under this criterion, they would receive the most money for parkland (\$4 million, or 100 acres), while Districts 1, 2 and 4 would receive \$1 million, \$3 million and \$2 million (that is, 14.3 acres, 50 acres, and 66.7 acres), respectively.

Allocation scenario 9: amount of taxes paid

The application of market equity based on taxes paid requires that resources be allocated based on the amount of property taxes paid by each district. If home values were used as an indicator of this, with the highest home values reflecting the highest tax contributions and parkland allocations were to adhere strictly to property tax proportions, then the allocations would be: District 1, \$4 million, 57.1 acres; District 2, \$3 million, 50 acres; District 3, \$2 million, 50 acres; and District 4, \$1 million, 33.3 acres.

Allocation scenario 10: direct price paid

This strategy is applicable only in situations where users pay directly for the service or facility provided, rather than indirectly through the tax system. In the context of neighborhood parks, for the most part, there is no price charged so this operationalization is not applicable using the Equityville scenario.

Allocation scenario 11: coproduction

If allocation decisions are based on coproduction, then parkland is developed in districts where other organizations have agreed to assist in contributing to its operational costs, for example, by developing programs or maintaining the parkland, or contributing to its capital costs. If 40% of the parks in District 1 were shared with, and therefore jointly maintained by, the school board, followed by 30%, 20% and 10% in Districts 2, 3 and 4, respectively, the allocation of new parkland would follow a similar pattern. Based on the levels of coproduction with the school board, allocations for parkland would be \$4 million, \$3 million, \$2 million and \$1 million, for Districts 1 through 4, respectively, resulting in 57.1 acres, 50 acres, 50 acres and 33.3 acres, respectively.

Allocation scenario 12: cut taxes

The most rigorous interpretation of this strategy would see the council ordering rescission of the funds. This would mean the \$10 million would not be spent and the council could authorize a commensurate tax cut.

Allocation scenario 13: decision rules

Allocations of parkland may be based on criteria deemed to be most appropriate in the professional judgment of parks and recreation staff. For example, if Equityville staff members were to base this on future growth projections, then the resulting distributions of money and parkland in Districts 1 through 4 would be \$3 million and 42.9 acres, \$0 million and 0 acres, \$6 million and 150 acres and \$1 million and 33.3 acres, respectively.

Allocation scenario 14: personal philosophy

The personal philosophies of employees obviously will vary. However, the available empirical evidence in the US suggests that egalitarianism is the dominant moral philosophy held by leisure service professionals, with equal opportunity preferred over equal inputs. Thus, the allocations from this strategy are identical to those in Scenario 3: 40 acres each for Districts 1, 2 and 4, and 80 acres for District 3.

Table 2. A summary of the potential outcomes of the 14 allocation scenarios (acreage and dollars spent per district)

Scenario	Operationalization	District 1		District 2		District 3		District 4	
		Acres	Millions	Acres	Millions	Acres	Millions	Acres	Millions
Economically disadvantaged	Comparative level of need based on:								
	i) cost of providing new land	14.3	\$1	33.3	\$2	75	\$3	133.3	\$4
	ii) proportionate distribution of new land	20	\$2.5	40	\$2.5	60	\$2.5	80	\$2.5
Equal inputs	Equal \$ spent	35.7	\$2.5	41.7	\$2.5	62.5	\$2.5	83.3	\$2.5
Equal opportunity	Access to leisure services	40	\$2.9	40	\$2.5	80	\$3.3	40	\$1
Efficiency	Cost to develop parkland	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	333.3	\$10
Effectiveness	Input received from REP scales	25	\$1.75	54.2	\$3.25	56.2	\$2.25	91.7	\$2.75
Demonstrated use	Park participation levels	14.3	\$1	66.7	\$4	75	\$3	66.7	\$2
Demonstrated interest	Input received from needs assessments	71.4	\$5	41.7	\$2.5	62.5	\$2.5	0	\$0
Advocacy	Number of contacts per year	14.3	\$1	50	\$3	100	\$4	66.7	\$2
Taxes paid	Property taxes (based on home values)	57.1	\$4	50	\$3	50	\$2	33.3	\$1
Direct price	Not applicable	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Coproduction	Savings accruing from shared costs	57.1	\$4	50	\$3	50	\$2	33.3	\$1
Tax cuts	Rescind funds	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Decision rules	Priorities established by management	42.9	\$3	0	\$0	150	\$6	33.3	\$1
Personal philosophy	Priorities established by professionals	40	\$2.9	40	\$2.5	80	\$3.3	40	\$1

and McNamee (2003) declare, 'There is a considerable degree of overlap in the political and economic landscapes that Crompton and Wicks (1988) researched in the USA and the contemporary economic and political UK landscape' (p. 20). They go on to observe, 'there would appear to be little evidence to suggest that a concept of "leisure equity" is strongly developed from a theoretically supported policy perspective' (p. 21). Their comment is made with specific reference to the UK but it is generalizable to the US

It has been suggested that since allocation strategies emerge from the legal political processes of governments, their outcomes are by definition equitable. However, Crompton and Lamb (1983) forcefully rejected this argument: 'This approach may be appealing to the elected official because it is expedient and self-serving, but it offers no consistent policy guidance for service delivery' (p. 30). The intent of this paper is to offer a comprehensive theoretical framework for explaining equity outcomes associated with leisure services. Our aspirations are consistent with those of McNamee *et al.* (2001): 'It is more in the form of a thought experiment rather than a description of actual states of affairs; imagine a family of moral theoretical positions and see how they might order professional practice' (p. 174). The moral philosophies offer a 'rational ethical basis' (p. 174) on which the equity outcomes of leisure service delivery are grounded.

Awareness of a community's equity perspectives is likely to facilitate more responsive decision-making and identify sources of potential conflict. Our goal has been to explicitly articulate the major elements that influence equity outcomes. Policy formulation and implementation follow from this. They involve investigating the distribution of the set of moral philosophies and consequent allocation strategies within a population. The nature of these distributions is governed in the first two stages of the equity implementation model (Crompton & Wicks, 1988) which are identifying normative distributions of equity perspectives and measuring actual distributions. However, validity of results from these two stages is dependent on all dimensions of the equity phenomenon being explicated which this paper purports to do. If only a subset of them is addressed then decisions in stages 3 through 5 of the process (prioritize equity objectives, evaluate policy scenarios, and implement new policy) would be made with incomplete and possibly erroneous information.

Selection from among the moral philosophies will differ according to individual value systems. Hence, there is always likely to be conflict within a community as to which of them should prevail. However, complexity is compounded because the moral philosophies of individuals often are not universal. Thus, in their study of normative equity outcome preferences of Austin, Texas, residents associated with the allocation of resources to seven different leisure activities, Wicks and Crompton (1990) reported that residents were consistently opposed to paying fees for six of the leisure activities, but were strongly supportive of fees covering the costs of adult sports programs. Thus, selection of preferred moral philosophies and consequent allocation strategies is likely to vary by individual, by community, and by leisure activity.

This specificity is consistent with the views of communitarianism which rejects universality of a moral philosophy in favor of the particular context. Howell and McNamee (2003) state that a communitarianism perspective directs that 'What we

are to think of as justice will vary according to the good or sphere at hand' (p. 23). It is a reaffirmation of the notion that there is no one 'right' answer in the debate on equity outcomes, and it offers a philosophical rationale for communities 'mixing and matching' moral philosophies among different leisure activities.

The prominence of the equity issue is likely to increase for the reasons given earlier in this paper. 'Who ought to get what' is a central theme of political debate. Its academic heritage dates back centuries to Bentham, Mill, Hobbes, Locke and others, but Ryan (1916) appears to have been the first to offer a comprehensive taxonomy of alternate equity positions which highlighted the multidimensionality of the concept. Sixty years later, Hirsch observed that 'this discussion of who should get what is only beginning to grapple with the conflicts among various desideratas and among various ways of looking at equity' (1976: p. 152). The 1988 Crompton and Wicks paper was intended to be comprehensive and facilitate better understanding of the concepts, procedures and rules on which equity outcomes are predicated, but almost two decades later this paper substantially revises and extends their work in clarifying the antecedents of equity outcomes. Indeed, equity is an elusive concept!

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