

**THE SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING OF ADOLESCENTS IN KOREA:  
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS ON YOUTH ACTIVITIES**

By

PARK, KYOUNGMI

**THESIS**

Submitted to  
KDI School of Public Policy and Management  
in partial fulfillment of the requirement  
for the degree of

**MASTER OF DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

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## **Abstract**

Korean society and government have emphasized on improving Youth Activity Program since 1990s. There has been also a movement for collaborating Youth Activity Programs with education system such as the Creative Experience Activities System in 2009 and the Free Semester System in 2013. However, yet, researches about the impact of Youth Activity have not been sufficiently conducted until now. Therefore, this paper tried to examine the impact of Youth Activity through Subjective Wellbeing especially on adolescents' lives. The analysis was conducted whether the adolescents' Subjective Wellbeing (adolescents' overall happiness, joyful lives and lowering worries) is enhanced by their social interactions; youth activities (participation hours), peer related circumstance and other environmental factors (annual family income, parents' attention and school environment so forth) utilized by middle school students' data from Korea Children and Youth Panel Survey (2010-2012, N=2351). The result revealed that longer youth activity participation hours could influence on adolescents' overall happiness and joyful lives. However youth activity was not related to alleviating adolescents' individual worries. The other notable result was an environmental factor; both of parents' income and parents' attention were not significant in adolescent's Joy (Subjective wellbeing) differently from other two cases of subjective wellbeing (Happiness and worry). Additionally, peer relation (how adolescents do for maintaining a good friendship?) was not related to their subjective wellbeing but the peer environment (how I feel from among my friends?) was strongly significant on their lives.

**Key words:** Youth Activity, Youth Activity Participation Hour, Subjective Wellbeing, Happiness, Joy, Worry, Youth Environment

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## INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is one of the important life developmental stages that lead them to stable and healthy adulthood (Ericson, 1968). While diverse changes such as “biological, psychological and sociological aspects (Ali, 2011)” surrounding adolescence are continuously occurring, it must be crucial for parents, government and society to find the influential factors for adolescent’s environment so that they can plan better adolescent supporting system for adolescents’ current and future life. According to the recent studies, whatever it is from individually or socially, “the experience on the early stage of human life can have a lasting impact on people’s sense of happiness (Yang, 2008),” “while higher frequency of acute stressful events lowering adolescent’s happiness (Ash & Huebner 2001, cited in Ashley et al., 2012).” Eileen (2006) also mentioned that the experience on childhood and adolescent is associated with their adulthood. “Those studies may emphasize that the positive intervention as an early experience to adolescent should be momentous for their future (Ashley, 2012).”

Currently many countries are constructing youth policies to operate better national supporting system for adolescents providing them with diverse social participation chances and experiences. “As of April 2014, of 198 countries, 122 countries (62%) have a national youth policies and 37 states (19%) are either developing a new or revising their current youth policy (Youthpolicy team, 2014),” Korea has also been approaching to enhance better situation for adolescents through diverse youth related policies such as ‘Framework Act on Juveniles’, ‘Juvenile Protection Act’, ‘Juvenile Welfare Support Act’, ‘Act on the Protection of Children and Juveniles Form’, “‘Juvenile Activity Promotion Act’ so forth. Especially, ‘Juvenile Activity Promotion Act’ in Korea can be noteworthy trial for adolescents in regards to adolescents’ early life experience. Korean government tries to give young people legal

right, which they are able to participate in youth experience programs (called youth activities) through the above Act. Actually, since the enactment of this Act, The number of youth activities in Korea supported by government has been increased.

Moreover, Korean education system tries to accept youth activities as a creative reconstruction of formal education system with the name of Creative Experience System in 2009 and the Free Semester System in 2013. Moreover, according to 2013 Korea administrative priorities as a name of 'New Era of Hope' (Prime Minister's Secretariat, 2013), Korean government has the future strategy of establishing more youth centers in the communities to support adolescents' diverse youth activities. Those educational and political circumstances reveal the belief that youth activity could be one of the ways that can support young people's healthy growth and development. And we may guess that youth activity can be potential area, which can be positive intervention to adolescents' life development.

Although the importance of youth activities has been mentioned on the surface of Korean society, there are not enough studies found on the impact of youth activities (experiences) to adolescents' life. This study will try to use Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) to figure out the impact of youth activities on adolescents' current life. Subjective wellbeing is increasingly adopted social indicator that can measure the level of people's life satisfaction, positive and negative emotions. The Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) in this paper is divided into 3 parts (happiness, joy, lowering worry) and tried to compare those three SWB evaluations with youth activities.

Youth activity will be measured by adolescents' yearly participation hour in youth activity instead of simple attendance to the programs so as to focus on the portion of youth activities in adolescents' lifetime. It will effectively examine the correlation between the number of hours of participation in youth activity and the level of subjective wellbeing.

Moreover the other surrounding factors related to adolescent based on ecological system will be measured together in the equation of this study.

The study is working on the ‘Korea Children Youth Panel Survey (KCYPs)’, which was conducted on Korean middle school students in 3 years waves from 2010 to 2012. The independent variable, yearly participation hour on youth activity is summated by all the participation hour from 9 kinds of youth activities (experiences) defined by youth activity accreditation committee in Korea. The equation also included diverse variables from “Korean structural analysis on subjective wellbeing” (Sung, 2013) such as family income, parents, peer, school, and community. This paper also tried to break down the variables; Peer Relation into 5 different relationships among friends, Peer Environment (age attachment) into 3 parts (communication, trust, out of fit among friends), School Environment into 3 condition in order to find closely related adolescents’ basic social interaction with subjective wellbeing.

According to the data analysis, the individual who participated longer hours in youth activities evaluated their life is happier and more joyful. However youth activity was not related to alleviating adolescents’ individual worries. The other notable result was an environmental factor; both of parents’ income and parents’ attention were not significant in adolescent’s Joy (Subjective wellbeing) differently from other two cases of subjective wellbeing (Happiness and worry).

This empirical study shows that youth activity programs need a consideration of adequate duration and diversity. First of all, since longer participation hour brings significant impact on subjective wellbeing, when we plan for youth activity program, the duration of the program should be considerable factors. Unfortunately, most of youth activities in Korea are consisted of one-time or short-term programs. The adolescents’ participation in those ‘one-time or short-term program’ could bring immediate response such as instant satisfaction or joyful feeling after their attendance in youth activity. However, it would be difficult to assure

the lasting impact of youth activities above. Moreover it is a challenge to organize youth activities in long-term because youth activity is usually not for developing professional, but for providing diverse experience.

One suggestion that we can make for current youth activity program might be developing systemic connection among each youth activity programs similar to each grade of school curriculum. In other words, a systemically advanced youth activity program can be continued after one program. That way, we can replace the disadvantage of short-term youth activity program. And it can utilize the advantage of short-term program in continuing systematic providing services among programs.

Second, this study could prove the impact of diverse environmental factors on adolescents' subjective wellbeing. This implies that when youth activities are planned, the cooperation among youth related sectors such, education field, counseling and family are necessarily to be involved. Since Korean youth related policies are separated into various ministries (the ministry education, the ministry gender equality and family, the ministry of health and welfare etc.), the cooperation among ministries has been having difficulty planning a program together. That is one of the reasons why each ministry has delivered one-time or short-term based youth activity to show off the activity (political achievement) rather than caring about true impact on adolescents' lives. The role of Korea Youth Work Agency, which is in charge of youth activity program in Korea, can be emphasized as controlling sector of all the national youth work occurring in each ministry so that it can control the youth activities as a curriculum and provide appropriate level of program to each adolescent.

### ***Research question***

What environmental factors are related to adolescent subjective wellbeing?

### ***Hypothesis***

Youth activity participation affects adolescent's subjective wellbeing.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Subjective Wellbeing**

Pursuing happiness is one of the essential human desires. And “this is the best, noblest, most pleasant thing in the world (Aristotle, 350 B.C.E, Cited in Laura, 2008),” though the value or levels of happiness can be varied by individual. One clear thing about happiness is that people want to achieve happiness through diverse life events. Many scholars have dedicated on those happiness issues to give people the information; when people are happy, how they are happy and what makes them happy working on life evaluation called subjective wellbeing. According to Diener & Selgman (2004) and Randy & Michael (2008), “even government and society should look at the level of people’s subjective wellbeing related to each social components surrounding human being to establish better social policy.”

Basically, the subjective wellbeing can have two aspects, one is affective and the other is cognitive. “The affective aspect is concentrated on finding the percent of time people feel happy, neutral and unhappy over a given time period (Fordyce, 1988 Cited in Randy & Michael, 2008).” And the cognitive aspect focuses on one’s life evaluation rather than just feeling. Even though those approaches to subjective wellbeing could be varied, “many studies have been consented that subjective wellbeing has to reflect ‘multi-dimensional facts from the life (Bradshaw, 2007).” And these studies are trying to find the “link between subjective wellbeing and diverse factors related to human life such as income, health and

marital status etc. (Gove & Shin, 1989; George & Landerman, 1984; Diener, Gohm, Suh, & Oishi, 2000; Diener, Sandvik, Seidlitz, & Diener, 1993; Okun, Stock, Haring, & Witter, 1984 Cited in Cited Sarah & David 2008).”

Kim (2008) also emphasized that subjective wellbeing is the most comprehensive concepts including not only the psychological aspects but also the other environmental factors. When viewed in terms of Ecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and previous studies, subjective wellbeing is useful social indicator that can figure out the influence to the people from the environment such as friends, neighbors, health, school so forth.

“The subjective wellbeing of children and adolescents started to be considered in 1960s. And it’s development accomplished during 1970s~1980s(Youm & Seo, 2011).” Nowadays, many organizations such as OECD, IMF, UNICEF and other international organization are also working on subjective wellbeing. Researches based on subjective wellbeing have found that the levels of subjective wellbeing can “predict future health, mortality, productivity and income, controlling statistically for other possible determinants and human wellbeing affects outcomes of interest such as health, income and social behavior (Jan-Emmanuel de Neve et al. 2013).” Yang (2008) also emphasized the importance of early experience for one’s future. Moreover, the meaningful approach of subjective wellbeing is not only for predicting one’s future but also for evaluating the current life and psychological evaluation such as “the relation between positive mood and social behavior (Kazdin, 1982).”

We can see many studies related to child (including early stage adolescents) wellbeing since the UN convention on the rights of the child (1989) happened. According to Bradshaw (2007), “the 54 articles of UN convention on the rights of the child have the concept of subjective well-being, which are non-discrimination (art. 2), the best interest of the child (art. 3), survival and development (art 6), and respect for the views of the child (art.

12).” “UN convention on the right of the child makes it clear that understanding children and adolescent’s circumstance and evaluation to support their current and future lives are important (Bradshaw, 2007).” In other words, understanding adolescents’ circumstance and environment then connecting it to their self-judgments of life satisfaction can make us understand better way of “enhancing their pleasant emotions, low levels of negative moods and high life satisfaction (Diener, 2009).” Especially, for adolescent, who is in the period of puberty, the effort of understanding their life evaluation and current mood can be important to support their diverse changeable puberty period.

The circumstance or environment for understanding could be considered in “the point of their life cycle (Youm & Seo, 2011) Bradshaw and his colleagues (2007) show the importance of including “self-rated health, enjoying school life, life satisfaction, feeling a sense of belonging, getting along with people and loneliness.” And Kim (2008) mentioned “gender, parents socio-economic status, one’s own self-esteem, school environment” are significant variables to affect adolescents’ quality of lives.

In this paper, basic environment for adolescent is established following Sung & Kim (2012)’s structural analysis of happiness. Those are family income, parents, peer, school and community. And as their life environment, the impact of youth activities will be considered as other environmental factors that can enhance adolescents’ subjective wellbeing. And subjective wellbeing will follow the suggested concept from Diener (1984) and Kim (2006); “Life Satisfaction (Happiness), Positive Affect (Joy) and Negative Affect (Worries)”

### **Subjective Wellbeing linkage to Youth Activity**

Historically, youth work has been existed in every society. At first, the concept of youth work was only focused on charitable activities such as Sunday or charitable school in case of the late Victorian period in England. Basically, those historical youth work used to

offer children and adolescents to help them get involved in part of educational systems. However, as time goes by the concept of youth work through youth activities has been changed to the concepts of “helping young people learn about themselves, others and society through informal educational activities which combine enjoyment, challenge and teach (Lee, 2012).” Generally, “these youth activities are relied on young people’s voluntary engagement (Bernard, 2005)” outside of school such as youth spaces or youth centers. The concept of youth activities has been developed through history understood as different concept from formal education.

However, current societies and many education experts understand that it is unnecessary to keep the boundary between inside (formal) and outside (informal) of education to create better supporting system for adolescents. That is why there have been diverse approaches and creation in education field. In 2009 the Ministry of Education (former Ministry of Education, Science and Technology) in Korea started to emphasize ‘Creative Experiential Activity’ as a format of education system, which asks students to do various experiences; self-regulated activity, volunteering, clubbing and course activities. As of 2013 Korean education system started new trial called ‘Free Semester System’, which program aims at “supporting students’ dreams and talents and establishing an educational system that can make students happy (Choi et al., 2013).” Basically, Free Semester System focused on students’ discussions, practice and experiences for one semester in Middle school without exams and students evaluations. In other words, these new steps try to bring diverse youth activities into the formal educational system (Choi et al., 2013). According to Korean government, Free Semester System will be expanded to every school by 2016.

The cooperation between formal education and informal education will be more emphasized on the youth activities near future. In this moment, we may need to look through

the current situation on youth activities and the effectiveness on adolescents to bring better and creative cooperation with education system.

“Youth activity contribute to the government’s vision for young people that they should enjoy happy, healthy and safe teenage years that prepare them well for adult life and enable them to reach their full potential (National Youth Agency UK).” In Korea, when the law established “Framework act on Juvenile” in 1991, youth activity started to be emphasized and organized by government in a certain shape. Then, officially supported youth activity in Korea has been conducted under the law ‘Juvenile activity promotion act’ since 2006. The main reason for supporting youth activity through the ‘Juvenile activity promotion act’ is to help adolescent develop their ability to manage personal and social relationships as well as enhancing their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Youth activity accreditation system under the Juvenile activity promotion act, article 35 subdivided youth activity into 9 types; health related activity, Science information, International exchange, Adventure, Cultural & Art, Volunteerism, Vocational activity, Environment protection, Self-development (personality). Until 2013, The total number of accredited programs are 1,699 which is divided into health 111, Science information 102, International Exchange 19, Culture/Art 271, Volunteerism 208, Vocational Experience 160, Environmental protection 158, self (personality) development 529 (Korea youth work agency, 2013).

Table 1: Accredited Youth Activity Classification System

Activity	Contents
Health	Physical Activity, Preventive Action (Drug, Smoking, Alcohol, Obesity), Safety and First Aid Activity, Sexual Education.
Science information	Creating Model and Robot, Internet, Outer Space, Information Camp, Media etc.
International Exchange	Youth Exchange between International, North and South, Urban and Rural. Understanding World and Multiculturalism, Comparing World Culture etc.
Adventure	Exploration Activity; Remote Areas, Mountaineering, Camping, Marine Self-control, Great Spirit Development Program
Culture/Art	Local, Public and World Culture, Historical Play, Traditional Art etc.
Volunteerism	Assistance, Campaign, Charity, Community Development etc.
Vocational Experience	Economy Camp, Social Skill, Career Exploration etc.
Environment Protection	Eco-Activity, Environmental Sensing, Drawing Natural Map, Forests Activities.
Self (personality) Development	Expression Development, Self exploration, self-esteem exploration, self-expression, mind training

Notes: The Accredited Youth Activity Classification is agreed with Korean Youth Activity Accreditation Committee (July. 3, 2008). Original data in Korean is translated. (Korea Youth Work Agency, 2012)

Recent studies about youth activity mentioned that participating in youth activity could improve adolescents' social interactions. Especially, vocational experience programs, health related programs and self- development program among 9 types of youth activities could bring significant impacts on increasing adolescents' level of social interactions (Lim et al., 2012). Even though those opinions did not prove the direct impact of youth activities on adolescents' lives, the youth activities would help adolescents improve their social interaction and it will affect their current and future personality and characteristics. According to Sung (2013), individual characteristic has direct impact on adolescent subjective wellbeing in structural relationship analysis. In addition, the paper pointed out that the connectivity among environmental factors, individual characteristic and subjective wellbeing, which has strong

relation on this process; environment affection to individual characteristic, individual characteristic to subjective wellbeing.

Then, what can be the environmental factors improving subjective wellbeing? Korea Youth Work Agency (2007) reported that youth activities could improve most of individual characteristics such as conflict management skills, achievement motivation, reducing stress and self-esteem efficiency. As it is mentioned above, those individual characteristics are important component, which can improve the level of subjective wellbeing. And according to Positive Youth Development (PYD) under the US policy, “the youth program emphasizes young people’s physical and psychological safety: the provision of appropriate structures, supporting relationships and positive role models: opportunities to develop self-efficacy, to build skills, to form positive associations and to make societal contributions ”. In conclusion, youth activities can be one of the important environmental factors that can improve adolescents’ subjective wellbeing according to the natural connectivity between environmental factors and individual characteristic.

Even though diverse studies show the efficiency of environmental and individual aspect of youth activity programs, it was hard to prove actual impact on the level of adolescent’s life satisfaction. Hence, this paper uses subjective wellbeing to approach direct impact of youth activities on adolescents’ lives. The format of variable youth activity here expressed in each respondent’s participated time in youth activities a year.

### **Subjective Wellbeing linkage to Surrounding Factors**

While adolescents are trying to connect with diverse society out of parents’ protection during their puberty, the newly adopted world is not only important to them but also influential. As one of the steps for adolescents to be adult, the environment in this period should deserve society’s attention. According to Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory,

the process of human development is surrounded by 5 system; “Microsystem (refers to the institutions and groups that most immediately and directly impact the child’s development), Mesosystem (Interconnections between the microsystems) Exosystem (Involves links between a social setting in which the individual does not have an active role and the individual's immediate context), Macrosystem (Describes the culture in which individuals live. Cultural contexts include developing and industrialized countries, socioeconomic status, poverty, and ethnicity), Chronosystem (The patterning of environmental events and transitions over the life course, as well as sociohistorical circumstances) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).” This model is interpreting that person’s interaction between people and social environment is important for human development.

When adolescents enter middle school in Korea, the circumstance of middle school is completely different from elementary schools. They begin to spend more time in school rather than having family based life. And they have more chances to be involved in social activity by their own decision.

First, the role of peer relations is one of adolescents’ representing social interactions based on microsystem of ecology system theory. And there were consistent reports proving that “positive association between the satisfactions of a single provision (e.g., support) in or overall quality of the friendship and happiness (Baldassare et al. 1984; Camfield et al. 2009; Cheng and Furnham 2002; Demir and Weitekamp 2007; Gladow and Ray 1986; Hussong 2000; Lu 1995; Walen and Lachman 2000 cited in Meliksah, 2013).” How adolescents’ are experiencing and feeling from their peer relation such as diverse responses (Marshall, 2001) and feedback (Gabel et al., 20014) from their friends will be the influential factors to their happiness. And the experience and feeling to adolescents increased the level of happiness (Gabel et al., 2004).

In addition, we can see school environment and community environment as important factors, which started to affect a lot of adolescents' subjective wellbeing. Especially, since school is where adolescents spend most of their time, the relationships in the school and school adaptability has positive reference (Yoon et al., 2009). In case of community, there are not many studies related to the impact of community environment. However recently there was a study about the impact of youth related centers in community. Although it does not affect adolescents' lives, it still gives impact on adolescents' lives (Hur, 2009).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Data and Variables**

This study was conducted based on middle school data from Korea Children Youth Panel Survey (KCYPs), which has been carried out by Korea National Youth Policy Institute on the purpose of duration from 2010 to 2016. Since the key questions related to subjective wellbeing appear only in the first and third waves of this panel data, this empirical study also worked on the first (2010) and third (2012) waves.

The respondents were all selected by weightily measured way, which was from 78 middle schools nationwide (at least 3 schools from each province). Total number of respondents was 2,351(male -1756, female – 1755) in 2010 and 2,259(male – 1,140, female - 1,119) in 2012. The data was unbalanced in that not every student is present for those waves. However this data is weighted when there is sample attrition. The equation for this study can be represented below. SWB is dependent variable. Key independent variable is youth activities participation hours.

$$SWB_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Youth\ Activity\ Hour_{it} + R'_{it}\beta_2 + Z'_{it}\gamma + a_i + \varepsilon_{it}$$

The dependent variable, subjective wellbeing (life satisfaction is from Korean affective characteristic developed by Kim (2006). The questions were ‘I think my life is happy’, ‘the life is so joyful to me’, ‘and I do not have much worries’. These questions are all evaluated on 4-likert scales from 1 to 4, where 1 means completely satisfied and 4 means completely dissatisfied. But the results were reverse coded by this empirical study.

- Subjective wellbeing (happiness) – I think my life is happy
- Subjective wellbeing (joy) – The life is so joyful to me
- Subjective wellbeing (worry) - I do not have much worries

Since the aim of this paper is looking into the relation between subjective wellbeing and youth activity and peer relation as social interaction, here I concentrate on the actual social involvement (Youth Activity Hour) and personal peer relation,  $R$  in equation. And  $Z$  from the equation is control variables, which are from Sung (2013)’s environmental aspects of structural relationship analysis; peer environment, school environment, community environment, parent environment, family income.

First, this panel data questioned to the respondents yearly participated hours on youth activity. Youth activity participation hours as social involvement are all summated by every participated hour from 9 activities, which is subdivided by youth activity accreditation committee (1.Health related program 2.Science Information 3.International Exchange 4. Adventure 5.Culture & Art 6.Volunteerism 7.Vocational Experience 8.Environment Protection 9.Self (personality) development). And this paper also tried to put log to this total participation hours of activities in order to make it balanced.

Second, peer relation is sub-divided into 5 questions, which are 1. I get along with my classmates, 2. I first apologize when I have been friends quarrel, 3. I share my materials with classmates, when they need it, 4. I disturb my friends' work, 5. My friends follow my opinion when we play together. 4-likert scales also evaluate those questions, where 1 means completely satisfied and 4 means completely dissatisfied. But reverse coded has been used with this scale except peer relation question 4.

Third, the control variables consist of peer environment, school environment, community environment, parent environment, and family income. The peer environment is checked by age attachment questions extracted by IPPA<sup>1</sup> (Gay C. Armsden, 1987). Total number of questions is 9 types and divided into 3 sections: Communication, Trust and out of fit. . 4-likert scales also evaluate those questions. The higher number shows positive relation and the lower number are representing negative relation among peers.

- Communication
  1. My friends respect my ideas when we have conversation.
  2. My friends listen to what I say.
  3. My friends talk about my worries and problems.
- Trust
  1. My friends understand me well.
  2. I can talk to my friends when I want to put off my inner thought.
  3. My friends believe in me.
- Out of fit
  1. I want to have another friends instead of current friends.
  2. I feel lonely even though I am with my friends.
  3. My friends do not know how I am doing these days.

School environment questions are from school adjustment indicators for elementary school developed by Min (1991) except for school festival related questions. School

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<sup>1</sup> IPPA: The inventory of parent and peer attachment

environment is divided into study environment, regulation environment and teacher environment. Each section also consists of 4 or 5 questions. And it used 4-likert scale (4 = very much ~ 1=completely not).

Community environment questions are extracted from ADD Health<sup>2</sup>. This has basically how adolescents recognize their communities. And the categories are community recognition, community spirit and multicultural acceptability. However, this analysis only used community recognition as an environmental variable because of the limitation, which community recognition only appeared in each wave. Lastly parent environment question is changed from Korean structural relationship analysis, which was rearing attitude to parent-adolescent relationship. And annual family income and gender were included.

Since this is panel data, this study was decided to use fixed effects after getting through Hausman test, and also delivered robustness test. And the variables in gender have been omitted at the results.

## **RESULT**

The descriptive statistic of each variable appears in Table 2 & 3. And Table 3 demonstrates detailed questions related to the youth environmental factors. The mean of Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) was between 2.5 to 3. And the positive aspect (Joy) was the highest among three kinds of subjective wellbeing. This distribution was revealing that generally adolescents' in middle school students in Korea are satisfied with their lives. In terms of Youth Activity, the total mean time of youth activity participation hours (18.78hours) at adolescents' first grade of middle school was higher than the third grade (10.83hours).

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<sup>2</sup> ADD Health is a longitudinal study of a nationally representative sample of adolescents in grades 7-12 in the United States during the 1994-95.

Since the duration of this panel data is not long enough, there are not many differences between waves (2010 and 2012) in terms of youth environment. However, the subtle difference in SWB is still meaningful to analyze at the same environment.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics I

	VARIABLES	Wave	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
SWB	Happiness	2010	2350	2.96	.85	1	4
		2012	2257	2.97	.75	1	4
	Joy	2010	2350	3.03	.81	1	4
		2012	2257	3.06	.71	1	4
	Lowering Worries	2010	2350	2.48	.92	1	4
		2012	2257	2.52	.89	1	4
Youth Activity Participation Hour	Total hour	2010	2294	18.78	19.39	0	106
		2012	2272	10.83	15.6	0	84
	log_hour ln (1+Total hour)	2010	2294	2.38	1.27	0	4.67
		2012	2272	1.65	1.36	0	4.44
Youth Environment	Family Income	2012	2219	4364	2856.9	0	30000
		2010	2180	4684	2179	0	40000
	Family Income (log)	2012	2219	8.16	.80	0	10.31
		2010	2180	8.28	.71	0	10.6
	Parents affection (Environment)	2012	2269	2.88	.64	1	4
		2010	2154	2.86	.63	1	4
	Peer relation	2012	2349	14.95	2.03	5	20
		2010	2255	15.36	1.97	7	20
	Peer environment	2012	2348	26.74	4.48	9	36
		2010	2255	27.35	4.08	9	36
	School environment	2012	2350	41	6.54	16	60
		2010	2254	42.45	6.68	15	60
Community environment	2012	2347	16.97	3.42	6	24	
	2010	2246	16.31	3.16	7	24	

Notes: Subjective wellbeing has all measured in 4-likert scales. And the total youth activity participation hour has been summated all the total hours from 9 kinds youth activities (Table 1). The unit of family income is 10,000won (Korean). The data analysis in this paper put the log to total hour and family income. The variables, peer relation, peer environment, school environment and

community environment are all summated the scale of each detailed variables. The detailed variables can be found in Table3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics II. Youth Environment

VARIABLES	Questions	
Parent affection Environment	Parents have an experience to meet respondents' friends.	
Peer relation	I get along with my classmates. I first apologize when I have involved in friends quarrel. I share my materials with classmates when they need it. I disturb my friends' work. My friends follow my opinion when we play together.	
Peer environment	Communication	My friends respect my ideas when we have conversation. My friends listen to what I say. My friends talk about my worries and problems.
	Trust	My friends understand my well. I can talk to my friends when I want to put off my inner thought. My friends believe in me.
	Our of fit	I want to have another friends instead of current friends. I feel lonely even though I am with my friends. My friends do not know how I am doing these days.
School environment	Study	Lessons in school are exciting. I do not miss any homework. I know well what I learned in class. I ask to the other person (parents, teacher, friends) when I don't understand. I do other things at study time.
	Regulation	I do work hard on my duty at the class. I do not run at the school (stairs, public places). I carefully use the school stuff. I obey the order at the toilet and cafeteria.
	Teacher	I exchange a greeting happily when I meet teachers. I feel comfortable when I talked to teachers. I am happy to meet teachers outside of school. My teacher is kind to me. I want to study with my current teacher next year.
Community environment	Recognition	I know most of my neighbors in my town. I exchange a greeting with my neighbors on the street. There are boundaries among neighbors. I feel safe in my town. I like to spend time with my neighbors. I want to continue living in my neighborhood.

Notes: Each detailed question is evaluated in 4-likert scales. And each evaluated scale has been summated to represent each youth environment.

Firstly, previous environmental factors in Korean structural relationship analysis (Sung, 2013) have been reviewed with panel fixed model. According to the regression, all the environmental factors, which affect adolescents' subjective wellbeing mentioned from Sung (2013) such as family income, parents' environment, peer environment (peer attachment), school environment and community environment are proved to be highly related to adolescents' subjective wellbeing. However, in terms of adolescents' joy of life (subjective wellbeing) in column (2) of table 4, the family income and parents' environment (attention to their kids) was not significant comparing to other environmental aspects.

Table 4: Regression I SWB with Youth Environment (Panel Fixed)

VARIABLES	(1) SWB_Happiness	(2) SWB_Joy	(3) SWB_Worry
Family Income (lninc)	0.0710** (0.0337)	0.0157 (0.0277)	0.107*** (0.0360)
Parent affection (Environment)	0.0815*** (0.0312)	0.0330 (0.0307)	0.111*** (0.0399)
Peer Environment	0.0281*** (0.00585)	0.0341*** (0.00564)	0.0223*** (0.00674)
School Environment	0.0185*** (0.00385)	0.0189*** (0.00387)	0.0144*** (0.00436)
Community environment	0.0277*** (0.00819)	0.0262*** (0.00794)	0.0230*** (0.00886)
Constant	0.156 (0.359)	0.671** (0.302)	-0.297 (0.389)
Observations	4,181	4,181	4,181
R-squared	0.082	0.089	0.045
Number of id	2,300	2,300	2,300

Notes: The dependent variable is Subjective Wellbeing divided into Column (1), (2), (3). This panel data belong to 2010-2012. The test is calculated from panel fixed regression. The gender is omitted by the regression. Coefficient is statistically different from zero at the \*\*\*1%, \*\*5%, and \*10% level. And robust standard errors are in parentheses.

After controlling all those variables above, new key variable, youth activity participation hour/year was inserted in table 5. According to the result from table 5, youth

activity participation hour is significant in column (1) Subjective wellbeing (happiness) and column (2) Subjective wellbeing (joy). However, in column (3) Subjective wellbeing (lowering worry) youth activity was not significantly related to the evaluation. Interestingly, while the other control variables' coefficient did not change a lot in column (2) in table 4 and 5, longer participated hours in youth activity is more meaningful for increasing SWB (joy). I assume, since youth activity is usually one-time or short-term based, it hardly includes individual emotionally touching program such as counseling or psychological aspects to the activity program. Hence, the result of this regression in column (3) demonstrates that youth activity participation hour is not related to SWB (lowering worries). However it is still significant adolescents' overall happiness and joyful lives.

Table 5: Regression II SWB with Youth Activity Participation Hour (Panel Fixed)

VARIABLES	(1) SWB_Happiness	(2) SWB_Joy	(3) SWB_Worry
Youth Activity Participation	0.0324**	0.0287**	-0.0150
Hour/year (lnhour)	(0.0132)	(0.0127)	(0.0151)
Family Income (lninc)	0.0764**	0.00858	0.104***
	(0.0338)	(0.0274)	(0.0371)
Parent affection	0.0793**	0.0377	0.117***
(Environment)	(0.0322)	(0.0312)	(0.0407)
Peer Environment	0.0269***	0.0324***	0.0205***
	(0.00602)	(0.00577)	(0.00697)
School Environment	0.0186***	0.0185***	0.0142***
	(0.00396)	(0.00391)	(0.00449)
Community Environment	0.0234***	0.0243***	0.0248***
	(0.00866)	(0.00816)	(0.00923)
Constant	0.147	0.758**	-0.219
	(0.361)	(0.301)	(0.404)
Observations	4,058	4,058	4,058
R-squared	0.084	0.090	0.045
Number of id	2,287	2,287	2,287

Notes: Youth activity participation hour is total hour that adolescents participated during a year. Coefficient is statistically different from zero at the \*\*\*1%, \*\*5%, and \*10% level. And robust standard errors are in parentheses.

And when peer relation was inserted in table 6, since peer relation in this data is more likely related to “How I do for keeping friendship”, it did not actually related to subjective wellbeing. However, in terms of peer environment ‘How I feel from my friends’ are strongly significant.

Table 6: Regression III SWB with YAPH and Peer Relation (Panel Fixed)

VARIABLES	(1) SWB_Happiness	(2) SWB_Joy	(3) SWB_Worry
Youth Activity Participation	0.0328**	0.0274**	-0.0154
Hour/year (lninc)	(0.0132)	(0.0127)	(0.0151)
Peer Relation	0.0128	0.0227*	0.00335
(Based on school life)	(0.0129)	(0.0123)	(0.0150)
Family Income (lninc)	0.0756**	0.00618	0.102***
	(0.0336)	(0.0273)	(0.0369)
Parent Environment	0.0800**	0.0396	0.118***
	(0.0322)	(0.0312)	(0.0406)
Peer Environment	0.0253***	0.0289***	0.0197***
	(0.00625)	(0.00579)	(0.00728)
School Environment	0.0174***	0.0164***	0.0140***
	(0.00415)	(0.00412)	(0.00482)
Community Environment	0.0238***	0.0232***	0.0247***
	(0.00868)	(0.00818)	(0.00927)
Constant	0.0488	0.629**	-0.224
	(0.372)	(0.308)	(0.416)
Observations	4,054	4,054	4,054
R-squared	0.086	0.092	0.044
Number of id	2,286	2,286	2,286

Notes: Youth Activity Participation Hour and Peer relation are inserted. The gender is omitted by the regression. Coefficient is statistically different from zero at \*\*\*1%, \*\*5%, and \*10% level. And robust standard errors are in parentheses.

Table 7: Regression IV Detailed Variables (Panel Fixed)

VARIABLES	(1) SWB_Happiness	(2) SWB_Joy	(3) SWB_Worry
YAPH (Inhour)	0.0332** (0.0132)	0.0289** (0.0126)	-0.0118 (0.0151)
Family Income (lninc)	0.0759** (0.0349)	0.000177 (0.0276)	0.0913** (0.0367)
Parent affection (environment)	0.0775** (0.0321)	0.0315 (0.0304)	0.112*** (0.0404)
Peer Environment I (Communication)	-0.0102 (0.0178)	0.0121 (0.0173)	0.0445** (0.0214)
Peer Environment II (Trust)	0.0595*** (0.0170)	0.0570*** (0.0158)	0.00506 (0.0213)
Peer Environment III (Out of fit)	0.0184* (0.00984)	0.0102 (0.00963)	0.00732 (0.0120)
School Environment I (Study)	0.0249** (0.0104)	0.0233** (0.0104)	0.0254** (0.0124)
School Environment II (Regulation)	0.0145 (0.0106)	0.0181* (0.0105)	0.0118 (0.0110)
School Environment III(Teacher)	0.0139** (0.00699)	0.0110 (0.00683)	0.00574 (0.00865)
Community environment	0.0255*** (0.00856)	0.0252*** (0.00802)	0.0280*** (0.00907)
Peer Relation I (I get along with my class mates)	0.0837** (0.0399)	0.160*** (0.0346)	0.105** (0.0420)
Peer Relation II (I first apologize when I have involved in friends quarrel)	0.0384 (0.0324)	0.0687** (0.0311)	0.0373 (0.0369)
Peer Relation III (I share my materials with my classmates when they need it)	-0.0275 (0.0361)	-0.0566* (0.0340)	-0.0225 (0.0405)
Peer Relation IV (I disturb my friends' work)	-0.0399 (0.0254)	-0.0316 (0.0253)	-0.0874*** (0.0310)
Peer Relation V (My friends follow my opinion when we play together)	0.0218 (0.0346)	-0.0172 (0.0386)	-0.0224 (0.0422)
Constant	0.0236 (0.389)	0.624** (0.314)	-0.175 (0.420)
Observations	4,054	4,054	4,054
R-squared	0.099	0.119	0.059

Number of id 2,286 2,286 2,286

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Notes: Each variable related to youth environment is subdivided into detailed questions. Coefficient is statistically different from zero at the \*\*\*1%, \*\*5%, and \*10% level. And robust standard errors are in parentheses.

Lastly, this study specified each controlled variables in order to look at which aspect of each variable are more significant on subjective wellbeing. In terms of peer environment, column (1), (2) was related to trust; most of questions were related to whether adolescents have their close friend or not who can understand their situation. And in column (3) communication were significant factors that can lower adolescents' worries. Related to the result above, peer relation has also similar result that having a good relationship is significant to subjective wellbeing. Peer1 (I get along with my classmates), which means good relationship indicated significant on subjective wellbeing in every regression from (1) to (3). And peer2 (I first apologize when I have been friends quarrel) that represents 'concession' is still significant in 2 regressions. However, peer 3(Share the materials) and 4(disturbing friends) negatively significant on column (2) and (3) each. Since share requires psychological sacrifice among relationship and disturbing friends is wrong behavior to make friends. In terms of school environment, how adolescents accept the studying environment is the most significant to all of subjective wellbeing in column (1), (2), (3).

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper has proved that the longer youth activity participation hours can affect adolescents' subjective wellbeing (overall happiness: I think my life is happy) and joy (the life is so joyful to me) positively. This can be interpreted as the importance of the duration in youth activity program. It does not only say that long term program is important, but also connectivity among youth program will be necessary; basic programs to advanced programs. There are many youth activities delivered in one-time or short-term based program. Those

programs are usually finishing as temporary experience. However, if formal and informal education can provide each activity as curriculums, which systemically connected between each youth activity programs like each grade of school curriculums, it will work the same condition as long-term program that is able to enhance the continuous impact on youth activity. These long-term curriculum based supporting youth activity program could help adolescent find youth activity easily in their communities and continue to participate in them. Constructing more public youth activity related centers in each community followed by 2013 administrative priorities could support delivering more diverse activities that enhance the accessibility of youth activity. According to the youth activity accreditation system, the accredited youth programs in each region are Seoul 589, Busan 38, Daegu 25, Incheon 75, Gwangju 66, Daejeon 31, Ulsan 29, Gyeonggi 343, Gangwon 66, Chungbuk 65, Chungnam 63, Jeonbuk 80, Jeonnam 52, Gyeongbuk 52, Gyeongnam 89, Jeju 36. These are actually small number of accredited program comparing to adolescents' population in Korea. As a result, it will be necessary to establish well-organized program (duration, connectivity and accreditation) and sufficient youth centers in each community to create long-term curriculum based supporting system, which can enhance adolescents' subjective wellbeing.

Second, adolescents' subjective wellbeing is affected by diverse environmental factors. That is why when youth activities are planned, the cooperation with youth related sectors such as education, counseling and family are necessary to be considered. Since Korean youth related policies are separated into various ministries (the ministry education, the ministry gender equality and family, the ministry of health and welfare etc.), the politic cooperation has been difficult. That is why each ministry has delivered one-time or short-term based youth activity with lack of knowledge to show off the activity rather than caring about true impact on adolescents' lives. The role of Korea youth work agency, which is in charge of youth activity programs in Korea, can be emphasized on a controlling sector of all

the youth work occurring in each ministry so that it can manage better on cooperation among youth works and connectivity between youth activities.

## **LIMITATION**

Youth activity has more diverse characteristics such as place, group members and detailed programs etc. However in this study, youth activity has not been specified into each characteristic. If youth activity in each characteristic compares with subjective wellbeing, the study will figure out what kind of program is more useful for adolescents' subjective wellbeing. Moreover, the wave of this panel data is only 3 years. If this study continues until the end of this panel survey (2016), there will be more specific relationship defined among age differences, youth activities, subjective wellbeing and surrounding factors.

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