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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE DETERMINATION OF CONSTRAINTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES (A SAMPLE OF SELCUK UNIVERSITY)

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ABSTRACT

This research was done to investigate why the students of Selcuk University did not join in recreational activities in their leisure time and which factors prevented them from participating in these ones. Totally 448 students including 190 females and 258 males who studied in the academic year 2013-2014, participated in this research. In determination of constraints associated with the students' participation in recreational activities, "The Leisure Constraints Scale" developed by Alexandris and Carroll (1997), adapted into Turkish by Karaküçük and Gürbüz (2007) and newly tested on the factor structure with the confirmatory factor analysis by Gürbüz *et al.* (2012) was used as a data collection tool. Data were statistically analyzed, any changes in leisure time perceptions were determined in the independent groups with T-test (Independent-Samples T test) and One Way Analysis of Variance (Anova). Tukey test was also used to analyze the differences between the groups. As a result of the study, significant differences were found in the students' leisure time perceptions, ages, genders, income levels, sportive capabilities and education classes.

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INTRODUCTION

Today the words of recreation and leisure, which can be used instead of each other, have the same meaning in fact. We can define the concept of leisure as time other than any period within a person works and fulfills one's vital needs. The concept of recreation also means that "an individual joins in any cultural, sport, artistic activities in free time except for one's works and other activities in order to have pleasure and satisfaction, enjoy, relax, develop oneself socially and individually (Çetinbaş, 2010). Developments in industry and technology, great stages in sustainability and welfare and mechanical dominances on people have led to increases in interests for leisure by giving reactions against works (Çolakoğlu and Yenel, 2003). In parallel to this, an active sector which provides people multiple choice services to make use of leisure time, has emerged herein. In addition to increasing economic efficiency and improving working conditions, integrated efforts with positive results must be for using leisure time consciously (Özdilek *et al.*, 2007). Nowadays valuing leisure time has become a lifestyle.

That's why, various programs and projects have become necessary to increase leisure time activities and broaden a valuing range of leisure time. Hereby, leisure time activities support an individual's psychological, social and physical values with one's own philosophies. When included in activities actively or passively, these help individuals be involved in society and make life beautiful (Ardahan and Lapa, 2011). But in our country evaluating leisure time provides us a passive image which generally shows resting at home (Özkul, 1997). In accordance with the reports titled with "Developments in Economical and Social Sectors" in 1993 by the State Planning Organization; when considered the distribution of leisure time valuing activities in Turkey, the participation rate in in-house activities such as reading a book, a journal and a newspaper, listening to music, watching television, chatting with neighbours and friends, resting, making handicrafts, doing housework and repairing was 67,3% in rural areas, 75,6% in urban areas. The rate of ones who used their leisure time by doing sport, was estimated to be very low (Emir, 2012). Among the basic functions of recreational activities, there are functions of resting, amusing and developing. Recreational efforts are confronted as an important concept for mentally performance increases, creativity and cultural developments among people.

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Especially in students having academic education in universities their cultural, social and skill equipments as well as academic background are effective on their success for their scientific and social lives (Özşaker, 2012). Students of the higher education institutions have an important place in Turkish population with a young identity. Furthermore, young people are boundless potential and faith of the country future due to their sensitive and dynamic attributes. Therefore, issues relating to students and problems associated with leisure time valuing are common issues and problems of all the higher education institutions (Mutlu, 2008).

University students' valuing free time and participating in recreational activities are partly organized within the opportunities to themselves by schools during their education; in this regard, universities may take a guiding role to value students' time except for their formal education well. Universities' own recreation programs and their relevant infrastructure opportunities predict other participation reasons when increasing communication between young people (Balci, 2003).

In spite of these positive contributions of recreational activities, it has been determined that individuals do not join in these types of activities important for themselves due to several reasons or cannot get involved in these ones due to various obstacles (Karaküçük and Gürbüz, 2007). In our study, the obstacles in participation to the relevant recreational activities have been evaluated; these have been interpreted with the variables such as gender, age, income level and sport experience.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Group

The study group of the research totally included 448 students including 190 females and 258 males having education in Selçuk University in the spring semester of the 2013-2014 academic year.

### Data Collection Tool

In determination of obstructs associated with the students' participation in recreational activities, "The Leisure Constraints Scale" developed by Alexandris and Carroll (1997), adapted into Turkish by Karaküçük and Gürbüz (2007) and newly tested on the factor structure with the confirmatory factor analysis by Gürbüz *et al.* (2012) was used as a data collection tool. The original scale involves 29 articles and 7 sub-dimensions. But the scale form used in this research involved 18 items and 6 sub-dimensions. These sub-dimensions were; (a) Individual Psychology (3 items), (b) Lack of Information (3 items), (c) Lack of Facility (3 items), (d) Lack of Friends (3 items), (e) Time (3 items) ve (f) Lack of Interest (3 items). The scale items were ordered as (1) "Absolutely Unimportant" ve (4) "Absolutely Important", and graded as well. The Cronbach Alpha reliability co-efficient for the sub-factors of the scale varied between 0.65 and 0.86, it was estimated to be 0.85 for a whole scale. Also, the participants' personal information such as gender, age, class,

monthly average income and history of interests in any sport branch was obtained when collecting data with "The Leisure Constraints Scale".

### Data Analysis

In evaluation of data and estimation of values, the SPSS 16.0 statistical package program was used. Data were summarised by estimating averages and standard deviations. The relevant differences in perceptions about leisure time were found out with the Independent-Samples T Test the t-test and the One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). When there was any difference in the groups, the Tukey test was performed.

According to Table 1, when considered all the scale, the arithmetical averages of total points were found to be  $36,73 \pm 8,61$ . The highest average value was  $8,06 \pm 2,62$  in the sub-dimension of facilities, the lowest average rate was  $7,2 \pm 1,84$  in the sub-dimension of lack of information. As understood from Table 2, there were no significant differences in the sub-dimensions of an individual's psychological situation, lack of information, facilities, friendship, time and a total value. In the sub-dimension of lack of interest, there was a statistically significant difference in favour of male students ( $P < 0.05$ ).

According to Table 3, any significant differences were not found in the sub-dimensions of an individual's psychological situation, lack of information, friend, facility and interest. When examined the facility sub-dimension, the 4<sup>th</sup> Class average value ( $9,09 \pm 2,32$ ) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Class average value ( $8,62 \pm 2,038$ ) were similar, the arithmetical average value concerning the 1<sup>st</sup> Class ( $7,65 \pm 2,63$ ) was lower and statistically more different than these values ( $P < 0.05$ ). In the same way, the arithmetical average value concerning the 4<sup>th</sup> Class ( $9,09 \pm 2,32$ ) was statistically more different than the value concerning the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class ( $7,97 \pm 2,71$ ) in favour of the 4<sup>th</sup> Class students. As understood from Table 4; there were no statistically significant differences in the sub-dimensions of an individual's psychological situation, lack of information, friend, time and interest of the Leisure Constraints Scale. As seen at Table 5. No significant differences were observed in any of the sub-dimensions of the Leisure Constraints Scale.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Today human beings have minimised time which they separate to sport and recreational activities, because of many reasons such as works, insufficient time and health problems, or cannot keep time for them. In this study, the underlying reasons for university students not to join in the relevant recreational or sport activities have been summarised under the certain headlines. The arithmetical average results of leisure scale values which belong to the students are given at Table 1, thereby, this result seems to be high in the sub-dimensions of lack of Facility and Information. This situation firstly shows that lack of facility affects participation in the recreational or sport activities in a negative way. Also, when examining the high value in the sub-dimension of lack of information, it can be interpreted that many students are not aware of these types of activities or do not have enough information about the current facilities in order to benefit from these.

**Table 1. Leisure Scale Values Belong to Students**

	N	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
Individual Psychology	448	7,61	1,9	3,00	12,00
Lack of Information	448	7,8	2,33	3,00	12,00
Facility	448	8,06	2,62	3,00	12,00
Friendship	448	7,5	1,95	3,00	12,00
Time	448	7,57	1,99	3,00	12,00
Lack of Interest	448	7,2	1,84	3,00	12,00
Total Points	448	36,73	8,61	13,00	68,00

**Table 2. Relevant Changes to Gender**

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	F	P
Individual Psychology	Female	190	7,63	1,93	,23	,63
	Male	258	7,6	1,88		
Lack of Information	Female	190	7,71	2,42	2,01	,157
	Male	258	7,87	2,26		
Facility	Female	190	8,01	2,61	,23	,63
	Male	258	8,10	2,64		
Lack of Friend	Female	190	7,32	2,03	,5	,48
	Male	258	7,62	1,88		
Time	Female	190	7,52	2,05	,56	,45
	Male	258	7,62	1,95		
Lack of Interest	Female	190	7,06	1,64	7,47	,007 *
	Male	258	7,30	1,97		
Total Points	Female	190	35,31	8,12	2,2	,139
	Male	258	37,78	8,82		

P<0.05 significant difference in groups

**Table 3. Relevant Differences to Students' Classes**

	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	F	P
Individual Psychology	1 <sup>st</sup> Class	198	7,48	1,97	3,00	1,804	,146
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	130	7,58	1,87	3,00		
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	64	7,63	1,58	4,00		
	4 <sup>th</sup> Class	56	8,14	1,99	3,00		
Lack of Information	1 <sup>st</sup> Class	198	7,66	2,25	3,00	1,522	,208
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	130	7,66	2,48	3,00		
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	64	8,11	2,18	3,00		
	4 <sup>th</sup> Class	56	8,27	2,37	3,00		
Facility	1 <sup>st</sup> Class	198	7,65 a	2,63	3,00	5,689	,001 *
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	130	7,97 #	2,71	3,00		
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	64	8,62 b	2,38	3,00		
	4 <sup>th</sup> Class	56	9,09 b #	2,32	3,00		
Lack of Friend	1 <sup>st</sup> Class	198	7,3	1,96	3,00	1,549	,201
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	130	7,53	1,99	3,00		
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	64	7,69	1,69	5,00		
	4 <sup>th</sup> Class	56	7,86	2,06	3,00		
Time	1 <sup>st</sup> Class	198	7,39	2,04	3,00	1,228	,299
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	130	7,69	2,04	3,00		
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	64	7,59	1,74	3,00		
	4 <sup>th</sup> Class	56	7,91	1,97	3,00		
Interest	1 <sup>st</sup> Class	198	7,06	1,76	3,00	1,000	,393
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	130	7,38	2,029	3,00		
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	64	7,14	1,75	3,00		
	4 <sup>th</sup> Class	56	7,36	1,76	3,00		
Total Points	1 <sup>st</sup> Class	198	34,57 a	7,35	16,00	12,191	,000 *
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	130	36,77 #	8,12	13,00		
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	64	39,44 b	8,11	21,00		
	4 <sup>th</sup> Class	56	41,21 b #	9,86	17,00		

P<0.05 significant difference in groups

a. b = groups having differences

A study on the participation frequencies of the university students in the recreational-sport activities and the factors inhibiting their participation by Alexandris and Carroll (1997) indicates that there is a significant relation between lack of information, an individual's motivation level and perceived constraint level. Furthermore, Özdilek *et al.*'s study (2007) suggests "Students are conscious about participating in the recreational activities, even though they want to join in these

ones, they cannot involved in these especially due to economic reasons, limited facilities, programs and guiding experts. In both studies, the results support our findings. At Table 2, the participants' reasons for not taking up in the recreational or sport activities are examined in accordance with the gender variable; no significant differences were found in the sub-dimensions of an individual's psychological situation, lack of information, facility, friend, time and the total value.

Table 4. Relevant Differences to Income Level

		N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	F	P
Individual Psychology	250_	153	7,66	1,96	3,00	12,00	,458	,712
	251-500	235	7,56	1,87	3,00	12,00		
	501-1000	42	7,86	1,87	4,00	12,00		
	1001-...	18	7,33	1,88	3,00	10,00		
Lack of Information	250_	153	7,75	2,28	3,00	12,00	1,98	,116
	251-500	235	7,73	2,34	3,00	12,00		
	501-1000	42	8,61	2,29	3,00	12,00		
	1001-...	18	7,33	2,49	3,00	12,00		
Facility	250_	153	7,81	2,49	3,00	12,00	1,89	,131
	251-500	235	8,06	2,66	3,00	12,00		
	501-1000	42	8,79	2,67	3,00	12,00		
	1001-...	18	8,67	2,95	3,00	12,00		
Ark_Eks	250_	153	7,38	1,91	3,00	12,00	1,28	,281
	251-500	235	7,52	1,95	3,00	12,00		
	501-1000	42	7,93	2,18	3,00	12,00		
	1001-...	18	7,01	1,71	4,00	11,00		
Time	250_	153	7,61	2,11	3,00	12,00	1,28	,281
	251-500	235	7,63	1,91	3,00	12,00		
	501-1000	42	7,19	2,04	3,00	11,00		
	1001-...	18	7,51	2,01	3,00	11,00		
Interest	250_	153	7,25	1,83	3,00	12,00	,784	,504
	251-500	235	7,21	1,86	3,00	12,00		
	501-1000	42	7,21	1,82	3,00	12,00		
	1001-...	18	6,56	1,72	3,00	9,00		
Total Points	250_	153	35,6	7,71	17,00	62,00	1,74	,143
	251-500	235	36,89	8,79	13,00	68,00		
	501-1000	42	39,81	9,85	20,00	57,00		
	1001-...	18	37,11	8,71	16,00	53,00		

Table 5. Relevant Differences Between Students Doing Sport and Not Doing Sport

		N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	F	P
Individual Psychology	Yes	343	7,61	1,92	3,00	12,00	,049	,825
	No	105	7,65	1,84	3,00	12,00		
	Total	448	7,61	1,9	3,00	12,00		
Lack of Information	Yes	343	7,87	2,36	3,00	12,00	1,125	,289
	No	105	7,59	2,22	3,00	12,00		
	Total	448	7,8	2,33	3,00	12,00		
Facility	Yes	343	8,09	2,69	3,00	12,00	,241	,624
	No	105	7,95	2,39	3,00	12,00		
	Total	448	8,06	2,62	3,00	12,00		
Lack of Friend	Yes	343	7,46	1,92	3,00	12,00	,357	,551
	No	105	7,59	2,05	3,00	12,00		
	Total	448	7,49	1,95	3,00	12,00		
Time	Yes	343	7,63	1,98	3,00	12,00	1,283	,258
	No	105	7,38	2,04	3,00	11,00		
	Total	448	7,57	1,99	3,00	12,00		
Interest	Yes	343	7,2	1,89	3,00	12,00	,004	,947
	No	105	7,19	1,68	3,00	11,00		
	Total	448	7,2	1,84	3,00	12,00		
Total Points	Yes	343	36,64	8,72	13,00	68,00	,171	,680
	No	105	37,04	8,26	18,00	55,00		
	Total	448	36,73	8,6	13,00	68,00		

Only a statistically significant difference was observed in the sub-dimension of lack of interest in favour of the male students. Ergül's study (2008) dealt with university students' participation in the sport, recreational activities to the gender variable, suggested that the male students were more inclined to do sport than the female students, this situation supports our study as well. Culp's research (1998) shows that gender has effects on participation in the recreational and sport activities and plays an important role for preferring leisure activities.

When looked at Table 3 for the scale points of the classes among the participants during their university education, while there was no statistically significant difference in the sub-dimensions of an individual's psychological situation, lack of information, friend, time and interest, the average value of the 4<sup>th</sup> class in the facility sub-dimension was estimated to be lower than the other classes. There are current studies with findings similar to our study. In Emir's study (2012), students' constraint points became lower when they finished their classes.

This situation can be interpreted that students' priorities change due to their different anxieties about life day by day. Based on the income levels of participants, there was no statistically significant difference in the sub-dimensions of an individual's psychological situation, lack of information, friend, time and interest within the Leisure Constraints Scale among the participants who had an income level less than 250 tl, between 251 tl and 500 tl, 501 tl and 1000 tl, more than 1001 tl. By examining the studies, there are current studies with results different from our findings. Özşaker (2012) found significant differences in some sub-dimensions on the university students. Also, Can (2010) investigated the students' parents at primary schools, and suggested that the families with a low income level participated in the recreational or sport activities less. This situation can be explained that there are differences in the participants' living places and in the participants' opportunities for various activities without paying any price. So our study indicates that there are many indoor-outdoor sport fields for students to use in Selçuk University without paying any price or with a low price, or there are effective student communities holding social activities.

When Table 5 was examined, there were no significant differences in the scale points which showed if the participants were interested in any sport field in the past years. But the point averages were high in the some sub-dimensions of participants not interested in any sport field in the past. Emir (2012) and Damianidis *et al.* (2007) had similar results in their researches, it can be said that the participants who were keen on any sport field in the past, were more inclined and open to participating in free time activities.

As a result of the study, it has been observed that most of the students could not take up in recreational activities because of the reasons such as lack of facility or lack of information. It will be necessary to present more services and introduce these events in order to value students' free time. In particular, if students want to carry out free time activities with specific information and skills, when they apply to expert persons on their own fields to meet lack of information in students, activities will be performed in more healthy and appropriate conditions.

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