

Levels of Satisfaction with Leisure Time in Foreign Students

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate levels of satisfaction with leisure time in foreign students of Kocaeli University. In the collection of the data, the Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS) and demographic status questionnaire were used; 257 male and 103 female students participated. In the LSS scores for the separate domains, participants scored highest in Education and lowest in the Aesthetic subscale. There was no statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between the genders, monthly income groups, and levels of academic achievement; but statistically significant differences were found between the students' faculties. Significant differences were found between faculties in the LSS scores on the Psychological subscale, and between students' monthly incomes and the Relaxation subscale on the LSS. As a result, there was a significant difference between the different faculties and students' satisfaction with leisure time on the Psychological subscale.

Keywords: leisure time, recreation, foreign student

1. Introduction

Technological developments advancing rapidly in recent years have brought changes to our daily lives. While this change has taken place, it has affected the use of time by individuals, introducing new concepts into our lives. Mechanization has reduced the need for human power, resulting in the concept of leisure time outside of people's working hours (Ayyildiz, 2015). Leisure time is a concept that has been defined in various ways: time outside of work, sleep and obligations; and the activities carried out in this time are also referred to as leisure time activities (Roberts, 2006; Tezcan, 1994).

It has been often observed that individuals who use their leisure time efficiently for activities such as relaxation, sports, health, and learning have developed and improved skills, with increased self-confidence, success, happiness, vitality in daily life, and healthy decision making (Ardahan, 2016). Given these positive relationships, the concept of free time evaluation has become a requirement of daily life (Tezcan, 1982), and the concept has reached people from all walks of life, whether it be business people, housewives, academics, people with disabilities, everyone aged 7 to 70; and continues to evolve with many possibilities and options (Koktas, 2014).

The university learning period is the most important period where behavior patterns acquired will continue for years. Participation in recreational activities helps to develop strong and resilient individuals (Agaoglu & Eker, 2006) and it positively affects many fields of life, as shown in job satisfaction, life satisfaction, satisfaction with family life, and so on (Huang & Carleton, 2003).

For these reasons, the concept of leisure time and recreational activities should be included and experienced as part of students' academic education. In this study, the aim was to evaluate the factors affecting free time participation according to the psychological, educational, social, relaxation, physiological and aesthetic dimensions of the university students using a short version of the scale of free time satisfaction according to sex, faculty, monthly income, evaluation of academic achievements and purposes of sports.

2. Method

2.1 Research Group

The research sample constituted 360 foreign students studying at Kocaeli University in the 2016–2017 academic year. The students were randomly chosen, with 257 being male (71.4%) and 103 being female (28.6%). The age range of this

group is 63,1% in the age of 17-21, 32,2% in the age of 22-26 and 4,7% at the age of 27 and above.

2.2 Data Collection Tools

In this study, a personal information form consisting of fourteen questions developed by the researchers was used to collect demographic data on: age group, gender, monthly income, faculty, year in their course, level of academic achievement, welfare level, weekly leisure time, leisure time choices, preferred recreational fields, the frequency of participating in identified recreational fields.

To evaluate levels of satisfaction with leisure time, a valid and reliable Turkish version of the Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS) (Beard & Ragheb, 1980), which consists of 39 questions, was used (Karli, Polat, Yilmaz, & Kocak, 2008). The LSS has 6 subscales reflecting different domains of satisfaction with leisure time: psychological, education, social, relaxation, physiological, and aesthetic. In each subscale, higher scores indicate higher satisfaction levels.

2.3 Data Collection

The personal information form and LSS questionnaire was administered in face-to-face interviews with foreign students who voluntarily consented to participate in the questionnaire, at Kocaeli University Umuttepe Campus. The data collection was conducted over a period of 40 days.

2.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed in the IBM SPSS (Version 24) program. Frequency (f) and percentage (%) values were calculated and tabulated. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine the effects of faculty, monthly income, level of academic achievement, and sporting intention, on levels of satisfaction with leisure time. T-tests were conducted to determine the effect of gender on satisfaction levels with leisure time.

3. Results

Table 1. Distribution of students by age group

Age group	n	%
17–21	227	63.1
22–26	116	32.2
27 and above	17	4.7
Total	360	100

63.1% of the students were in the 17-21 age group, 32.2% of the students were in the 22-26 age group and 4.7% of the students were aged 27 or above.

Table 2. Distribution of students by gender

Gender	n	%
Male	257	71.4
Female	103	28.6
Total	360	100

71.4% of the students were male and 28.6% of the students were female.

Table 3. Distribution of students by income level

Income level (Turkish Lira)	n	%
1000 and below	235	65.3
1001–2000	96	26.7
2001–3000	19	5.3
3001 and above	10	2.8
Total	360	100

As monthly income, 65.3% of the students received 1000 Turkish Lira or below; 26.7% had 1001–2000 Turkish Lira, 5.3% had 2001–3000 Turkish Lira, and 2.8% of the students received 3001 Turkish Lira or above.

Table 4. Distribution of students across faculties

Faculty	n	%
Engineering	83	23.1
Education Sciences	11	3.1
Social Sciences	9	2.5
Political Science	22	6.1
Health Sciences	6	1.7
Communication	6	1.7
Medicine	23	6.4
Arts and Sciences	43	11.9
Economics and Administrative Sciences	31	8.6
Other Faculties and Colleges	126	35
Total	360	100

23.1% were studying at faculty of engineering, 3.1% of the students were studying at faculty of education sciences, 2.5% of the students were studying at faculty of social sciences, 6.1% of the students were studying at faculty of political science, 1.7% of the students were studying at faculty of health sciences, 1.7% of the students were studying at faculty of communication, 6.4% of the students were studying at faculty of medicine, 11.9% of the students were studying at faculty of arts and sciences, 8.6% of the students were studying at faculty of economics and administrative sciences and 35.0% of the students were studying at other faculties and colleges.

Table 5. Distribution of students across year in the course

Year	n	%
1st	190	52.8
2nd	88	24.4
3rd	56	15.6
4th	26	7.2
Total	360	100

52.8% of the students were in their 1st year, 24.4% of the students were in the 2nd year, 15.6% of the students were in the 3rd year, and 7.2% of the students were in the 4th year.

Table 6. Distribution of students across self-reported academic achievement levels

Level of academic achievement	n	%
Low	34	9.4
Moderate	196	54.4
High	130	36.1
Total	360	100

Students were asked "How do you evaluate your academic achievement status?" and in response, 9.4% answered "low", 54.4% answered "moderate", and 36.1% of the students answered "high".

Table 7. Distribution of students across self-reported welfare levels

Variables	n	%
Very bad	12	3.3
Bad	20	5.6
Normal	151	41.9
Well	144	40.0
Total	360	100

Students were asked, “When you think of the welfare level of people in the society, where do you see yourself?” and 3.3% answered “very bad”, 5.6% answered “bad”, 41.9% answered “normal”, and 40.0% of the students answered “well”.

Table 8. Distribution of students by weekly leisure time

Hours per week	N	%
1–5	16	4.4
6–10	32	8.9
11–15	119	33.1
16 and above	193	53.6
Total	360	100

Students were asked, “How much leisure time do you have weekly?” and 4.4% answered “1–5 hours”, 8.9% answered “6–10 hours”, 33.1% answered “11–15 hours”, and 53.6% of the students answered “16 hours or above”.

Table 9. Self-reported frequency of experienced difficulty with assessing leisure time

Frequency	n	%
Always	157	43.6
Sometimes	169	46.9
Never	34	9.4
Total	360	100

In reply to the question “How often do you have difficulty assessing your leisure time?”, 43.6% of the students answered “always”, 46.9% answered “sometimes”, and 9.4% answered “never”.

Table 10. Self-reported preferred leisure activity

Preferred activities	n	%
Home-based	49	13.6
Physical	162	45.0
Social	104	28.9
Cultural-artistic	32	8.9
Open field	13	3.6
Total	360	100

13.6% of the student preferred home-based activities, 45.0% preferred physical activities, 28.9% preferred social activities, 8.9% preferred cultural-artistic activities, and 3.6% of the students preferred open field activities.

Table 11. Student evaluation of the adequacy of the university’s recreational areas

Variables	n	%
Totally inadequate	37	10.3
Inadequate	125	34.7
Partly enough	137	38.1
Enough	49	13.6
Totally Enough	12	3.3
Total	360	100

10.3% of the students rated the university’s recreational areas as being “totally inadequate”, 34.7% rated these as being “inadequate”, 38.1% rated these as being “partly enough”, 13.6% rated these as being “enough”, and 3.3% rated these as being “totally enough”.

Table 12. Self-reported usage of university recreational areas

Hours per week	n	%
1–5	205	56.9
6–10	116	32.2
11–15	34	9.4
16 or above	5	1.4
Total	360	100

When asked about their weekly use of the university's recreational areas, 56.9% of the students indicated they used these recreational areas 1–5 hours per week, 32.2% indicated 6–10 hours per week, 9.4% indicated 11–15 hours per week, and 1.4% of the students indicated 16 hours or more per week.

Table 13. Location of recreational activities

Location	n	%
On campus	274	76.1
Off campus	79	21.9
Other	7	1.9
Total	360	100

76.1% of the students conducted their recreational activities on campus, 21.9% of the students off campus, and 1.9% of the students in "other" locations.

Table 14. Students' scores on the Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS) and its subscales

LSS domain	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Psychological	360	20	39	26.92	2.87
Education	360	22	43	31.04	3.27
Social	360	16	40	30.43	3.44
Relaxation	360	8	20	14.36	2.27
Physiological	360	6	30	18.31	3.19
Aesthetic	360	6	20	11.03	2.41
LSS total	360	101	170	132.11	9.70

On average, students scored highest on the Education subscale and the lowest on the Aesthetic subscale.

Table 15. T-test comparisons of the LSS and its domains between genders

LSS domains	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Psychological	Male	257	27.10	2.93	1.953	.052
	Female	103	26.47	2.69		
Education	Male	257	31.10	3.29	.587	.558
	Female	103	30.88	3.21		
Social	Male	257	30.36	3.50	-.661	.510
	Female	103	30.62	3.31		
Relaxation	Male	257	14.32	2.26	-.495	.621
	Female	103	14.45	2.32		
Physiological	Male	257	18.38	3.32	.686	.494
	Female	103	18.14	2.85		
Aesthetic	Male	257	11.05	2.42	.195	.846
	Female	103	11.00	2.38		
Leisure Satisfaction Scale	Male	257	132.33	10.14	.716	.475
	Female	103	131.58	8.51		

$p > 0.005$

Comparisons between the genders found no significant difference in the level of satisfaction with free time ($p > 0.05$).

Table 16. T-test comparisons of LSS scores by faculties

Subscale	Faculty	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Psychological	Engineering	83	26.67	3.11	2.507	.009*
	Educational Sciences	11	28.81	2.99		
	Social Sciences	9	28.55	2.74		
	Political Science	22	27.40	3.96		
	Health Sciences	6	25.50	1.76		
	Communication	6	29.66	3.14		
	Medicine	23	27.13	2.52		
	Arts and Sciences	43	26.11	2.55		
	Economics and Administrative Sciences	31	26.19	2.28		
	Other Faculties and Colleges	126	27.07	2.64		
	Total	360	26.92	2.87		
Education	Engineering	83	31.28	3.65	.696	.712
	Educational Sciences	11	31.36	4.29		
	Social Sciences	9	30.11	1.36		
	Political Science	22	30.04	3.24		
	Health Sciences	6	29.83	4.11		
	Communication	6	32.33	3.55		
	Medicine	23	31.08	3.32		
	Arts and Sciences	43	31.51	3.79		
	Economics and Administrative Sciences	31	31.16	2.13		
	Other Faculties and Colleges	126	30.88	2.99		
	Total	360	31.04	3.27		
Social	Engineering	83	30.89	3.47	1.813	.062
	Educational Sciences	11	32.81	3.57		
	Social Sciences	9	30.77	2.22		
	Political Science	22	29.00	4.16		
	Health Sciences	6	31.66	5.46		
	Communication	6	29.66	1.86		
	Medicine	23	31.21	2.81		
	Arts and Sciences	43	30.44	3.13		
	Economics and Administrative Sciences	31	30.77	2.59		
	Other Faculties and Colleges	126	29.90	3.57		
	Total	360	30.43	3.44		
Relaxation	Faculty of Engineering	83	14.40	2.38	1.443	.168
	Educational Sciences	11	14.63	1.68		
	Social Sciences	9	14.11	1.36		
	Political Science	22	13.86	2.49		
	Health Sciences	6	15.33	3.50		
	Communication	6	15.00	2.52		
	Medicine	23	13.73	2.07		
	Arts and Sciences	43	15.02	2.05		
	Economics and Administrative Sciences	31	15.00	2.03		
	Other Faculties and Colleges	126	14.06	2.31		
	Total	360	14.36	2.27		
Physiological	Engineering	83	18.22	2.73	.708	.701
	Educational Sciences	11	18.09	3.38		
	Social Sciences	9	18.66	2.82		
	Political Science	22	18.18	3.15		
	Health Sciences	6	19.50	5.08		
	Communication	6	18.16	4.40		
	Medicine	23	18.91	3.78		
	Arts and Sciences	43	19.00	3.10		
	Economics and Administrative Sciences	31	18.70	3.01		
	Other Faculties and Colleges	126	17.90	3.32		
	Total	360	18.31	3.19		
Aesthetic	Engineering	83	11.15	2.56	1.049	.401
	Educational Sciences	11	12.72	3.34		
	Social Sciences	9	11.00	1.73		
	Political Science	22	11.13	2.69		
	Health Sciences	6	11.83	1.60		
	Communication	6	11.83	3.60		
	Medicine	23	10.47	1.95		
	Arts and Sciences	43	11.06	2.72		
	Economics and Administrative Sciences	31	10.61	1.78		
	Other Faculties and Colleges	126	10.92	2.26		
	Total	360	11.03	2.41		
Leisure Satisfaction Scale	Engineering	83	132.65	10.31	1.231	.275
	Educational Sciences	11	138.45	13.00		
	Social Sciences	9	133.22	5.11		
	Political Science	22	129.63	12.25		
	Health Sciences	6	133.66	12.53		
	Communication	6	136.66	15.44		
	Medicine	23	132.56	10.03		
	Arts and Sciences	43	133.16	9.60		
	Economics and Administrative Sciences	31	132.45	6.32		
	Other Faculties and Colleges	126	130.76	8.80		
	Total	360	132.11	9.70		

p < 0.05

When the findings were examined, there was a significant difference only in the Psychological subscale. In the other subscales, no significant difference was found.

Table 17. ANOVA of the LSS scores by monthly income

LSS	Monthly income (Turkish Lira)	N	Mean	SD	f	p
Psychological	1000 and below	235	27.05	2.76	.488	.691
	1001–2000	96	26.64	3.35		
	2001–3000	19	26.73	1.59		
	3001 and above	10	26.9	2.42		
	Total	360	26.92	2.87		
Education	1000 and below	235	31.08	3.42	.132	.941
	1001–2000	96	31.02	2.99		
	2001–3000	19	30.84	2.79		
	3001 and above	10	30.5	3.37		
	Total	360	31.04	3.27		
Social	1000 and below	235	30.44	3.46	.514	.673
	1001–2000	96	30.62	3.27		
	2001–3000	19	29.78	4.41		
	3001 and above	10	29.6	2.91		
	Total	360	30.43	3.44		
Relaxation	1000 and below	235	14.44	2.29	2.832	.038*
	1001–2000	96	13.90	2.26		
	2001–3000	19	14.94	1.77		
	3001 and above	10	15.60	2.11		
	Total	360	14.36	2.27		
Physiological	1000 and below	235	18.50	3.39	1.392	.245
	1001–2000	96	17.79	2.59		
	2001–3000	19	18.21	3.72		
	3001 and above	10	19.20	2.14		
	Total	360	18.31	3.19		
Aesthetic	1000 and below	235	11.11	2.39	.668	.572
	1001–2000	96	11.03	2.4		
	2001–3000	19	10.31	2.26		
	3001 and above	10	10.8	3.25		
	Total	360	11.03	2.41		
Leisure Satisfaction Scale	1000 and below	235	132.65	10.31	.762	.516
	1001–2000	96	131.02	8.06		
	2001–3000	19	130.84	9.55		
	3001 and above	10	132.60	9.74		
	Total	360	132.11	9.70		

$p < 0.05$

There was a significant difference in the relaxation subscale according to the students' monthly income.

Table 18. ANOVA of the LSS scores by levels of academic achievement

LSS	Academic achievement	N	Mean	SD	f	p
Psychological	Low	34	26.26	2.20	1.852	.158
	Moderate	196	27.16	2.98		
	High	130	26.73	2.83		
	Total	360	26.92	2.87		
Education	Low	34	29.94	2.88	2.217	.110
	Moderate	196	31.21	3.34		
	High	130	31.06	3.21		
	Total	360	31.04	3.27		
Social	Low	34	29.26	3.57	2.960	.053
	Moderate	196	30.75	3.48		
	High	130	30.26	3.30		
	Total	360	30.43	3.44		
Relaxation	Low	34	15.11	2.08	2.155	.117
	Moderate	196	14.32	2.33		
	High	130	14.22	2.22		
	Total	360	14.36	2.27		
Physiological	Low	34	17.79	2.43	.610	.544
	Moderate	196	18.43	3.19		
	High	130	18.26	3.37		
	Total	360	18.31	3.19		
Aesthetic	Low	34	10.73	2.24	.409	.665
	Moderate	196	11.12	2.44		
	High	130	10.99	2.42		
	Total	360	11.03	2.41		
Leisure Satisfaction Scale	Low	34	129.11	6.42	2.693	.069
	Moderate	196	133.01	10.05		
	High	130	131.56	9.73		
	Total	360	132.11	9.70		

There was no significant difference in Leisure Satisfaction Scores by levels of academic achievement.

4. Results, Conclusions and Recommendations

As a result of our statistical analyses, students scored higher on the Education subscale of the LSS on average compared to the other LSS subscales. Additionally, it was observed that on average the Aesthetic subscale was scored the lowest.

In a study conducted with 173 male and 223 female participants in the province of Antalya (Lapa, 2013), it was found that the Education subscale was scored the highest score, as in our study, but the Social subscale was scored the lowest. When we examined the effect of gender in our study, there was no significant difference between the genders on levels of satisfaction with leisure time. This result is similar to the findings of Misra and McKean (2000). A similar result was obtained by Lu and Hu (2005) on Chinese university students. Siegenthaller and O'Dell (2000), and Di Bona (2000) also found no significant difference between genders on the levels of satisfaction with leisure time. Griffin and McKenna (1998) and Boley (2001) found similar results in their studies on elderly individuals. Berg, Trost, Schneider and Allison (2001) found that there was no significant difference in the level of satisfaction with leisure time between the male and female subjects in their study of couples. Similarly, the results of the work by Ardahan and Lapa (2010) indicate that scores on the LSS and its subscales did not differ according to sex. Similar results were obtained in the literature by Gokce (2008), Ngai (2005), and Kabanoff (1982). Spiers and Walker (2009) concluded that gender had no

significant effect on levels of satisfaction with free time. However, Brown and Frankel (1993) reported that males scored higher levels of satisfaction with their free time.

When we analyzed the subscales of the LSS according to monthly income variables, we found that scores for Relaxation were higher than for the other subscales. These findings are similar to Russell's finding (1987) that levels of satisfaction with leisure time are associated with income. Bonke, Deding, & Lausten (2007) also found a positive relationship between income and satisfaction with leisure time: as incomes rise, participants' level of satisfaction with their leisure time also increases. However, in a study by Mancini (1978), the level of satisfaction with leisure time was not affected by income. Ngai (2005), in a study of 993 participants living in the Macao region of the People's Republic of China, reported that the level of satisfaction with free time did not differ according to the income. The results of the studies performed by Mancini (1978) and Ngai (2005) may differ from those in our study because of different sample characteristics in the studies.

It was determined that there was no significant difference between the genders on their level satisfaction with leisure time. Similarly, there was no significant difference between the levels of academic achievement on levels of satisfaction with leisure time.

With regard to the faculty of the student, only the Psychological subscale of the LSS was statistically significant. Levels of psychological satisfaction of these individuals is high.

In relation to the monthly income level, a statistically significant difference was also found.

Given these findings, the following are our recommendations for researchers:

- 1- Further research should be conducted to look at the different factors that affect differences in levels of satisfaction in university students with leisure time.
- 2- Qualitative observation-based studies may allow consideration of the issue from different dimensions.
- 3- The same study can be conducted in different universities to obtain more generalizable results.

The following are our recommendations for students:

- 1- Creating panels in each faculty can increase student awareness of the recreational opportunities and activities at the university.
- 2- Preparing English announcements for foreign students can help them understand and make them more comfortable with activities.
- 3- Providing joint participation of all faculties through organizations can allow for socialization of foreign students.
- 4- Offering elective courses at each faculty, for different recreational activities that students may be interested in, can promote student participation.
- 5- Holding weekly outdoor activities for different countries, under the name of National Recreation, with the help of foreign students, is also another way of promoting student participation.
- 6- Creating English-speaking only areas in the faculty (e.g., cafés, classrooms, a few green spaces and so on) can generate opportunities for foreign students to speak English with others.

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