

Examining the Relationship between Leisure Attitude and Life Satisfaction Levels of University Students*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between leisure attitudes and life satisfaction levels of university students in terms of certain demographic variables. The population of the study consists of 16120 students enrolled at Bartın University during the academic year 2018-2019. The sample consists of 261 (149 women and 112 men) students studying at various departments at Bartın University. The data collection tools included the "Personal Information Form" developed by researchers, the "Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)" developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985) and adapted to Turkish by Köker (1991) and the "Leisure Attitude Scale (LAS)" developed by Ragheb and Beard (1982) and adapted to Turkish by Akgül and Gürbüz (2011). Frequency, percentage, descriptive statistics, t-Test, ANOVA and Pearson correlation tests were used in the analysis of the data. According to the results of the t-Test of the gender variable, there was no significant difference between the LAS sub-dimensions and SWLS ($p>0,05$). The correlation analysis for the age variable showed no significant relationship in the sub-dimensions of LAS, while a positive and low-level relationship was found with SWLS ($p<0,05$). As a result, leisure activities of university students vary and variables such as gender, age, income level and daily leisure time are important factors. However, the participation of university students in city and on-campus activities contributes to the leisure attitude level. Therefore, the participation of university students in activities and the diversity of leisure activities will improve the level of attitude and increase satisfaction with life.

Keywords: University students, leisure attitude, life satisfaction

Introduction

Today, there are many factors that directly and indirectly affect the education level of university students. Reasons included in these factors are important in engaging in leisure activities effectively and leaning towards a certain attitude in this period.

Therefore, the concept of education plays an indispensable role in the stage of human development and change. Education affects the individual's education life, status and social life in society. Education emerges as a process, and this process is effective when time is used efficiently (Yaşartürk & Bilgin, 2018). While technology provides more consumer goods necessary for human life and more rapidly, it has created the concept of “leisure time” that is different from working time (Abadan, 1961). The concept of leisure time constitutes a structural feature of the contemporary industrial society and a product of this type of society (Karakparmak, 2005).

Leisure or free time allows individuals to be by themselves, to live their freedom and to find themselves when used efficiently and in the right place. Making good use of leisure time enables individuals to express themselves, develop their creativity, gain new experiences, improve their social environment and increase their productivity. The wise use of leisure time is a result of development and education (Kılbaş, 2004; Yaşartürk, Bilgin & Yaman, 2017). Therefore, it is important to create an attitude in terms of using leisure time to be successful.

Attitude is generally a tendency that is attributed to an individual and that regularly shapes their thoughts, feelings and behaviors about a psychological object (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010). These trends are a product of the socio-cultural environment of the society that the individual is in. The subject of attitude can be anything (abstract-concrete) or leisure time (İnceoğlu, 2000). Attitude has a quality that directs the person to action.

The concept of leisure attitude is the positive or negative reactions or trends that arise from the compilation of experiences, feelings, memories and knowledge about leisure and leisure activities (Teaff, 1975; Aydın & Yaşartürk, 2020). The person's leisure time changes and develops rapidly all over the world. When the individual's tendency to behave is examined, it is understood that there is a close relationship between lifestyle, education, attitudes and thoughts (Akgül, 2011; Bozkuş, 2014).

The concept of life satisfaction can be defined as the situation or result obtained by comparing a person's expectations with what they have (Haybron, 2004), as an important element of a person's positive assessment of their entire life per their criteria (Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin, 1985), and as the sum of human beliefs and evaluations about life or general attitude of human life (Rice, Frone and McFarlin, 1992). According to Shin and Johnson (1978), life satisfaction is generally an assessment of the quality of an individual's life according to the criteria they have determined. Life satisfaction can be defined as the degree of positive development of all quality of life as a whole (Veenhoven, 1996, as cited in Dağlı and Baysal, 2016).

Life satisfaction is defined as the general judgments and evaluations of the individual regarding their life. In the formation of life satisfaction judgments, which have a subjective nature, an individual's comparison of the situation with the situations that they think is an appropriate standard plays a role (Diener et al., 1985). These standards can be the criteria of the individual for a good life, as well as general judgments that are given importance. Additionally, it may be possible for the individual to adopt different standards to achieve “success” in their different living spaces. Therefore, it is emphasized that it is more important to evaluate the individual's general judgments about their life rather than their satisfaction in certain living spaces (Pavot and Diener, 1993; as cited in Çivitçi, 2012). In terms of university students, individuals who have high attitude towards life satisfaction and leisure activities can also be more successful in their classes by improving their academic self-efficacy levels (Yaşartürk, 2019).

Therefore, it is thought that the leisure attitude level of university students or the activities they do will affect the satisfaction they will get from life. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between leisure attitude and life satisfaction levels of university students in terms of demographic variables.

Method

Research Model

To reveal the current situation, a descriptive and a relational survey were used in the research model. To present the existing situation, the research model consisting of “descriptive and relational survey” was utilized. Descriptive survey models are defined as the surveying of arrangements made on the whole population or a group of samples to be taken from it to make a general judgment about the population consisting of many elements. Relational screening models aim to determine the presence and/or degree of change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2017).

Population and Sampling

The population of the study consists of 16120 students enrolled at Bartın University during the academic year 2018-2019. The sample group consists of 261 students studying at various departments at Bartın University.

Data Collection Tools

The personal information form developed by the researcher was used in the study as the data collection tool which consists of questions related to the independent variables of gender, year (at the university), age, family income and leisure time levels.

To determine the attitude levels of individuals on their leisure activities, the "Leisure Attitude Scale (LAS)” developed by Ragheb and Beard (1982) and adapted to Turkish by Akgül and Gürbüz (2010) was used. The leisure-attitude scale is a 5-point Likert scale consisting of three sub-dimensions that are; (1) cognitive, (2) affective and (3) behavioral (12 items each dimension) with a total of 36 items. The minimum score that can be obtained in the scale is 36

while the highest is 180. In the adaptation study of the scale, the internal consistency coefficients calculated for the sub-dimensions were found to be 0.81, 0.92, 0.91, respectively, and the total reliability coefficient was 0.97 (Akgül and Gürbüz, 2011). According to the analysis results, the internal consistency coefficient of the leisure attitude scale was "cognitive 0.93", "affective 0.94", "behavioral 0.92" and LAS was 0.96.

To determine the overall satisfaction levels of individuals with their lives, the "Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)" developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985) and adapted to Turkish by Köker (1991) was used. The satisfaction with life scale consists of five 7-point Likert items and the minimum score that can be obtained in the scale is 7 while the maximum is 35. The high score obtained from the scale shows that the satisfaction with life is high, and although the number of items is low, Diener et al. (1985: 72) who developed the original scale found the reliability coefficient of the scale to be 0.87 and criterion-dependent validity as 0.82 (Pavot et al., 1991: 149- 161). Köker (1991) determined that the test-retest consistency coefficient of the scale applied with three-week intervals was 0.85. According to the analysis results, the internal consistency coefficient of the leisure attitude scale was 0.89.

Data Analysis

SPSS 20 program was used to analyze the data. Besides, descriptive statistical methods, independent sample t-test, one-way variance analysis (ANOVA) and Pearson correlation test results were examined. The level of significance calculated for the equality of variances was accepted as ($p < 0,05$) (Büyüköztürk et al., 2012).

Findings

In this part of the study, the results of the analysis are interpreted as a table.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics results according to the demographic variables of the participants

Variables	N	%	\bar{x}	s
Age	261		22,21	1,82
Family Income Level	261		3455,93	1535,80
Daily Free time	261		6,73	3,018
Gender	Female	149	57,1	
	Male	112	42,9	
Class	1st Class	45	17,2	
	2st Class	82	31,4	
	3st Class	57	21,8	
	4st Class	77	29,5	

According to the table, the average age of the participants is 22.21; family income levels (monthly) are 3455,93 TL and daily free time average is 6,73 hours. %57.1 of the participants are female and %42.9 are male students. In addition, % 17,2 of the participants receive education in the first grade, 31,4 in the 2nd grade, 21,8 in the 3rd grade and 29,5 in the 4th grade.

Table 2. T-Test Results for Independent Samples According to the Gender Variable of the Participants

Dimensions	Gender	n	X	Sd	t	p
Cognitive	Female	149	4,255	,5763	,600	,549
	Male	112	4,211	,5916		
Affective	Female	149	4,183	,6255	-1,242	,215
	Male	112	4,279	,6017		
Behavioral	Female	149	4,217	,5635	,049	,961
	Male	112	4,213	,5680		
LAS	Female	149	4,218	,5037	-,254	,800
	Male	112	4,234	,5150		
SWLS	Female	149	5,055	1,2082	-,145	,884
	Male	112	5,076	1,1794		

According to the table, no statistically significant difference was found in the gender variable t-Test results ($p > 0,05$).

Table 3. ANOVA Test Results According to Class Variable of Participants

Dimensions	Source of Variance	Total of Squares	sd	Average of Squares	F	p	Significant Difference
Cognitive	Between Groups	1,255	3	,418	1,237	,297	-
	In-groups	86,898	257	,338			
	Total	88,152	260				
Affective	Between Groups	4,183	3	1,394	3,792	,011*	3st Class > 1st Class
	In-groups	94,508	257	,368			
	Total	98,691	260				
Behavioral	Between Groups	,872	3	,291	,912	,436	-
	In-groups	81,943	257	,319			
	Total	82,815	260				
LAS	Between Groups	1,563	3	,521	2,045	,108	-
	In-groups	65,452	257	,255			
	Total	67,014	260				
SWLS	Between Groups	6,039	3	2,013	1,419	,237	-
	In-groups	364,479	257	1,418			
	Total	370,519	260				

* $p < 0,05$

According to the table, in the ANOVA test results of the class variable, “affective” dimension “While a statistically significant difference was found between the 3st grade and the 1st grade ($p < 0,05$), no statistically significant difference was found in the "cognitive and behavioral"

dimensions and the total mean scores ($p>0,05$). In addition, there was no statistically significant difference in the total score mean of the SWLS according to the class variable ($p>0,05$).

Table 4. Correlation Analysis Results According to the Age Variable of the Participants

Variable	Cognitive	Affective	Behavioral	LAS	SWLS	
Age	r	,019	,037	,027	,032	,174*
	p	,763	,557	,663	,607	,005
	n	261	261	261	261	261

* $p<0,05$

According to the table, no statistically significant relation was found in the correlation analysis results of the age variable in the sub-dimensions of LAS and total mean scores. A statistically significant and low level statistically significant relationship was found in the total score mean of the SWLS ($r = 0.174$; $p<0,05$).

Table 5. Correlation Analysis Results According to the Family Income Variable of the Participants

Variable	Cognitive	Affective	Behavioral	LAS	SWLS	
Family Income	r	,062	,054	,044	,062	,131*
	p	,316	,385	,481	,319	,034
	n	261	261	261	261	261

* $p<0,05$

According to the table, while there was no statistically significant relationship in the correlation analysis results of the family income variable in the sub-dimensions of SWLS and the total score averages ($p>0,05$), a positive and low level statistically in the total score mean ($r = 0.113$; $p<0,05$) significant relationship was determined.

Table 6. Correlation Analysis Results According to the Daily Free Time Variable of the Participants

Variable	Cognitive	Affective	Behavioral	LAS	SWLS	
Daily Free Time	r	,312*	,331*	,327*	,374*	,052
	p	,000	,000	,000	,000	,402
	n	261	261	261	261	261

* $p<0,05$

According to the table, as a result of the correlation analysis of the daily free time variable, a positive and moderate statistically significant relationship was determined in the cognitive, affective and behavioral sub-dimensions and total score averages ($r=0,312$, $r=0,331$, $r=0,327$; $p<0,05$) and there was no statistically significant difference in the total score average of the SWLS ($p>0,05$).

Table 7. Results of Correlation Analysis between LAS and SWLS

	Cognitive	Affective	Behavioral	LAS
SWLS	r	,199*	,145*	,184*
	p	,001	,019	,003

	n	261	261	261	261
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* $p < 0,05$

According to the table, as a result of the correlation analysis conducted in order to show the relationship between “LAS and SWLS total score averages”, a positive and low-level statistically relationship was found between the total scores and sub-dimensions of LAS (cognitive, affective and behavioral) and SWLS total scores. ($r=0,199$, $r=0,145$, $0,184$ and $r=0,202$; $p < 0,05$).

Discussion and Conclusion

This study aims to investigate the relationship between leisure attitude and life satisfaction levels of university students.

For the gender variable, the T-test, which was completed to examine the difference between LAS sub-dimensions and the total mean scores, showed no statistically significant difference ($p > 0,05$). Deng, Walker and Swinnerton (2005) did not find any significant difference in the gender variable in their study conducted with Chinese and Canadian students. Gökyürek (2016) in their study focusing on leisure attitudes of individuals who engage in dance activities, did not find any significant differences in terms of the gender variable. Furthermore, Ayyıldız (2015) and Aydemir, Tokgöz and Oğuzhan (2017) did not find any significant differences by gender in their research. However, Akgül (2011) conducted a study with university students in Ankara and London, and found a difference in gender among individuals in Ankara, while they did not find any difference in gender among individuals in London. Therefore, studies in the literature show parallelism with our study that the attitude towards leisure activities does not differ by gender. No significant difference was found in the total mean scores of the SWLS by gender ($p > 0,05$). In the study conducted by Cenkseven and Akbaş (2007) with university students, the average scores of life satisfaction level of women were higher than men, however, there was no significant difference in gender. In the study of Arıdağ and Seydooğulları (2019) no significant difference was found in terms of gender. Similarly, studies conducted by Çeçen (2007), Özkara, Kalkavan & Çavdar (2015), Dirlik (2016), Yaşartürk, Akyüz & Karataş (2017) and Yaşartürk & Bilgin (2018) are in line with our findings. Therefore, the satisfaction levels of university students from life do not differ significantly from each other as a result of their activities.

In terms of the class variable, according to the results of the ANOVA completed to examine the difference between the LAS sub-dimensions and the total mean scores, the statistically significant difference in the “affective” sub-dimension of LAS was between “3st class and 1st class” and the difference is in the 3st class ($p < 0,05$). This shows that 3st class students have a more effective attitude in leisure activities than 1st class students at the affective level. Education at the undergraduate level may be a factor in this finding. However, no significant difference was found between other sub-dimensions and years. Similarly, Balkan (2019) did not find a significant difference between the year variable and the leisure attitude level of students studying in the recreation department. Gürtekin (2019) did not find any significant difference between the leisure attitude levels of the university students and the year variable. However, Erol, Belgin & Cansever (2017) stated that while there was no significant difference between the year variable and leisure attitudes, students in all years could obtain attitudes from leisure activities at a close level. Therefore, many studies in the literature are in line with our findings, but it cannot be said that leisure attitude will create a clear attitude

level among each year. According to the class variable, there was no significant difference in the total mean score of the SWLS ($p>0,05$). In his study, Ünal (2011) found that the year variable did not affect life satisfaction. Aydilek (2019) did not find any significant difference in their research conducted with physical education and sports teacher candidates. However, in a study conducted by Özel (2019) with university students, it was concluded that 4th class students had higher life satisfaction than those in other years. Therefore, studies in the literature are similar and it can be said that the year variable is not directly related to satisfaction with life.

The results of the correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between LAS sub-dimensions and the total mean scores by age, showed no significant relationship between the LAS sub-dimensions and the total mean scores ($p>0,05$). Binbaşoğlu & Tuna (2014) found no significant relationship between the age variable and the leisure attitudes in their study with university students. Similarly, Gürtekin (2019) found no significant relationship between university students and age. Akyüz (2015) has also reached similar results in their study. Therefore, we can say that the age factor does not have a direct effect on university students' engagement with leisure activities. Besides, there is a positive and low-level significant relationship between the age variable and the total mean scores of the SWLS ($p<0,05$). Karakılıç, Alay & Koçak (2009) found a significant relationship between the students' age and life satisfaction in the sports management program. Kaygusuz, Kömrükçü & Adalı (2016) found a meaningful relationship between age and life satisfaction levels of physical education and sports school students, and concluded that those in the fourth year had higher life satisfaction levels. Fiske, Wetherell & Gatz (2009) found a significant relationship between age and life satisfaction, and explained this difference in age levels and life satisfaction by stating that older people experience less psychological distress in their daily lives compared to young people and middle-aged people, and that stress and anxiety decrease with age. Therefore, according to the studies in the literature and our findings, we can say that age has an effect on life satisfaction, and that satisfaction with life increases as individuals reach a certain level of maturity with experiences.

The results of the correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between LAS sub-dimensions and the total mean scores by age, showed no significant relationship between the LAS sub-dimensions and the total mean scores ($p<0,05$). In general, it is foreseen that the income level would increase the options in diversity and evaluation methods in recreational activities. However, Akyüz (2015) did not find a significant relationship between income level and leisure time in parallel with our study. In their study, Burton, Turrell & Oldenburg (2003) stated that the income level of the individual is an important factor in participating in recreational activities. Family income level is an important factor as it is one of the reasons that can limit the types of activities and participation of individuals, which may require high expenditure (Demir & Demir, 2006). Studies in the literature differ and we can say that the income status of university students does not directly affect their engagement with leisure activities, and that the family income level and the leisure attitude are not associated as activities that would create expenses are limited when students make choices. In addition, there is a positive and low-level significant relationship between the family income variable and the total mean scores of the SWLS ($p<0,05$). In their study with university students examining life satisfaction by certain variables, Dost (2007) stated that the participants' life satisfaction levels increased significantly when the perceived economic situation increased. Similarly, Gündoğar et al. (2007) found a direct relationship between university students' income level and life satisfaction. Atik (2020) found a significant relationship between life satisfaction and family income level in their research. As a result of these findings, it can be

said that the income status affects the preference of activities and social activities that individuals engage in their life, and even the possibility of having an option affects life satisfaction positively. Therefore, as the family income level of university students increases, the level of satisfaction from life increases in a positive way.

According to the daily free time variable, a positive and moderately significant relationship was found between the LAS sub-dimensions and total mean scores ($p < 0,05$). In other words, when the daily free time of the university students increases, the attitude levels can be increased by participating in courses, personal development courses or training for their cognitive, affective and behavioral development. Therefore, we can say that the increase of daily free time allows university students to create more recreational activities in their daily, monthly or annual schedules and that they can complete their cognitive, affective, and behavioural development by obtaining a parallel attitude from these activities. However, no significant correlation was found between the daily free time and the total SWLS mean scores ($p > 0,05$). We can say that the factors determining the life satisfaction of university students differ, but that the duration of daily free time is not a concept that will directly affect life satisfaction.

As a result of the correlation analysis performed to show the relationship between the LAS sub-dimensions and the mean total scores and the SWLS mean total scores, a statistically positive and low-level relationship was found ($p < 0,05$). As a result of these results, the increase in the attitude of university students towards leisure activities or their concentration on activities directly affects the level of satisfaction obtained from life. In other words, individuals who adopt cognitive, affective and behavioral concepts, acquire concepts at the knowledge level, who capture and interpret meaning, transforming it from one state to another, and express their knowledge with their sentences, would increase their life satisfaction levels. Therefore, leisure activities differ according to the lifestyle and characteristics of the person, and after engaging with these activities, the level of happiness increases, and life satisfaction improves positively.

As a result, leisure activities of university students vary and variables such as gender, age, income level and daily leisure time are important factors. However, the participation of university students in city and on-campus activities contributes to the leisure attitude level. Therefore, the participation of university students in activities and the diversity of leisure activities will improve the level of attitude and increase satisfaction with life.

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