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INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERIOUS LEISURE, EVENT SATISFACTION AND PERCEIVED HEALTH OUTCOMES OF RECREATION: THE OUTDOOR SPORTS EXAMPLE*

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Abstract: The aim of this study was to identify the relationship between serious leisure, event satisfaction and perceived health outcomes from recreation for individuals interested in outdoor sports and to determine whether these parameters differed in terms of some variables. The research included 293 volunteer outdoor sports participants (mean age 29.23±8.47 years). The participants answered the Serious Leisure Inventory-Short Form (SLI-SF), Event Satisfaction Scale (ESS) and Perceived Health Outcomes in Recreation Scale (PHORS). The analysis results found that the mean points for the SLI-SF, ESS and PHORS were not significantly different according to gender ($p>0.05$). According to the frequency of event participation, statistically significant differences were identified for all subscales of the SLI-SF, the ESS and all other subscales of PHORS apart from the prevention of a worse condition subscale ($p<0.05$). Additionally, there were statistically significant correlations identified between the mean SLI-SF, ESS and PHORS scores with the number of years of involvement in outdoor sports ($p<0.05$). In conclusion, individuals participating more frequently in outdoor sports activities were observed to have increases in serious leisure, event satisfaction and perceived health levels. At the same time, with the increase in the number of years of involvement of participants in outdoor sports, it can be said that there are increases in serious leisure, event satisfaction and health perception levels related to realization of a psychological experience.

Key words: Serious leisure, event satisfaction, perceived health, outdoor sports

CİDDİ SERBEST ZAMAN, ETKİNLİK DOYUMU VE REKREASYONDA ALGILANAN SAĞLIK ÇIKTILARI ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİNİN İNCELENMESİ: DOĞA SPORLARI ÖRNEĞİ

Öz: Bu çalışmanın amacı, doğa sporları ile ilgilenen bireylerin ciddi serbest zaman, etkinlik doyum ve rekreasyonda algılanan sağlık çıktıları arasındaki ilişkiyi tespit etmek ve bu parametrelerin bazı değişkenler açısından farklılık gösterip göstermediğini belirlemektir. Araştırmayı 293 (Ortaş= 29,23±8,47) gönüllü doğa sporları katılımcısı oluşturmuştur. Katılımcılar Ciddi Boş Zaman Ölçeği-Kısa Form (CBZÖ-KF), Etkinlik Doyum Ölçeği (EDÖ) ve Rekreasyonda Algılanan Sağlık Çıktıları Ölçeği'ni (RASÇÖ) cevaplamışlardır. Analiz sonuçları, cinsiyet değişkenine göre CBZÖ, EDÖ ve RASÇÖ'nün ortalama puanlarında anlamlı farklılık olmadığını göstermiştir ($p>0,05$). Aktivite katılım sıklığı değişkenine göre ise, CBZÖ'nün tüm alt boyutlarında, EDÖ ve RASÇÖ'nün "Daha Kötü Bir Durumun Önlenmesi" alt boyutu dışındaki diğer alt boyutlarında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı farklılık olduğu tespit edilmiştir ($p<0,05$). Ayrıca, "CBZÖ" "EDÖ" "RASÇÖ" ortalama puanları ile bireylerin doğa sporları ilgilenim yılı arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı ilişkiler tespit edilmiştir ($p<0,05$). Sonuç olarak, doğa sporları aktivitelerine daha sık katılan bireylerin ciddi serbest zaman, etkinlik doyum ve algılanan sağlık düzeylerinde artış gözlemlenmiştir. Aynı zamanda, katılımcıların doğa sporları ilgilenim yılının artmasıyla birlikte ciddi serbest zaman, etkinlik doyum ve "Psikolojik Deneyimin Gerçekleşmesi"ne ilişkin sağlık algı düzeylerinin de arttığını söyleyebiliriz.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ciddi serbest zaman, etkinlik doyum, algılanan sağlık, doğa sporları.

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INTRODUCTION

Leisure represents the time remaining outside of working, learning or other mandatory activities of humans, while recreation is the activities performed to fill this leisure (Torkildsen, 2005). In other words, leisure offers the opportunity for recreational events. Recreational events are activities humans perform for relaxation, entertainment, social interaction, physical activity and mental relaxation (Veal, 1992). These events include many activities like walking, cycling, swimming, fitness, reading, listening to music, traveling and outdoor sports. The concept of leisure, when individuals perform several recreational events, was investigated under three main headings (casual leisure, project-based leisure and serious leisure) by Elkington and Stebbins (2014). Perhaps the most important of these three headings at the point of personal and societal benefit is the serious leisure perspective, which includes physical activity and sporting events (Stebbins, 2017).

Serious leisure is defined as “activities that people voluntarily participate in, require expertise and time outside of work” (Stebbins, 2001). Though serious leisure has several different definitions, it has some common features; a) subjective value: serious leisure is an event given personal value by individuals. Individuals determine their own specific goals according to areas of interest and hobbies, and care about completing these activities (Liu, 2014). b) Independent activity: serious leisure is an activity that an individual completes that is not linked to any organization or group activity. This means individuals have freedom of self-expression (Green and Jones, 2005). c) Passionate participation: serious leisure is an event where individuals participate in depth and with passion. Individuals focus more on these events over time and become experts in the field (Doistua et al., 2022). d) Time and resources: serious leisure is an event requiring time and resources. Individuals may allocate more time and resources to these events and may ensure further progress in the field (Kelly et al., 2020). e) Self-investment: serious leisure is an event where individuals invest in themselves. These events, completed with the aim of increasing personal development and welfare, assist in reducing stress, improving mental health and increasing self-confidence of individuals (Bunea et al., 2023; Wong et al., 2022). f) Social contribution: participating in serious leisure events increases social participation of individuals and develops social capital (Green and Jones, 2005). Stebbins (2001) proposed that serious leisure events have an important place in people’s lives and provide a variety of benefits. Just as serious leisure events add meaning to people’s lives, they have many physical, mental and social impacts (Lee et al., 2023). The most important reasons for this are that individuals approach these events from a serious leisure perspective and gain satisfaction from these activities (Liu and Yu, 2015; Sato et al., 2017).

Event satisfaction is the level of perceived satisfaction an individual gains from an event. How a person participating in an event evaluates the event and how much they enjoy it is called event satisfaction (Lee and Kang, 2015). Event satisfaction reflects the level of enjoyment and satisfaction people gain from a certain event and this may ensure that they participate in the event again or recommend it to others (Okayasu et al., 2016). There are some factors affecting event satisfaction in the literature; a) personal value: events provide satisfaction when they are important for the individual. The personal value of an event is linked to the reasons for participation of individuals and these reasons result in personal satisfaction (Lynch and Dibben, 2016). b) Difficulty and ability balance: Good balance between the difficulty level of an event and the individual’s ability level increases satisfaction. People obtain more satisfaction from events that are appropriate for them (Rogers et al., 2016). c) Social connection: events increase the social connections of individuals and

this elevates satisfaction levels. Events assist in individuals meeting new people and developing existing relationships (Chelladurai and Kim, 2022). d) Freedom and control: events provide satisfaction when individuals have the freedom to control their own time and actions. Being able to act according to personal choice increases satisfaction levels of individuals (Lapa, 2013). e) Feeling of success: events assist in individuals obtaining a feeling of success about themselves and others. Success increases personal satisfaction levels and elevates motivation (Beggs and Elkins, 2010; Shin and You, 2013). f) Education and learning: events assist individuals in learning new skills and developing themselves (Yıldız, 2022). This learning process increases satisfaction levels and increases an individual's confidence in themselves (Beard and Ragheb, 1980; Broughton and Beggs, 2007). g) Personal control and responsibility: events increase an individual's feeling of self-control and responsibility. This feeling of control and responsibility increases the satisfaction levels of individuals and self-confidence (Kelly et al., 2020). Increases in event satisfaction provide many benefits to individuals. Event satisfaction supports both physical and mental health as an indicator of a healthy lifestyle (Lee et al., 2014). Especially participating in recreational events based on physical activity causes an increase in the perceived health in recreation levels of people adopting a healthy lifestyle, along with improving physical and mental health (Elçi et al., 2019; Hill and Gómez, 2020).

Perceived health in recreation is how a person perceives their health status during a recreational activity (Gómez et al., 2016). This involves a variety of factors like the person feeling good physically during the activity, being energetic and vibrant, being mentally alert and concentrating, without stress and feeling at ease (Chalmin-Pui, 2021). When a person feels enjoyment and pleasure during recreational activities, they gain pleasure from the activity and there is high probability they will continue the activity as part of a healthy lifestyle. As a result, perceived health in recreation is affected by factors related to health and welfare like frequency of participation in recreational activities and feeling of satisfaction obtained from activities (Eifert et al., 2019). Perceived health encourages people to participate in recreational activities and to adopt a healthy lifestyle. At this point, participation in serious leisure during outdoor sports events may provide an increase in the feeling of satisfaction along with perceived health levels of individuals.

Outdoor sports are a popular choice among serious leisure activities. These sports are performed in the natural environment and generally in the outdoor (Winter et al., 2019). Outdoor or nature sports include activities like walking, running, mountaineering, cycling, climbing, canoeing, rafting, fishing, camping and sailing (Clawson and Knetsch, 2013). Outdoor sports are accepted as serious leisure activities and increase the event satisfaction of people (Davidson and Stebbins, 2011). During outdoor sports, individuals obtain satisfaction by experiencing the beauty and quietness of the natural environment, distancing themselves from stress and relaxing mentally (Manning, 2011). Additionally, when outdoor sports are regularly performed, they provide benefit for physical health (Winter et al., 2019). Outdoor sports increase cardiac health, muscle strength, resilience and flexibility and assist in weight control. This increases the perceived health of these people (Eigenschenk et al., 2019). In conclusion, outdoor sports are a popular choice among serious leisure activities and provide many benefits for event satisfaction and perceived health (Godbey, 2009).

When the international literature is investigated, research about serious leisure has frequently been completed in the context of different events (Hungenberg and Gould, 2015; Lee et al., 2022; Işık et al., 2020). However, at national level, research related to this concept is very inadequate. Research investigating the serious leisure perspective, event satisfaction and

perceived health outcomes in recreation in the context of outdoor sports was not encountered in the literature. This situation emphasizes the importance of the research. In this context, investigating the relationship between event satisfaction and perceived health of individuals with serious leisure participation in outdoor sports will contribute to the literature. Based on this, the aim of the research was to identify the relationship between the serious leisure, event satisfaction and perceived health outcomes in recreation for individuals involved in outdoor sports and to determine whether these parameters differ in terms of some variables.

METHOD

Research Model

This study was completed with the relational screening model from the quantitative research methods. The relational screening model is a screening approach aiming to detect the presence of variation between two or more parameters (Karasar, 2011).

Study Group

The research group were chosen with the convenient sampling method and comprised members of different outdoor sports clubs living in İstanbul province. The study included a total of 293 volunteers (mean age 29.23 ± 8.47 years) including 114 women and 179 men, aged 18-47 years, regularly involved in outdoor sports (walking, running, mountaineering, cycling, climbing, canoeing, rafting, fishing, camping, sailing, etc.). The mean number of years of participation in outdoor sports was 4.93 ± 3.41 .

Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form: The study collected data with a Personal Information Form including questions about age, sex, frequency of participation in outdoor sports events and number of years involved in outdoor sports. The participants also completed the Serious Leisure Inventory-Short Form (SLI-SF), Event Satisfaction Scale (ESS) and Perceived Health Outcomes of Recreation Scale (PHORS).

Serious Leisure Inventory-Short Form (SLI-SF): The scale was developed by Gould et al. (2011) and adapted to the Turkish language with validity and reliability study performed by Işık et al. (2020). The SLI-SF comprises 3 factors and is rated from 1 to 5. The scale includes 18 items with no inverse rating. In this research, the internal consistency coefficients calculated for the factors were seriousness 0.81, personal benefit 0.85 and social benefit 0.71.

Event Satisfaction Scale (ESS): Developed by Oliver (1980), the scale was modified by Funk et al. (2011) and adapted to the Turkish language as a result of validity and reliability studies by Aydın (2022). The scale has a single-factor structure and is rated from 1 to 7. The scale includes 3 items with no inverse rating. In this research, the internal consistency coefficient calculated for the scale was 0.93.

Perceived Health Outcomes of Recreation Scale (PHORS): The scale was developed by Gomez et al. (2016) and adapted to the Turkish language as a result of reliability and validity studies by Yerlisu Lapa et al. (2020). The scale comprises 3 factors with rating from 1 to 7. There is no inverse rating and the scale contains 16 items. In this research, the internal consistency coefficients calculated for the factors were realization of a psychological experience 0.92, prevention of a worse condition 0.84 and improved condition 0.82.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed with the SPSS 23 statistical program. Data were checked with the skewness and kurtosis values and Levene test results to ensure they met the preconditions for parametric tests (Kline, 2011). The skewness and kurtosis coefficients for scales used within the scope of the study were between -2 and +2, indicating data had normal distribution (George and Mallery, 2016). Analysis of data used descriptive statistics, t test, MANOVA, ANOVA and Pearson correlation test. At the same time, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated with the aim of identifying the reliability of the scales.

Ethical Issue

The approval of the study is ethical and taken from The Ethics Committee of National Defence University Presidency (23.06.2022/E-54589112-824.99-2484357).

FINDINGS

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the variables

Scales Sub-Dimensions	Number of Items	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
SLI-SF						
Seriousness	6	293	3.71	0.80	-0.28	-0.36
Personal Benefit	9	293	3.67	0.73	-0.53	0.33
Social Benefit	3	293	3.96	0.85	-0.83	0.47
ESS	3	293	6.07	1.12	-1.36	1.88
PHORS						
PSYC	7	293	5.77	1.14	-0.85	-0.10
PREV	5	293	5.93	1.11	-0.92	0.25
IMPV	4	293	6.39	0.80	-1.45	1.77

Note: **SLI-SF**= Serious Leisure Inventory-Short Form, **ESS**= Event Satisfaction Scale, **PHORS**= Perceived Health Outcomes of Recreation Scale (PSYC= The Realization of a Psychological Experience, PREV= The Prevention of a Worse Condition, IMPV= An Improved Condition)

According to Table 1, when scores for the SLI-SF are investigated on the basis of arithmetic mean score for factors, the highest mean was for the social benefit subscale (3.96), with lowest mean for the personal benefit subscale (3.67). The arithmetic mean for ESS total scores of participants was 6.07. When the arithmetic means for PHORS scores are investigated on a factor basis, the highest mean score was for improved condition (6.39) with lowest mean score for realization of a psychological experience. Additionally, data appeared to have normal distribution when skewness and kurtosis values are investigated.

Table 2. MANOVA and T-Test results by gender variable

Scales Sub-Dimensions	Female (N= 147)		Male (N= 162)		p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
SLI-SF					
Seriousness	3.62	0.71	3.77	0.85	0.13
Personal Benefit	3.58	0.69	3.73	0.75	0.08
Social Benefit	4.06	0.73	3.89	0.92	0.10
ESS	6.07	1.11	6.07	1.13	0.96
PHORS					
PSYC	5.65	1.12	5.84	1.15	0.16
PREV	5.80	1.10	6.02	1.11	0.11
IMPV	6.36	0.69	6.42	0.87	0.56

Note: **SLI-SF**= Serious Leisure Inventory-Short Form, **ESS**= Event Satisfaction Scale, **PHORS**= Perceived Health Outcomes of Recreation Scale (PSYC= The Realization of a Psychological Experience, PREV= The Prevention of a Worse Condition, IMPV= An Improved Condition)

According to the MANOVA analysis results in Table 2, there was no statistically significant difference between SLI-SF and PHORS mean scores for female and male participants ($p>0.05$). According to t-test analysis results, there was no statistically significant difference between the ESS mean scores for participants ($p>0.05$).

Table 3. MANOVA-ANOVA test results according to outdoor sports activity frequency (monthly) variable

Scales Sub-Dimensions	1-3 act. (1) (N= 134)		4-7 act. (2) (N= 154)		8 and more act. (3) (N= 21)		P	Significant Difference
	Ort.	Ss	Ort.	Ss	Ort.	Ss		
	SLI-SF							
Seriousness	3.20	0.81	3.83	0.70	4.33	0.58	0.00*	1-2 / 1-3 / 2-3
Personal Benefit	3.30	0.77	3.77	0.67	4.10	0.49	0.00*	1-2 / 1-3 / 2-3
Social Benefit	3.60	0.88	4.06	0.81	4.31	0.66	0.00*	1-2 / 1-3
ESS	5.52	1.30	6.21	1.00	6.66	0.60	0.00*	1-2 / 1-3
PHORS								
PSYC	5.33	1.27	5.87	1.06	6.32	0.86	0.00*	1-2 / 1-3
PREV	5.77	1.13	6.04	1.07	5.77	1.24	0.12	-
IMPV	6.13	0.98	6.47	0.72	6.66	0.54	0.00*	1-2 / 1-3

Note: **SLI-SF**= Serious Leisure Inventory-Short Form, **ESS**= Event Satisfaction Scale, **PHORS**= Perceived Health Outcomes of Recreation Scale (**PSYC**= The Realization of a Psychological Experience, **PREV**= The Prevention of a Worse Condition, **IMPV**= An Improved Condition)

In the MANOVA analysis results in Table 3, according to the frequency of participation in outdoor sports of individuals, there were statistically significant differences for the seriousness ($F_{(2,290)}= 36.29, p<0.05$), personal benefit ($F_{(2,290)}= 20.17, p<0.05$) and social benefit ($F_{(2,290)}= 12.66, p<0.05$) subscales of the SLI-SF, and the realization of a psychological experience ($F_{(2,290)}= 11.83, p<0.05$) and improved condition ($F_{(2,290)}= 7.66, p<0.05$) subscales of the PHORS ($p<0.05$). The ANOVA analysis results for this variable showed a statistically significant difference in mean scores for the ESS ($F_{(2,290)}= 18.05, p<0.05$). For all subscales with significant differences identified, individuals participating in activities more frequently than monthly had higher mean scores compared to others.

Table 4. Correlation between SLI-SF, ESS, PHORS and OSPY

	SLI-SF (F1)	SLI-SF (F2)	SLI-SF (F3)	ESS	PHORS (F1)	PHORS (F2)	PHORS (F3)	OSPY
SLI-SF (F1)	1							
SLI-SF (F2)	0.77**	1						
SLI-SF (F3)	0.46**	0.56**	1					
ESS	0.55**	0.59**	0.50**	1				
PHORS (F1)	0.62**	0.73**	0.50**	0.55**	1			
PHORS (F2)	0.25**	0.33**	0.29**	0.31**	0.42**	1		
PHORS (F3)	0.32**	0.41**	0.35**	0.46**	0.54**	0.65**	1	
OSPY	0.24**	0.23**	0.19**	0.21**	0.17**	-0.07	0.07	1

Note: **= $p<0.01$, *= $p<0.05$, **SLI-SF**= Serious Leisure Inventory-Short Form, (**F1**= Seriousness, **F2**= Personal Benefit, **F3**= Social Benefit), **ESS**= Event Satisfaction Scale, **PHORS**= Perceived Health Outcomes of Recreation Scale (**F1**= The Realization of a Psychological Experience, **F2**= The Prevention of a Worse Condition, **F3**= An Improved Condition), **OSPY**: Outdoor Sports Participation Year

When Table 4 is investigated, there were medium and low level, positive and significant correlations identified between mean scores for all subscales of the SLI-SF, ESS and all subscales of the PHORS ($p<0.05$). At the same time, there were statistically significant positive correlations between the numbers of years of involvement in outdoor sports of individuals with all subscales of the SLI-SF, the ESS and the realization of a psychological experience subscale of the PHORS ($p<0.05$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In recent years it appears that recreational events related to physical activity have been frequently studied in the field of social psychology (Hulten et al., 2017; Kremer et al., 2014; Wiese et al., 2018). Physical activity-based events offer social, psychological and physical benefits especially for individuals who regularly and frequently participate (Cheng et al., 2017; Cuenca et al., 2014; Patterson et al., 2016). In this context, serious leisure participation in outdoor sports is considered to provide individuals with event satisfaction along with a range of improvements in health perceptions. Additionally, some factors affect the serious leisure, event satisfaction and perceived health of individuals.

When serious leisure, event satisfaction and perceived health mean scores are investigated according to gender, statistically significant differences were not encountered. Tian et al. (2020) concluded that there was no significant difference between women and men participants in terms of serious leisure and satisfaction among recreational runners. However, there are studies in the literature showing significant differences for gender for serious leisure, satisfaction and perceived health outcome parameters (Doğan, 2021; Elkington and Stebbins, 2014; Raisborough, 2007; Yoo, 2022). These results may be affected by the environment in which the individual lives and the serious leisure activity. Activity types may cause differences in the context of gender. Additionally, Henderson and Shaw (2006) stated that there was a significant relationship between social gender and leisure, and this may cause differences due to the position of women and men in society.

Another of the research problems was about whether there was a statistically significant correlation between serious leisure, event satisfaction and perceived health mean scores with frequency of participation in outdoor sports. Within the scope of our research, statistically significant results were reached for serious leisure (seriousness, personal benefit, social benefit), event satisfaction and perceived health (realization of a psychological experience, improved condition) subscales for outdoor sport participants according to the variable of frequency of participation. In other words, individuals participating in outdoor sports activities more frequently had higher serious leisure, event satisfaction and perceived health levels than others. Qiu et al. (2020) determined significant correlations between serious leisure qualities and weekly run frequency for marathon runners. Stacey et al. (2019) identified that more frequent participation in leisure events was associated with satisfaction and provided health-related benefits for individuals with autism. As serious leisure activities, participation in taekwondo, running, marathons, rock climbing, walking, surfing and sports clubs means there are positive effects like a feeling of satisfaction along with perceived health outcomes for individuals (Hungenberg and Gould, 2015; Kim et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2019). This is because serious leisure means regular and frequent participation. Participation in serious leisure involving physical activity, especially, provides physiological benefits for individuals and also encourages psychological and social development (Cardwell, 2005; Mannell, 2007; Son et al., 2021).

Another problem in the research was to investigate the relationships between the number of years involved in outdoor sports with serious leisure, event satisfaction and perceived health outcomes. Positive and moderate correlations were identified between these variables. Several scientists (Heo and Lee, 2010; Heo et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2011; Yang et al., 2019) emphasized there were correlations at significant level between serious leisure and health perceptions. There are studies in the literature revealing positive significant relationships between serious leisure and activity participation frequency (Qiu et al., 2020; Özdemir, 2021).

As a result of this research, conducted with the aim of examining the relationships between cases in cross-sectional research about individuals participating in outdoor sports as serious leisure activity, no significant difference was found according to the gender variable in terms of serious leisure, activity satisfaction and perceived health outcomes. However, results were in favor of the group participating in outdoor sports activities more frequently for all subscales of serious leisure, event satisfaction and two subscales of perceived health outcomes (realization of psychological experience and improved condition). Additionally, positive correlations were identified between serious leisure, event satisfaction, perceived health and number of years involved in outdoor sports.

Limitations and future research avenues

Although this research makes an important contribution to the leisure literature, it has some limitations. The research, which is limited to individuals who are members of outdoor sports clubs in Istanbul, emphasizes the deficiency in the domestic literature regarding the concept of serious leisure. In conclusion, more frequent participation in outdoor sports activities offers positive contributions to individuals from the serious leisure perspective, and positively contributes to the satisfaction and perceived health outcomes they obtain from these events. At this point, it is important to perform studies to increase participation in outdoor sports. The state needs to develop and implement significant policies, especially in terms of increasing the number of nature sports clubs. Considering the very limited domestic studies related to the serious leisure concept, research about the physical, social and psychological benefits of physical activity-based events should be increased.

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