http://doi.org/10.22282/ojrs.2017.22

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' FREE TIME MANAGEMENT AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Emrah Serdar[1], Duygu Harmandar Demirel[2], Mehmet Demirel[2], Veli Ozan Çakır[1]

[1]Department of Sport Sciences, Sport Management, Istanbul University, Istanbul, Turkey.
[2]Department of Physical Education and Sport, Recreation, Dumlupınar University, Kutahya, Turkey.

serdar-emrah@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to highlight the relationship between free time management and the academic success of university students and to examine their free time management levels in terms of different variables. With this aim, a total of 267 university students (106 females, 39.7%; 161 males, 60.3%) were selected through random sampling. The study was designed as a relation scanning model. The study sample consisted of the students attending at İstanbul University, Faculty of Sports Sciences. The average age of the participant students was 22.27 ± 1.34. As data collection instruments of the study, *"The Free Time Management Scale"* which aimed to determine free time management levels of responders and was developed by Wang et al. (2011) and adapted into Turkish by Akgül and Karaküçük (2015) was used as well as a personal information form which was prepared by the researcher. Frequency (f) and percentage (%) were applied to determine the distribution of the participants' personal information, the Shapiro Wilks normality test was used to see if the data possessed a normal distribution, and that the data was appropriate for the parametric test conditions was revealed, independent t test and ANOVA tests were applied to describe the meaningful differences.

Lastly, the Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to measure the relationship between the sub dimensions of the scale and academic success levels of the participant students. Regarding gender, male students scored more in "Goal Determination and Method" sub dimension than female students ($t=-1.759$; $p<0.05$). Regarding age variable, the 21-25 aged students scored more in "Assessment," "Free Time Attitude" and "Programming" sub dimensions than the students in other age groups in ($f= 3.657$; 5.085; 4.237; $p<0.05$). In terms of departments of the students, statistically meaningful no difference was found while there were significant differences in "Free Time Attitude" and "Programming" sub dimensions in terms of class variable. Lastly, a positively medium relationship was found between the free time managements and academic success of the participants. Consequently, it was determined that male participants were more successful in goal and method determination in free time management than females, that the 21-25 year-old students were better at assessment, attitudes and programming regarding free time management than other age group students and that the participants who could spend and manage their free time more effectively also had higher academic success, which indicates that it had a positive effect on their academic success.

Key Words: Free time management, university student, academic success

INTRODUCTION

Time, an indelible aspect of our lives, is often categorized into free time and work time. Effective time management depends on an agent's balancing among the periods he spares considering many various factors. Recreation can simply be defined as the activities done during "free time" in off-hours (Sevil et al.,2012).

Free time is the period which can be spent by an agent freely (Broadhurst, 2001). This period is to be the time which is completely separated for recreational activities and different from the time left for working and vital needs of an agent, and it can change from agent to agent and possess a subjective meaning (Karaküçük, 2005, Gürbüz & Handerson, 2013). In other words, it is the time in which an agent is free from all the dependencies or compulsory tasks for both himself and others, which he spends time doing an activity he desires (Ekinci et al., 2014). Today free time is needed at schools "…to realize educational goals, for students' social development and gaining social status and for integration of different cultures through cultural exchanges," (Karataş, 2006). Time is life and wasting it means wasting life. It gains importance when it is spent productively, which is matter of an education and civilization. Education is integrated with the responsibility of both school and environment. An individual should first know himself in order to spend time effectively. That is, he should know what he will do, what his goals or targets are. He should be able to specify the limits of what he can or cannot do. Completing many things in a short time without wasting time in thinking and details refers to using time effectively. In contrast, a well description of goals and priorities and doing the only desired ones mean spending time effectively as well (Baltaş and Baltaş, 1987).

In short, an individual should be aware of the fact that time gains importance when it is spent productively, and he should make use of the time well (Akyüz, 2015). The fast changes we encounter during daily our lives, force individuals to run against time. This change again reminds the significance of spending time effectively regarding both maintaining our social roles and responsibilities and leading a quality life. For university students, maintaining their academic studies at an optimal level is among the expected duties and responsibilities from them. Aiming to provide a country with qualified labor, the universities are directly related to university students' functioning well during this education and fulfilling their academic tasks and responsibilities (Aydın & Koçak, 2016). Although

there have been studies regarding time management definitions and concepts, the number of the studies on free time managements is quite few.

However, since the importance of the free time assessments has increased recently, and the characteristics of working/studying time assessment and free time assessments are different, these assessments processed are to be dealt separately. Additionally, today the studies about free time management focus on increasing life quality (Akgül & Karaküçük, 2015). In this sense, the aim of the current study is to examine the relationship between free time managements and academic success of university students in terms of different variables.

METHODS

Research Model: The study was designed as a relational scanning model in which participants' opinions or characteristics such as interests, abilities and attitudes are described (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). In this method, a past or present situation is described as the way it is and it enables to observe a case, agent or an object within its own conditions and without changing anything (Karasar, 2012).

Study Sample: The study sample consisted of 267 university students studying at İstanbul University, 161 of whom were males while 106 of them were females. The age average of the participants was 22,27 ± 1,34.

Data Collection Instruments: The form which was one of the data collection instruments of the study consisted of three parts. The first part was "Personal Information Form". It was used to describe the participants' gender, age, department, class, income level and weekly free time.

In the second part, "The Free Time Management Scale" which aimed to measure free time management levels of responders and was developed by Wang et al. (2011) and adapted into Turkish by Akgül and Karaküçük (2015) was used. It was 5-point Likert scale (1=Definitely Agree, 5=Definitely Disagree) consisting of 15 items and four sub dimensions: Goal Determination and Method, Free Time Attitude, Programming and Assessment. And in the third part, an Assessment Form of Academic Success Level was applied to measure the students' academic success levels.

Data Analysis: Frequency and percentage methods which are among the descriptive statistical methods, were used for analyzing the personal information. Frequency (f) and percentage (%) were applied to determine the distribution of the participants' personal information, the Shapiro Wilks normality test was used to see if the data possessed a normal distribution, and that the data was appropriate for the parametric test conditions was revealed, independent t test and ANOVA tests were applied to describe the meaningful differences. Lastly, the Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to measure the relationship between the sub dimensions of the scale and academic success levels of the participant students.

FINDINGS

Table 1: The Distribution of the Participants Based on Their Personal Information

Variables		**F**	**%**
Gender	Male	161	60,3
	Female	106	39,7
	Total	**267**	**100**
Age	17-20	99	37,1
	21-25	148	55,4
	26 and older	20	7,5
	Total	**267**	**100**
Department	F.E. and Sport Edu.	78	29,2
	Coaching Edu.	109	40,8
	Sport Management	80	30,0
	Total	**267**	**100**
Class	1.Class	71	26,6
	2.Class	70	26,2
	3.Class	93	34,8
	4.Class	33	12,4
	Total	**267**	**100**
Economic Status	Very Low	14	5,2
	Low	30	11,2
	Normal	140	52,4
	Good	71	26,6
	Very Good	12	4,5
	Total	**267**	**100**
Weekly Free Time Period	1-5 Hours	80	30,0
	6-10 Hours	56	21,0
	11-15 Hours	68	25,5
	16 Hours and more	63	23,6
	Total	**267**	**100**

Table 1 shows the statistical findings related to the participants' gender, age, department, class, income level and weekly free time, in this sense it was revealed that 69.1% of them

were male while 30.9% were female, 55.4% were in between 21-25, 40.8% were studying at the Coaching Education Department, 34.8% were in their 3rd year, 52.4% had a normal income level and 30% had about 1-5 hours of free time a week.

Table 2: The Distribution of Scale Scores

	Number of Items	n	Avg.	Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis
Free Time Management	15	267	2.48	0.32	0.326	2.470
Goal Determination and Method	6	267	2.40	0.48	0.304	0.070
Free Time Attitude	3	267	1.93	0.49	0.919	0.986
Programming	3	267	3.47	0.59	-0.580	0.330
Assessment	3	267	2,20	0.47	0.807	1.210

The distribution of the scale scores was presented in Table 2. Considering the results, the lowest score was in "Free Time Attitude" sub dimension (1.93), while the highest one was in "Programming" sub dimension (3.47).

Table 3: Participants' Free Time Management Levels Based on Their Gender

Sub Dimension	Gender	N	Avg. ± Sd	t	p
Goal Determination and Method	Male	161	2.47 ± .80	-1.759	**,046***
	Female	106	2.30 ± .75		
Free Time Attitude	Male	161	1.98 ± .86	-1.348	,164
	Female	106	1.85 ± .73		
Programming	Male	161	3.44 ± 1.08	-594	,547
	Female	106	3,52 ± .93		
Assessment	Male	161	2.26 ± .83	-1,652	,088
	Female	106	2,10 ± .69		

Conducted to determine the free time management levels of the participants in terms of gender variable, the independent t test results are shown in Table 3. To the test results, statistically meaningful difference was found between participants' genders and "Goal Determination and Method" sub dimension ($p<0.05$) while no similar differences were found between gender variable and other sub dimensions ($p>0.05$).

Table 4: Participants' Free Time Management Levels Based on Their Ages

Sub Dimension	Age	N	Avg. ± Sd	F	p
Goal Determination and Method	17-20	99	2.37 ± .73	.404	,668
	21-25	148	2.41 ± .79		
	26 and older	20	2.54 ± .74		
Free Time Attitude	17-20	99	1.73 ± .65	5.085	**,007***
	21-25	148	2.08 ± .90		
	26 and older	20	2.05 ± .87		
Programming	17-20	99	3.30 ± .74	4.237	**,015***
	21-25	148	3.95 ± .78		
	26 and older	20	3.53 ± .92		
Assessment	17-20	99	2.03 ± .69	3.657	**,027***
	21-25	148	2.38 ± .99		
	26 and older	20	2.28 ± .79		

Table 4 demonstrates the one-way variance analysis results which indicated that there were meaningful differences between the participants' ages and "Free Time Attitude," "Programming" and "Assessment" sub dimensions ($p<0.05$) while statistically meaningful, no difference was found in the "Goal Determination and Method" sub dimension ($p>0.05$).

Table 5: Participants' Free Time Management Levels Based on Their Departments

Sub Dimension	Age	N	Avg. ± Sd	F	p
Goal Determination and Method	F.E. and Sport Edu.	78	2.37 ± .80	.137	,872
	Coaching Edu.	109	2.40 ± .79		
	Sport Management	80	2.44 ± .76		
Free Time Attitude	F.E. and Sport Edu.	78	1.92 ± .76	.713	,491
	Coaching Edu.	109	1.87 ± .88		
	Sport Management	80	2.02 ± .79		
Programming	F.E. and Sport Edu.	78	3.41 ± 1.03	.280	,756
	Coaching Edu.	109	3.49 ± .95		
	Sport Management	80	3.52 ± .96		
Assessment	F.E. and Sport Edu.	78	2.14 ± .81	1.536	,217
	Coaching Edu.	109	2.36 ± .76		
	Sport Management	80	2.32 ± .77		

Table 5 shows the results of one-way variable analysis which was conducted to see the participants' free time management levels in terms of their departments. The test results refer that statistically meaningful no difference was found between the participants' departments and free time management levels ($p>0.05$).

Table 6: Participants' Free Time Management Levels Based on Their Classes

Sub Dimension	Age	N	Avg. ± Sd	F	p
Goal Determination and Method	1.Class	71	2.39 ± .74	.537	,658
	2.Class	70	2.31± .86		
	3.Class	93	2.44 ± .80		
	4.Class	33	2.50 ± .67		
Free Time Attitude	1.Class	71	1.66 ± .65	4.713	**,003***
	2.Class	70	1.95 ± .82		
	3.Class	93	2.01 ± .89		
	4.Class	33	2.25 ± .71		
Programming	1.Class	71	3.38 ± 1.03	5.093	**,002***
	2.Class	70	3.16 ± 1.13		
	3.Class	93	3.70 ± .80		
	4.Class	33	3.76 ± .74		
Assessment	1.Class	71	2.06 ± .69	2.366	,071
	2.Class	70	2.10 ± .79		
	3.Class	93	2.32 ± .82		
	4.Class	33	2.36 ± .73		

In Table 6, the results of the one way variable analysis which was conducted to reveal the participants' free time management in terms of class levels, are shown. To the test results, statistically meaningful differences were found between the participants' class levels and "Free Time Attitude" and "Programming" sub dimensions ($p<0.05$). However, similar no meaningful differences were found in "Goal Determination and Method" and "Assessment" sub dimensions ($p>0.05$).

Table 7: Participants' Free Time Management Levels Based on Their Weekly Free Time Periods

Sub Dimension	Age	N	Avg. ± Sd	F	p
Goal Determination and Method	1-5 Hours	80	2.27 ± .72	1.348	,259
	6-10 Hours	56	2.53 ± .84		
	11-15 Hours	68	2.39 ± .70		
	16 Hours and more	63	2.46 ± .89		
Free Time Attitude	1-5 Hours	80	1.83 ± .82	1.030	,380
	6-10 Hours	56	2.08 ± .91		
	11-15 Hours	68	1.93 ± .72		
	16 Hours and more	63	1.93 ±.80		
Programming	1-5 Hours	80	3.31 ±1.03	1.208	,346
	6-10 Hours	56	3.55 ±.94		
	11-15 Hours	68	3.56 ±.86		
	16 Hours and more	63	3.52 ±1.04		
Assessment	1-5 Hours	80	2.12 ±.75	1.431	**,005***
	6-10 Hours	56	2.15 ±.73		
	11-15 Hours	68	2.19 ±.75		
	16 Hours and more	63	2.38 ±.88		

According to the results of the test which was applied to see the participants' free time management levels in terms of their weekly free time, there was statistically meaningful difference between the participants' weekly free time and "Assessment" sub dimension ($p<0.05$) while no significant difference was found), "Goal Determination and Method" "Free Time Attitude" and "Programming" sub dimensions ($p>0.05$).

Table 8: The Correlations Between Free Time Management and Academic Success Scores

Sub dimensions		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Poor	R	1							
	P								
Moderate	R	,645	1						
	P	**0,04****							
Good	R	,326	,264	1					
	P	**0,04****	**0,04****						
Excellent	R	,287	,367	,697	1				
	P	**0,04****	**0,04****	**0,04****					
Goal Determination and Method	R	,476	,457	,435	,345	1			
	P	**0,04****	**0,04****	**0,03****	**0,03****				
Free Time Attitude	R	,426	,426	,568	,673	,236	1		
	P	**0,03****	**0,03****	**0,03****	**0,03****	**0,03****			
Programming	R	,564	,653	,345	,325	,436	,539	1	
	P	**0,01****	**0,01****	**0,01****	**0,01****	**0,01****	**0,01****		
Assessment	R	,346	,678	,235	,435	,434	,585	,553	1
	P	**0,00****	**0,00****	**0,00****	**0,01****	**0,03****	**0,01****	**0,01****	

Table 8 displays the results of the Spearman correlation test that was applied to highlight whether there was a correlation between free time management and academic success levels of the participants. The test results indicated that there was a medium level positive significance between the given variables ($p<0.05$).

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to examine the relationships between university students' free time managements and academic success, and it was tried to be predicted in terms of different variables. Upon the analysis, it was found that there was a meaningful difference between the participants' gender and "Goal Determination and Method" sub dimension, in favor of female participants ($p<0.05$). In a similar study by Alay and Koçak (2003), the relationships between genders and free time management and academic success of university students were examined, and the results indicated a meaningful correlation among them. The reason for this meaningful difference might stem from that female participants take more responsibilities in than male ones in social life, so they are assumed to develop better time

management skills. Again in a study by Akgül et al. (2016) about university students' free times, meaningful differences were found in Programming sub dimension. There were statistically significant differences between the participants' ages and "Free Time Attitude", "Programming" and "Assessment" sub dimensions ($p<0.05$), while no such a difference was seen in "Goal Determination and Method" sub dimension ($p>0.05$). Of the participants, this difference was in favor of the ones in 21-25 age group, which is thought to stem from the fact that these students were either third or last classes and they had to plan their time effectively so as to prepare for the placement examinations about their professions in Turkey. Statistically meaningful no difference found between the participants' departments and all sub dimensions ($p>0.05$). However, in a study by Sugötüren et al. (2011) on free time behaviors of the students at the Academy of Sports Sciences and Technologies, it was pointed out that the students' scores differed and the highest score average was belong to the students at Physical Education and Sports Teaching Department. This finding is parallel with our findings related to department. Meaningful differences were found between the participants' class levels and "Free Time Attitude" and "Programming" sub dimensions ($p<0.05$), while there was no similar difference in "Goal Determination and Method" and "Assessment" sub dimensions ($p>0.05$). Regarding free time of the participants, the meaningful differences were seen in "Assessment" sub dimension ($p<0.05$) and no difference was found in "Goal Determination and Method" "Free Time Attitude" and "Programming" sub dimensions ($p>0.05$). The reason for differences in class variable that 4th class students' average scores were higher in the given sub dimensions. Also, it thought that it might stem from that 1st class students just started their educational lives and did not know or have social settings and opportunities to spend free time. A positively medium level relationship was found between free time and academic success levels ($p<0.05$). In this sense, it can be inferred that the agents are able to manage their free time effectively, influence their academic success positively. Participation in recreational activities help agents rest both psychologically and physically, and it ensures the necessity for recreation. Also, the precondition to participate in recreational activities is to manage free time well and effectively. In turn, it transfers to individuals' academic success and other domains of life. In this sense, university students should be informed about how to manage free time and recreational activities. The study can be conducted with larger samples and at different regions, and qualitative research methods can be used in the following studies, which is thought to provide more efficient outcomes.

REFERENCES

Sevil, T., Şimşek, Y., K., Katırcı, H., Çelik, O., V., and Çeliksoy, A., M. (2012). Boş Zaman Yönetimi, T.C. Anadolu Üniversitesi Yayını, No:2497 (Editör:Kocaekşi, S.)

Broadhurst, R., (2001) "Managing Environments For Free And Recreation", London, GBR:Rotledge, s.3.

Karaküçük, S., (2005) "Rekreasyon (Boş Zamanları Assessment)", Gazi Kitabevi, Ankara, s.60.)

Gürbüz, B.and Henderson, K. (2013) Exploring the Meanings of Free among Turkish University Students, Croatian Journal of Education.15(4), 927-957.

Demirel, M., Demirel, H., D., and Serdar, E. Constraints and perceived freedom levels in the Free of university students. International Journal Of Human Science, Volume: 14 Issue: 1 Year: 2017

Ekinci, N.,E., Kalkavan A, Üstün Ü.,D. and Gündüz B. (2014). Üniversite öğrencilerinin sportif ve sportif olmayan rekreatif etkinliklere katılmalarına engel olabilecek unsurların incelenmesi. *Sportif Bakış: Spor ve Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 1-13

Karataş, N.Y. (2006). Yatılı İlköğretim Bölge Okullarında Okuyan Öğrencilerin Boş Zamanlarını Assessment Alışkanlıkları (Bingöl Örneği). (Yüksek lisans tezi, Bursa Uludağ Üniversitesi/Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Bursa.

Baltaş, A. and Baltaş, Z. (1987). Başarılı ve sağlıklı olmak için stres ve başarma yolları. 5. Baskı, Remzi Kitapevi, İstanbul.

Akyüz, H. (2015) Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Boş Zaman Faaliyetlerine Yönelik Tutumlarının İncelenmesi, Bartın Üniversitesi Örneği. Bartın Üniversitesi, Eğitimi Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Öğretmenliği Anabilim Dalı, Yüksek Lisans Tezi.

Aydın K. S. and Koçak S. (2016) Üniversite öğrencilerinin zaman yönetimi becerileri ile akademik erteleme düzeylerinin incelenmesi. Uşak Üniversitesi Eğitim Araştırmaları Dergisi, 2(3), 17- 38.

Akgül, B. M., and Karaküçük, S. (2015) Boş Zaman Yönetimi Ölçeği (Geçerlilik Güvenirlik Çalışması) International Journal Of Human Science, 12, (2), 1867-1880.

Alay, S. and Koçak, S. (2003) "Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Zaman Yönetimleri ile Akademik Başarıları Arasındaki İlişki", Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Yönetimi, 35, s. 326–335.

Akgül, B., M., Yenel, F., İ., and Karaküçük, S. (2016) Evaluatıng free tıme management and ıts relatıon to lıfe satısfactıon, most partıcıpated Free actıvıtıes and gender among college students ın Turkey. Vol. 11 | No. 2 | Feb 2016 Social Sciences and Humanities Journal (SSHJ), 11 (2), 2-18.

Sugötüren, M., Ballı, M., Ö., and Gökçe, H. (2011) Spor bilimleri ve teknolojisi yüksekokulunda öğrenim gören öğrencilerin zaman yönetimi davranışları. SPORMETRE Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Bilimleri Dergisi, 2011, IX (3) 91-96

Francken, D. A., Raaij, V. F. and Verhallen, T. M. M. (1981). Satisfaction with Free activities. Available from: http://arno.uvt.nl/show.cgi?fid=6881 Accessed September 09, 2013.

Karasar, N. Bilimsel araştırma yöntemi. Ankara: Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık; 2012.

Wang, W.C., Kao C.H., Huan, T. C and Wu, C.C (2011). Free Time Management Contributes to Better Quality of Life: A Study of Undergraduate Students in Taiwan. Journal of Happiness Studies, 12(4):561-573.