

# A comparative study to determine the sport branches that the classroom pre-service teachers want to be engaged in the most in their leisure time

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## Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to determine the sports that the university students want to do the most in their leisure which is becoming increasingly important for university students. In this regard, the present study aims to elicit the opinions of the pre-service classroom teachers from elementary education programs about the sports they want to be engaged in the most in their leisure and provide some insights into recreational facilities that should be established in campuses. The sampling of the study consists of 1082 pre-service classroom teachers from the education faculties of Necmettin Erbakan University, Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, and Muğla University in 2011-2012 academic year. The participants were selected through random sample selection method. A Likert-type questionnaire developed in line with expert opinions was used to collect data. The questionnaire consists of two parts. First part is personal information form and the second part is a scale aiming to determine the sports that the participants want to perform the most in their leisure. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale to determine the sports the participants want to perform the most in their leisure was found to be .628. The collected data were analyzed through SPSS 16.0 (Statistical Package for Social Science) and for the analyses, frequencies, t-test and Chi-square were used. The results obtained were presented in tables and interpreted. Out of the participants of the study, 336 are males and 746 are females. A gender-based significant difference was found among the sports the participants want to perform the most ( $p=.000$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The male students' attitudes towards sports (mean= 5.631) were found to be more positive than those of the female students. The sports that the students want to do the most are sequenced as follows: most preferred sport by the male students is football (87.5%), then volleyball (63.7%), swimming (60.1%), trekking (50.9%) and basketball (50.5%) and the most preferred sport by female students is volleyball (68.1%), then trekking (54.6%), swimming (53.2%) and folkdances (49.5%).

**Keywords:** Elementary education, pre-service classroom teachers, sports that the students are interested in.

## INTRODUCTION

In its modern meaning, leisure activity can be defined as a positive activity many working people enjoy participating in as they can improve some of their capabilities or have a good time outside the work. The distinguishing characteristic of modern leisure is its requiring being active and creative rather than just passively spending time (11). Leisure activities defined as a means of getting rid of stress and socialization through interaction with other people by participating in social, cultural and sports activities suitable for the personality of the person can also be defined as activities participation in which is rewarding itself and which cannot be inherently anti-social (1).

Within the daily life, as a result of working routines and other activities' becoming boring and monotonous, patterns of performing leisure activities have turned out to be an important part of our life renovating us. With the improving economic efficiency and working conditions, people have more leisure time and attempts made to make good use of this time should be in the form of unified effort to have positive impacts on the individual. Research in the related literature commonly agree that positive use of leisure time has great contributions to physical and spiritual development of the individual (7).

The time remaining after economic and biological needs are met is called daily leisure time. For instance, an average person spending 8 hours at

work and 11 hours on other vital needs such as sleeping, eating etc. will have 5 hours of leisure time. The person can spend this spare time by performing activities he/she wishes (4). Using this leisure time actively can help the person to gain confidence at different dimensions and improve his/her credibility and productivity and contribute to his/her self-actualization. By guiding the young people's patterns of making use of leisure time, they can be encouraged to acquire habits of making good use of their time. Otherwise, leisure time wasted might lead to negative outcomes harmful to both the individual and society (8).

Lack of facilities where young people can make productive use of their leisure time may lead them to environments that may have negative impacts on their physical and spiritual development. As a result of being in bad environments or having bad friends in such places, the number of young people taking drugs or other harmful substances and showing propensity towards violence is steadily increasing (13). In line with the "Determined Desires Approach" developed by Kraus for leisure activity programs at university campuses, information should be collected about students and this information should be used to develop suitable leisure activity programs. For this purpose, various research forms are used to elicit information from students and through this information, sports which students are interested in can be determined. In this way, students can be provided with activities which they will voluntarily be engaged in (6).

In today's world, sport without doubt has an important place among leisure activities. Due to its inherent characteristics, sport should not be regarded as a mere leisure activity. On the other hand, doing sports with the view of making good use of leisure time can make some contributions to better understanding of the qualities and importance of sports. Widely accepted slogans such as "Mass sport", "life-long sport", "sport for everyone" and "sport for healthy life" should penetrate into every segment of society to encourage people to do sports in their leisure time (12). "Sport is a physical, mental and technical effort to compete and win for athletes; a process arousing excitement and aesthetic feelings for spectators and in general, a scientific phenomenon that is developed with the contributions from scientific disciplines such as anatomy, physiology, orthopedics, bio-mechanic and psychology. According to another definition, it is a competitive, cooperative and cultural concept leading to socialization and developing physical and

spiritual well-being by performing some activities with or without equipment, individually or in groups while enabling the individual to make good use of leisure time (3). The most visible purpose of leisure activities is, besides physical training and its accompanying gains, to compete and win.

Effective and efficient use of time is a matter of education. This is a responsibility to be undertaken primarily by the family and school. Disorders occurring as a result of bad and ineffective use of leisure have negative impacts on the individual and society. This may result in outcomes more harmful than physical illnesses (2). At school, students should not only take good education but they also should be provided with opportunities to learn how to plan their time, to work according to a schedule, to decide their priorities, to recognize and develop their personal capabilities. How an individual make use of his/her leisure time may have positive or negative impacts on the individual and this is becoming more and more important in today's world (9). At universities where greater emphasis is put on educational, cultural and sports activities, physical and spiritual development of students is as important as their intellectual development. Moreover, there is a need for an environment free of stress and psychological pressures to protect and improve human wellbeing (7). University campuses are highly different from city centers because the variety of activities to be performed here is not much. At universities, great importance should be attached to sports areas, classrooms and leisure activities so that students can have more opportunities to make good use of their leisure and they can acquire many useful values contributing to personal and social happiness. In this regard, as in developed countries, university students should be trained about how to use their leisure time. The efficient use of time is closely related to the level of development. In our country, efficiency of making use of leisure time is not at the desired level and in this regard, schools should be institutions that should assume the main responsibility.

Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to determine the sports that students want to do the most at their schools and provide the insights for the proper design of university campuses. Moreover, the literature reviewed carried out revealed that there is no such study.

The present study aiming to determine the sports that the elementary education 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>-year pre-service classroom teachers from the

education faculties of Necmettin Erbakan University (NEU), Mehmet Akif Ersoy University (MAEU), and Muğla Üniversitesi (MU) in 2011-2012 academic year seeks answers to these questions:

- 1- Is there a gender-based significant difference among the sports that the students want to do the most?
- 2- Is there a grade level-based significant difference among the sports that the students want to do the most?
- 3- Is there significant difference based on whether students are attending day or evening classes among the sports that the students want to do the most?
- 4- Is there a significant difference based on the place of residence among the sports that the students want to do the most?
- 5- Is there a significant difference based on the available leisure time of the students among the sports that the students want to do the most?
- 6- Is there a significant difference based on the university attended among the sports that the students want to do the most?
- 7- What are the sports that the male and female students want to do the most?

**MATERIALS & METHODS**

The present study aiming to determine the sports that the pre-service classroom teachers want to be engaged in the most employed a survey method to reflect the current state.

**Study group**

The universe of the study consists of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>-year elementary education pre-service classroom teachers from the education faculties of NEU, MAEU, and MU in 2011-2012 academic year. The sampling of the study consists of 550 pre-service teachers from NEU, 172 from MAEU and 360 from MU, so totally 1082 pre-service teachers participated in the study

**Data Collection Instrument**

A Likert-type questionnaire developed by the researcher to determine the sports that the students want to do in their leisure time (ÖYİSD) was used to collect data. The questionnaire was developed through a literature review and seeking expert opinions. The piloting of the questionnaire was carried out with 120 pre-service classroom teachers not participating in the study and in this way,

reliability and validity works were performed and some questions not clear enough to understand were reworded. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was found to be .628. The questionnaire consists of totally 20 closed-ended questions, 6 of which to elicit personal information and the rest to determine the sports that the students want to do the most.

**Data Analysis**

The collected data were analyzed through SPSS 16.0 (Statistical Package for Social Science). Frequencies, t-test and Chi-square were used to determine the sports that the students want to do the most.

**RESULTS**

In this section, the students responses to the questions asked to elicit the opinions of the participants about the sports that they want to do the most are tabulated and interpreted.

Table 1. Demographics of the participants.

Variables		Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Gender	Male	336	31.1
	Female	746	68.9
Grade level	1st year	393	36,3
	2nd year	389	36
	3rd year	300	27,7
Day or evening classes	Day time	629	58,1
	Evening	453	41,9
Available leisure time	1-2	149	13,8
	3-4	417	38,5
	5-6	335	31
	7-8	120	11,1
	No leisure time	61	5,6

As can be seen in Table 1, 336 male and 746 female students participated in the study on a voluntary basis. 36.3% of the students are first-year, 36% are second-year and 27.7% are third-year students and 58.1% of them are attending day time classes and 41.9% are attending evening classes.

Table 2. T-test results showing the sports that the students want to do the most in their leisure in relation to gender variable.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Male	336	5.631	2.632	1080	30.732	.000*
Female	746	3.851	2.052			

\* p<0.05

As can be seen in Table 2, there is a significant difference based on gender among the sports that the students want to do the most ( $p=.000$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The male students' attitudes towards sports ( $\bar{X}= 5.631$ ) are more positive than those of the female students ( $\bar{X}= 3.851$ ). In this regard, it can be argued that the male students are more interested in sports.

Table 3. Anova results showing the sports that the students want to do the most in their leisure time in relation to grade level.

Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F	p
Between-groups	9.465	14	.676	1.069	.382
Within-groups	674.361	1066	.633		
Total	683.826	1080			

Anova results presented in Table 3 show that there is no significant difference based on grade level among the sports that the students want to do [ $F_{(14-1066)} = 1.069$ ,  $p>.05$ ]. That is, there is no significant correlation between the sports that the students want to do the most and their grade levels. Hence, it can be argued that attending different grade levels does not have a significant influence on the selection of sports to be performed.

Table 4. T-test results showing the sports that the students want to do in their leisure time in relation to whether they attend day or evening classes.

Day or evening classes	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Day time classes	628	4.535	2.368	1080	.173	.677
Evening classes	454	4.220	2.424			

Table 4 shows that there is no significant correlation between whether the students attend day or evening classes and the sports that they want to do the most ( $p=.677$ ,  $p>.05$ ). Attending day or evening classes does not have a significant influence on students' interest in sports.

As can be seen from the Anova results presented in Table 5, there is no significant difference based of the place of residence of the students among the sports that the students want to do the most [ $F_{(14-1066)} = 1.646$ ,  $p>.05$ ]. That is, there is no significant correlation between the place of residence and the sports that the students want to do the most. Hence, it can be argued that the place of residence does not have a significant influence on the students' interest in sports.

The Anova results presented in Table 6 show that there is no significant difference based on the daily available time for leisure among the sports that the students want to do the most [ $F_{(14-1066)} = 1.592$ ,  $p>.05$ ]. That is, there is no significant correlation between the daily available time for leisure and the sports that the students want to do the most. Hence, it can be argued that the daily available time does not lead to significant influences on students' interest in the sports.

Table 5. Anova results showing the sports that the students want to do the most in relation to their place of residence.

Source of variance	Sum of squares	sd	Mean of squares	F	p
Between-groups	12.994	14	.928	1.646	.061
Within-groups	601.086	1066	.564		
Total	614.080	1080			

Table 6. Anova results showing the sports that the students want to do the most in relation to daily available time for leisure.

Source of variance	Sum of squares	sd	Mean of squares	F	p
Between-groups	24.172	14	1.727	1.592	.075
Within-groups	1156.109	1066	1.085		
Total	1180.281	1080			

The Anova results presented in Table 7 show that there is no significant difference based on the university attended among the sports that the students want to do the most [ $F_{(14-1066)} = 1.182$ ,  $p>.05$ ]. That is, there is no significant correlation between the sports that the students most want to do the most and the university they attend. Hence, it can be argued that the university attended does not significant influences on the students' interest in sports. Therefore, it can be said that there is a great similarity among the students from different universities in terms of the sports that they want to do the most.

Table 7. Anova results showing the sports that the students want to do the most in relation to the university they attend.

Source of variance	Sum of squares	sd	Mean of squares	F	p
Between-groups	9.017	14	.644	1.182	.283
Within-groups	580.806	1066	.545		
Total	589.823	1080			

Table 8. Gender-based distribution of the sports that the students want to do the most.

The sports that the students want to do the most	Male (N-%)		Female (N-%)		Total (N-%)	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
I can play football	42 (12.5)	294 (87.5)	679 (91.3)	65 (8.7)	721 (66.8)	359 (33.2)
I can play basketball	136 (40.5)	200 (50.5)	578 (77.7)	166 (22.3)	714 (66.1)	366 (33.9)
I can play volleyball	122 (36.3)	214 (63.7)	237 (31.9)	507 (68.1)	359 (33.2)	721 (66.8)
I can play handball	259 (77.1)	77 (22.9)	694 (93.3)	50 (6.7)	953 (88.2)	127 (11.8)
I can play table tennis	125 (37.2)	211 (62.8)	460 (61.8)	284 (38.2)	585 (54.2)	495 (45.8)
I can play badminton	271 (80.7)	65 (19.3)	550 (73.9)	194 (26.1)	821 (76.0)	259 (24.0)
I can wrestle	259 (77.1)	77 (22.9)	738 (99.2)	6 (0.8)	997 (92.3)	83 (7.7)
I can do judo	299 (89.0)	37 (11.0)	722 (97.0)	22 (3.0)	1021 (94.5)	59 (5.5)
I can do Taekwondo	286 (85.1)	50 (14.9)	691 (92.9)	53 (7.1)	977 (90.5)	103 (9.5)
I can do gymnastic exercises	308 (91.7)	28 (8.3)	627 (84.3)	117 (15.7)	935 (86.6)	145 (13.3)
I can go mounting	172 (51.2)	164 (48.8)	520 (69.9)	224 (30.1)	692 (64.1)	388 (35.9)
I can go trekking	165 (49.1)	171 (50.9)	338 (45.4)	406 (54.6)	503 (46.6)	577 (53.4)
I can swim	134 (39.9)	202 (60.1)	348 (46.8)	395 (53.2)	482 (44.7)	597 (55.3)
I can participate in folkdance activities	234 (69.6)	102 (30.4)	376 (50.5)	368 (49.5)	610 (56.5)	470 (43.5)

As can be seen in Table 8, the sports that the male students want to do the most are as follows: the most preferred sport by the male students is football and it is followed by volleyball, table tennis, swimming, trekking and basketball and the least preferred one is gymnastics, judo, taekwondo, badminton and wrestling. The sports that the female students want to do as follows: the most preferred one is volleyball and it is followed by trekking, swimming and folkdances and the sports that they do not want to do are judo, wrestling, taekwondo, gymnastics and handball.

**DISCUSSION**

Out of the 1082 pre-service classroom teachers participating in the study from Necmettin Erbakan University (NEU), Mehmet Akif Ersoy University (MAEU) and Muğla University (MU), 336 are males and 746 are females. According to the results of t-test showing the sports that the male and female students are the most interested in, the male students' attitudes towards the sports that they want to do are more positive than the attitudes of female students towards the sports that they want to do the most. Hence, it can be claimed there is a need to improve the attitudes of female students towards sports. This may result in negative outcomes for the elementary school students where the pre-service teachers will work in the future.

No significant difference was revealed by Anova test among the sports that the students from different grade levels want to do the most. Therefore, it can be argued that attitudes of university students towards sports are homogenous. Moreover, whether the students are attending day time or evening classes does not significantly influence the students' interest in sports.

It was also found that the place of residence, the university attended and the daily available time for leisure do not have significant influence on their preferences for the sports that they want to do the most. As stated by (10) the popularity of football can be explained by its fascinating effects on people. Representing the rebellion against boring and monotonous living patterns of the modern world, football serves the function of reducing mechanization, alienation and emotionlessness stemming from modern living conditions (10). In line with the above-mentioned citation, the sport that the male students of the present study want to do the most was found to be football. Hence, it can be argued that the male students are fascinated by the lure of the football.

One of the interesting findings of the present study is the fact that trekking is the second most wanted sport by the female students following volleyball (68%) and more than half of the male students (51%) also want to go trekking, which shows the interest of students in nature sports. While planning university campuses, planners can take this finding into consideration. This may also indicate the negative influences of city life perceived by the students.

The university students who are at the highest stage of schooling should be well-educated in their fields but they should also be equipped with skills which may help them to make good use of their leisure. Providing such opportunities for their students is among the main responsibilities of universities. Moreover, with the article 47 of the 2547 circular of the Higher Education Council, it is stated that higher education institutions, in line with the plans and programs developed by the Higher Education Council, are responsible for the protection

of physical and spiritual health of young people by meeting their nutritional, working, resting and social needs such as providing them with leisure activities and for this purpose, within the budgetary restrictions, reading saloons, health centers, student canteens and restaurants, meeting rooms, cinemas, theatres, sports centers and pitches and camping places should be established and students should be encouraged to use these facilities. As stated by article 47 of the Higher Education Council law, university campuses should be places where not only ideal environment for quality education should be provided but also facilities which enable students to participate in activities they want. Therefore, in addition to classes and laboratories, sports facilities, theatres, cinemas, amphitheatres, drawing workshops should be provided for students (5). Moreover, departments and units that will make participating in leisure activities attractive for students should be established and expert coaches should be recruited to conduct such programs.

As a result, universities, in addition to instructional activities, universities should provide sports facilities where students direct their energies towards useful activities and these facilities should be equipped with the necessary equipments and materials. By developing appropriate policies, students should be encouraged to spend their leisure in these facilities. And qualified personnel should be recruited to work in these sports facilities. The number of the sports centers where sportive and social activities can be performed should be rapidly increased and put into service of students. Developing modern universities always need multi-purpose leisure time activity programs within their campuses.

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