

Examination of the Barriers to Participation in Recreation of Individuals Working in Local Governments

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Abstract

The study aims to evaluate the reasons that prevent individuals working in local governments from participating in recreation according to some variables. While the accessible population of the study consists of individuals working in local governments, the sample consists of 202 volunteer participants selected by convenience sampling method. It consists of 202 individuals, 102 of whom are male and 100 of whom are female, working in local governments to determine the obstacles to participation in recreation. The research was designed in a descriptive survey model. A demographic information survey prepared as data collection tools and the Recreation Area Participation Barriers Scale developed by Gümüş and Özgül in 2017 were used. The obtained data were transferred to the IBM SPSS 25 package program and a normality test was applied to determine whether the study data showed a normal distribution. Since it did not show a normal distribution, non-parametric tests were used for statistical analysis. In this context, Mann Whitney-U and Kruskal Wallis H tests were applied in the study. It has been determined that the age variable is not a determining variable in the obstacle to participation in recreation, while the variables of gender, marital status, income level, sufficient leisure and how many days a week you participate in leisure activities play a determining role in the obstacle to participation in recreation.

Key Words: Recreation, Participation Barrier, Local Government

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1. Introduction

It is not possible for all public services that need to be provided through the state to be carried out from one centre. For this reason, the execution of some public services, especially of a local nature, has been left to some public institutions other than the central administration. The provision of some public services by public legal entities other than central government organizations is referred to as local governments (Pirler, 1999). Some of the duties of local governments regarding sports and recreation are; preparing and updating the inventory of sports and recreation facilities, planning sports fields in an easily accessible manner, ensuring that

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sports facilities are open-access and adopting the principle of gender equality in this regard, planning interesting events for individuals and supporting local sports organizations to develop and implement projects to gain physical activity habits. It is included in the Union Activity Guide (EU Working Group "Sport and Health", 2008). Time is an abstract concept that cannot be bought and brought back to the past (Gürbüz and Aydın, 2012). Leisure time, which is a part of time, is explained as the time other than the time spent by individuals for work (McLean and Hurd, 2012, p.20). Recreational activities are considered as activities that individuals perform in their spare time. Recreation is activities based on physical, mental, social and spiritual motivation of people's own will, outside of their working lives, in order to realize or renew themselves (Kesim, 2016). Peoples, activities carried out in open or closed areas in their spare time, based on physical activities aimed at having fun, socializing, and staying physically and mentally dynamic and healthy, are expressed as sportive recreation activities (Şahin and Kocabulut, 2014, p. 51). Recreational activities are also important in terms of contributing to education, advancing economic and cultural development, restoring and protecting mental and physical health, and preventing behaviors that are inappropriate for society (Özdağ, 1996). Studies also reveal that people do not engage in such activities that are important to them for various reasons, or that they are prevented for various reasons (Alexandris, 1997; Kyle & Mowen, 2003). According to the results of empirical studies, the main factors affecting the individual's participation in recreational activities are, in order of importance: They were determined as "money", "time", "lack of friends", "transportation" and "facility" (Koçak, 2005; Shinew, et al. 2004). Rapid change, increase in the rate of urbanization, decrease in mobility due to technological developments, intense working hours and the health problems they bring, increase the importance of recreation areas day by day. Changes in social and physical environmental conditions make it difficult for people to adapt, and this creates unhappy and high-stress societies. At this point today, people looking for happiness and peace have turned to recreational activities because many studies conducted in the field of recreation around the world have shown that such activities have a positive effect on people's physical and psychological state. Moreover, it has become a matter of curiosity why people cannot participate in activities that are so important for their physical and psychological health. and has been examined by many researchers (Badia et al., 2011; Emir, 2012; Gümüş, 2012; Gürbüz, et al., 2010; İskender et al., 2015). In order to ensure optimal use of recreation areas, it is necessary to examine the reasons that attract and/or prevent people from these areas and act as a result of the results. This research is important in terms of determining the demands of recreation area users, both in the construction of new areas and in the modernization of existing areas. Therefore; The main purpose of this study is to determine the factors affecting the barriers to recreation participation of individuals working in local governments and whether these factors differ according to the demographic characteristics of individuals working in local governments, and to offer suggestions to local governments and stakeholders in the sector regarding practices that will reduce the barriers to recreation participation of individuals working in local governments. It is noteworthy that studies on the subject in the literature are generally conducted on samples of students, individuals working in public institutions, disabled individuals and local people, and individuals working in local governments are ignored in this context. Based on this, the aim of this research is to examine the barriers to recreation participation of individuals working in local government.

2. Metod

In this research, a descriptive survey model, which is a quantitative research model, was used. In this model, data is collected to test hypotheses and find answers to questions about the current situation of the subject to be researched. In descriptive research, case studies, developmental and comparative research methods and scanning methods are used. In this research, screening method was applied. This method is used to reveal the current situation. By collecting data through surveys, large audiences can be easily reached (Gökdağ, 2013).

2.1. Universe Sample: In line with the purpose of the research, the population of the research consists of local government employees, and the sample consists of a total of (n = 202) volunteer individuals, 102 of whom are men and 100 of whom are women, determined by the convenience sampling method.

2.2. Data Collection Process: After giving information about the research to the participants, questions were asked to determine their gender, age, marital status, income level, having leisure and participating in leisure activities, created by the researcher. To determine individuals' Recreation Area Participation Barriers, the Recreation Area Participation Barriers Scale (RAPB), consisting of 17 items developed by Gümüş and Özgül (2017), was applied. The scale has five sub-dimensions: safety obstacle (4 items), individual obstacle (4 items), sports field obstacle (3 items), time obstacle (3 items) and friend obstacle (3 items).

Cronbach's alpha values for the sub-dimensions of the recreation area participation barriers scale are 0.91; .90 in the "security obstacle" sub-dimension, .83 in the "individual obstacle" sub-dimension, .81 in the "Time obstacle" sub-dimension, .76 in the "Friend obstacle" sub-dimension, .91 in the "Sports field obstacle" sub-dimension and .91 in the individual obstacle sub-dimension. It was calculated as .84 (Gümüş and Özgül, 2017). The scale is rated in a 5-point Likert scale form.

2.3. Statistical analysis

The data were transferred to the IBM SPSS 25 Package program and statistical analyzes were carried out through the program. As a result of the normality test, it was determined that the data did not show a normal distribution. For statistical analysis, Mann Whitney-U tests were used for binary variables and Kruskal Wallis tests were used for more than two variables. In the statistical analysis and interpretation of the data, the significance level was taken into account as 0.05.

3. Finding

Table.1

Demographic Characteristics

	Groups	(n)	(%)
Age	19-27 age	29	14.4
	28-36 age	57	28.2
	37-45 age	67	33.2
	46-54 age	30	14.9
	55 and above age	19	9.4
	Total	202	100.0
Gender	Male	102	50.5
	Female	100	49.5
	Total	202	100.0
Marital status	Married	133	65.8
	Single	69	34.2
	Total	202	100.0
Income level	Low	36	17.8
	Middle	117	57.9
	Good	49	24.3
	Total	202	100.0
Enough Leisure	Yes	83	41.1
	No	119	58.9
	Total	202	100.0
Participating in a leisure activity (Weekly)	1-2 days	182	90.1
	3 or 4 days	20	9.9
	Total	202	100.0

When Table 1 is examined, the highest number of participants are those aged 37-45 with 33.2%, followed by those aged 28-36 with 28.2%, those aged 46-54 with 14.9%, and those aged 19-27 with 14.4%, while the least number of participants are those aged 37-45, respectively. It is seen

that 9.4 is 55 years old or more. 50.5% of the participants are male and 49.5% are female. While 65.8% are married, 34.2% are single. It is seen that the income levels of the majority of the participants are medium at 57.9%, 24.3% are good and 17.8% are low. It is seen that 58.9% of the participants do not have enough leisure, while 41.1% have enough leisure. It is seen that 90.1% of the participants participate in weekly leisure activities for 1-2 days, and 9.9% participate in 3-4 days of weekly leisure activities.

Table 2.

Kruskal Wallis Test Results of RAPB Scores According to the "Age" Variable

RAPB	Age	N	Rank averages	Sd	X ²	P
Security Barrier	19-27 age	29	101.84	4	2.123	.713
	28-36 age	57	107.10			
	37-45 age	67	96.66			
	46-54 age	30	108.45			
	55 and above age	19	90.29			
	Total	202				
Time Barrier	19-27 age	29	99.72	4	.435	.980
	28-36 age	57	98.14			
	37-45 age	67	104.71			
	46-54 age	30	101.68			
	55 and above age	19	102.68			
	Total	202				
Friend Barrier	19-27 age	29	104.36	4	1.242	.871
	28-36 age	57	99.39			
	37-45 age	67	99.63			
	46-54 age	30	98.68			
	55 and above age	19	114.50			
	Total	202				
Sports Field Barrier	19-27 age	29	91.16	4	7.448	.114
	28-36 age	57	99.95			
	37-45 age	67	100.59			
	46-54 age	30	125.75			
	55 and above age	19	86.87			
	Total	202				
Individual Barrier	19-27 age	29	90.34	4	1.805	.772
	28-36 age	57	104.07			
	37-45 age	67	100.44			
	46-54 age	30	103.40			
	55 and above age	19	111.55			
	Total	202				

When Table 2 was examined, no statistically significant difference could be detected in RAPB according to the age variable. ($p > .05$).

Table 3.

Mann-Whitney U Test results of RAPB score according to "Gender"

RAPB	Gender	N	Rank Average	Sum of Ranks	U	P
Security Barrier	Male	102	95.95	9786.50	4533.500	.171
	Female	100	107.16	10716.50		
	Total	202				
Time Barrier	Male	102	93.51	9538.00	4285.000	.047
	Female	100	109.65	10965.00		
	Total	202				
Friend Barrier	Male	102	106.19	10831.50	4621.500	.245
	Female	100	96.72	9671.50		
	Total	202				
Sports Field Barrier	Male	102	101.90	10393.50	5059.500	.922
	Female	100	101.10	10109.50		
	Total	202				
Individual Barrier	Male	102	98.13	10009.00	4756.000	.405
	Female	100	104.94	10494.00		
	Total	202				

When Table 3 is examined, according to the gender variable of RAPB, there is a significant difference in favor of women in the Time barrier sub-dimension ($U=4285.000$ $p<.05$), while there is a significant difference in the other sub-dimensions ($U=4533.500$; 4621.500 ; 5059.500 ; 4756.000 $p>.05$). It was determined that there was no difference in direction.

Table 4.

Mann-Whitney U Test results of RAPB score according to "Marital Status"

RAPB	Marital status	N	Rank Average	Sum of Ranks	U	P
Security Barrier	Married	133	94.39	12553.50	3642.500	.016
	Single	69	115.21	7949.50		
	Total	202				
Time Barrier	Married	133	99.09	13178.50	4267.500	.410
	Single	69	106.15	7324.50		
	Total	202				
Friend Barrier	Married	133	98.27	13070.00	4159.000	.272
	Single	69	107.72	7433.00		
	Total	202				
Sports Field Barrier	Married	133	101.06	13441.50	4530.500	.882
	Single	69	102.34	7061.50		
	Total	202				
Individual Barrier	Married	133	102.43	13623.50	4464.500	.751
	Single	69	99.70	6879.50		
	Total	202				

When Table 4 is examined, a significant difference in favor of singles ($U=3642.500$ $p<.05$) was found in the Security barrier sub-dimension according to the marital status variable of RAPB, while there was a statistically significant difference in the other sub-dimensions ($U=4267.500$; 4159.000 ; 4530.500 ; 4464.500 $p>.05$). It was determined that there was no significant difference.

Table 5.

Kruskal Wallis Test Results of RAPB Scores According to the "Income Level" variable

RAPB	Income level	N	Rank Average	Sd	X ²	P	Fark
Security Barrier	Low	36	105.42	2	.245	.885	
	Middle	117	101.28				
	Good	49	99.14				
	Total	202					
Time Barrier	Low	36	116.22	2	3.194	.203	
	Middle	117	100.03				
	Good	49	94.20				
	Total	202					
Friend Barrier	Low	36	114.88	2	4.254	.119	
	Middle	117	102.64				
	Good	49	88.96				
	Total	202					
Sports Field Barrier	Low	36	110.71	2	2.253	.324	
	Middle	117	102.62				
	Good	49	92.06				
	Total	202					
Individual Barrier	Low ^a	36	118.79	2	11.706	.003	c-a
	Middle ^b	117	105.91				
	Good ^c	49	78.27				
	Total	202					

When Table 5 is examined, while there is no significant difference in the sub-dimensions of Security, Time, Friends and Sports Field barriers according to the income level variable of RAPB, it was determined that there is a significant difference in the Individual barrier sub-dimension ($p < .05$). It seems that this situation arises from the difference between low and good income levels, and between medium and good income levels.

Table 6.

Mann-Whitney U Test results of RAPB score according to "Do you have enough leisure?"

RAPB	Enough Leisure	N	Rank Average	Sum of Ranks	U	P
Security Barrier	Yes	83	97.49	8091.50	4605.500	.413
	No	119	104.30	12411.50		
	Total	202				
Time Barrier	Yes	83	75.15	6237.50	2751.500	.000
	No	119	119.88	14265.50		
	Total	202				
Friend Barrier	Yes	83	100.11	8309.00	4823.000	.776
	No	119	102.47	12194.00		
	Total	202				
Sports Field Barrier	Yes	83	93.64	7772.00	4286.000	.107
	No	119	106.98	12731.00		
	Total	202				
Individual Barrier	Yes	83	92.01	7637.00	4151.000	.053
	No	119	108.12	12866.00		
	Total	202				

When Table 6 is examined, it can be seen that RAPB's Do you have enough leisure? While a highly significant difference was found in the Time barrier sub-dimension ($U=2751.500$ $p < .05$) according to the variable, it was determined that there was no significant difference in the other sub-dimensions ($U=4605.500$; 4823.000 ; 4286.000 ; 4151.000 $p > .05$).

Table 7.

RAPB score: "How many days a week do you participate in leisure activities?" According to Mann-Whitney U Test Results

RAPB	Participating in a leisure activity (Weekly)	N	Rank Average	Sum of Ranks	U	P
Security Barrier	1-2 days	182	102.21	18603.00	1690.000	.599
	3-4 days	20	95.00	1900.00		
	Total	202				
Time Barrier	1-2 days	182	105.81	19257.50	1035.500	.001
	3-4 days	20	62.28	1245.50		
	Total	202				
Friend Barrier	1-2 days	182	102.95	18736.00	1557.000	.285
	3-4 days	20	88.35	1767.00		
	Total	202				
Sports Field Barrier	1-2 days	182	102.66	18684.50	1608.500	.390
	3-4 days	20	90.93	1818.50		
	Total	202				
Individual Barrier	1-2 days	182	104.81	19075.00	1218.000	.015
	3-4 days	20	71.40	1428.00		
	Total	202				

When Table 7 is examined, RAPB's question: How many days a week do you participate in leisure activities? While there was a significant difference in favor of 1-2 days (U=1035.500; 1218.000 p<.05) in the Time and Individual disability sub-dimensions according to the variable, it was determined that there was no significant difference in the other sub-dimensions (U=1690.000; 1557.000; 1608.500 p>.05).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The advancement of technology has brought various conveniences to people's lives and business life. However, as a result of these conveniences, individuals' physical activities have decreased and this has caused some physiological and psychological problems. Individuals have turned to recreational activities in order to get rid of these discomforts and have a more enjoyable time. Local governments in Europe are developing their work in this field by attaching great importance to recreational activities (Gümüş et al., 2017). Individuals have the freedom to choose different recreational activities at different times and in different places (Yılmaz, 2006). Research shows that demographic factors such as gender, age, income level, education level, health status and occupation, as well as factors such as the cultural structure of the society they live in, level of economic development and social environment are effective when individuals choose recreational activities (Gümüş et al., 2017). No statistically significant difference could be detected in the recreation area participation barriers scale according to the age variable. This result means that appropriate opportunities should be provided for each age group to participate in recreational activities. Keskin, Akova and Öz (2015) stated that the age variable does not create a significant difference in participation in recreational activities. However, there are also sources in previous studies showing that the age variable prevents participation (Jackson and Henderson, 1995; Mowen, Payne and Scott, 2005; cited in Zanon et al., 2013). These sources indicate that age has a hindering effect on participation in recreational activities. Another study, Torkildsen (2005), stated that the age factor is an important variable in individuals' participation in recreational activities and that their participation in recreational activities may decrease as people get older. For this reason, he pointed out that the age factor may partially prevent participation in recreational activities. Akgül (2011) stated that individuals' attitudes towards recreational activities may differ depending on age. While it was determined that there was a significant difference in the "Time" barrier sub-dimension in the recreation area participation barriers scale according to the gender variable, no significant differences were found in other sub-dimensions. In a similar research conducted; In the studies conducted by Alexandris and Carroll (1997) on university students, it is stated that the gender

factor is an important variable affecting participation in leisure activities. According to the marital status variable, a significant difference was found in the "Security" obstacle sub-dimension of the recreation area participation barriers scale, while there was a significant difference in the other sub-dimensions. No differentiation was found. Şapçılar, Kalkan and Büyükşalvarcı (2019) stated in their study that the marital status of individuals is an important factor in their participation in recreational activities. Contrary to our research results; Ardahan and Lapa (2011) stated in their study that marriage does not positively affect participation in recreational activities. According to the Income Level variable, no significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of "Security", "Time", "Friends and Sports Area" obstacles in the recreation area participation barriers scale, while " It was determined that there was a significant difference in the "individual" disability sub-dimension. It has been determined that this significant difference is in favor of individuals with "low" income levels. As a result, individuals with low income levels may have limited financial resources. In this case, costs included under individual barriers (e.g. activity fees, travel expenses) may become a bigger obstacle. Do you have enough leisure? While a significant difference was found in the "Time" barrier sub-dimension of the recreation area participation barriers scale according to the variable, no significant differences were found in the other sub-dimensions. The significant difference in time barrier shows that time constraints are an important factor in individuals' participation in recreational activities. It is thought that the time barrier is an undeniable fact due to the limited time that individuals can spare for recreational activities due to the intensity of daily life, work or other responsibilities. In their study, Temir and Gürbüz (2012) stated that the time factor was the first factor in participants' participation in recreational activities. How many days a week do you participate in leisure activities? While a significant difference was found in the "Time" and "Individual" obstacle sub-dimensions of the recreation area participation barriers scale according to the variable, no significant difference was found in the other sub-dimensions. When the time barrier sub-dimension is evaluated, it is understood that individuals with less leisure experience time constraints in participating in recreational activities. This situation shows that individuals limit the time they can devote to recreational activities due to the intensity of daily life, work or other responsibilities. When the individual obstacle sub-dimension is evaluated, it is evaluated that the individual factors that prevent participation in recreational activities are related to the individual's own internal motivation, interest level and personal preferences. It is thought that this is due to the low interest and motivation in recreational activities among individuals with low participation rates or the fact that personal obstacles are at the forefront. Our research shows that the level of disability of individuals working in local governments to participate in recreational activities still exists and that this is a situation that requires a solution in this field. In addition, the fact that the frequency of participation was found to be as low as 1-2 days a week shows that local governments should provide more recreation opportunities for their employees.

As a result, it can be said that supporting the participation of municipal employees in recreational activities will be important for the development of both their work efficiency and well-being.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Giriş: Devlet aracılığıyla yapılması gereken tüm kamu hizmetlerinin bir merkezden yürütülmesi pek mümkün değildir. Bu nedenle özellikle mahalli nitelikteki bazı kamu hizmetlerinin yürütülmesi, merkezi idarenin dışındaki bazı kamu kuruluşlarına bırakılmıştır. Kamu hizmetlerinden bazılarının merkezi idare örgütleri dışındaki başka kamu tüzel kişilerce yapılması yerel yönetimler (Pirler, 1999) olarak ifade edilmektedir. Spor ve rekreasyon konusunda yerel yönetimlere düşen görevlerin bazıları; spor ve dinlenme tesislerinin envanteri hazırlanarak güncellemek, spor alanlarının kolay ulaşılabilir nitelikte planlanması, spor tesislerinin açık erişimli olmasını sağlamak ve bu konuda cinsiyet eşitliği ilkesini benimsemek, bireyler için ilgi çekici etkinlikler planlamak ve yerel spor kuruluşların fiziksel aktivite alışkanlığı kazandırmaya yönelik proje geliştirmesini ve uygulamasını desteklemek Avrupa Birliği Aktivite Kılavuzunda yer almaktadır (EU Working Group “Sport and Health”, 2008).

Yöntem: Bu araştırmada nicel bir araştırma modeli olan betimsel tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Bu modelde araştırma yapılmak istenilen konunun var olan durumuna yönelik hipotezleri test etmek ve sorulara cevap bulmak için veriler toplanmaktadır. Betimsel araştırmalarda örnek olay, gelişimci ve karşılaştırmalı araştırma yöntemi ve tarama yöntemleri kullanılmaktadır. Bu araştırmada tarama yöntemi uygulanmıştır. Bu yöntem mevcut olan durumu ortaya çıkarmak için kullanılmaktadır. Anketler yoluyla veriler toplanarak geniş kitlelere kolaylıkla ulaşılabilir (Gökdağ, 2013). Katılımcılara araştırma hakkında bilgi verildikten sonra araştırmacı tarafından oluşturulan cinsiyet, yaş, medeni durum, gelir düzeyi, boş zamana sahip olma ve boş zaman aktivitelerine katılma durumlarının belirlemeye yönelik sorular yöneltilmiştir. Bireylerin Rekreasyon Alanı Katılım Engellerini belirlemek için Gümüş ve Özgül (2017) tarafından geliştirilen 17 maddeden oluşan Rekreasyon Alanı Katılım Engelleri Ölçeği (RAKE) uygulanmıştır. Ölçeğin güvenlik engeli (4 madde), bireysel engel (4 madde), spor alanı engeli (3 Madde), zaman engeli (3 Madde) ve arkadaş engeli (3 Madde) beş alt boyutu bulunmaktadır. Rekreasyon alanı katılım engelleri ölçeğine ait alt boyutlara ilişkin Cronbach alfa değerleri ise ölçeğin 0,91; “Güvenlik engeli” alt boyutunda .90, “bireysel engel” alt boyutunda .83, “Zaman engeli” alt boyutunda .81, “Arkadaş engeli” alt boyutunda .76, “Spor alanı engeli” alt boyutunda .91 ve bireysel engel alt boyutunda .84 olarak hesaplanmıştır (Gümüş ve Özgül, 2017). Ölçek 5’li Likert ölçek formunda derecelendirilmiştir. Araştırma amacı doğrultusunda araştırmanın evrenini yerel yönetim çalışanları, örneklemini ise kolayda örnekleme yöntemi belirlenen 102’si erkek, 100’ü kadın toplam (n=202) gönüllü birey oluşturmaktadır. Veriler, IBM SPSS 25 Paket programına aktararak istatistiksel analizler program aracılığıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Normallik testi sonucunda verilerin normal dağılım göstermediği tespit edilmiştir. İstatistiksel analiz olarak ikili değişkenlerde Mann Whitney-U ve ikiden fazla değişkenler için ise Kruskal Wallis testleri kullanılmıştır. Verilerin istatistiksel analizinde ve yorumlanmasında, anlamlılık düzeyi 0.05 olarak dikkate alınmıştır. **Sonuç:** Sonuç olarak, Belediyelerde çalışanların rekreasyonel aktivitelerine katılımları desteklemek onların hem iş verimi hem de iyilik hallerinin gelişimi açısından önemli olacağı söylenebilir.