

The Relationship Between Youth Perception of Social Support in Physical Activities and Leisure Time Management Attitude

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Abstract

Participation in social and physical activities contributes to the social, physical and psychological development of youth. With the increasing importance of participation in physical activity in the fight against obesity, social support to direct youth to physical and social activities and the existence of programmes covering such activities gain importance. Social support for youth to participate in physical activities is related to their leisure time management planning. The main aim of the research is to identify the relationships between youth perceptions of social support for participation in physical activity and their leisure use and attitudes towards it. The study used a relational screening model. The questionnaire form designed to measure the perception of social support in physical activities and leisure time management attitude was applied face-to-face to high school graduated youth (n=1012). In the demographic data of the research, the findings that 92.2% of the participants are overweight, 71.1% (n=720) do not exercise regularly, 70.6% do not have membership to clubs, etc. that organize music, art or sports activities, and although they know that various activities are held in the living space (n=542, 53.6%), they are not aware of the activities (n=591, 58.4%) come to the fore. According to the results of the study, it was found that there was a positive relationship between peers and parents in the perception of social support. It was also found that perceptions of social support from parents and peers positively predicted leisure time management attitudes at a weak level. It is suggested that practices and activities to support the physical activity of youth should be increased and institutional solutions should be produced within the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Keywords: Leisure Time, Leisure Time Management, Physical Activity, Social Support, Youth.

Introduction

Social activities such as hobbies, arts, sports or music have an important place in people's social life. People acquire some skills by participating in social activities with the guidance of their family, teacher or social environment, especially from childhood. These skills can be an important factor in the identity of the individual with reinforcement. The display of these skills acquired during childhood and adolescence can also affect social, physical and psychological development (Karatekin & Ahluwalia, 2020). The sustainability of social-sportive activities is possible with the existence of structures operating in this field. In our country, social activities for young people are carried out by Youth Centers, Youth Sports Provincial Directorates and municipalities (Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry, 1986) and private culture, arts and sports centers (Döş & Kır, 2013) with the duties defined by law (art.2) (Birol et al., 2018). While some structures have an institutionalized culture, others are more local and even limited to a small audience.

The participation of post-secondary youth in the mentioned social-cultural and sportive activities is possible with the existence of organizations offered to them. These organizations should diversify their activities in order to achieve their objectives and should carry out their publicity activities meticulously. Informing young people about the activities is one of the important factors that will affect their participation. For this reason, relevant institutions, organizations and private structures should use management organization techniques effectively in accordance with their vision and mission. In this way, it will be possible for young people to spend their free time in a qualified way. In this respect, systematic management activities of organizational structures are considered important for their success.

Social Support

Socialization is the process of learning to adapt to group rules and structure (Topaçoğlu & Kılavuz, 2022) and continues throughout life (Baltacı & Uysal, 2012). Socialization positively affects the life of the individual and relieves him/her mentally (Yang et al., 2023). In this sense, socialization supports the concept of social support. We can say that social support is the gains obtained from the social life of the person (Abay-Alyüz, 2020). While explaining the concept of social support, some concepts should be considered (Cohen, et al., 2000); these can be expressed as interaction, coping, respect, belonging, competence and change. These concepts can be explained as mutual dialogue, coping with one's problems, respect in bilateral relationships, feeling that one belongs to a place, having the ability to provide social support, and the state of returning a social support. These factors should be present in the explanation of social support (Halis & Demirel, 2016). It has been stated that social support affects people in two different ways. One of them is direct effect. It can be defined as a state of well-being that directly affects another person. It is related to our more basic emotions. The other dimension is the so-called buffer effect. It is the support the individual receives from the environment against situations that occur outside the individual's sphere of control (Abay-Alyüz, 2020; Diewald & Sattler, 2010).

Physical Activity and Participation

Physical activity is body movements that result in the consumption of energy in the body (Caspersen et al., 1985; Carbone et al., 2019). People's physical activity is related to their living standards (Koruç & Bayar, 2004). For this reason, daily physical activities affect the level of physical activity in the region where people live, such as climate and geographical conditions, modes of transport, occupational positions, leisure time utilization methods (Zimmermann-Sloutskis et al., 2010). The importance of physical activity for physical, mental

and psychological health has not been sufficiently explained to people (Kong et al., 2013). Therefore, the fact that individuals do not care about physical activity and lead a sedentary life is getting worse with the developing technology and the negativities brought by this increase the incidence of diseases such as diabetes, blood pressure, heart diseases, vascular diseases, etc. (Yıldırım & Bayrak, 2019). Today, the developing internet and social media life restricts the movement of our young people, so inactivity occurs with weight gain (Ayhan et al., 2012). Psychological disorders seen in individuals between the ages of 15-17, negativities in their development, unbalanced nutrition cause them to gain unnecessary weight and experience health problems (Alper et al., 2017). In this direction, increasing the interest of young people in physical activity will facilitate their lives in terms of health (Özakar-Akça & Selen, 2015).

Concept of Leisure Time

Leisure time is the free time that individuals choose for themselves, the period of time when they do not work, do not think about life troubles and realize their own wishes and desires (Okumuş, 2005; Kılbaş, 2010). Tabuk and Özkatar-Kaya (2024) found in their bibliometric analysis that the concepts used in leisure and recreation studies focus on physical activity, that the majority of the tourism sector is oriented towards the long-term field, that it focuses on theses and government policies to increase participation in physical activity, and that it contains arguments for the development of social theories and practical applications. Leisure time is an extremely important element for individuals today to maintain motivation in their lives, to socialize (Demir & Alpulu, 2020), to raise healthy generations, to become happy and successful in their future lives by evaluating their time efficiently (Aydoğan & Gündoğdu, 2006), and it is also possible for people who have the ability to create leisure time to use this time in the most efficient way. Therefore, the use of time can be expressed as an important skill that distinguishes individuals from others. The aim of the research determined in line with the conceptual relationships expressed in the literature is to reveal the relationship between high school graduates' perception of social support and attitude towards leisure time management.

Material and Method

Research Model

The research was designed with the relational survey model. The relational survey model is defined as "a research model that aims to determine the degree of change or the presence of co-variation between two or more variables" (Kaner et al., 2013; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006; Karasar, 2016). The measurement tool prepared for the collection of data within the scope of the research was applied face-to-face to the participants using the questionnaire technique.

Study Group

The population of the research is high school graduates residing in Çorum province. There are approximately 55,000 (+/-3,000) young people between the ages of 18-24 in Çorum (TÜİK, 2021). According to the population density of the settlement center, the ratio of the provincial center population to the general population is approximately 60%. Therefore, the number of young people between the ages of 18-24 living in the city center is estimated to be approximately 33,000 (+/-3,000). According to Yazıcıoğlu and Erdoğan (2004), the sampling error of ± 0.05 was determined as 381 at a significance level of $p=0.05$ (population $n=33,000$, ± 3000). The questionnaire form designed to measure the perception of social support in

physical activities and leisure time management attitudes was applied face-to-face to a total of 1012 high school graduates, 570 women and 442 men. In the study, Cronbach Alpha coefficient (α), percentage and frequency distributions, t-test, anova test, correlation and regression analyses will be performed for the sub-dimensions and total reliability of the scales and the relationships between the variables will be tried to be determined.

Data Collection Tools

Social Support in Physical Activities Scale

The scale developed by Farias Junior et al. (2014) and adapted by Küçükbiş and Eskiler (2019) was used in the study. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale, which consists of 10 items in two sub-dimensions including the encouragement of parents and peer groups to physical activity, joint participation, transport support and motivation, was determined as 0.70. As a result of the analysis of the research data, Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was determined as 0,793.

Leisure Time Management Scale

In the study, the "Leisure Time Management Scale" developed by Wang et al. (2011) and adapted into Turkish by Akgül and Karaküçük (2015) was used. The scale structurally has a total of 15 items with 4 factors that have achieved reliability values ($\alpha = ,83$). The scale has a 5-point Likert-type rating. As a result of the analysis of the research data, Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient is 0,807.

Body Mass Index

Body mass index is a value obtained by dividing a person's body weight (kg) by the square of their height (in m) ($BMI=kg/m^2$). The values shown in Table 2 were calculated from the participants' answers.

Findings

In this part of the study, the findings on the demographic characteristics of the participants, the data obtained as a result of the reliability and frequency analysis of the scales are presented.

Table 1. Distribution of the participants in terms of demographic characteristics

Variables		f	%
Gender	Female	570	56,3
	Male	442	43,7
Total income level of the family	Minimum wage	398	39,3
	Minimum wage*2	378	37,4
	Minimum wage*3	236	23,3
I exercise regularly	Yes	292	28,9
	No	720	71,1
Body mass index	Normal	79	7,8
	Fat	779	77,0
	Obese	154	15,2
A music art sports etc. club membership	Yes	298	29,4
	No	714	70,6
Availability of leisure time alternatives	Yes	825	81,5
	No	187	18,5

Having daily free time	0-3 hours	307	30,3
	3-6 hours	600	59,3
	More than 6 hours	105	10,4
Existence of organizations offering social activities	Yes	470	46,4
	No	542	53,6
Being informed about social events	Yes	421	41,6
	No	591	58,4
	To study lessons	16	1,6
	Others	120	11,9
	Ps game	54	5,3
Leisure use preference	Trip	41	4,1
	Social media	326	32,2
	Sports/music/art	284	28,1
	TV/movie	171	16,9
	Total		1012

When Table 1 is analyzed, it is seen that 570 of the participants are women (56.3%) and 442 of them are men (43.7%). When the total family income of the participants was analyzed, it was determined that those with a minimum wage (39.3%) and two minimum wages (37.4%) were higher than those with three minimum wages (23.3%). When the regular exercise status and body mass indexes of the participants were analyzed, it was found that 71.1% (n=720) did not exercise regularly, and when classified according to body mass indexes, the majority (77.0%) were in the overweight category (n=779). While 70.6% (n=714) of the participants were not members of social organizations such as music, art, sports, etc., 18.5% (n=187) stated that they had no alternatives to evaluate their leisure time. When the daily leisure time durations of the participants were analyzed, it was determined that the majority (59.3%) of the participants had leisure time between 3-6 hours. While 46.4% of the participants (n=470) stated that there are clubs, associations, foundations, etc. offering alternative activities in the region where the research was conducted, 53.6% (n=542) stated that there are no such organizations. The majority of the participants (58.4%) stated that they were not aware of social activities. When the leisure time preferences of the participants are analyzed; 32,2% (n=326) answered social media, 28,1% (n=284) answered sports/music/art, 16,6% (n=171) answered TV/film, 22,9% (n=231) answered PS game, other, travelling and studying.

	Mean	SD.	Kurtosis	Skewness
Body mass index	2,07	0,15	,223	1,284
How many hours of free time do you have per day?	1,80	0,19	,127	-,474
Your parents support (Mean=1,37, SD=0,53)	Mean	SD.	Kurtosis	Skewness
Your parents encourage you to engage in physical activity?	1,99	0,73	-0,405	-0,03
Your parents do physical activities with you?	1,51	0,82	0,012	-0,55
Your parents drop you off at your physical activity location or get you there?	1,31	0,82	0,231	-0,451
Your parents watch you do physical activity?	0,81	0,74	0,73	0,376
Your parents say that you are doing your physical activities well?	1,24	0,81	0,2	-0,492
Peer support (Mean=1,19, SD=0,57)	Mean	SD.	Kurtosis	Skewness
Your peers encourage you to engage in physical activity?	1,17	0,80	0,303	-0,348
Your peers do physical activities with you?	1,09	0,75	0,407	-0,021
Your peers drop you off at your physical activity location or get you there?	1,12	0,77	0,401	-0,114
Your peers watch you do physical activity?	1,3	0,77	0,238	-0,276
Your peers say that you are doing your physical activities well?	1,28	0,80	0,297	-0,324
Leisure Time Management (Mean =3,58, SD=0,43)	Mean	SD.	Kurtosis	Skewness
Setting goals for my free time.	3,73	0,80	-0,613	0,953
I'm making a list of things I can do in my free time.	3,17	0,91	-0,167	-0,094
I set priorities for my free time.	3,61	0,82	-0,591	0,657
I organize my free time on a daily or weekly basis.	3,1	0,96	-0,087	-0,305
I collect information about leisure activities.	3,31	0,92	-0,378	0,052
I organize activities that I can do in my free time.	3,45	0,83	-0,513	0,419
I use my waiting times.	3,6	0,76	-0,265	-0,118
I evaluate my use of free time.	3,79	0,69	-0,465	0,492
I reserve some of my time for leisure activities.	3,69	0,77	-0,217	-0,226
Free time is meaningful.	3,86	0,78	-0,369	-0,172
Leisure time is happy.	4	0,78	-0,528	-0,043
Use of free time is important.	4,2	0,72	-0,819	1,117
I think making programs for free time is a waste of time.	3,29	0,95	0,212	-0,685
I believe free time is unpredictable.	3,57	0,83	-0,122	-0,34
I don't know what to do with my free time.	3,46	0,93	0,013	-0,762

Table 2. Quantitative data of the scales.

When the skewness and kurtosis values of the scale items used in the research in Table 2 were examined, it was determined that the skewness and kurtosis values of all items were between +2 and -2 (Tabachnick et al., 2013). When the mean values of the answers given to the scale items were analyzed, it was found that although parents frequently encouraged young people to engage in physical activity ($\bar{X}=1,99$; $1,26 \leq \bar{x} \leq 2,72$), participation in physical activity with young people ($\bar{X}=1,51$; $0,69 \leq \bar{x} \leq 2,33$), monitoring their physical activities ($\bar{x}=0,81$; $0,07 \leq \bar{x} \leq 1,55$), providing access to physical activity ($\bar{x}=1,31$; $0,49 \leq \bar{x} \leq 2,13$) and stating that they do physical activity well ($\bar{x}=1,24$; $0,43 \leq \bar{x} \leq 2,05$). In addition, it is seen that young people perceive parental support ($\bar{x}=1,37$; $0,84 \leq \bar{x} \leq 1,90$) more than peer support ($\bar{x}=1,19$; $0,62 \leq \bar{x} \leq 1,76$) in physical activity participation. When the averages of the leisure time management scale were examined, it was determined that although the young people stated that leisure time was pleasing ($\bar{x}=4,00$; $3,22 \leq \bar{x} \leq 4,78$) and its use was important ($\bar{x}=4,2$; $3,48 \leq \bar{x} \leq 4,92$), they were undecided about organizing their leisure time daily and weekly ($\bar{x}=3,1$; $2,14 \leq \bar{x} \leq 4,06$). In addition, it was determined that young people had high mean scores in leisure time management ($\bar{x}=3,58$; $3,15 \leq \bar{x} \leq 4,01$).

Table 3. Reliability analysis results of the scales

	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Social Support	10	0,793
Parent Support	5	0,698
Peer Support	5	0,787
Leisure Time Management	15	0,807

According to the reliability analysis results indicated in the table, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the parental support sub-dimension is 0.698, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the peer support sub-dimension is 0.787, and the total Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the social support scale is 0.793. The reliability coefficient of leisure time management is 0.807.

Table 4. The relation between body mass index and gender

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	F	p
BMI	Female	442	2,17	,47	5,873	34,702	,000
	Male	570	2,00	,46	5,853		

According to the results of the t-test conducted to compare the body mass indexes of female and male youth, a significant difference was determined between gender and body mass index. The body mass index of young women ($\bar{x}=2.17$) was higher than the body mass index of young men ($\bar{x}=2.00$).

Table 5. Correlation between social support and its sub-dimensions and leisure time management

	Parental Support	Peer Support	Social Support	Leisure Management Attitude
Parental Support	1	,412**	,826**	,139**
Peer Support		1	,853**	,180**
Social support			1	,191**
Leisure Management Attitude				1

According to the correlation analysis given in Table 5, it is seen that there is a positive, weak and moderately significant relationship between the sub-dimensions of the social support scale and leisure time management. It is seen that there is a positive, medium level ($r=.412$; $p<.000$) significant relationship between parental support and peer support scores; a positive, medium level ($r=.826$; $p<.000$) significant relationship between parental support and social support dimension scores; and a positive, weak level ($r=.139$; $p<.000$) significant relationship between parental support and leisure time management attitude dimension scores.

Table 6. Regression analysis on the prediction of peers support on leisure time management attitude

		B	Std. Err.	Beta	t	P	R	R ²	F	p
Peer Support	Leisure Management Attitude	,340	,148	,180	5,809	,000	,180	,032	33,741	,000

According to the regression analysis results for the prediction of the relationship between peer support and leisure time management attitude stated in Table 6, it is seen that peer support has a weakly significant positive effect on leisure time management attitude. In the model ($R=0,180$; $R^2 = 0,032$; $P<0,05$), it is seen that 3,2% of the variance of leisure time management attitude is explained by the independent variable of peer support. Beta coefficient of the independent variable included in the model is $=0,180$. Since the dimension of peer support is $p<0.05$, it has a statistically significant effect on leisure time management attitude.

Table 7. Regression analysis for the prediction of parental support on leisure time management attitude

		B	Std. Err.	Beta	t	P	R	R ²	F	p
Parental Support	Leisure Management Attitude	,170	,038	,139	4,462	,000	,139	,019	19,912	,000

According to the regression analysis results for the prediction of the relationship between parental support and leisure time management attitude stated in Table 7, it is seen that parental support has a weak positive effect on leisure time management attitude. According to the model ($R=0,139$; $R^2=0,019$; $P<0,05$), 1,9% of the variance of leisure time management attitude was explained by parental support. Beta coefficient of parental support, which is the independent variable in the model, is $=0,139$. As a result, parental support ($p<0.05$) dimension has a statistically significant effect on leisure time management attitude.

Table 8. Regression analysis for the prediction of social support on leisure time management attitude

		B	Std. Err.	Beta	t	P	R	R ²	F	p
Social support	Leisure Management Attitude	,204	,033	,191	6,172	,000	,191	,036	38,090	,000

According to the results of the regression analysis conducted for the prediction of the relationship between social support and leisure time management attitude stated in Table 8, it is seen that social support has a weakly significant positive effect on leisure time management. In the model ($R=0,191$; $R^2= 0,036$; $p<0,05$), 3,6% of the variance of leisure time management attitude was explained by social support. Since the Beta coefficient of the

independent variable social support= 0,191 ($p<0,05$), it has a statistically significant effect on leisure time management.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the relationship between the perception of social support in physical activities and leisure time management attitude of young people was tried to be determined. It is seen that only 7.8% ($n=79$) of the young people participating in the study were of normal weight, 92.2% were overweight ($n=779$, 77%) and obese ($n=154$, 15.2%) (Table 1). It is seen that 71.1% of such a mass (overweight and obese $n=933$), which is far from physical activity, do not exercise regularly ($n=720$, Table 1). In addition to these two findings, the low number of those who participate in activities such as sports/art/music in their free time ($n=284$, 28,1%) supports that the research group is far from physical activity. When the literature on the physical activity levels and body mass indexes of young people is examined, Yıldız et al. (2015) found that the physical activity levels of young people were low in their study and stated that young people should be encouraged more to physical activity in order to prevent health problems that may occur due to inactivity. Özakar-Akça and Selen (2015) concluded in a study that one out of every three participants was obese and the majority of the participants did not have the habit of doing sports. These results coincide with the results of our study.

While most of the participants responded "often" to the statement "your parents encourage you to engage in physical activity", which is item 1 of the parent sub-dimension of the social support scale, most of the participants responded "rarely" to the statements "they do physical activities with you", "they tell you that you do your physical activities in a good way", "they watch you doing physical activity", "they drop you off at the place where you do physical activity or make you reach there". Based on these results, we can say that parents mostly encourage young people verbally, but are insufficient in terms of actual encouragement. Azevedo et al. (2006) stated that individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards physical activity begin to form in adolescence and that physical activity habits can be acquired at a young age.

Most of the participants responded "agree" to the statement "leisure time use is important", which is the 12th item of the leisure time management scale. On the other hand, most of the participants responded "undecided" to the statements "I organize my free time daily or weekly", "I make a list of what I can do in my free time", "I organize the activities I can do in my free time". Based on the answers given, we can say that young people find the use of leisure time important, but they are undecided in evaluating their leisure time within a plan and program.

It is seen that approximately 70% of the young people ($n=705$, Table 1) have more than three hours of free time. However, it can be stated that 70.6% of young people do not have a membership to a club, etc. that performs music, art or sports activities, and this may have an effect on leisure time management attitude. In a study conducted by Arat and Çalıklı (2017), it was stated that the highest mean score in the answers of the participants to the reasons for not participating in leisure time activities was in the statement "there are not enough facilities, tools and materials for such activities in my environment". Similarly, Akyol and Akkaşoğlu (2020) found in a study that the highest mean score in the reasons why young people do not participate in leisure time activities is in the expression "insufficient facility equipment". Özşaker (2012), in a study on the reasons why young people do not participate in leisure time activities, concluded that facilities and organizations are inadequate in universities where young people study.

Although 53,6% of the young people (n=542, Table 1) stated that they know that there are social activity organizations in their environment, it is seen that they are not aware of such activities (n=421, 41,6%). It is possible that the main reason for this finding may be due to the influence of the organizations that organize the activities on the practices of visual or written media activities. On the other hand, it was determined that young people's interest, perception and attitudes towards news sources prefer computer games (n=54), social media (n=326) and watching TV/film (n=171) more than physical activities (total n=551, 54,4%). Çömlekçi and Başol (2019) found a positive relationship between young people's use of social media for leisure time and social media addiction in a study they conducted. In a study conducted by Alemdağ (2022), it was determined that individuals who actively use social media participate in physical activities less than individuals who use social media passively. Schrag and Strattman (2009) stated that young people in urban and rural areas have high rates of participating in sports groups and listening to music, while young people living in the city center spend more time shopping and playing computer games (Özşaker, 2012).

According to the research findings, in the participants' perception of social support for physical activities, it was determined that parents ($\bar{x}=1,99$) encouraged participants to engage in physical activities more than peers ($\bar{x}=1,17$), parents (1,51) did more physical activities with participants than peers (peers, $\bar{x}=1,09$), and peers of the participants ($\bar{x}=1,3$) watched the participants while doing physical activities compared to parents (0,81). It was determined that both groups gave feedback to motivate the participants (parent $\bar{x}=1,24$; peer $\bar{x}=1,28$).

Based on the results of the regression analysis conducted within the scope of the research, it was determined that the perception of social support (parents, peers) of young people predicted leisure time management attitudes in a positive and weakly significant way. No similar study has been found in the literature. Tomás et al. (2019), in his research on the social support levels of family and peership relations of young people, concluded that the perception of social support of young people was high in general. This situation supports the results of our study.

The results showed a positive relationship between perceived peer social support and perceived family social support. Drogomyretska et al. (2020) found a significant relationship between social support perceived from family and social support perceived from peers. Kahrman and Yeşilçiçek (2007) reported that there was a positive relationship between social support perceived from family and social support perceived from peers and that social support perceived from family was higher. Similarly, Traş and Arslan (2013) found that social support perceived from family was higher than social support perceived from peers.

Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest is declared by the authors. In addition, no financial support was received.

Ethics Committee

This study is approved by the Hitit University Non-Interventional Ethics Committee (Protocol number: 2023/10).

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