Business Travel and Bleisure Tourism A Study on the Travel Motivations of Academics[*]

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Abstract

In this study, the aim is to evaluate the tendencies towards bleisure tourism and travel motivations of academics, who are one of the profiles of bleisure tourists in universities in Kayseri, and to present recommendations that sector representatives can benefit from in product design as well as marketing activities, and to present the knowledge accumulation expected to have a widespread impact on the relevant literature accordingly. In line with the aim of the research, data were collected through semi-structured interviews utilizing purposive sampling methods, including maximum diversity sampling, with 24 academics in qualitative research methods. As a result of the analyses, it was determined that although most participants were not conceptually aware beforehand, they frequently exhibited a positive tendency towards bleisure travels within the business context, despite their lack of prior knowledge. Additionally, it was observed that among the motivation factors of participants for bleisure travels were cultural exploration, realization of personal plans, participation in activities, as well as exploring local flavors, visiting architectural and cultural elements, and benefiting from hotel facilities.

Keywords: *Business Travel, Bleisure Tourism, Travel Motivations, Academics.*

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1. Introduction

With economic prosperity, individuals engage in travel activities for a variety of purposes, such as relaxation, medical treatment, education, visiting relatives, business, and leisure (Keadplang, 2018). Particularly due to the communication and interaction of businesses with individuals operating in different geographical regions, there has been a significant increase in business travel in recent years (Gustafson, 2012). The priority of individuals traveling for business purposes is to fulfill their daily business routines (Abdullah et al., 2020). However, it is known that individuals participating in business travel also engage in various activities to fulfill their needs for entertainment, sightseeing, and relaxation (Özel & Kozak, 2012). This mobility created by individuals traveling for business purposes has given rise to a significant tourism activity, and business travel has become a sector of considerable interest as an alternative form of tourism.

Those who engage in business travel, categorized as tourist typologies such as tourism professionals, travelers, and freelancing tourists, are recognized in the relevant body of knowledge as bleisure tourists (Unger et al., 2016). The concept of bleisure tourists involves individuals traveling for business purposes who, during their stay at the destination, engage in activities offered by tourism and recreation businesses to meet their touristic demands and needs, utilizing the time remaining after fulfilling business-related tasks and responsibilities. These activities include exploring interesting places, tasting local flavors, visiting entertainment venues, and buying souvenirs (Ünal & Özgürel, 2021). Therefore, the tourism mobility that combines business travel with tourism activities for purposes such as entertainment, sightseeing, and relaxation has found its place in the relevant body of knowledge as bleisure tourism (Keadplang, 2018; Sardest & Ivanauskas, 2019; Alp & Yazıcı Ayyıldız, 2020; Chung et al., 2020; Pinho & Marques, 2021; Ünal & Özgürel, 2021).

In the relevant literature, it is observed that bleisure tourism is generally examined conceptually due to being a new concept (Lichy & Mcleay, 2018; Kasalak et al., 2019; Alp & Yazıcı Ayyıldız, 2020; Pinho & Marques, 2021; Raykova, 2021; Walia et al., 2021; Вагапова, 2023), Mercan & Sandıkcı, 2024). On the other hand, research has been made on bleisure tourism and bleisure tourists, generally associated with variables such as perceived quality and intention to revisit (Ünal & Özgürel, 2021), competitive development in health tourism (Keadplang, 2018), competitiveness (Caicedo-Barreth et al., 2020), experience chain and destination marketing (Chung et al., 2020), sustainable development (Petrenko et al., 2023). Regarding motivational factors, besides a systematic literature review (Sohaili et al., 2022), two studies targeting business people and human research managers have been encountered (Sardest & Ivanauskas, 2019; Çetinöz & Hazarhun, 2020). However, it is obvious that bleisure tourism, which has become a new trend, is primarily driven by academics who, as a professional necessity, experience significant mobility due to their participation in events such as conferences, seminars, and congresses held in different destinations (Kasalak et al., 2019). Despite this, there is a lack of research in the relevant body of knowledge focusing on academics, who constitute one of the most-travelled groups of bleisure tourists, exploring their tendencies, evaluating their trends, and examining their travel motivations in relation to bleisure tourism. Kayseri, with its five universities and 3,598 academics (Kayseri Governorship, 2023), holds significant potential both as an attraction center for bleisure tourists and as a potential bleisure tourist destination. In light of this information, which forms the basis of the research, the study aims to target academics from a sample of universities in Kayseri as bleisure tourists, with the goal of uncovering their tendencies and travel motivations towards bleisure tourism. Additionally, the study aims to provide recommendations that can be utilized in product design and marketing activities for industry representatives. It is believed that the research will fill a significant gap in the body of knowledge and have a widespread impact. The importance of the study emerges in this context.

2. Conceptual Framework

Information on the conceptual framework of the study is provided in this section.

2.1. Business Travel and Bleisure Tourism

Tourism, being one of the sectors that extensively utilizes information and communication technologies, is defined as an information-intensive industry (Starčević & Konjikušić, 2018). The primary factors directing the tourism sector towards information and communication technologies are the development of technology and increased competition. On the other hand, dynamic changes and challenges in global trade and the industry necessitate a new business model, requiring a comprehensive review of existing strategies and practices (Konstantinova, 2019). Therefore, the business processes of the tourism sector began to show diversity over time.

In addition to changes observed in business processes, the shift in generations, who are the key consumers of tourism, has led to significant diversification in the services offered in the tourism sector and a notable differentiation in consumer travel behaviors (Starčević & Konjikušić, 2018). In this context, alternative forms of tourism have emerged alongside mass tourism. As mentioned earlier, especially with the impact of globalization, business travel have begun to be seen as a significant alternative form of tourism due to the interaction of businesses with establishments in different regions. Business travel encompasses journeys made to enhance relationships with decision-makers, suppliers, or other stakeholders in the industry and to protect mutual interests (Gustafson, 2012). In short, business travel refers to the travel of an employed individual from their place of residence to a different location for reasons related to their business (Aguilera, 2008). The leisure time created during business travel, with its impact on local and regional economies, paves the way for combining travel with tourism activities (Pinho & Marques, 2021).

The concept of bleisure dates back to 2009 and encompasses a structure formed by employees who demand different activities for themselves while traveling on business assignments (Lichy & Mcleay, 2018; Pinho & Marques, 2021). The term "bleisure" is derived from the combination of "business" and "leisure" (Alp & Yazıcı Ayyıldız, 2020). Bleisure tourism, arising from the integration of tourism activities with business travel, mainly refers to the mobility generated by individuals attending meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) who, during these visits, exhibit a tendency to explore the attractions of the destination (Caicedo-Barreth et al., 2020). It fundamentally involves a deep integration of business and leisure (Tsaur & Tsai, 2023).

According to the definition of bleisure tourism, the two main elements that constitute bleisure mobility are the tendencies of those traveling for business purposes to participate in tourism activities and the attractive elements of the destination. This situation has been acknowledged in the relevant body of knowledge, evaluating the tendencies of individuals traveling for business purposes to participate in tourism activities as the desire of people to extend their accommodation periods during business travel, explore the destination and its attractions, revisit relevant places as individual tourists, and share and recommend the destination to their social circles, such as family, friends, and colleagues (Pinho & Marques, 2021). The attractive elements of the destination are considered a crucial key to creating a tourism experience with its inherent attractions, offering a range of experiences to serve the consumption of individuals through sales, and reaching a wider audience through marketing (Scott et al., 2008). Therefore, bleisure tourism, considered one of the most important opportunities for the tourism sector (Starčević & Konjikušić, 2018), will contribute significantly to the development of destinations and industry representatives as an important market both today and in the future with the continuation of globalization. In this context, it is important to evaluate bleisure travels specifically for destinations.

2.2. Travel Motivations in Bleisure Tourism

Motivation is primarily seen as a concept applied to understand tourist behaviors in the tourism body of knowledge (Uysal& Jurowski, 1994; Meng, Tepanon & Uysal, 2008). Motivation, encompassing psychological factors that influence tourist behaviors (Devesa et al., 2010), is the ultimate driving force explaining individuals' actions (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981). The core of motivation factors lies in individuals being guided by internal motives (push factors) when making travel decisions and being attracted to destination qualities (pull factors) (Dann, 1977). While push factors are considered useful in explaining

the desire to go on vacation, pull factors are known to assist in explaining destination selection (Crompton, 1979). Expectations such as beaches, resorts, natural attractions, cultural areas, innovation, benefit expectations, and marketing image emerge as elements resulting from the attractive forces of a destination perceived by travelers with the capacity to travel. The driving force represents the internal psychological motives generated by a disturbing level of tension within the minds and bodies of individuals (Fodness, 1994).

Understanding tourist motivations is challenging due to its focus on sensory and emotional elements, its complex structure, and the lack of sufficient theories on the subject (Kluin & Letho, 2012; Qiao et al., 2021). Additionally, because travel motivations have a significant impact on tourist preferences, travel plans, and decision-making processes, numerous studies have been conducted to understand them (Chen et al., 2014; Lichy & Mcleay, 2018; Sardest & Ivanauskas, 2019; Qiao et al., 2021; Walia et al., 2021). According to research, individuals turn to bleisure travel for personal and business reasons (Sardest & Ivanauskas, 2019), to explore new places and share experiences and information, to network for business purposes (Lichy & Mcleay, 2018), or to alleviate stress/tension and fulfill internal needs (Chen et al., 2014). Another study emphasizes that individuals participate in bleisure tourism to minimize business pressure and daily life stress (Walia et al., 2021), while individuals with stronger health and pleasure motivations engage in bleisure tourism to meet physiological needs (Qiao et al., 2021).

Predicting trends in individuals' travel behaviors based on motivational factors is a predictable structure (Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983). For instance, individuals with high motivation tend to overcome constraints and participate in more leisure activities (Fredman & Heberlein, 2005), allocate a significant portion of their income to travel (Fleischer & Pizam, 2002), and exhibit a greater tendency to establish a closer connection with the destination, especially for cultural experiences (Tsaur & Tsai, 2023). Therefore, the motivation factors of bleisure tourists, despite their diversity and complexity, play a crucial role in enabling destinations to gain a competitive advantage. On the other hand, considering the opportunities for bleisure tourism to eliminate seasonality issues for destinations and tourism businesses, extend service delivery throughout the year (Jang & Wu, 2006), and sustain a competitive advantage (Caicedo-Barreth et al., 2020; Chung et al., 2020), the importance of examining the travel factors of those participating in bleisure tourism becomes evident.

3. Methodology

In this study, the aim was to determine the tendencies and travel motivations of academics as bleisure tourists. To achieve this goal, academics from the universities in Kayseri were identified as the target audience, and interviews were conducted using the semi-structured interview technique with 24 academics, employing a maximum diversity sampling method. It was observed that the data collected from the interviews with academics reached a certain saturation and started to repeat (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Therefore, the data collection process with academics was completed, and it was deemed that a sufficient sample size had been reached.

Maximum diversity sampling, a purposive sampling method, was preferred as it provided an opportunity to identify differences and determine similar patterns among participants who could contribute to answering the research question (Baltacı, 2018). Additionally, a qualitative research method was adopted in this study because of its comprehensive and flexible approach, enabling the detection of tourists' tendencies and behaviors (Çetinöz & Hazarhun, 2020). Furthermore, due to the novelty of bleisure tourism as a concept and the lack of research associated with academics, this method was chosen to thoroughly examine the opinions and experiences of the participants.

The semi-structured questionnaire used in the research was validated and confirmed by participant verification. To ensure that participants responded sincerely, it was emphasized that their names would be kept confidential, not shared with third parties, and not disclosed in any way. Data were collected through both online systems and face-to-face interviews, with prior appointments made with participants.

The average response time to the questions ranged from 20 to 25 minutes. For reliability, raw data obtained from participant opinions were transferred without alteration, providing a detailed description. Care was taken to ensure that the questions were clear and understandable to the participants. Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Erciyes University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Board on May 30, 2023.

The semi-structured questionnaire, consisting of two sections—one for demographic characteristics and the other for questions prepared for the purpose of the research—was compiled from the studies of Sardest & Ivanauskas (2019) and Çetinöz & Hazarhun (2020). To determine participants' tendencies toward bleisure tourism and their travel motivations, eight open-ended questions were included.

1. How many times a year do you engage in business travel?
2. Do you travel alone or with your family on your business travel?
3. Have you heard of the concept of bleisure before? How many of your business travel is combined with leisure activities in the country or city you visit, turning them into bleisure travel?
4. Does your family influence the transformation of your business travel into bleisure travel?
5. What are the motivation factors, apart from your family, that lead you to participate in bleisure travel (factors such as meeting new people, exploring cultures and lifestyles, visiting different destinations, experiencing different cuisines and rejuvenating physically, mentally, and personally)?
6. What activities do you engage in during bleisure travel (such as swimming in the hotel pool, going to a local restaurant to explore regional cuisines)?
7. What contributions does bleisure travel make to you?
8. How does bleisure travel contributes to your business?

In the study, content analysis was conducted to analyze the data obtained through the adopted qualitative research method, aiming to answer the research problem. Content analysis is a deductive research method used to systematically evaluate content obtained through communication channels and reveal relationships (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991). The data obtained in the study were transferred to the Nvivo 12 program. Conceptual coding was performed based on the data obtained through the program, and similar codes were systematically organized under main and sub-themes. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the distribution of participants' demographic characteristics.

This research was designed with a focus on research questions to clearly present the problem aimed at being addressed, and the following research questions were asked:

1. What are the tendencies of academics towards bleisure tourism?
2. What are the travel motivations of academics in their participation in bleisure tourism?

4. Findings

The demographic characteristics of the participants involved in the study were examined, and the data obtained within this framework are detailed in Table 1. These data constitute one of the main focal points of the research, aiming to understand the profiles of the participants and evaluate the research findings based on these demographic variables.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Gender	n	%
Male	17	70.83
Female	7	29.17
Age	*n*	*%*
25-34	3	12.50
35-49	17	70.83
50-64	4	16.67
Marial Status	*n*	*%*
Married	19	79.17
Single	5	20.83
Education Level	*n*	*%*
Master's Degree	4	16.67
Doctorate	20	83.33
Institution of Employment	*n*	*%*
Erciyes University	12	50.00
Kayseri University	9	37.49
Abdullah Gül University	1	4.17
Nuh Naci Yazgan University	1	4.17
Health Sciences University, Kayseri Medical Faculty	1	4.17
If applicable, your administrative position in the institution?	*n*	*%*
Department Chair	2	8.33
Department Vice Chair	2	8.33
Committee Chair	1	4.17
Deputy Director	1	4.17
Research Center Director	2	8.33
Research Center Deputy Director	2	8.33
Coordinator	1	4.17
Coordinator Assistant	1	4.17
No Administrative Position	12	50.00

*n: 24

The total number of participants included in this study is 24. When looking at the gender distribution, 70.83% of the participants are male, and 29.17% are female. In terms of age distribution, 12.50% of the participants are in the age range of 25-34, 70.83% are in the age range of 35-49, and 16.67% are in the age range of 50-64. Regarding marital status, 79.17% of the participants are married, while 20.83% are single. Analyzing the educational level, 16.67% of the participants have a master's degree, and 83.33% have a doctoral degree.

Looking at the institutions of employment, Erciyes University and Kayseri University stand out. While the rate of participants from Erciyes University is 50%, the rate of participants from Kayseri University constitutes 37.49% of the total. Other represented universities in the study (Abdullah Gül University, Nuh Naci Yazgan University, and Health Sciences University, Kayseri Medical Faculty) each have only one participant, indicating that the majority of participants are from specific state universities such as Erciyes University and Kayseri University.

Examining the administrative positions of the participants, 8.33% are department chairs, 8.33% are department vice chairs, 4.17% are committee chairs, 4.17% are deputy directors, 8.33% are research center directors, 8.33% are research center deputy directors, 4.17% are coordinators, and 4.17% are coordinator assistants. These results show that participants hold various administrative roles, and the distribution of these roles is generally balanced. Additionally, it is observed that half of the participants do not hold any administrative positions, indicating access to participants from different administrative levels within the scope of the study. These data provide an opportunity to understand the diverse characteristics of the participant group and assess various roles and responsibilities within a specific academic organization.

4.1. Analysis of Data

In this section, a detailed analysis of questions directed to participants, which is one of the main focal points of the research, is presented. The content of the questions directed to participants covers the fundamental problematics of the study, and the evaluation of the obtained data sheds light on the overall aim of the research. This analysis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the content of participant responses and represents a crucial stage in answering the research questions. All data obtained within the scope of the research has been categorized by the researchers according to the main categories determined based on the relevant literature. Participants' responses and comments have been included in these categories, and analyses have been conducted. Among the variables included in the main categories are the motivation factors, which are the main focus of the research. In this variable, in addition to the analyses, explanations of the categories have been provided. Additionally, considering that it is not possible to present all highlighted evaluations from participants' responses and comments, only the prominent evaluations related to motivation factors have been presented to support the research findings and evaluations made.

How many times a year do you travel for business purposes?

The responses to the question 'How many times a year do you travel for business purposes?' among the questions directed to participants provide essential information about the travel habits of participants in a business context.

Table 2. Frequency of Business Travel: Data on How Many Times Participants Travel for Business Purposes Annually

Frequency of Business Travels	n*	%
6 times or more per year	2	8.33
4-5 times per year	1	4.17
2-3 times per year	13	54.17
Once a year	6	25.00
Once every 2-3 years	2	8.33
Total	**24**	**100.00**

n:24

According to the obtained data, the business travel habits of the participants are distributed at various frequencies. While 54.16% of the participants stated that they travel for business purposes 2-3 times a year, 25% indicated that they travel once a year. Additionally, it is observed that among the participants, there are those who travel for business purposes once every 2-3 years, 4-5 times a year, and 6 times or more a year. These data indicate a wide range of business travel habits and provide valuable insights into various dynamics related to the research topic.

Do you travel alone or with your family on business travel?

The question directed at the participants provides crucial information about the travel arrangements preferred by participants during business travel.

Table 3. Business Travel Preferences: Distribution of Participants According to Their Travel Styles

Participants' Travel Styles	n*	%
Traveling Alone	12	50.00
Traveling with Family	6	25.00
Traveling with Different Individuals	6	20.83
Total	**24**	**100.00**

n:24

The data presented in Table 3 reflects the participants' travel preferences. The most common preference among participants is in the "Traveling Alone" category, with 50%. This result indicates individuals'

pursuit of independence and freedom. The desire to make their own decisions and manage the experience individually appears to be influential in participants making this choice. The "Traveling with Family" category ranks second with 25%. Traveling with family can strengthen social bonds, enhance family communication, and emphasize the value of time spent together. The fact that one-fourth of the participants make this choice highlights the importance of family values and spending time together.

The "Traveling with Different Individuals" category ranks third with 20.83%. This preference indicates that participants prefer traveling in a group. Traveling with others can improve social skills, provide opportunities to build new relationships, and provide different perspectives. The desire to be open to cultural and social diversity reveals the motivation of participants making this choice. In conclusion, based on this data, travel preferences vary according to individuals' personal, social, and cultural needs. Traveling alone, spending time with family, and traveling in groups with different individuals are among the significant factors shaping participants' travel experiences.

Have you heard of the concept of Bleisure before? How much of your business travel is combined with leisure activities in the country or city you visit, turning them into Bleisure travel?

The responses to the question "Have you heard of the concept of bleisure before? How many of your business travels are combined with leisure activities in the country or city you visit, turning them into bleisure travels?" provide unique insights into participants' travel habits in the business context and their inclination toward bleisure travel.

Table 4. Data Showing Whether Participants Have Heard of the Bleisure Concept

Have You Heard of the Bleisure?	*n**	*%*
No	15	62.50
Yes	9	37.50
Total	**24**	**100.00**

*n:24

The data presented in the table shows how familiar participants are with the "Bleisure" concept. Out of 24 participants, 15 (62.50%) have not heard of this concept before, indicating a "No" response. The remaining 9 participants (37.50%) have indicated that they have heard of this concept with a "Yes" response. These data suggest that the term "Bleisure," being a relatively new concept, is not widely known among the participants.

Table 5. Data Showing How Often Participants Engage in Bleisure Travel

Frequency of Participants' Bleisure Travel	*n**	*%*
I have bleisure traveled many times	13	54.17
I have bleisure traveled, but I find it difficult to determine the frequency	9	37.50
I generally conduct my business travel only for business purposes	2	8.33
Total	**24**	**100.00**

*n:24

Table 5 shows how often participants engage in bleisure travel. 13 out of 24 participants (54.17%) stated that they have bleisure travel many times. The other 9 participants (37.50%) expressed that they have bleisure travel but find it difficult to determine the frequency. Only 2 participants, who prefer to travel solely for business purposes, constitute 8.33% of the total. These data indicate that the majority of participants have experienced bleisure travel and have a positive attitude toward it.

Does Your Family Have an Impact on Turning Your Business Travel into Bleisure Travel?

This question was asked to assess the potential influence of the family factor on participants' preferences for turning business travel into bleisure travel.

Table 6. The Influence of Family on Turning Participants' Business Travel into Bleisure Travels

The Influence of Family	n*	%
Yes	14	58.33
No	10	41.67
Total	**24**	**100.00**

*n:24

The majority of participants (58.33%) state that the influence of their families plays a role in the transformation of their business travel into bleisure travel. However, there are participants (41.67%) who indicate that this influence is not present. These results suggest a trend where the family factor can contribute to the bleisure experience during business travel.

What are the motivation factors that enable your participation in bleisure travel outside of your family (such as meeting new people, experiencing cultures and lifestyles, visiting different destinations, trying different cuisines, rejuvenating physically, mentally, and personally)?

The findings regarding the motivation factors that enable participants to engage in bleisure travel outside their families are as follows:

Table 7. Motivation Factors Influencing Participation in Bleisure Travel Outside the Family

Motivation Factors for Participating in Bleisure Travel Outside the Family	f	%*
Cultural Discovery Motivation	15	40.54
Personal Planning	6	16.22
Participation in Activities	5	13.51
Gastronomic Exploration	3	8.11
Artistic and Relaxing Activities	3	8.11
Love for Diversity	2	5.41
Desire for Renewal	2	5.41
Passive Participation	1	2.70
Total	**37**	**100.00**

Ratios have been adjusted according to the total repetition count. f: Repetition frequency

This table illustrates the motivation factors for participants to engage in bleisure travel outside of their families. Based on the frequencies of relevant factors, the most common motivation factor is "Cultural Discovery Motivation," repeated by 40.54% of participants. "Personal Planning" and "Participation in Activities" are also significant motivation factors, with frequencies of 16.22% and 13.51%, respectively. Additionally, among the motivation factors for participants to join bleisure travel, various factors have emerged, such as meeting new people, exploring different cultures, observing various lifestyles, visiting different destinations, experiencing diverse cuisines, and achieving physical, mental, and personal renewal. These findings indicate that when participants undertake business travel outside their families, they generally focus on motivations related to cultural discovery, personal planning, and participation in activities. Brief explanations of the motivation factors revealed through participants' opinions are as follows:

Cultural Discovery Motivation: The desire to meet new places, structures, people, cultures, and historical destinations with an interest in collecting memories.

P1: "One of the biggest influences on my participation in bleisure travel is the inherent nature of the architecture profession, which involves encountering new places, structures, people, and cultures. This provides me with the opportunity to see many important architectural structures, archaeological sites, and artworks that I may not have had the time to visit otherwise."

P20: "…to explore the cultural and historical points of interest in the destinations we visit."

P12: "I enjoy experiencing different cultures, people, and environments."

Passive Participation: The tendency not to participate in additional activities after business travel.

P4: "...due to not participating in any activities after my business trips..."

Diversity Affection: An attitude that loves seeing new places, getting to know different lives, and trying various activities.

P2: "Seeing new places, getting to know new cultures."

P3: "Meeting new people and getting acquainted with new cultures is a wonderful factor. I enjoy visiting different destinations."

P15: "Seeing new environments and countries/cities is my primary motivation."

Participation in Activities: The desire to participate in socio-cultural tours, gastronomy, tourist attractions, and sports activities.

P6: "When domestic conferences are held in hotels, I participate in hotel events. I always join socio-cultural tours."

P11: "The local cuisine of cities may not directly influence my choice of destination, but I'm sure it enhances my travel motivation. I engage in the hotel's sports activities during conferences held at the hotel."

Personal Planning: Acting according to hobbies by planning one's activities.

P6: "I am a billiards player. I also participate in billiard events."

P7: "...If there are no events where I go, I plan my own activities and implement them..."

Gastronomic Exploration: The motivation to explore regional flavors and, in particular, try different cuisines.

P2: "Trying new dishes (unless there are unusual ingredients). I enjoy eating region-specific foods. Collecting memories. Buying items that will remind me of that region."

P5: "...I research what kind of cuisines are there, what people eat. I make sure to experience whatever there is to see and eat..."

P6: "...Regarding gastronomy – I'm a foodie – when we go abroad, I try different flavors. I try to taste different dishes. I am selective about food but when I travel abroad, I like to try it..."

Renewal Desire: The desire of business travel to provide physical, mental, and personal renewal.

P9: "...it is true that travels provide me with physical, mental, and personal renewal."

P23: "Of course, it is evident that such trips also contribute to one's mental and spiritual rejuvenation."

Artistic and Relaxing Activities: Interest in handicrafts and turning to relaxing activities in new places.

P10: "...due to my particular interest in handicrafts, I would like to see places related to them, such as activities, workshops, souvenir shops, etc. In some of my travels, I preferred activities aimed at relaxation."

P24: "...Furthermore, it is to renew myself physically, mentally, and personally, to acquire new ideas, and to increase my awareness."

Figure 1: Word Frequency of Motivation Factors Influencing Participation in Bleisure Travel Outside the Family

What activities do you participate in during bleisure travel (such as using the hotel pool, going to a local restaurant to explore regional flavors, etc.)?

Here are the findings regarding the activities participants prefer during bleisure travel:

Table 8. Activities Participants Engage in During Bleisure Travel

Activities Participated in During Bleisure Travel	*f*	*%**
Exploring Local Flavors	8	24.24
Utilizing Hotel Facilities	6	18.18
Architectural and Cultural Visits	5	15.16
Getting to Know the City and Region	4	12.12
Shopping	2	6.06
Nature and Environmental Activities	2	6.06
Touristic and Historical Sites	2	6.06
Arts and Relaxation	1	3.03
Festivals and Entertainment	1	3.03
Not Participating in Activities	2	6.06
Total	**33**	**100.00**

* *Ratios have been adjusted according to the total repetition count. f: Repetition frequency*

According to this table, participants' preferences for activities during bleisure travel vary widely. Regional culinary exploration is the most preferred activity, with a rate of 24.24%, followed by utilizing hotel facilities (18.18%), architectural and cultural visits (15.16%), and getting to know the city and region (12.12%). Additionally, participants show interest in various activities such as shopping, nature and environmental activities, tourist and historical sites, arts and relaxation, festivals, and entertainment. The rate of not participating in any activities is 6.06%. These results indicate that participants prefer diverse experiences during bleisure travel, and these activities enrich their travel experiences.

Figure 2: Word Frequency of Activities Participated in During Bleisure Travel by Participants

What are the contributions of bleisure travel to you?

The contributions of bleisure travel can go beyond just business purposes, offering individuals various benefits in personal, social, and professional aspects by providing experiences that extend beyond business-related travel. In this context, evaluating the impact of bleisure travel on participants can contribute to understanding the interest in this type of travel and participants' desire to experience it again. The emerging themes in this regard are as follows:

Table 9. Contributions of Bleisure Travel and Participants' Inclination Towards This Type of Travel

Contributions of Bleisure Travel and Inclinations for Future Travel	*n**	%
Acquiring Knowledge and Embracing Innovations	4	16.67
Personal Development and Awareness	3	12.50
Cultural Enrichment	3	12.50
Physical and Mental Renewal	3	12.50
Scientific and Social Development	3	12.50
Motivation and New Experiences	2	8.33
Building Networks and Socializing	2	8.33
Contributions in a Business Context	1	4.17
Seizing Opportunities	1	4.17
Accumulation of Experience and Knowledge	1	4.17
Consultation and Assistance	1	4.17
Total	**24**	**100.00**

*n:24

This table shows the contributions of bleisure travel as perceived by participants and their inclinations for future bleisure travel. According to the data in the table:

Acquiring Knowledge and Embracing Innovations: 16.67% of participants stated that bleisure travel are important in providing them with new information and innovations.

Personal Development and Awareness: 12.50% of participants expressed that bleisure travel contribute to their personal development and awareness.

Cultural Enrichment: 12.50% of participants indicated that bleisure travel has positive effects on their cultural development.

Physical and Mental Renewal: 12.50% of participants emphasized that bleisure travel contributes to their physical and mental renewal.

Scientific and Social Development: 12.50% of participants mentioned that bleisure travel contributes to their scientific and social development.

Other Contributions: Various factors such as contributions in a business context, seizing opportunities, accumulation of experience and knowledge, consultation, and assistance were also mentioned among the participants.

Therefore, it can be observed that bleisure travel provides participants with various directions and contribute to personal, cultural, scientific, social, and business aspects.

What are the contributions of bleisure travel to your business?

The question directed to the participants, "What are the contributions of bleisure travel to your business?" aims to understand the significance of bleisure travel in a business context and evaluate the motivations of participants for choosing this type of travel.

Table 10. Contributions of Bleisure Travel to Business and Inclinations for Future Travels

Contributions of Bleisure Travel to Business and Guidance	*f*	%*
Motivation and Job Performance	7	25.93
Professional Contributions	6	22.22
Personal Development and Empathy	5	18.52
Business Relationships and Communication	5	18.52
Sharing Knowledge and Culture	4	14.81
Total	**27**	**100.00**

* Ratios have been adjusted according to the total repetition count. f: Repetition frequency

Table 10 shows various factors related to the contributions of bleisure travel to business and their importance rankings. The analysis of the results presented in the table is as follows:

Motivation and Job Performance (25.93%): It is indicated that bleisure travel increases the motivation and job performance of employees. This can contribute to greater commitment to business-related tasks and increased efficiency.

Professional Contributions (22.22%): Bleisure travel is highlighted for their positive impact on enhancing employees' professional skills and knowledge. This can lead to the development of job-related abilities and the expansion of expertise areas.

Personal Development and Empathy (18.52%): This category indicates that bleisure travel has a positive effect on employees' personal development and empathy skills. This can contribute positively to employees' overall life skills and emotional intelligence.

Business Relationships and Communication (18.52%): It is mentioned that bleisure travel strengthens business relationships and positively influences communication. By increasing interaction among colleagues, it can support teamwork.

Knowledge and Culture Sharing (14.81%): Bleisure travel is noted for increasing knowledge and culture sharing among employees. This can contribute to gaining different perspectives and enhancing diversity in the workplace.

Figure 3: Word Frequency of Contributions of Bleisure Travel to Business and Guidance Trends

In conclusion, the combination of these factors indicates that bleisure travel has various positive effects on business. Factors such as increasing employee motivation, contributing to professional development, and strengthening business relationships can support organizations in encouraging such travels.

5. Conclusion

In this study, the tendencies and motivation factors of academics towards bleisure tourism have been comprehensively evaluated. Detailed interviews were conducted to understand the bleisure tourism activities that participant academics undertake outside of their families during business travel. The findings have revealed the general tendencies of academics towards bleisure tourism, allowing for the analysis of interest levels and frequencies. The research has focused on understanding the motivations of academics to participate in bleisure tourism during their business travel. The motivation factors for participating in bleisure tourism activities alongside their business travel is examined in detail. The results have uncovered the motivations of academics to participate in such travels, highlighting key factors and the impact of these motivations on travel preferences. In this context, important data on the motivations of academics for participating in bleisure tourism has been obtained.

The findings of the study indicate that, conceptually, most participants were not familiar with the term "bleisure." Many participants had not heard of this term before. However, a significant portion of these participants expressed that they had undertaken bleisure travel multiple times. Additionally, some participants mentioned difficulties in determining the frequency of such travel. On the other hand,

participants who did not turn their business travel into bleisure travel were also identified. These findings represent participants who prefer strictly business-focused travel. Overall, the results answer the research question regarding the tendencies of participants towards bleisure travel conceptually, indicating that although most participants were not familiar with the term, they had positive inclinations toward bleisure travel within their professional lives.

When travel preferences are examined, it is observed that a significant majority of participants prefer to travel alone. This preference reflects individuals' quest for independence and freedom during business travel. Simultaneously, the desire to make their own decisions and manage the travel experience individually can be the motivation behind this preference. Another important preference is the high percentage of those traveling with their families, indicating that participants value traveling with their families. This preference strengthens social bonds and reflects the views of participants, who tend to combine business travel with family experiences. The third notable preference, the rate of traveling with different individuals, is also noteworthy. This preference may aim to increase social interaction, establish new relationships, and gain different perspectives. Participants who want to combine business travel with social interaction and cultural experiences adopt various travel dynamics through these preferences. In conclusion, this diversity in business travel is shaped according to individuals' personal, social, and cultural needs. Understanding this diversity and developing flexible policies based on it can contribute to making business travel more effective and satisfying.

The academics participating in the research presented different perspectives when explaining their motivations for participating in bleisure travel. Explanations generally focus on family, colleagues, and personal preferences. Some participants emphasized the key role of their families in turning business travel into bleisure travel. The desire for professional development and exploring new places is among the factors determining the influence of family in this process. Other participants mentioned that they did not care about the influence of their families on bleisure travel and emphasized that the influence of colleagues was more decisive. Additionally, some participants highlighted personal preferences over the family factor. Those who generally prefer to travel alone emphasized individual freedom and decision-making abilities. These diverse explanations indicate the complexity of motivations for academics in bleisure travel and the various factors underlying these motivations.

When examining the various contributions of participants' bleisure travel, the most prominent motivation factor is the cultural discovery motivation. Following this factor, personal planning and participation in activities are highlighted. The findings indicate that participants generally focus on motivations such as cultural discovery, personal planning, and participation in activities during these travels. Among the preferred activities in bleisure travel, regional culinary exploration stands out, followed by taking advantage of hotel facilities, architectural and cultural visits, and exploring cities and regions. Additionally, participants have shown interest in various activities such as shopping, nature and environmental activities, tourist and historical sites, handicrafts and relaxation, festivals, and entertainment. Participants also mentioned that factors influencing their motivations include difficulties in participating in different activities and providing detailed responses related to these travel after business travel. The low rate of non-participation in activities indicates that participants generally prefer diverse experiences in bleisure travel, enriching their travel experiences through these activities. These findings reveal the answer to the research question, which explores the motivation factors for bleisure travel.

Furthermore, participants' motivations for participating in bleisure travel also play a significant role in specific areas of interest, such as interest in gastronomy, the desire to visit places with cultural and historical significance, and the aspiration to participate in scientific activities. These factors indicate that participants aim to both improve their business and achieve personal satisfaction in their bleisure travel. In summary, participants' motivations for bleisure travel are diverse and shaped by individual preferences, professional development, cultural discovery, and personal relaxation, among other factors. These results show that when participants engage in business travel outside their families, they generally

focus on motivations such as cultural discovery, personal planning, and participation in activities. The findings demonstrate that bleisure travel contribute to various needs in participants' personal, cultural, scientific, social, and business contexts.

As a result, the findings identified in the scope of the research provide an opportunity to offer some recommendations specifically for destinations or industry representatives wishing to continue their activities related to bleisure tourism. In this context, the following recommendations have been developed for destinations or industry representatives:

- In particular, in order to eliminate the seasonality problem of tourism, destinations should host bleisure tourism as an alternative tourism activity,
- Providing services by ensuring the integration of elements that will create attraction for bleisure tourists of different types of destinations,
- Participating in national and international congresses and fairs held for business purposes or drawing attention with sponsorship agreements in order to reach bleisure tourists as a bleisure tourism destination,
- Reaching the target potential tourists directly with personalized e-marketing activities and focusing on attracting more bleisure tourists,
- Considering the tendency of participants to have diverse experiences in their bleisure travel despite not being familiar with the concept, it is recommended to offer various products, services, and activities.
- Despite the majority of participants traveling alone, there is a significant number of participants who travel with their families and indicate the influence of their families in travel planning. In line with this, diversity in products, services, and activities targeting families should be provided.
- Enhancing the variety of activities, ranging from culture to art, food to festivals, based on various motivational differences, and including them in packages offered to potential bleisure tourists.
- Actively utilizing natural and cultural resources as tourist attractions based on a sustainability approach.
- Embracing digital applications required by the modern world, such as e-marketing and cloud computing.
- Planning personalized products, services, and activities with the creation of databases.
- Offering regional events as part of tourist services, in addition to local products.
- Creating attractive elements for bleisure tourists in their workspaces.
- Improving service quality, particularly highlighting it in promotional materials.
- Lastly, it is recommended to establish travel agencies specializing in activities related to bleisure travel.

While the focus of the study is limited to academics in the Kayseri province, it is recommended that future research endeavors broaden the sample size and scope. Including academics from universities in different cities could enhance the potential for generalizing the findings and provide a better understanding of trends nationwide. Additionally, comparing bleisure travel participation at the national and international levels and examining the motivations of academics in different geographical regions could be crucial. This may contribute to a more in-depth understanding of general trends in bleisure tourism. Furthermore, in future research, exploring the impact of participants' demographic characteristics, academic positions, and disciplines on bleisure travel motivations could be a valuable area of investigation. Especially considering the changing consumer habits after the pandemic, destination-specific guiding suggestions can be provided with a study that identifies and reveals the changing consumer habits of bleisure tourists and their expectations. Such detailed analyses can assist in developing more specific and focused recommendations.

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