



## Leisure Time Deprivation

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### **Abstract**

While there is a great deal of research on leisure time in the literature on the basis of various variables, it is not possible to talk about enough variety in the theoretical context. In the majority of studies, it has been observed that researchers have tried to reveal the importance of leisure time and its positive effects in accordance to usage. While leisure time and its usage are considered as significant, there has not been enough information on the deprivation of that much needed time. This study aims to reveal the micro and macro sociological foundations of leisure time deprivation while making sense of leisure time deprivation.

**Keywords:** Leisure time, Leisure time deprivation, Free time

### **Introduction**

The subject of leisure time has been formed a literature within the field of study of different disciplines and has been written and drawn on a large scale in a short time (Jewell, 1997; Hemilton-Smith, 1992). While many researchers do not refrain from focusing on the difficulty of defining such a highly studied subject (Dumazadier,1989), it is possible to talk about its transformation, during the historical process (Giddens, 2012; Kılıç 2019), classification (Hartel, 2003), positive effects (Kılıç and Şener, 2013, Kilic, 2016), micro-macro dimensions

(King, 2001; Sallis ve ark., 1998), and the intensity of studies on the axis of economic (Wilensky, 1961) and various parameters.

In this respect, leisure time is a dynamic phenomenon that is adapted to almost all spaces of daily life and can be studied under different scales and social strata. Leisure time – that sometimes considered as the remaining time outside the work (Applebaum, 1992; Lafarque, 1996) or sometimes as the freedom of individual choice (Kraus, 1979, 1998) – is viewed in terms of the activities in which an individual is involved for his/her own purposes and benefits (Kılıç, 2018). However, leisure time is most commonly defined as a sense of freedom or “state”, a kind of social “activity” or a “certain time” phase (Stokowski, 1994).

The nature, meaning and activities of leisure time cause the studies to create a positive expectation for us. This argument is not quite wrong. While many speaks of the need for leisure time and the mostly positive benefit of their activities, an argument on “leisure time deprivation” has not been clearly identified. It is overlooked that the “third time” requirement that is needed not only philosophically very much but also needed for daily life is based on deprivation of leisure time.

Here, we are not talking about the leisure time barriers of the people as mentioned by Stebbins (2012). That is not to prevent people from participating in leisure time activities. *Leisure time deprivation* refers to lack of time for people to participate in leisure activities, insufficient socio-cultural capital or inability to know how to use leisure time although the person has it.

In the book, “Flow: The Secret to Happiness”, Csikszentmihalyi (2018) suggested that although people would like to use their hard-earned leisure time when they leave from the job, they often have no idea what to do in their leisure time and this supports our argument on leisure time deprivation. Because it is very difficult for people to enjoy leisure time. Leisure time is not structured. And leisure time is more difficult to shape for pleasure than the work that has a specific format.

### **Fundamentals of Leisure Time Deprivation**

The deprivation of leisure time is a phenomenon that must be explained in the light of individual and social parameters. In the evolutionary process from birth to death, the use of leisure time decreases and increases. Different factors influence leisure time in different

periods of life. (Thompson et al., 2002). Childhood leisure time is based on play, while adolescence and adulthood are based on career planning and work. Senescent period is an effort to make sense of leisure time again in order to eliminate the deprivation of leisure time after a busy working life. When the deprivation of leisure time is considered in the context of gender, it can be concluded that women are more deprived of leisure time than men. Previous studies indicated that men's daily leisure time is at least thirty minutes longer than women (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003, Sayer, 2005; Mullahy and Robert, 2008). In a study, it was noted that although there are no gender differences in leisure time during the week, men have more leisure time than women at the weekend (Shaw, 1994). On the one hand, Beck and Arnold (2009) criticized the inclusion of the periods in which women perform their unpaid work in the leisure time period and conducted a study focusing only on the time women were completely empty. Similarly, it was observed that males had more leisure time. On the other hand, related field studies also showed that women's leisure time is frequently interrupted due to their domestic responsibilities (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000; Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003). A study conducted by Searle and Jackson (1985) found that women in heterosexual relationships could spend less time performing activities of their own interests. The first reason for this is that women have more leisure time deprivation than men. It is thought that women may have a different perception of leisure time than men, because women tend to plan and organize their work even in their leisure time. This may result in less leisure time to allocate to themselves. In a study conducted with married heterosexual women, Shaw and Dawson (2001) observed that women had a concern about having fun of other individuals around them in their leisure time. In other words, women also undertake the emotional responsibilities of others.

Besides these; women feel less satisfaction than men, even in the limited time they can allocate to themselves (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003). This dissatisfaction stems from the guilt that women feel when they are in their leisure time, worrying about their unfinished work, taking into account not only their own enjoyment but also the happiness of other family members in leisure activities. In short, there is a close relationship between adult deprivation of leisure time and gender (Mullahy and Robert, 2008).

Without a doubt, career planning is another factor that influences the deprivation of leisure time in modern society. The career selection process is the product of the interaction of

individual-specific attitudes and values and the social support elements that an individual can receive (Harrington 1997; Güleri 1998; Bowsbey and Sampson 2001). We can argue that motivation for career choice is the product of the complex process of interaction between person's past and personal variables and environmental variables. As suggested by Bell (1998), a person who is raised to earn a living cannot be raised to make the most of life. To lead a high level of civilized life, one has to stay away from material concerns, but it is the career planning period in which people spend more time preparing for work. This period is a phase that enters every stage of the school age and produces intense deprivation of leisure time. People often compromise the joy and happiness of their time for career planning. Because career planning requires intensive work, the easiest time period to relinquish is undoubtedly leisure time. This situation directly supports the deprivation of leisure time today. When discussing career planning, it is necessary to mention the effect of social environment and ethnicity (Washburne, 1978; Coakley, 1998; Jarvie, 2000; Lovell, 2005; Magurie, 2005, Kılıç, 2012) on the deprivation of leisure time. The physical and social environment is one of the most important factors that potentially influences a person's participation in the field of leisure (Diez-Roux, 2001; Kılıç, 2015). Many studies reveal that individuals direct leisure-time behavior under the influence of their environment, however; Rojek paves the way for action where individuals change and transform their environments in line with these influences in a transactional process through a relational initiative (Öztürk, 2019). According to Rojek (2005), the environment should not be understood as an independent, stationary factor in free-time action. On the contrary, the environment is conditioned by individual behavior as well as the condition of leisure time practice. Sensitivity to the contingent nature of the environment leads to accepting openness to change as the essential determinant character of positioning in leisure time analysis. The practice of leisure time reflects the environmental context, but it also transforms this context through its effects. Rojek's bidirectional positioning is very important. But the side of the social environment that supports the deprivation of leisure time should not be ignored. Every moment of the passing time is directly determined by the conditions that surround us (Durkheim, 2010). Surmounting the existing value judgments are much more difficult to overcome than leisure time limits. Because it is not possible to talk about a transformative effect without considering class and cultural distinctions. According to Russell (2008), the fact that leisure time is not distributed equally arises from the fact that some work

harder than necessary and others are completely idle. Our problem is not the leisure time distribution that Russell expresses, but the use of leisure time. Arguably the two main components through which it is possible to strongly reflect inequalities are the leisure time period and its presence (Thompson et al., 2002).

Paterson (2006), who identifies lifestyle with consumption, in his book *Consumption and Everyday Life*, viewed the consumption as self-expression and this view is an abstract indicator of leisure time consumption. Lefebvre (2014) is relatively right when talking about leisure time spaces nourished by desire. At the point of transformation of space, in modern society, there are production of areas such as holiday cities and holiday villages. When the use of these areas is only analyzed, the social class difference creates a deprivation of leisure time. It is used according to the economic capital of upper and relative middle classes. There is no mention of deprivation that consumes time, economically.

In view of the broader perspective of deprivation of leisure time in class presence, according to Bauman, people of the upper class live in a permanent now, passing through moments that are sequentially isolated from their past as well as their future. These people are always busy. They always suffer from “shortness of time” because every moment of time is a piece with no extension. This is an experience identical to the brim time experience. The desperate people of the opposite world (the lower class) are crushed under the burden of time that is abundant, unnecessary, empty and nothing to fill. Nothing happens in their time. They do not control time. While time kills them slowly, all they can do is to dally away. According to Bourdieu (2016), who also advocated a similar argument, their property is lacking because their time has no value unlike the proletarians whose having more time, the workaholic rulers have more property and their time is extraordinarily incomplete. The use of leisure time, which is put forward as a class, clearly shows the deprivation of leisure time for different classes. When social class distinctions are taken into consideration, the fact that people who are deprived of work and who work hard have more or less leisure time does not differentiate their deprivation of leisure time.

### **Other Fundamentals of Leisure Time Deprivation**

In addition to the basic elements leading to deprivation of leisure time, there are relatively more elements. Starting from Bell's (1998) claim "one should have leisure time to use as much as he wishes", Stebbins (1982) interpreted that today's work and value judgments of leisure time patterns and behavior patterns have a meaningful orientation towards leisure time in today's post-industrial society and leisure time will increase. Stebbins' discourse does not provide a holistic perspective even when considered in the context of Western societies. Moreover, where are the Eastern, Asian and African communities in this process? Given the social context, the breadth of leisure time clearly shows the deprivation of leisure time in many third world countries. Again, the increase of leisure time in the 1st and 2nd World countries is a fact supporting the deprivation of leisure time. When technological developments in modern society are considered, technological dependence creates a virtual leisure time instead of enjoying pleasure, happiness and satisfaction from leisure time. In most of the activities we participate in evaluating leisure time, technological sharing anxiety is one of the important factors that cause leisure time deprivation. Even in leisure activities, the lack of positive evaluation of leisure time is the deprivation of leisure time. For example, instead of experiencing the moment of a family going on a hiking, cultural trip or vacation, the anxiety of sharing the environment with the social environment by shooting via the phone at the present time prevents the physical and mental unity and creates a deprivation of leisure time. It is not about having leisure time, but about using leisure time.

The use of technology, media and media (especially television) is identified with ordinary (Stebbins, 1997) and serious leisure activities (Stebbins, 1982). According to Stebbins ordinary leisure activities were often missed. Supporting his argument, everyday leisure activities are the most facilitating factors for deprivation of leisure time. Because in such activities there is leaving of time to time. With Veblen's (2017) discourse, what one can easily do is what turns into a habit, which determines what he can easily think and do. Therefore, it is a routine act for people to come home intensively and sit for hours in front of the television when they are out of work. When it comes to routines in social life, it is not possible to talk about positive use of leisure time. Routine behaviors lead to deprivation of leisure time in the concrete and abstract plane.

Participation in serious leisure activities is very limited in social life. A small minority as a population is involved in such activities. When there is any health problem (we are not talking about chronic health problem. It is able to produce leisure time deprivation in itself) or if there is no satisfaction or the routine of daily life is interrupted (economic collapse, natural disaster, fire etc.), serious leisure activities are the easiest activities to give up compared to ordinary leisure activities.

Beyond the leisure time classifications, finally, there is the situation of producing leisure time deprivation of belief, education, political system and legal structure. Many studies support this argument (Floyd and Gramann, 1993, 1995; Stamps and Stamps, 1985; Kocadaş and Kılıç, 2012; Kılıç, 2018). When the social structure is examined from a functional point of view, institutional structures create an external pressure on the micro worlds of people in the macro dimension. This pressure increases the deprivation of leisure time in the visible or invisible plane. Unless the deprivation of leisure time is prevented, people's tendency towards crime and deviation behaviors (mostly in youth) increases in social life (Kılıç, 2011, 2014, 2019). Such disruptive elements are also supported by the deprivation of leisure time increased by institutional structures.

## **Conclusion**

In the researches, while the individual and social benefits of participation in leisure activities are mentioned, a leisure time planning is constantly introduced. It is possible to put forward leisure time planning according to various factors such as age, gender and socio-economic status. Leisure time planning is essentially the most clear indication of leisure time deprivation and nothing more than an effort to eliminate it. Because the basic elements for the deprivation of leisure time are fed from the leisure time spent for work, fulfilling physiological needs, and living a routine life. The deprivation of leisure time, which encapsulates individuals with micro-congenital status criteria (age, gender, genealogy-social environment) and institutional structures in the macro dimension, reproduces itself in modern society. Starting from MacCannell's (1999) thinking that the existence of leisure time is based on cultural experiences, the effort of individuals to use institutional tools to achieve cultural goals, namely the career planning process, increases the deprivation of leisure time today. In addition, in today's world where consumption is more planned than production, it is difficult to talk about

a leisure time that people can freely use. No matter how much the idea of decreasing working time and increasing leisure time is emphasized, the temporal positions of social activities as Elias (2000) says are planned according to the interests of a certain minority class. This relationship of interest also increases the deprivation of leisure time. As a result, while modern society offers leisure time to us, it has never created such a deprived leisure time.

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