

## **The Investigation of the Relationship between University Students' Leisure and Life Satisfaction Levels**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between leisure satisfaction and life satisfaction levels of university students and to determine whether these parameters differ in terms of various variables. In the study, the Leisure Satisfaction Scale, which was developed by Beard and Ragheb (1980) and adapted to Turkish by Gökçe and Orhan (2011) was applied to determine the participants' leisure satisfaction levels and Life Satisfaction Scale developed by Diener et al. (1985) and adapted to Turkish by Köker (1991) was used to measure the life satisfaction levels of the participants. The convenience sampling method was chosen for sampling and face-to-face method was used for data collection. SPSS package program was used for analysis of obtained data. Pearson Correlation, Regression, and Multivariate variance analysis were used for data showing normal distribution according to Skewness-Kurtosis values. Totally, 1418 participants [651 males (45.9%) and 767 females (54.1%)] participated in the research voluntarily. According to the findings of current research, it was determined that there was a positive correlation between life satisfaction and all sub-scales of leisure satisfaction. When MANOVA results were examined according to gender, it was found that there was a significant difference in all sub-scales of leisure satisfaction scale. As a result; leisure satisfaction sub-scales (aesthetic and physical) have a positive impact on life satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Leisure Satisfaction, Life Satisfaction, University Student

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## INTRODUCTION

The role of time in society is highly significant in terms of fast-moving technology and ever-changing living standards (Henderson, 2010). However, due to these changing standards, the need for a special time in the inactive life of the individual reveals the importance of the concept of leisure (Ceyhun, 2008). Leisure time; apart from the time spent on things that the individual does to continue his life (Mull et al., 1997), is defined as time periods that the individual can use freely, have pleasure, and gain increased personal satisfaction (Özdemir et al., 2006), and that are used for personal preferences not including times spent by the individual for his/her life (Sabbağ and Aksoy, 2011) and have a positive effect on their lives (Soyer et al., 2017). Leisure activities play an important role in the social development of the people (Mahoney and Stattin, 2000), reducing the stress and tension caused by intense workload and making individuals feel good about themselves psychologically and physically (Coleman and Ahola, 1993, Trenbeth et al., 1999; Ayhan, Eskiler and Soyer, 2017).

Even though the purpose of individuals for participating in leisure activities is different, there is a point that is true for everyone. Individuals use these activities to take pleasure and to be satisfied as a result of this pleasure (Çelik, 2011). Satisfaction is described as meeting emotional requirements such as motivation, expectation, and needs before the happenings (Kovacs, 2007). Leisure satisfaction means positive emotions that individuals achieved as a result of their participation in leisure activities (Beard and Raghep, 1980), how satisfied they are with their leisure (Kovacs, 2007; Ayhan, Eskiler and Emir, 2018) and meeting their interests, desires, and needs with such activities (Mannel and Kleiber, 1997). To reach their desires through leisure activities and to measure their level of happiness in their participation have an important role in developing leisure activities and expanding the activity spectrum in the direction of satisfaction indicators of the participants (Karli et al., 2008). However, there are limited studies on participation in leisure activities that will contribute to the physical and psychological development of the individual (Eskiler and Karataş, 2017). It is thought that leisure activities, which have an important role in the development of satisfying feelings, may have significant effects on life satisfaction.

Life satisfaction, which has been among subjects that have become the focus of humanity throughout the ages, is described as the result of the comparison of the individual's expectations with what the individual has (Sung-Mook et al., 1994, Haybron, 2004; Çevik and Korkmaz, 2014), the individual's positive evaluation of his/her own life with his/her own means (Diener et al., 1985; Veenhoven, 1996) and the combination of beliefs and desires on life (Rice, Frone and McFarlin 1992) and the merge of the concepts of happiness and subjective well-being (Sirgy, 2012). Leisure activities are at the level of self-actualization within the Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Yüncü et al., 2003). Individuals who reach the stage of self-actualization meet all their needs and attained the level of life satisfaction (Çetinkanat, 2000). Therefore, it is thought that the individuals who reach the saturation point with the leisure activities can realize the life satisfaction.

The leisure activities that individuals perform to achieve happiness and satisfaction are extremely important in every period of their life (Soyer et al., 2017). University education especially has an important place in the lives of individuals. This period is one of the periods when socio-economic and academic aspects of the process of adopting social values and taking adult steps are realized in the clearest way and the behaviors that will continue for years will occur. (Ağaoğlu and Eker, 2006; Tel and Sarı, 2016). With the increase of technological developments, the time that students spend for themselves and their surroundings decreases, and this situation causes them to be isolated from themselves and the society they live in (Ekinçi, Yalçın, and Soyer, 2017). The physical activities performed by the individual in his / her leisure during the education period are very significant (Işık, Özarslan and Bekler, 2015). Leisure activities participated in the non-curricular periods increase the happiness and satisfaction level of the university students and make them achieve the level of satisfaction and get rid of the feeling of loneliness.

There is a limited number of studies in the literature despite the positive contributions of leisure satisfaction and life satisfaction to university students (Kwan, 2008, Kong and You, 2013,

Suldo and Huebner, 2006, Chen, Li and Chen, 2013). In this context, the aim of the study was to measure the effect of the leisure satisfaction levels of university students on life satisfaction. This result will not only contribute to the literature but also help us overcome the deficiencies in the relevant area.

## **METHOD**

### **Study Model**

The research was grounded in quantitative research design. It was adopted general survey model which scanned on a sample that would be taken from it or all of population in an attempt to pass a general judgment on the population in a population consisting of scores of members. (Karasar, 2012).

### **Sample Group**

A total of 1418 extreme athletes 651 male (45,9 %), 767 female (54,1 %) who were voluntarily participated in the study and chosen with convenience sampling method. Participants were contacted face-to-face and subsequently given a paper copy of the self-administered questionnaire. A total of 1504 questionnaires were returned, and 86 questionnaires were judged unusable, leaving a final sample size of  $n = 1418$ .

### **Data Collection Tools**

In the study, "Leisure Satisfaction Scale" developed by Beard and Ragheb (1980) and adapted to Turkish by Gökçe and Orhan (2011) was used to determine the levels of leisure satisfaction of the participants. The scale consists of 6 sub-scales and 24 expressions. Leisure Satisfaction Scale in 5-point rating and all expressions on the scale are scored between 1 and 5 according to the levels of "Almost never true",....., "Almost always true". In addition, the Life Satisfaction Scale developed by Diener et al. (1985) and adapted into Turkish by Köker (1991) was used to determine the level of life satisfaction of participants. Life Satisfaction scale consists of 5 items. The scale is 7 Likert scale.

### **Data Analysis**

SPSS package program was used for analysis of obtained data. For descriptive statistics, frequency (f) and percent (%) distributions of variables were calculated. Skewness and Kurtosis values were checked to determine whether the data had normal distributions. These values were checked and evaluated between +2 and -2 (George & Mallery, 2003). As a result of this evaluation, the data showed normal distribution. In this direction; Pearson Correlation Analysis, Regression Analysis and MANOVA to reduce Type 1 error risk were applied. In order to do this: 05 value is divided by the number of dependent variables and the new value obtained is considered as a new probability value for the differences between the groups to be considered statistically significant (Pallant, 2015/2017). Accordingly in this study, 007 value obtained by dividing, 05 value into 7 dependent variables (Psychological, Educational, Social, Physical, Relaxing, Aesthetic, Life Satisfactory) was taken as the cut-off point, and values lower than this value were accepted as a new probability value for the differences between the groups to be considered as statistically significant.

## RESULTS

**Table 1. Descriptive Statics**

Variables		F	%
Gender	Man	651	45,9
	Woman	767	54,1
Grade point Average	2.00 and below	268	18,9
	2.01-2.50	359	25,3
	2.51-3.00	470	33,1
	3.01-3.50	271	19,1
	3.51-4.00	50	3,5
Have difficulty in leisure time	Always	191	13,5
	Sometimes	906	63,9
	Never	321	22,6

n=1418

When descriptive statistics on sex were examined, it was determined that 54.1% of the participants were female and 45.9% were male. The highest percentage of the participants in the grade point average was in the range of 2.51-3.00 (33,1%) and this was followed by 2.01-2.50 (25,3%), 3.01-3.50 (19,1%), 2.00 and below (18,9%), 3,51 - 4.00 (3,5%). When the difficulty in the leisure was examined, it was found that 63.9% of the participants sometimes had difficulty, 22.6% never had difficulty and 13.5% always had difficulty.

**Table 2. Analysis of correlation between leisure satisfaction and life satisfaction**

Variables		1	2	3	4	5	6
Psychological (1)	R						
	P						
Educational (2)	R	,704**					
	P	,000					
Social (3)	R	,622**	,732**				
	P	,000	,000				
Physical (4)	R	,698**	,694**	,681**			
	P	,000	,000	,000			
Relief (5)	R	,589**	,607**	,616**	,651**		
	P	,000	,000	,000	,000		
Aesthetics (6)	R	,458**	,541**	,622**	,541**	,591**	
	P	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	
Life Satisfaction (7)	R	,159**	,159**	,196**	,183**	,185**	,232**
	P	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000

According to the Table, it was determined that there was a positive relationship between life satisfaction and all sub-scales of leisure satisfaction ( $p < 0,05$ ).

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics on Leisure Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction by Gender of Participants**

Variables	Gender	Mean	SD	n
Psychological	Man	3,86	,81	651
	Woman	3,55	,87	767
	Total	3,69	,86	1418

Educational	Man	3,98	,85	651
	Woman	3,60	,94	767
	Total	3,77	,92	1418
Social	Man	3,86	,81	651
	Woman	3,48	,94	767
	Total	3,65	,90	1418
Physical	Man	4,08	,78	651
	Woman	3,82	,90	767
	Total	3,94	,86	1418
Relief	Man	3,81	,77	651
	Woman	3,46	,80	767
	Total	3,62	,80	1418
Aesthetics	Man	3,67	,86	651
	Woman	3,42	,93	767
	Total	3,54	,91	1418
Life Satisfaction	Man	20,14	7,00	651
	Woman	20,48	6,79	767
	Total	20,33	6,89	1418

When the analysis results were concerned, it was found that the average scores of male participants in all sub-scales of leisure satisfaction were higher than female. On the other hand, in the life satisfaction variable, the average score of female participants was higher than male participants.

**Table 4. MANOVA Results on Leisure Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction by Gender**

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	p	R Squared	Adjusted R Squared
Gender	Psychological	33,859	1	33,859	,000*	,033	,032
	Educational	49,354	1	49,354	,000*	,041	,041
	Social	48,774	1	48,774	,000*	,043	,042
	Physical	24,367	1	24,367	,000*	,023	,023
	Relief	42,809	1	42,809	,000*	,047	,046
	Aesthetics	21,471	1	21,471	,000*	,018	,018
	Life Satisfaction	42,022	1	42,022	,347	,001	,000
	Error	Psychological	1007,553	1416	,712		
Educational		1145,151	1416	,809			
Social		1096,697	1416	,775			
Physical		1017,484	1416	,719			
Relief		875,296	1416	,618			
Aesthetics		1142,650	1416	,807			
Life Satisfaction		67183,104	1418	47,446			
Total		Psychological	20334,875	1418			
	Educational	21379,625	1418				
	Social	20077,313	1418				
	Physical	23027,375	1418				
	Relief	19489,938	1418				
	Aesthetics	18891,688	1418				
	Life Satisfaction	653015,000	1418				

Wilks Lambda= 0,936;  $F_{(1,1416)}=15,377$ ;  $p= 0,000$

\* $p<0,007$

According to the Table, statistically significant differences were determined in all sub-scales of leisure satisfaction according to gender ( $p < 0.007$ ). However, there was no statistically significant difference in life satisfaction according to gender ( $p > 0,007$ ).

**Table 5. Descriptive Statistics on Leisure Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction by Average Grade of Participants**

Dependent Variable	Grade Average	Mean	S.D.	n
Psychological	2.00 and below	3,63	,85	268
	2.01-2.50	3,69	,88	359
	2.51-3.00	3,74	,82	470
	3.01-3.50	3,66	,91	271
	3.51-4.00	3,62	,83	50
	Total	3,69	,86	1418
Educational	2.00 and below	3,69	,87	268
	2.01-2.50	3,80	,95	359
	2.51-3.00	3,83	,88	470
	3.01-3.50	3,76	,96	271
	3.51-4.00	3,53	,99	50
	Total	3,77	,92	1418
Social	2.00 and below	3,55	,82	268
	2.01-2.50	3,70	,86	359
	2.51-3.00	3,73	,92	470
	3.01-3.50	3,62	,95	271
	3.51-4.00	3,41	1,04	50
	Total	3,65	,90	1418
Physical	2.00 and below	3,88	,82	268
	2.01-2.50	3,97	,84	359
	2.51-3.00	3,98	,86	470
	3.01-3.50	3,92	,89	271
	3.51-4.00	3,70	,94	50
	Total	3,94	,86	1418
Relief	2.00 and below	3,59	,74	268
	2.01-2.50	3,65	,78	359
	2.51-3.00	3,61	,83	470
	3.01-3.50	3,61	,85	271
	3.51-4.00	3,62	,87	50
	Total	3,62	,80	1418
Aesthetics	2.00 and below	3,45	,83	268
	2.01-2.50	3,60	,87	359
	2.51-3.00	3,55	,95	470
	3.01-3.50	3,54	,95	271
	3.51-4.00	3,39	,86	50
	Total	3,54	,91	1418
Life Satisfaction	2.00 and below	18,74	6,94	268
	2.01-2.50	19,89	6,72	359
	2.51-3.00	21,17	6,79	470
	3.01-3.50	20,89	7,04	271
	3.51-4.00	20,92	6,40	50
	Total	20,33	6,89	1418

According to the results of the analysis, it was determined that those who had an average of 2.51-3.00 grades in the psychological, educational, social and physical sub-scales of leisure satisfaction and life satisfaction variables had higher average scores than the others. On the other hand, it was determined that those who had an average of 2.01-2.50 in the relaxation and aesthetic sub-scales had higher scores on the sub-scales than those who had the other grade averages.

**Table 6. MANOVA Results on Leisure Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction by Average of Scores**

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	p	R Squared	Adjusted R Squared	Post-Hoc Results
Grade Average	Psychological	2,628	4	,657	,467	,003	,000	
	Educational	6,465	4	1,616	,104	,005	,003	
	Social	9,382	4	2,345	,020	,008	,005	
	Physical	5,073	4	1,268	,141	,005	,002	
	Relief	,656	4	,164	,908	,001	-,002	
	Aesthetics	4,580	4	1,145	,233	,004	,001	
	Life Satisfaction	1175,833	4	293,958	,000*	,017	,015	A-C; A-D
Error	Psychological	1038,785	1413	,735				
	Educational	1188,041	1413	,841				
	Social	1136,089	1413	,804				
	Physical	1036,778	1413	,734				
	Relief	917,449	1413	,649				
	Aesthetics	1159,541	1413	,821				
	Life Satisfaction	66049,293	1413	46,744				
Total	Psychological	20334,875	1418					
	Educational	21379,625	1418					
	Social	20077,313	1418					
	Physical	23027,375	1418					
	Relief	19489,938	1418					
	Aesthetics	18891,688	1418					
	Life Satisfaction	653015,000	1418					

Wilks Lambda= 0,936; F(4,1413) =1,792; p<0,000 – A: 2.00 and below; B: 2.01-2.50; C: 2.51-3.00; D:3.01-3.50; E: 3.51-4.00

\*p<0,007

When the analysis results were analyzed, there was no statistically significant difference in the sub-scales of leisure satisfaction according to gender ( $p > 0,007$ ) whereas there was a statistically significant difference in life satisfaction variable ( $p < 0,007$ ). According to this, it was determined that there was a difference between the life satisfaction scores of the participants with an average of 2.00 and below and the participants with the average of 2.51-3.00 and 3.01-3.50.

**Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of Leisure Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction by the Difficulty**

**Degree of Participants in Leisure**

Variables	Have difficulty in leisure	Mean	S.D.	n
Psychological	Always	3,62	,99	191
	Sometimes	3,68	,83	906
	Never	3,75	,86	321
	Total	3,69	,86	1418

Educational	Always	3,60	1,04	191
	Sometimes	3,79	,90	906
	Never	3,82	,89	321
	Total	3,77	,92	1418
Social	Always	3,49	,96	191
	Sometimes	3,67	,88	906
	Never	3,69	,90	321
	Total	3,65	,90	1418
Physical	Always	3,83	,94	191
	Sometimes	3,94	,83	906
	Never	4,00	,89	321
	Total	3,94	,86	1418
Relief	Always	3,52	,89	191
	Sometimes	3,61	,79	906
	Never	3,69	,79	321
	Total	3,62	,80	1418
Aesthetics	Always	3,33	,99	191
	Sometimes	3,54	,88	906
	Never	3,66	,92	321
	Total	3,54	,91	1418
Life Satisfaction	Always	17,54	7,04	191
	Sometimes	20,42	6,66	906
	Never	21,70	6,98	321
	Total	20,33	6,89	1418

According to the analysis results, it was determined that for all variables, the average score of those who had never had difficulty in their leisure was higher than those who had sometimes and always had difficulties.

**Table 8. Results of MANOVA Analysis on Leisure Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction by Difficulties in Leisure**

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	p	R Squared	Adjusted R Squared	Source
Have difficulty in leisure	Psychological	2,193	2	1,097	,225	,002	,001	
	Educational	6,532	2	3,266	,021	,005	,004	
	Social	5,973	2	2,987	,025	,005	,004	
	Physical	3,665	2	1,832	,083	,004	,002	
	Relief	3,390	2	1,695	,073	,004	,002	
	Aesthetics	13,036	2	6,518	,000*	,011	,010	A-B; A-C
	Life Satisfaction	2098,985	2	1049,492	,000*	,031	,030	A-B; A-C; B-C
Error	Psychological	1039,219	1415	,734				
	Educational	1187,973	1415	,840				



	Social	1139,497	1415	,805
	Physical	1038,187	1415	,734
	Relief	914,715	1415	,646
	Aesthetics	1151,085	1415	,813
	Life Satisfaction	65126,14	1415	46,026
Total	Psychological	20334,88	1418	
	Educational	21379,63	1418	
	Social	20077,31	1418	
	Physical	23027,38	1418	
	Relief	19489,94	1418	
	Aesthetics	18891,69	1418	
	Life Satisfaction	653015,00	1418	

\*p<0,007; Wilks Lambda= 0,959; F<sub>(2,1415)</sub>=4,211; p= 0,000 – A: Always; B: Sometimes; C: Never

When the analysis results were analyzed, it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference in Psychological, Educational, Social, Physical and Relaxation sub-scales of leisure satisfaction according to the degree of difficulty in leisure ( $p > 0,007$ ), while there was a statistically significant difference in Aesthetic sub-scale of leisure satisfaction and Life Satisfaction Variable according to the degree of difficulty in leisure time ( $p < 0,007$ ). According to this, it was observed that there was a difference between the averages of the aesthetic sub-scale scores of those who always had difficulty, those who had difficulty sometimes and those who never had difficulty in their leisure time. In addition, it was determined that there was a difference between those who had always had difficulty in their leisure time with those who had had difficulty sometimes, and those who had never had difficulty, those who had difficulties sometimes and those had no difficulty.

**Table 9. Results of Regression Analysis on Life Satisfaction and Leisure Satisfaction**

Model		$\beta$	t	P	F	R <sup>2</sup>
1	(Constant)		19.64	.000	80.895	.053
	Aesthetics	.232	8.99	.000		
2	(Constant)		14.31	.000	44.128	.057
	Aesthetics	.188	6.15	.000		
	Physical	.081	2.65	.008		

Dependent Variable: Life Satisfaction Method: Stepwise

According to the Table, it was determined that the regression models were statistically significant. In Model 1, the aesthetic sub-scale of the leisure satisfaction predicts the life satisfaction at the rate of 5% ( $F = 80.895$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In Model 2, the aesthetics and physical sub-scales of the leisure satisfaction predict the life satisfaction at the rate of 6% ( $F = 44,128$ ,  $p < .01$ ). According to the results of gradual regression analysis (analysis was completed in two steps) in Model 2; the aesthetic sub-scale ( $\beta = .188$ ,  $p < .01$ ) was determined as the variable which has the strongest effect. This variable is followed by the physical sub-scale ( $\beta = .081$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, the relationship between leisure satisfaction and life satisfaction of university students and whether these parameters differ in terms of various variables were investigated. According to the results of the analysis, it was determined that scores of participants have difficulty in their leisure time (77.4%). Several studies have similar results with this study (Karaküçük and Gurbuz, 2007; Tolukan, 2010; Coruh, 2013; Karaçar and Pasli, 2014). Güngörmüş (2006) have reported that in the study on the teaching staff who work in the schools of physical education and

sports, it is observed that the rate of difficulty in evaluating the leisure is low and they usually do not have difficulty. The result does not support the result of this study. It is thought that this situation may be caused by differences in the sample groups.

When the results related to leisure and life satisfaction were investigated, it was determined that there was a positive relation between all sub-scales of leisure satisfaction and life satisfaction. Accordingly, it is thought that life satisfaction levels will increase as participants' leisure satisfaction increases. There are various studies obtained similar results in the related literature (Ragheb and Griffith, 1982, Kinnney and Coyle, 1992, Brown and Frankel, 1993, Huang and Carleton, 2003, Kovacs, 2007, Wang et al. 2008; Agyar, 2014; Chick et al., 2016). It is known that leisure activities are seen in the self-actualization degree, which is the highest degree of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Karaküçük, 1999). This need is related to one's self-consciousness, the realize one's potential and the self-actualization (Çetinkanat, 2000: 12). In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, individuals cannot upgrade if they cannot satisfy their basic needs (Diener, Lucas and Oishi, 2002). It may be thought that individuals in this degree achieve satisfaction level after satisfying their needs. Hence, it can be told that the life satisfaction of the individuals who are satisfied their leisure satisfaction will also increase.

In accordance with the results of the regression analysis, it is possible to say those esthetics and physical sub-scales estimate the life satisfaction at about the rate of 6%. On the other hand, it is thought that life satisfaction can be estimated by factors such as their positive sense of self, economic conditions, social relations, the satisfaction of daily life, subjective well-being and job satisfaction. Similar results were obtained in related studies (Brown and Frankel, 1993; Wang et al. 2008).

When investigating the analysis results of MANOVA related to gender, it was deduced that there was an significant difference in all scales of leisure satisfaction according to gender. There are supporting results in related studies. (Vong, 2005; Serdar and Ay, 2016). It is thought that this situation may change from the point of view of the leisure activities of men and women and the fact that men are more free than women in participation in activities (Ayhan et al., 2018). When the MANOVA analysis of the mean grade was analyzed, there was no statistically significant difference in the leisure satisfaction sub-scales, while the difference in life satisfaction. It was determined to cause that arithmetic mean of the difference was between the arithmetic mean of participants who had 2.00 and below and 2.51- 3.00 and 3.01- 3.50. As a result, the life satisfaction level of individuals who were satisfied in their leisure time was also obtained to increase.

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