Abstract
The aim of this study is to examine the perceptions of university students towards leisure and perceived freedom in leisure on the basis of different variables. To this end, a total of 250 university students in total, 174 (69%) of whom are males and 78 (31%) of whom are females selected by random sampling have voluntarily attended the research study. The sample of the study consists of students studying at Istanbul University's Faculty of Sports Sciences. The data collection instruments of the study include the personal information form developed by the researcher, as well as the Leisure Meanings Inventory which was developed by Esteve et al. (1999) and adapted into Turkish by Gürbüz et al. (2007) and aims to determine the leisure perceptions of the participants. The Perceived Freedom in Leisure Scale, which was developed by Witt and Ellis (1985) and adapted into Turkish by Yerlisu, Lapa and Agyar (2011) was used to determine the participants' perceived freedom levels in leisure. Additionally, frequency methods have been utilized to identify the distribution of the personal information of the participants and the Shapiro-Wilks normality test has been applied to identify whether data had normal distribution. Mann-Whitney U and Kruskall Wallis tests have been applied to determine the significant differences after it was determined that the data were suitable to non-parametric test conditions. According to the gender variable, no significant difference has been identified in the sub-dimension of the perceived freedom in leisure scale \(p>0.05\). In the active-passive participation and goal orientation sub-dimensions in the leisure meanings inventory, the female participants were found to score more than male participants. Based on the age variable, there were no significant differences found in any sub-dimension of the perceived freedom scale \(p<0.05\) or in the leisure meanings inventory \(p>0.05\). In conclusion, the perceived leisure levels of the female participants were higher than the male while it was also seen that as age increases, the perceived freedom levels in leisure increases as well.

Keywords: Leisure; Leisure Meaning; Perceived Freedom in Leisure.

Introduction
In a constantly changing world, the physical and mental features of humans have changed the least from the past to today. In this changing and developing world, the concepts of leisure and recreation have been one of the ways to maintain humans' mental and physical health. The recreation activities which people do in their spare times have become essential components of community life (Sevil et al., 1997). According to Kemp and Pearson, leisure is the time which is left over after excluding time spent working, sleeping, eating and other compulsory tasks (Kemp & Pearson, 1997).
Another point of view concerning leisure is that it represents the time period apart from working and other compulsory activities we do, and it is claimed that leisure is the best way to learn about a culture (Cordes & Ibrahim, 1999; Demirel, 2009). Leisure, which refers to the time in which an agent does not work or do other compulsory duties, but rather spends it as s/he wants (Karaküçük & Gürbüz, 2007; Atasoy et al., 2015; Esteve et al., 2007) is commonly claimed to contribute to positive participation which in turn promotes the development of healthy and self-realized young people (Balci et al., 2002). The concept of leisure allows for various definitions. It is generally thought to be the opposite of working, however, time spent working by one can be viewed as the leisure time of another, and many activities integrate the features of working and leisure together. Getting rid of obligations is often thought to be the primary attraction of leisure, but many activities outside of one’s job - activities in the house, social, voluntary and community activities - include considerable obligations in themselves (Torkildsen, 2005). Thus, the definition of leisure is subjective in nature as well as its symbolic meaning. It means different things to different people (Madrigal, 2006, Gürbüz & Henderson, 2013, Demirel, 2009).

Considering the vast variations of preferences in the world, some people may want to spend their leisure time indoors or outdoors, actively or passively, in rural or in urban areas. Hence, a number of researches about the contribution of active participation in recreational activities to agents’ positive feelings have been conducted. One of these positive emotions is freedom (Lapa & Ağyar, 2012). Perceived freedom in leisure refers to that agents choose the activity they want to do (Siegenthaler & O’Dell, 2000). Also, agents are expected to possess some characteristics such as adequate competency, the ability to control their experiences and internal motivation instead of external so that they can obtain maximum benefit from recreational activities (Lapa & Ağyar, 2012). Considering the fact that the experiences gained during childhood and youth would continue in the years following, it is of great importance to learn about the attitudes and behaviors playing a critical role in guiding the behaviors and decisions of young people (Çimen & Sarol, 2015). Thus, it is critical to examine young individuals, especially university students’ leisure time behavior, its meaning for them, as well as their opinions towards perceived freedom level. To this end, the aim of this study is to examine the opinions of university students concerning the meaning of leisure and perceived freedom levels in leisure based on different variables.

Methods

Study Sample

The sample of this study consists of 252 university students (174 males and 78 females) attending Istanbul University with an average age of 21.80 ± 2.62.

Data Collection Instrument

The form used in the study as a data collection instrument consists of three parts. The first part is the “Personal Information Form” which aims to determine students’ gender, age, income and weekly leisure time. The second part, which aims to measure the perceived competency, control and internal motivation in leisure, is the “Perceived Freedom in Leisure Scale” which was developed by Witt and Ellis (1985) and adapted into Turkish by Yerlisu, Lapa and Ağyar (2011). It is a five-point Likert scale with 17 items and two sub-dimensions labelled Knowledge and Skill and Excitement and Joy. In the scale, the scores range from 1 (Definitely Disagree) to 5 (Definitely Agree). The third part aimed to determine the leisure perceptions of the participants by using the “Leisure Meanings Inventory” which was developed by Esteve et al. (1999) and adapted into Turkish by Gürbüz et al. (2007) by conducting its validity and reliability studies. It is a 6-point Likert scale including 35 items and eight sub-dimensions labeled perceived freedom, business relation, social interaction, the availability of leisure, active-passive participation, goal orientation, perceived competency and internal motivation. The scale scores range from 1 (Completely Disagree) to 6 (Completely Agree).
Data Analysis Process

The data related to personal information was analyzed using frequency and percentage, both of which are descriptive analysis methods. With the aim of testing whether both instruments’ sub-dimensions show a normal range, the Kolmogrov-Smirnof test was conducted, and the results revealed that there was not a normal distribution among the sub-dimensions of both scales (p<0.05). The Mann Whitney U Test was then applied for the data with two variables, and the Kruskal Wallis Test was applied for more than two variables. The significance level was accepted as α = 0.05.

Finding

Table 1. The Distribution of the Participants in terms of Gender, Age, Monthly Income and Weekly Leisure

| Variables              | Gender | F | %       |
|------------------------|--------|---|---------|
| Gender                 | Male   | 174| 69.1    |
|                        | Female | 78 | 30.9    |
| Total                  | 252    | 100|         |
| Age                    | 17-20  | 147| 58.3    |
|                        | 21-25  | 96 | 38.1    |
|                        | 26 and older | 9 | 3.6    |
| Total                  | 252    | 100|         |
| Monthly Income         | Very Low | 22| 8.7     |
|                        | Low    | 41 | 16.3    |
|                        | Medium | 149| 59.1    |
|                        | High   | 35 | 13.9    |
|                        | Very High | 5| 2.0     |
| Total                  | 252    | 100|         |
| Weekly Leisure Time    | 1-5 Hours | 65| 25.8    |
|                        | 6-10 Hours | 68| 27.0    |
|                        | 11-15 Hours | 56| 22.2    |
|                        | 16 Hours or more | 63| 25.0    |
| Total                  | 252    | 100|         |

According to the statistical findings concerning participants’ gender, age, monthly income and weekly leisure time, 69.1% of the participants are male while 30.9% are female. The age of 58.3% of them ranges from 17 to 20, 59.1% of them have a “medium level” of monthly income, and 27% of them have “6-10 hours” weekly for leisure time.

Table 2. The Participants’ Perceived Leisure Freedom Levels based on Gender

| Sub-dimensions      | Gender | N  | Sequence Value Avg. | Z   | p   |
|---------------------|--------|----|----------------------|-----|-----|
| Knowledge and Skill | Male   | 174| 125.73               | - .251| .802|
|                     | Female | 78 | 128.22               |     |     |
| Excitement and Joy | Male   | 174| 121.00               | -1.792| .073|
|                     | Female | 78 | 138.77               |     |     |

Table 2 presents the Mann-Whitney U Test results conducted to test perceived freedom levels in leisure based on participants’ genders. The results indicate no statistically significant difference between the scores of males and females (p>0.05).
Table 3. The Participants’ Levels of Leisure Meaning based on Gender

| Sub-dimensions                  | Gender   | N     | Sequence Value Avg. | Z    | p   |
|---------------------------------|----------|-------|---------------------|------|-----|
| Active-Passive Participation    | Male     | 174   | 119.53              | -1.746 | .013* |
|                                 | Female   | 78    | 142.04              |      |     |
| Social Interaction              | Male     | 174   | 124.60              | -0.483 | .342 |
|                                 | Female   | 78    | 130.74              |      |     |
| Perceived Competency            | Male     | 174   | 124.14              | -0.584 | .234 |
|                                 | Female   | 78    | 131.78              |      |     |
| Availability of Leisure         | Male     | 174   | 121.81              | -2.847 | .432 |
|                                 | Female   | 78    | 134.74              |      |     |
| Perceived Freedom               | Male     | 174   | 122.45              | -1.645 | .232 |
|                                 | Female   | 78    | 135.53              |      |     |
| Internal Motivation             | Male     | 174   | 122.25              | -1.324 | .172 |
|                                 | Female   | 78    | 135.99              |      |     |
| Goal Orientation                | Male     | 174   | 119.00              | -2.455 | .014* |
|                                 | Female   | 78    | 143.23              |      |     |
| Business Relation               | Male     | 174   | 124.36              | -0.696 | .486 |
|                                 | Female   | 78    | 131.26              |      |     |

Table 3 presents the Mann-Whitney U test results which was conducted to determine the participants’ levels of leisure meaning based on gender. The results show that there is a significant difference in the sub-dimensions of “Active-Passive Participation” and “Goal Orientation” (p<0.05).

Table 4. The Perceived Freedom Levels in Leisure based on Participants’ Gender

| Sub-dimensions                  | Age       | N   | Sequence Value Avg. | X²   | p   |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----|---------------------|------|-----|
| Knowledge and Skills            | 17-20     | 147 | 113.70              | 10.918 | .004* |
|                                 | 21-25     | 96  | 144.31              |      |     |
|                                 | 26 and older | 9  | 145.61              |      |     |
| Excitement and Joy             | 17-20     | 147 | 114.58              | 9.477 | .009* |
|                                 | 21-25     | 96  | 143.01              |      |     |
|                                 | 26 and older | 9  | 145.17              |      |     |

With the aim of testing the perceived freedom levels in leisure based on participants’ gender, the Kruskall Wallis Test was conducted, and the results are shown in Table 4. The test results revealed that there are statistically significant differences in the sub-scales of “Knowledge and Skills” and “Excitement and Joy” (p<0.05).

Table 5. Participants’ Levels of Leisure Meaning based on Age

| Sub-dimensions                  | Age       | N     | Sequence Value Avg. | X²   | p   |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------|---------------------|------|-----|
| Active-Passive Participation    | 17-20     | 147   | 125.45              | 1.274 | .273 |
|                                 | 21-25     | 96    | 129.70              |      |     |
|                                 | 26 and older | 9  | 109.56              |      |     |
| Social Interaction              | 17-20     | 147   | 124.52              | .564 | .435 |
|                                 | 21-25     | 96    | 128.18              |      |     |
|                                 | 26 and older | 9  | 140.94              |      |     |
| Perceived Competency            | 17-20     | 147   | 130.25              | .748 | .218 |
|                                 | 21-25     | 96    | 120.52              |      |     |
|                                 | 26 and older | 9  | 129.06              |      |     |
| The Availability of Leisure     | 17-20     | 147   | 127.16              | 1.327 | .434 |
|                                 | 21-25     | 96    | 123.75              |      |     |
|                                 | 26 and older | 9  | 145.11              |      |     |
| Perceived Freedom               | 17-20     | 147   | 127.22              | 1.345 | .245 |
|                                 | 21-25     | 96    | 124.66              |      |     |
|                                 | 26 and older | 9  | 134.44              |      |     |
Table 5 illustrates the results of the Kruskal Wallis test which was applied to test the participants' leisure meaning levels based on their ages. According to the test results, there are no statistically meaningful differences between participants’ ages and their leisure meaning levels (p>0.05).

Table 6. The Relations among the Sub-dimensions of Perceived Freedom in Leisure Scale and the Leisure Meanings Inventory

| Sub-dimensions                      | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    | 8    | 9    | 10   |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Knowledge and Skill                |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Excitement and Joy                |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Active-Passive Participation       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Social Interaction                 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Perceived Competency               |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| The Availability of Leisure       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Perceived Freedom                 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Internal Motivation                |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Goal Orientation                  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Business Relation                 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

The Spearman Correlation Test was applied to determine whether there are relationships among the sub-dimensions of Perceived Freedom in Leisure Scale and the Leisure Meanings Inventory. The test results are shown in Table 6. The results indicate statistically positive and significant relationships among the sub-dimensions of both scales (p<0.05).

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of the study is to examine the leisure constraints and perceived freedom in leisure of university students in terms of different variables. Considering the demographic features of the participants, it was found that 69.1% of the participants were males; 58.3% of them were between the ages of 17 and 20, 59.1% had a medium level of income and 27% of them had leisure time of 6-10 hours weekly. There were no significant differences between the sub-dimensions of “Knowledge and Skills” (802) and “Excitement and Joy” (.073) in terms of perceived leisure levels based on gender. In the study of Lapa & Ağyar (2012) and Serdar (2016) which examined university students’ perceived freedom in leisure based on their participation in recreational activities, it was shown that gender was not a significant variable in defining perceived freedom levels in leisure. However, in another study by Kodaş et al. (2015) measuring relationships between the perceived freedom in
leisure and leisure time satisfaction levels of workers in the catering sector, there were meaningful differences found in the perceived freedom levels in leisure in the “Knowledge and Skills” sub-dimension based on gender. Thus, the study by Kodaş et al. (2015) parallel to this study in terms of the “Knowledge and Skill” sub-dimension. Based on participants’ age, there were again no meaningful differences found between perceived freedom in leisure and both sub-dimensions, which can be interpreted as that no matter what age the participants are, they care about the recreational activities they are involved in, and that as they get older, their interest in such activities does not change. Considering the leisure time and gender of the participants, there were significant differences found between the sub-dimensions of “Active-Passive Participation” and “Goal Orientation” (p<0.05) while there no meaningful differences in other sub-dimensions. The results of the study by Lakot (2015), which was conducted with physical education teacher candidates and the study by Demir et al. (2013) conducted with civil servants do not show parallelism with the current study results. This outcome can be interpreted as that the participants tend to perceive leisure time differently based on their genders. In terms of age, there were no significant differences found between the perceived leisure time meanings of the participants and sub-dimensions, which may mean that the perceived leisure time levels of the participants were close to each other regardless of any age difference. According to the Spearman Correlation Test results which was conducted to determine whether there were relationships among the sub-dimensions Perceived Freedom in Leisure Scale and Leisure Meanings Inventory, there are statistically positive and significant relationships among the sub-dimensions of both scales. Lastly, it was determined that gender is not a statistically significant factor in perceived freedom levels of the participants while age could be a meaningful variable. Additionally, in terms of the Leisure Meanings Inventory, there were meaningful differences between gender and the sub-dimensions of “Active-Passive Participation” and “Goal Orientation,” while there were seen to be no differences between age and leisure meanings of the participants.

References
Atasoy, L. K., Öncü, E., & Küçü, K. S. (2015). Beden Eğitimi Öğretmenleri Adaylarında Serbest Zaman Algısı ve Engelleri. 3. Rekreasyon Araştırmaları Kongresi, Eskişehir Anadolu Üniversitesi.
Balci, V., Demirtaş, M., Gürbüz, P., İlhan, A., & Ersöz, V. (2002). Ankara’da Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Boş Zaman Etkinliklerine Katılımlarının Araştırılması. 7. Uluslararası Spor Bilimleri Kongresi, Marmara Üniversitesi, Antalya.
Cordes, K. A., & Ibrahim, H. M., (1999). Applications in Recreation and Leisure: For Today and Future. (2nd Edition) Mc Graw Hill Companies.
Çimen, Z., & Sarol, H. (2015). Serbest Zaman Tutunu: Üniversite Öğrencilerine Yönelik Bir Araştırmada. 3. Rekreasyon Araştırmaları Kongresi, Eskişehir Anadolu Üniversitesi
Demirel, M. (2009). Rekreasyonel Etkinliklere Katılım ve Çevresel Duyarlılık. Gazi Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Doktora Tezi.
Esteve, R., San Martin, J., & Lopez, A. E. (2007). Gropsing The Meaning of Leisure: Developing A Self Report Measurement Tool. Leisure Studies, 18 (2):79-91.
Gürbüz, B., & Henderson, K. (2013). Exploring the Meanings of Leisure among Turkish University Students, Croatian Journal of Education. 15(4), 927-957.
Gürbüz, B., Özdemir, A. S. & Karaküçük, S. (2007). Meaning of leisure time scale: evaluation of psycho-metric characteristics on Turkish University students. International Mediterranean Sport Science Congress Book of Abstracts. Antalya.
Karaküçük, S., & Gürbüz, B. (2007). Rekreasyon ve Kent(II)leşme. Ankara: Gazi Kitabevi
Kemp, K., & Pearson, S. (1997). Leisure and Tourism. Great Britain: Longman Press.
Lakot, K. (2015). Beden Eğitimi Öğretmenleri Adaylarında Serbest Zaman Algısı Ve Engelleri, Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi.
Madrigal, R. (2006). Measuring The Multi-Dimensional Nature of Sporting Event Performance Consumption. Journal of Leisure Research, 58, 3.
Serdar, E. (2016). Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Katıldıkları Serbest Zaman Etkinliklerinden Tatmin Olma ve Algılanan Özgürlük Düzeylerinin İncelenmesi, Marmara Üniversitesi, Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi (Yayılmamış).

Sevil, T., Şimşek, Y. K., Katırcı, H., Çelik, O. V., & Çeliksoy, A. M. (2012). Boş Zaman ve Rekreasyon Yönetimi. Editör: Kocaeli S. T.C. Anadolu Üniversitesi Yayın No:2497

Siegenthaler, K. L., & O’Dell, I. (2000). Leisure Attitude, Leisure Satisfaction and Perceived Freedom in Leisure within Family Dyads.” Leisure Sciences, 22, 281-296.

Torkildsen G. (2005). Leisure and Recreation Management. (5th Edition). Routledge. New York: Taylor and Francis Group.

Yerlisu Lapa T., & Agyar E. (2011). Cross-Cultural adaptation of perceived freedom in leisure scale. World Applied Sciences Journal. 14(7): 980-986.

Yerlisu Lapa T., & Agyar E. (2012). Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Serbest Zaman Katılımlarına Göre Algılanan Özgürlük, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Spor Bilimleri Dergisi, 23(1), s.24-33.