

ORIGINAL ARTICLE



The Relationship between Recreation Awareness and Happiness Levels of Children in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Background. It is known that recreational awareness and physical activities are essential in increasing society's happiness. **Objectives:** This study aims to determine the relationship between the recreational awareness levels and happiness levels of children between the ages of 14-20, determine whether demographic variables affect recreational awareness levels, and examine the relationship between them. **Methods.** The study sample consists of 448 children (16.04±2.79), 272 males and 176 females, residing in two regions in Turkey. As a data collection tool in the research, "The recreation Awareness Scale (RFS)" and "Oxford Happiness Scale" were used. Pearson correlation, independent sample t-test, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to analyze the data. Quantitative research methods it is a research conducted with a relational screening model. **Results.** It was determined that the recreational awareness levels of the participants and social success, self-development, and pleasure-entertainment sub-dimensions were high, and their happiness levels were moderate. There was no significant difference between the recreation awareness sub-dimensions of the children participating in the study and the gender variable. There were statistically significant differences in pleasure-fun (P=0.001), social success (P=0.000), and self-development (P=0.000) in all sub-dimensions according to the living area variable. While there was no difference in the self-improvement (P=0.188) sub-dimension of the recreational awareness scale according to the monthly income variable, significant differences were found in the social-achievement (P=0.017) and pleasure-entertainment (P=0.015) sub-dimensions. As a result of the Pearson correlation analysis, it was determined that there was a weak positive correlation between the recreational awareness levels of the participants and their happiness levels ($r = .610$, $P > 0.24$). **Conclusion.** As a result of the analysis made between the recreation awareness levels of the children participating in the research, the recreation awareness levels of children in the age group participating in the research can be increased, and their happiness levels can be directly affected.

KEYWORDS: *Recreation, Awareness, Happiness, Children, Physical Activity.*

INTRODUCTION

With the industrial revolution, human-based power has shifted to machines, and as a result of this situation, a decrease in work time has emerged. The concept of free time has increased in contrast to the decreasing work time. Parallel to the increase

in free time, searches have begun to make it productive, and at this point, the concept of recreation has emerged. Recreation comes from the Latin word "recreation," meaning renew, recreate or reconstruct (1). The definition of

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recreation in the literature has been tried to be explained by considering different aspects by each researcher. Recreational awareness is a concept related to the awareness of recreational activities' advantages to individuals. It has been determined that participation in leisure activities has physical, psychological, and social benefits for individuals (2). The most significant factor that will help the individual to live healthy for many years is the level of physical activity (3). Recreation divides into two for-profit and non-profit services. In this sense, emphasizing tourism; has included profit-oriented businesses under the commercial recreation type. Other types of recreation can be segmented on an operational or functional basis. In addition, as can be seen, the diversity of recreational activities in a wide area, sociology, psychology, sports, tourism, health, planning, economy, etc., provided academic studies across disciplines. Therefore, recreational activities should be evaluated with a socio-psychological approach and in a multidisciplinary framework (4). Therefore, Recreational activities should be evaluated with a socio-psychological approach and in a multidisciplinary framework (5). According to another approach, Recreational activities can cover purposes such as places that create development and production for all age groups, social activities, sports, and exciting hobbies. It can even be perceived as a treatment center for physical treatments or a workshop area for people. Therefore, we can say that the best environment to examine personality through interpersonal relationships is the behavior process of individuals during recreational activities. The perception of the individual's body, especially during recreational or sports activities that he shares with other people, also has a shaping effect on his personality (6). On the other hand, awareness affects the stages of perception and representation of the mind's relationship with the brain. Awareness is not a cold cognitive process that indicates the defects of executive functions (7).

Awareness is more than a good thought. through mediation, can reduce depression, increase personal quality and bring life satisfaction (8). Awareness is a concept that can be associated with consciousness. Consciousness includes awareness and attention. Awareness creates the radar of consciousness that perceives internal and external factors. Attention is the state of focusing on

conscious awareness. The individual can become aware of objects or events without being exposed to the intense attention of the environment. Conscious awareness; is defined as being aware of the experiences in the present time (9). Recreation awareness, on the other hand, is a concept that indicates the individual's awareness of the benefits of recreational activities. This awareness is important in individuals' participation in recreation and activity preferences. The various benefits of recreation indicate that there is a need for the development of the individual. In order to fully fulfill these needs, the individual must be conscious of recreation. Recreational activities attended with awareness provide meaningful personal and social gains (10). Thanks to recreation, individuals can become individuals who can better express their feelings and thoughts, developing mutual relations and personal competence (11). Recreational activities contribute to the satisfaction of the person's psychological needs, to make them feel good, and to the development of their social behaviors (12). In addition, people can meet some of their needs, such as participation, acceptance, and closeness with the people and groups they interact with due to their social relations. In this respect, it is known that participation in recreational activities provides a holistic social benefit (13). Participation in recreational activities is an important protective factor for health. It contributes to the development of one's creativity and self-expression. It also serves as a basic measure in overcoming illness and disability, coping with negative life events and stress (14). Recreation also provides the opportunity to revitalize the individual, solve their problems and have a good time (15). Recreation activities are considered to have positive effects on the quality of life, as well as social benefits such as improving the skills of individuals, providing social solidarity, and getting closer to people from different ethnicities and cultures (16). Happiness is frequently studied in terms of being one of the basic concepts of positive psychology. The reason why there are many definitions for happiness is the fact that everyone's perception of happiness can be based on different issues. Happiness, which is an element that shows the quality of life of the individual and society, is an important phenomenon for a quality life created by developed societies (17). Participating in

recreational activities is known to help individuals reduce physical, mental, social and psychological satisfaction, as well as reduce health problems such as osteoporosis, reduction in body pain, stress and depression (18). Recreational activities provide a psychological discharge for the individual. Thus, that individual is expected to establish positive relationships with his family, friends, and others around him. Recreational activities provide individuals with personal and social benefits and physical development, healthy and free. It also provides the opportunity to spend their time in the most efficient way (19). In this case, it is thought that happiness has a relationship with leisure time, and it is expected that the happiness of individuals participating in recreational activities will increase. Among the determining tools of happiness; is satisfaction from leisure time, frequency of recreational activities, education and income level of the individual, and marital and physical health status. In addition, to social interaction tools, It is known that factors such as the number of friends and the frequency of social activities significantly affect the level of happiness (20). Peterson, Park, and Seligman introduced the concept of happiness orientations by providing a different perspective on happiness (21). The main purpose of the research is; to determine the relationship between recreational awareness and happiness levels. Similar studies; Bulbul et al. They found that athletes and physical education teachers have high recreational benefit awareness levels (4). Sevin et al.(2019) found that teachers' participation in recreational activities has a direct positive effect on happiness and job performance (22). Aksoy et al., on the other hand, determined that participation in recreational activities, defined as physical activity, directly affects the lifestyles of individuals (23). The aim was to determine the awareness levels of the participants with different demographic information by using the recreational awareness scale and to determine the relationship between the recreational awareness and happiness levels of the same individuals.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Design. The study was carried out according to the quantitative research design. In order to reach a general judgment about the universe, the universal scanning model was used in which the scanning would be done on the whole universe or the sample

(24). Quantitative research methods it is a research conducted with a relational screening model.

Participants. The research group comprised 448 children with an average age of 16.04 ± 2.79 (272 boys, 176 girls) residing in Turkey's Marmara and Southern Anatolian regions. The sample size was chosen to be at least five times the total number of scales.

Research Tools. The study used a personal information form including gender, region of residence and monthly income level of the family, recreation awareness and Oxford happiness scale (10, 25). A recreational awareness scale is a tool that measures individuals' recreational awareness levels. The scale consists of 41 items and a three-factor structure. Its sub-dimensions are pleasure and entertainment, social success, and self-development. Scale items were evaluated on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The total internal consistency reliability of the scale is .94, and the consistency reliability of the sub-dimensions is as follows: Pleasure/entertainment 0.88, social / success 0.90, and self-development 0.88. (10) Oxford happiness is a measurement tool developed to evaluate the happiness levels of individuals. The scale consists of 29 items and one dimension. Scale items were evaluated in a 6-point Likert type. Hills and Argyle found Cronbach's alpha value of the inventory to be 0.91 (25).

Statistical Analysis. SPSS 25.0 package program was used for data analysis. In order to evaluate whether the obtained data were suitable for normal distribution, the kurtosis and skewness values were checked, and it was determined that the values were between -2 and +2, and the data were suitable for normal distribution (26). Accordingly, independent samples t-test was used for two groups, one-way ANOVA was used to compare more than two groups, and Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between the data obtained from two scales.

RESULTS

This section will focus on the data obtained in the research. The results of the data obtained in the research (Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) are given. A total of 448 children, 272 male, and 176 female, were included in the study. The mean age of the children participating in the study was 16.04 ± 2.79 . As a result of the data obtained in the research, it was determined that the recreational awareness and happiness values of the

participants were above average. There was no difference in all sub-dimensions in terms of gender variables. A significant difference was found in terms of the region where the children live and their family income levels.

When the analysis results were examined, it was determined that the average values of the participants were high, and their recreational awareness and happiness levels were high (Table 1).

Table1. Average Values of Participants' Recreation Awareness and Happiness

| Variable | N | X | SS |
|---------------------------|-----|--------|---------|
| Pleasure - Fun | 448 | 4,1515 | 0,45403 |
| Sosyal Başarı | 448 | 4,1109 | 0,45982 |
| Self Development | 448 | 4,1484 | 0,45995 |
| Recreation Awareness | 448 | 4,1322 | 0,43307 |
| Happiness Overall Average | 448 | 2,9460 | 0,46517 |

As a result of the analysis based on the gender variable, no difference was found in the sub-dimensions of recreational awareness of the

participants in self-development (P=0.59), pleasure-entertainment (P=0.163), and social success (P=0.264) (Table 2).

Table 2. Participants' T-Test of the Sub-Dimensions of the Recreation Awareness Scale by Gender Variable

| Gender | N | X | SS | t | P Value |
|-----------------------------|-----|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Recreation Awareness | | | | | |
| Pleasure - Fun | | | | -1,397 | 0.163 |
| Male | 272 | 4,1275 | 4,1154 | | |
| Female | 176 | 4,1888 | 4,1993 | | |
| Social Success | | | | -1,120 | 0.264 |
| Male | 272 | 4,0909 | ,44873 | | |
| Female | 176 | 4,1417 | ,46089 | | |
| Self Development | | | | -1,891 | 0.059 |
| Male | 272 | 4,1154 | ,44155 | | |
| Female | 176 | 4,1993 | ,48638 | | |
| Total | 448 | | | | |

*Significant effects are marked (P < 0.05).

Statistical differences were found due to the t-test of the region where the children participating in the study lived. This difference was found to be higher in the recreation awareness levels of the children living in the

Marmara region in the sub-dimensions of pleasure-entertainment (P=0.001), social success (P=0.001), and self-development (P=0.001) compared to the children living in the other region (Table 3).

Table 3. Participants' T-Test of the Sub-Dimensions of the Recreation Awareness Scale by Residence Variable

| Region | N | X | SS | t | P Value |
|-----------------------------|-----|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| Recreation Awareness | | | | | |
| Pleasure - Fun | | | | -3,386 | .001* |
| South East Region | 244 | 4,0852 | 0,42167 | | |
| Marmara Region | 204 | 4,2309 | 0,47900 | | |
| Social Success | | | | -5,377 | .000* |
| South East Region | 244 | 4,0057 | 0,40788 | | |
| Marmara Region | 204 | 4,2367 | 0,48706 | | |
| Self Development | | | | -4,863 | .000* |
| South East Region | 244 | 4,0526 | 0,40986 | | |
| Marmara Region | 204 | 4,2628 | 0,49049 | | |
| Total | 448 | | | | |

*Significant effects are marked (P < 0.05).

As a result of the test performed depending on the family income level variable, no difference was

found in the sub-dimension of self-development (P=0.188), while there were differences in the sub-

dimensions of pleasure-entertainment (P=0.015) and social success (P=0.017). As a result of the Tukey multiple comparison tests performed to find the difference between the groups, it was determined that

the social achievement and pleasure-entertainment sub-dimension levels of high-income family members were higher than those of low- and middle-income family members (Table 4).

Table 4. Participants Anova Test of Sub-Dimensions of Recreation Awareness Scale According to Family Income Level Variable

| Income Status | N | X | SS | f | P Value | Variation |
|-----------------------------|-----|--------|---------|-------|---------|-----------|
| Recreation Awareness | | | | | | |
| Pleasure - Fun | | | | 4,208 | .015* | 3-1, 3-2 |
| Low (1) | 64 | 4,0833 | 0,46452 | | | |
| Middle (2) | 347 | 4,1435 | 0,45997 | | | |
| High (3) | 37 | 4,3453 | 0,44286 | | | |
| Social Success | | | | 4,096 | .017* | 3-1 , 3-2 |
| Low (1) | 64 | 4,0573 | 0,47831 | | | |
| Middle (2) | 347 | 4,0994 | 0,45625 | | | |
| High (3) | 37 | 4,3108 | 0,42055 | | | |
| Self Development | | | | 1,675 | .188 | |
| Low (1) | 64 | 4,0998 | 0,46452 | | | - |
| Middle (2) | 347 | 4,1443 | 0,45997 | | | |
| High (3) | 37 | 4,2703 | 0,44286 | | | |
| Total | 448 | | | | | |

*Significant effects are marked (P < 0,05),

As a result of the Pearson correlation analysis performed in Table 5, it was determined that there was a weak positive correlation between the recreational awareness levels of the participants

and their happiness levels and a high level of positive correlation between all sub-levels. Dimensions of the recreational awareness scale (r=.610, P=0.024).

Table 5. Pearson Correlation Tests Results

| | Happiness Scale | Recreation Awareness | Pleasure Fun | Social Success | Self Development |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| Happiness Scale | 1 | | | | |
| Recreation Awareness | .024** ,610* | 1 | | | |
| Pleasure - Fun | .026** ,586* | .894** ,000* | 1 | | |
| Social Success | 0.20** ,673* | .968** ,000* | .806** ,000* | 1 | |
| Self Development | 0.25** ,603* | .947** ,000* | .790** ,000* | .868** ,000* | 1 |

**r (Pearson Correlation Coefficient); * P,

DISCUSSION

The results obtained in the study are shown. It was determined that the study participants' average values were at a high level. In light of our results; Ekinçi (2017), Chin Tsai (2013), and Üstün and Aktaş Üstün (2020) are similar to the studies of researchers (10, 27, 28). As a result of the t-test performed according to the gender variable, no significant difference was found in the recreation awareness levels. As a result of the test, it is thought that the gender variable is not a determining factor in the recreational awareness levels. Statistically significant differences were found as a result of the t-test performed according to the residence variable of the children participating in the study. The recreation awareness scale differs from the sub-dimensions

of pleasure and entertainment, social success and self-development. It was determined that this difference was in favor of children residing in the Marmara region in all sub-dimensions. As a result of the test, it is thought that the rate of children living in the Marmara region has more recreational activity areas. As a result of the test performed according to family income level, a statistically significant difference was found. Tukey's multiple comparison test was used to determine between which groups the difference was. It was determined that there was a difference in the pleasure and entertainment and social success sub-dimensions of the recreation awareness scale, and this difference was in favor of the children of families with high income. There was no statistical difference in the self-

improvement sub-dimension. It has been determined that income status is a determining variable on recreation awareness levels and children with higher income levels have higher awareness levels. As a result of the Pearson correlation analysis, it was determined that there was a weak positive correlation between the recreational awareness levels of the participants and their happiness levels ($r = .610, p = .024$). There was a high positive correlation between the sub-dimensions of the recreational awareness scale. In the study by Sevin et al. (2019), the effect of leisure time on the happiness and life satisfaction of university students was examined. The study found that compared to college students who spend their free time at home, college students who spend their free time with outdoor or recreational activities have higher happiness and life satisfaction (29). In another study, In their study with primary school teachers, Chao et al. (2013) revealed that the benefits of participation in leisure time activities and leisure time positively predicted people's happiness (30). In Demirbulat and Avcıkurt (2015), the effect of tourism activities as a recreational activity on the happiness of individuals was examined, and besides being expressed as vacation, rest times away from work and stress; It was concluded that travel-related experiences increase happiness of tourists (31). The results obtained in our study show parallelism with the literature. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that there is a weak positive relationship between the happiness levels of individuals participating in recreational activities.

CONCLUSIONS

The research is limited to children living in Turkey's Marmara and South East regions. The results of the research, which determines whether

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the demographic variables of the children participating in the research are influential on their recreational awareness levels and examines the relationship between these two concepts, are as follows: Children's recreation awareness levels, social success, self-development, and fun sub-dimensions and happiness levels were found to be high. While there was no difference in recreational awareness levels on the gender variable, significant differences were found in the family income levels and the shadow variable they lived. It has been determined that there is a weak positive and significant relationship between happiness and recreation awareness levels.

APPLICABLE REMARKS

- Children in the southeast region should be encouraged to engage in recreational activities to increase their awareness of recreation.
- Children with low and medium family income levels should be encouraged to participate more in recreational activities.
- Studies can be conducted because recreational awareness levels are related to children's happiness levels.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Study concept and design: C.E. Acquisition of data: C.E. Analysis and interpretation of data: M.K. Drafting of the manuscript: S.C. Critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content: M.S. Statistical analysis: M.K. Administrative, technical, and material support: K.S. Study supervision: C.E.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors report no conflicts of interest. The authors alone are responsible for the content and writing of this article.

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