

Reviewing attitudes of women towards leisure activities in terms of different variables

Hüseyin GÜMÜŞ, Çağla AYNA, İrfan YILDIRIM

Mersin University, School of Physical Education and Sport, Mersin, Turkey

Address Correspondence to H. Gümüş, e-mail: huseyinn.gumuss@gmail.com

Abstract

This study focused on reviewing attitudes of women towards leisure activities in terms of different variables. The population of the study was consisted of women who were aged between 18 and 65 and lived in Mersin Province while the sample of the study was consisted of 214 women who participated in the study voluntarily. As data collection tools; Information Request Form and Leisure Attitude Scale (LAS) were used. To measure participants' physical activity level; International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ) were used. Normality of the distributions was tested with Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. For the analyses of the data; T-test, ANOVA and Correlation tests were used for those data that followed a normal distribution whereas Mann Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis H test were used for those data that did not follow a normal distribution. As a result; it may be concluded that women's leisure attitudes differed in terms of variables of having children and age. Besides, it was identified that women's employment status caused a significant difference in LAS-cognitive sub-dimension. No significant difference was found in leisure attitudes in terms of educational status while there was significant difference in affective sub-dimension and total scale score in terms of marital status ($p < .05$). No significant correlation was found between women's physical activity levels and leisure attitudes ($p < .05$).

Keywords: Attitude, Leisure, Physical Activity, Recreation.

INTRODUCTION

It is important how people use their time in their life struggles (8). Basic physiological needs and time concepts about living are necessary for all people. Today, the biggest problem that people face is lack of time. Handling the problem historically, too; it is seen that when women are compared to men, they are restricted while participating in recreational activities and are not able to have a special time period due to such reasons as women's heavy work conditions, heavy domestic works, lack of options in raising up children, using their spare time for family responsibilities and stress (13). These needs have reminded individuals of leisure term. When definitions of leisure in literature are examined, it is noted that many authors describe this term as freedom or being free (5, 20). For example; according to Karaküçük and Başaran (12), leisure is described as a time that is spent

away from work as well as necessary personal time and can be freely used with options".

Increased socio-economic and cultural levels of people today has made them motivated for spending time in beneficial activities and these people with increased awareness, knowledge, savings and leisure have been pursuing the best option that will enable them to use their leisure time ideally. Therefore, people want to do activities that will make them enter different social circles, get away from stress, adapt into different environmental conditions and improve and protect physical and psychological health (4). What motivates people for these activities is their attitudes. Attitude is -shortly- a state of readiness referred to individuals in order to give an emotional or behavioral respond to a psychological object in a specific way (11). These attitudes are the products of socio-cultural environment where individuals exist. Subject of attitude can be anything as well as leisure (10).

Attitude of leisure includes positive and negative reactions or tendencies made up by experiences, feelings, memories and knowledge in relation to all of the thoughts, emotions and behaviors about leisure and leisure activities. For example, someone with a positive attitude towards environment gets motivated for natural activities such as riding mountain bike. Since attitude -an invisible and subjective concept- produces visible behaviors, it may be understood how leisure attitudes of individuals are shaped by observing these visible behaviors (1). Therefore, it is worth investigating leisure attitudes of women – greatly restricted in recreational activities-. With this study, it is aimed at exploring how women’s demographic characteristics affected their leisure attitudes. In this sense, women’s leisure attitudes were examined in terms of such variables as having children, employment status, education levels, physical activity levels and age groups.

METHOD

Sample

The sample of the study was consisted of 214 women who were aged between 18 and 65, lived in Mersin Province and were recruited using convenience sampling method. 29.4 % of the women were aged between 18 and 33 years, 50.9 % of them between 34 and 49 years and 19.6 % of them between 50 and 65 years.

Data Collection Tools

Data collection tool used in the study was consisted of three parts. The first part of the data collection tool included statements that targeted at exploring information about participants’ personal information. The second part of the data collection tool included Leisure Attitude Scale (LAS) –which was designed by Ragheb and Beard (18) and was adapted into Turkish by Akgül and Gürbüz (2) - in order to gain insight into women’s leisure activities. LAS has three sub-dimensions “Cognitive”, “Affective” and “Behavioral” and 36 items. Variance ratio is 54%. In the current study, Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients were found to be .90 for Affective subdimension, .83 for Cognitive subdimension and .91 for Behavioral subdimension. Total reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated

to be .88. The third part of the data collection tool included International Physical Activity Questionnaire-Short Form (IPAQ) –which was developed by Craig et al. (6) and Turkish reliability and validity tests of which were performed by Öztürk (17)- in order to measure participating women’s physical activity level. In IPAQ the measure is to perform physical activities in at least 10-minute bouts. IPAQ questions individuals’ intense physical activity duration (football, basketball, aerobic, fast cycling, lifting, carrying load etc.), moderate physical activity duration (carrying light load, cycling at normal speed, folk dances, dance, bowling, table tennis, etc.), walk duration and one day sitting duration in the last 7 days in minutes. Intense physical activity duration, moderate physical activity duration and walk duration were converted into basal metabolic rate MET and total physical activity score was calculated (MET-min/week).

Procedure

Data were gathered based on voluntariness principle and using face to face interviews with or home visits to women who lived in the city center of Mersin Province and were aged between 18 and 65 or with the help of third parties. Before administration of data collection forms, participants were provided with data collection tools and they were requested to answer the questions correctly. Filling in the scales lasted 7 minutes averagely.

Analyses of Data

Data were processed and analyzed with computers using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software package. For the descriptive data analyses, frequencies and percentage analyses were performed. Distribution normality was tested with Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. In order to demonstrate whether or not leisure attitudes differed; T-test and ANOVA were used for the data with normal distribution while Mann Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis H test were used for those data that did not follow a normal distribution. Besides, one of the multiple comparison tests -LSD test- was used in order to find out which measurement results produced differences in variance analysis. Also,

correlation analyses were employed in order to assess

FINDINGS

Table 1. LAS scores and Mann-Whitney U results according to marital status, employment status and having children

LAS	Variable	Mean rank	u	z	p
Cognitive	Married (n = 141)	112.47	4.44	-1.63	.102
	Single (n = 73)	97.90			
Affective	Married (n = 141)	115.52	4.01	-2.63	.008
	Single (n = 73)	92.01			
Total	Married (n = 141)	113.58	4.28	-1.99	.046
	Single (n = 73)	95.76			
Cognitive	With Children (n = 150)	113.70	3.86	-2.24	.025
	Without children (n = 64)	92.96			
Affective	With Children (n = 150)	119.08	3.06	-4.19	.000
	Without children (n = 64)	80.37			
Total	With children	116.30	3.48	-3.18	.001
	Without children (n = 64)	86.88			
Cognitive	Employed (n=119)	117.77	4.43	-2.70	.007
	Unemplo yed (n = 95)	94.69			
Affective	Employed (n=119)	112.86	5.01	-1.41	.156
	Unemplo yed (n = 95)	100.79			
Total	Employed (n=119)	112.86	5.01	-1.41	.157
	Unemplo yed (n = 95)	100.79			

According to analysis results, women's LAS scores changed significantly in terms of marital status and status of having children. This finding indicated

the correlations among variables.

that women being married or single and having children had different effects upon their leisure attitudes. On the other hand, women's scores in LAS-cognitive subscale changed significantly according to employment status but women's scores in LAS-affective subscale and total scores did not differ.

When participating women's LAS scores were examined, marital status and employment status did not differ in behavioral subscale whereas status of having children differed considerably in behavioral subscale. Leisure attitudes of women with children were higher in behavioral subscale as compared to those without children.

Table 2. LAS scores and T-test results according marital status, status of having children and employment status

LAS	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Sd	Sd	t	p
Behavioral	Married	141	3.46	.77	212	1.43	.154
	Single	73	3.30	.78			
	With children	150	3.51	.75	212	2.92	.004
	Without children	64	3.17	.79			
	Employed	119	3.42	.82	212	.287	.774
	Unemployed	95	3.39	.71			

Table 3. LAS scores and ANOVA results according to age groups

LAS	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Sd	Sd	F	p
Behavioral	18-33	63	3.23	.75	2-211	3.29	.039
	34-49	109	3.43	.71			
	50-65	42	3.45	.74			
	Total	214	3.42	.79			

When participants' LAS scores were examined according to age groups, it was noted that age groups produced a significant difference in behavioral subscale. As women's age groups increased so did their leisure attitudes. Post-Hoc analysis was performed in order to explore which age group created the difference and it was found that the difference was created by 18-33 age group and 50-65 age group.

Table 4. LAS scores and Kruskal-Wallis H Test results according to age groups

LAS	Groups	n	Mean rank	X ²	sd	p
Cognitive	18-33 Years	63	92.33	6.85	2	.032
	34-49 Years	109	110.03			
	50-65 Years	42	123.69			
Affective	18-33 Years	63	86.04	11.63	2	.003
	34-49 Years	109	113.53			
	50-65 Years	42	124.04			
Total	18-33 Years	63	89.39	9.59	2	.008
	34-49 Years	109	110.68			
	50-65 Years	42	126.40			

According to Kruskal Wallis H-test results; young women's leisure attitudes differed significantly in cognitive, affective and total scores according to ages. Post-Hoc analysis was performed in order to explore among which age groups the difference existed and variances were homogeneously distributed (Sig. .914, $p > .05$) but LSD test was performed when the number of the members in the groups was not equal and it was found that the difference was created. According to the results of the analysis, leisure attitudes of women aged 18-33 years and 50-65 years differed.

Table 5. LAS Scores and Spearman Brown Correlation Results according to Physical Activity Level

Variable	n	r	p
Behavioral	214	.122	.074
Cognitive	214	.133	.052
Affective	214	.071	.304
Total	214	.099	.149

According to Spearman correlation analysis results, it was identified that there was a low and positive correlation between women's physical activity level and cognitive ($r = .133$, $p > .05$), affective (r

$= .071$, $p > .05$) and behavioral ($r = .122$, $p > .05$) subscales but the correlation was statistically not significant. Also, there was a low and positive correlation between women's physical activity level and LAS total scores but the correlation was statistically not significant ($r = .099$, $p > .05$). To us, this finding may be indicating that no significant correlation existed between women's physical activity levels and their leisure attitudes.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

In the recent years, new opportunities and new legal regulations have been available for women in the world; which has mobilized them by making them active members in many fields (14). Although significant increases have been observed in women's participation in recreational activities and physical activities –which are among these fields–; the number of studies examining their leisure attitudes is quite limited.

In this study that looked at women's leisure attitudes in terms of different variables, analysis results showed that women's LAS scores changed significantly in terms of their marital status, whether or not they had children and employment status; which means that women's being married or single, having children and employment status influenced their leisure attitudes in a different way. Analysis results indicated that married women as compared to single women, women with children as compared to those without children and women employed as compared to those not employed had higher attitude scores. We are of the opinion that behind this finding was the effect of patriarchal Turkish culture. Due to burdens required by the society (cleaning, cooking, being a spouse, mother etc.), women who are married and have children face with time-related restrictions and have limited time; which makes their leisure more valuable. Therefore, we think that it is due to this mission of the married women required by the society that they had higher leisure attitude than single women and likewise women with children had higher leisure attitude than those without children. Similarly, Akyüz and Türkmen (3) and Tektaş et al. (21) stated that women's leisure attitudes were stronger and higher than men. When the literature was

investigated, Lapa Yerlisu and Ağyar (15) emphasized that men were more active and comfortable in recreational choices thanks to such society supported structures as work, family, social responsibilities whereas women's recreational choices and options were more limited due to roles they adopted. Thapa, Confer and Mendelson (22) reported that men participated in more activities in recreational areas than women; which –in other words- means that women were exposed to more restrictions in leisure activities. Particularly in less developed or developing countries burdens caused by motherhood role, work and marriage as well as “women” identity are important factors that influence their leisure attitudes.

According to another finding of the study, there was a significant difference in Leisure Attitude Scale cognitive, affective, behavioral subdimensions and total scale scores in terms of age groups. The difference in all subscales and total LAS score was created by 18-33 age group and 50-65 age group. According to the study findings, it may be argued that average scores of women aged between 50 and 65 were better than those women aged between 18 and 33. Ragheb and Tate (19) suggested that leisure attitudes are turned into generalized set of values as a result of sufficient experience and long time period. In other words, attitudes are shaped, interacted, connected to and interchanged in time, becoming more generalized structures. These generalized structures are internalized by individual in time and become habits. Therefore, it will not be wrong to argue that individuals between 50 and 65 years may have developed an attitude towards leisure thanks to their experiences. Likewise, Akgül (1) reviewed leisure activity attitudes of individuals of different cultures. In the study, it is reported that thanks to multi activity physical education programs designed in England, life long leisure assessment options to which students can participate are given to them. Therefore, they learn more activity as they grow older and gain an assessment habit of leisure which they later can participate in. Lloyd and Auld (16) emphasized that one of the most important factors to enhance quality of life –value of which has been understood more as people grows older- is leisure attitude. There are other studies which are similar to our study but do not

investigate leisure attitude directly. One of these studies reported that thanks to the development of multi activity physical education programs designed in England, life long leisure assessment options which students can have are given to them. Therefore, they learn more activity as they grow older and gain an assessment habit of leisure which they later can participate in. As a result, it was observed that leisure attitudes of these students increased positively as they grew older (9).

According to another finding of the study, the correlation between participants' physical activity levels and scores of leisure satisfaction was examined. According to analysis results, it was seen that there was no statistically significant correlation between women's physical activity levels and LAS-cognitive, affective, behavioral subdimensions and total scale scores. With this finding it may be interpreted that women's leisure attitudes were not affected by physical activity levels. Particularly in developed countries, physical activity is considered as a necessity rather than a leisure activity (7, 12); which may be taken as an example by the societies of the developing countries.

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