

# Investigation of Factors Facilitating the Happiness of Individuals Participating in Leisure Activities

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## Abstract

This study aimed to examine the factors that facilitate happiness in leisure. The research was performed according to the relational screening design, one of the scanning models. A total of 260 students, 180 male and 80 female, selected by simple random sampling method, studying at Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa Faculty of Sport Sciences participated in the research group. In addition to the personal information form to collect data in the study, the Oxford Happiness Scale-Short Form (OHS-S) developed by Hills and Argyle (2002) and adapted into Turkish by Doğan and Çötök (2011), and the Leisure Facilitators Scale (LFS) developed by Kim et al. (2011) and adapted into Turkish by Gurbuz et al. (2015) were used as data collection tools. Considering the skewness and kurtosis values of the research data, it was accepted that the data showed a normal distribution. Moreover, t-test, ANOVA and Pearson Correlation test were used in the analysis. In this context, while no significant difference was found between the happiness of individuals according to their gender, a significant difference was determined between leisure facilitators. Moreover, a moderately significant relationship was found between leisure facilitators and happiness. As a result, personal, interpersonal and structural facilitators were identified as factors that facilitate the happiness of individuals in their leisure.

**Keywords:** Leisure, Leisure Facilitators, Happiness

## 1. Introduction

In the recent years, the developments in science and technology in modern life (Avunduk, 2021a) causes less need for people's labour while at the same time reducing their working hours. While workers working between 3500 and 4000 hours at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, this number decreases to less than 1800 hours today. In other words,

weekly working hours are reduced from 80 hours to less than 40 hours, and this means that people's leisure increased in parallel (Arslan, 2013). Regarding this situation, Jensen and Naylor (2005) state that the length of vacation time, the convenience of people in working conditions, and people have more leisure compared to other periods in history. It is seen that in the age we live in, especially in industrialized countries, developing and traditional societies are aware of the increase in the leisure periods (Karaküçük, 2014). Because leisure is like a symbol of development and modern life (Kelly, 1990).

While leisure is defined as the period that includes activities that people can participate in voluntarily (Daniel et al., 2008), this period is an important factor in people's sense of success and pleasure (Chen et al., 2013). Therefore, in recent years, researchers have drawn their attention to this point in the study of leisure. Because leisure has turned into a period that attracts more and more attention in contemporary societies and the usage of leisure became an important situation for people (Hou, 2003). The usage of leisure efficiently is important for people to get away from stress and to be more successful in their social and personal lives (Türker et al., 2016). While the use of leisure differs from society to society, culture to culture and even from individual to individual, the meaning attributed to leisure activities and the expected output from activities may also differ. The only thing that does not change for the people who participate (Gökçe, 2020) is the aim of getting satisfaction from these activities (Mannel & Kleiber, 1999). Researches show that; The satisfaction that people get from leisure activities affects their personality and mental states positively (Liu, 2014; Yağar & Yerlisu Lapa, 2015), mediating a life without depression (Chang et al., 2018) and happy (Öztaş, 2018) can increase satisfaction (Köksal, 2019). While the importance of leisure periods that people have and their positive evaluation is extremely important; researchers have revealed the need to examine the factors that facilitate people's participation in leisure activities. While Raymore (2002) states that the factors that facilitate people's participation in leisure activities should be known; Beşikçi (2020) states that knowing these factors is important for encouraging people to participate in leisure activities and ensure continuity in participation. Researchers are group leisure facilitators by use of the leisure barrier theory. In this context, it is thought that examined from three different perspectives as individual facilitators, interpersonal facilitators, and structural facilitators can be a better perspective (Sarol, 2017). Individual facilitators are defining as the skills, characteristics and beliefs that the individual develops in line with his/her area of interest (Beşikçi, 2020). Interpersonal facilitators have a developing quality in choosing and participating in leisure activities (Beşikçi, 2020) such as family members, friends, club membership (Sarol, 2017). Structural facilitators can be explained as factors such as money, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status (Swinton et al., 2008). It is thought that knowing these facilitating factors in participation in leisure activities is important at the stage of people's participation in leisure activities (Gürbüz et al., 2015).

Happiness is a situation that is emphasized, tried to be understood and defined together with the history of humanity (Mumcu, 2019). Considering at the concept of happiness, which aims to make life meaningful, has continued to develop day by day (Lyubomirsky, 2007) and is become a concept that is considered, evaluated and policies are developing in almost every

country and society (Korkut, 2019). Because happiness can be expressed as the degree to which individuals evaluated their quality of life (Selim, 2008). Although there are many factors for happiness in many areas of life, it is a fact that there are also intermediary reasons to increase happiness. It is demonstrated by scientific studies that people are happy, especially with sports activities. In addition, it is determined by scientific studies that individuals' recreational activities in their leisure (Alanoğlu, 2020), the freedom they perceive in their leisure (Siyahtaş & Ertekin, 2020) and the satisfaction obtained in the leisure activities that individuals participate in increase their happiness (Öztaş, 2018). Therefore, these activities are of great importance for the happiness of the individual (Avunduk, 2021b). Therefore, it is thought that it is important to investigate which facilitating factors affect the happiness of individuals in leisure activities and to contribute to the literature. In this context, the main aim of this research is to examine the factors that facilitate the happiness of individuals in leisure activities; At the same time, it is to determine whether the gender of individuals affects their happiness levels and leisure facilitators.

## **2. Method**

### *2.1 Research Model*

This research was performed according to the screening model, which is one of the quantitative research methods. One of the screening models was applied according to the relational scanning design. Relational screening design is a research design that aims to determine the existence or degree of change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2020).

### *2.2 Research Group*

A total of 260 students, 180 male and 80 female, selected by simple random sampling method, studying at Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa Faculty of Sport Sciences, participated in the study group of the research.

### *2.3 Data Collection Tools*

#### **2.3.1 Personal Information Form**

To determine the variables such as gender and age of the individuals participating in the research, the "Personal Information Form" prepared by the researcher was used.

#### **2.3.2 Oxford Happiness Scale-Short Form (OHS-S)**

OHS-S was developed by Hills and Argyle (2002), and adapted into Turkish by Doğan and Çötök (2011). The scale consisted of a 5-point Likert type (1-strongly disagree, 5-strongly agree), and 7 items and a single factor. The reliability coefficient of the scale was determined as 0.85, and the internal consistency coefficient determined for this study was 0.79.

#### **2.3.3 Leisure Facilitators Scale (LFS)**

LFS was developed by Kim et al. (2011) and Gurbuz et al. (2015) adapted into Turkish. LFS consisted of 16 items in 5-point Likert type (1-not important, 5-very important) and 3 sub-dimensions (personal facilitators, interpersonal facilitators, structural facilitators). The

Cronbach Alpha value calculated for the total of the scale was determined as 0.86, and for this study it was determined as 0.82.

#### 2.4 Analysis of Data

SPSS 20.0 package program was used in the analysis of the research data. Percentage (%) and frequency (f) methods were used in the distribution of personal data of individuals participating in the research. Whether the research data showed a normal distribution or not was understood by the skewness and kurtosis values. According to Büyüköztürk (2014), the fact that the data were in the range of -1, +1 can be interpreted as the scores did not show a significant deviation from the normal distribution. Therefore, as shown in Table 2, since the research data were in the range of -1, +1, it was accepted that the data showed a normal distribution. After the data showed normal distribution, independent samples t-test was used in the analyzes and Pearson Correlation test was used to determine the relationship between the variables. Evaluation of the data took place at the 95% confidence interval.

### 3. Results

Table 1. Distribution of demographic characteristics of individuals

		<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	180	69.6
	Female	80	30.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Age</b>	18-21	103	39.6
	22-25	120	46.2
	26 and older	37	14.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Welfare Status</b>	Low	118	45.4
	Normal	78	30.0
	High	64	24.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 showed the distribution of the demographic characteristics of the individuals participating in the research. According to the table, it was determined that 69.6% of the participants were “male” and 30.4% were “female”. It was determined that 39.6% of the individuals in the study were in the “18-21 age group”, 46.2% were in the “22-25 age group” and 14.2% were “26 years old and over”. It was determined that the welfare level of 45.4% of the individuals participating in the research was “low”, 30.0% “normal” and 24.6% “high”.

Table 2. Distribution of scale scores

Sub-dimensions		Item Number	n	Mean	Sd.	Skewness	Kurtosis
<b>Oxford Happiness Scale</b>	<b>Happiness</b>	7	260	2.93	.55	.457	.561
<b>Leisure Facilitators Scale</b>							
	<b>Personal facilitators</b>	5	260	3.53	.92	-.599	.463
	<b>Interpersonal facilitators</b>	4	260	3.41	.84	-.455	.581
	<b>Structural facilitators</b>	7	260	3.57	.88	-.741	.458

Table 2 showed the score distribution of the sub-dimensions of the scale obtained from the individuals participating in the research. According to the table, it was determined that the mean obtained by the individuals from the happiness scale was 2.93. It was determined that individuals have mean of 3.53 for the “personal facilitators” sub-dimension, 3.41 for the “interpersonal facilitators” sub-dimension, and 3.57 for the “structural facilitators” sub-dimensions of the Leisure Facilitators Scale.

Table 3. Results of analysis between happiness and sub-dimensions of LFS by gender

Scales	Sub-dimensions	Gender	n	Mean±Ss	t	p
<b>Oxford Happiness Scale</b>	<b>Happiness</b>	Male	180	2.92±0.60	1.557	.184
		Female	80	2.96±0.43		
<b>Leisure Facilitators Scale</b>	<b>Personal facilitators</b>	Male	180	3.51±0.98	1.268	.226
		Female	80	3.57±0.78		
	<b>Interpersonal facilitators</b>	Male	180	3.42±0.87	.985	.354
		Female	80	3.37±0.75		
	<b>Structural facilitators</b>	Male	180	3.56±0.93	6.851	<b>.000*</b>
		Female	80	3.60±0.77		

Table 3 showed the results of the independent samples t-test between the sub-dimensions of the happiness and leisure facilitators scale according to the gender variables of the individuals participating in the research. In the analysis results, no statistically significant difference was found between the happiness of individuals according to their gender ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Another result of the research analyzes was that while there was no statistically significant difference between the sub-dimensions of LFS “personal facilitators” and “interpersonal

facilitators” according to the gender variables of the individuals ( $p > 0.05$ ), a significant difference was found between the “structural facilitators” sub-dimension ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 4. ANOVA results on scale scores according to the welfare status variable

Scales	Sub-dimensions	Welfare Status	n	Mean±Ss	f	p
<b>Oxford Happiness Scale</b>	<b>Happiness</b>	Low	118	1.98±0.79	8.267	<b>.000*</b>
		Normal	78	2.03±0.45		
		High	64	2.47±0.81		
<b>Leisure Facilitators Scale</b>	<b>Personal facilitators</b>	Low	118	2.01±0.88	.352	.322
		Normal	78	2.06±0.71		
		High	64	2.85±0.82		
	<b>Interpersonal facilitators</b>	Low	118	2.93±0.80	.257	.527
		Normal	78	3.05±0.71		
		High	64	3.17±0.74		
	<b>Structural facilitators</b>	Low	118	2.85±0.77	6.725	<b>.000*</b>
		Normal	78	3.05±0.56		
		High	64	3.25±0.69		

In Table 4, the results of ANOVA analysis regarding the scale scores according to the welfare status of the individuals participating in the research were given. According to the analysis results, A significant difference was found between the happiness of individuals according to their welfare status ( $p < 0.05$ ). It was determined that the significant difference was in favor of individuals with a high level of welfare.

When the table is examined; While no significant difference was found between LFS “personal facilitators” and “interpersonal facilitators” according to the welfare status of individuals ( $p > 0.05$ ); A significant difference was found between “structural facilitators” ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the structural facilitators sub-dimension, it was determined that the average of individuals with high welfare status was higher than those with normal and low levels.

Table 5. Correlation results between LFS sub-dimensions and happiness

	<b>Happiness</b>
<b>Personal facilitators</b>	<b>.307*</b>
<b>Interpersonal facilitators</b>	<b>.324*</b>
<b>Structural facilitators</b>	<b>.274*</b>

Table 5 showed the correlation results between the sub-dimensions of LFS and happiness. In the analysis results, a positive correlation was found between “personal facilitators” and “happiness” ( $r = .30$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), and a moderate positive correlation between “interpersonal facilitators” and “happiness” ( $r = .32$ ;  $p < 0.059$ ). Moreover, a moderate positive correlation was found between “structural facilitators” and “happiness” ( $r = .27$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ).

#### **4. Discussion and Conclusion**

The main aim of this research was to examine the factors that facilitate the happiness of individuals in leisure activities. In addition, it was to determine whether there was a significant difference between the genders of individuals in terms of happiness levels and leisure facilitators.

According to the results; Although female individuals mean score of happiness (2.96) were higher than the mean score of male individuals (2.92), the mean score of happiness was not found statistically significant. Many studies were found in the literature examining the relationship between happiness and different concepts. Studies conducted were showed that the majority of studies showing that the gender of individuals did not affect happiness. For example Demir and Murat (2017), Saygın and Arslan (2009), Eryılmaz and Aypay (2011), Toprak (2014), Şahin (2015), Demirel (2019), Serdar (2020), Serdar et al. (2018) and Aydın (2016) concluded that gender does not affect happiness. Therefore, the results of this study and the results of the studies conducted were showed parallelism. However, there were also studies found in which a significant difference was found between happiness by gender. In the studies conducted by Gülcan (2014), Şaşmaz (2016), and Wei et al. (2015), it was concluded that the level of happiness differs according to gender. Since happiness was a relative concept against changing situations and events, and it was parallel to the living conditions of the day, it was thought that the differences emerging in the researches were natural. While there was not any statistically significant difference was found between the “personal facilitators” and “interpersonal facilitators” sub-dimensions of leisure facilitators according to the gender of the individuals; There was a significant difference between the “structural facilitators” according to the gender of the individuals. When the mean scores of the genders in the structural facilitators sub-dimension were examined, it was seen that the mean scores of female individuals were higher than the mean scores of male individuals. In the studies conducted by Bilgili (2019), Sarol (2017), Siyahtaş et al. (2018), and Özkan (2018), significant differences were found between the structural facilitators according to the gender of the individuals. Therefore, the results of this study and the results of the studies

conducted showed parallelism. In the research findings, a significant difference was found between the happiness of individuals according to their welfare level. It can be said that individuals who state their level of well-being as high are happier than those who state it as normal and bad. In the study conducted by Serdar (2020), it was seen that the same result was reached. Therefore, it can be said that the effect of high welfare levels on the happiness of individuals is important. When the effect of the welfare level of individuals on the leisure facilitating factors is examined in the research findings, it has been determined that the welfare level has a significant effect on the structural facilitating factors.

The main aim of the research was to examine the factors that facilitate the happiness of individuals in leisure. In the analysis results; A positive and moderately significant relationship was found between the happiness of individuals and the sub-dimensions of leisure facilitators. In other words, it was concluded that as individuals' personal facilitators, interpersonal facilitators and structural facilitators increase, their happiness would also increase. In other words; It can be said that all factors, including personal, interpersonal and structural factors, facilitate the happiness of individuals in their leisure.

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