



Examination of University Students' Perceived Stress Levels in Terms of Leisure Time Participation and Demographic Characteristics

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Extensive Summary

The concept of stress, which is important for every age group in today's conditions, affects the whole life deeply. Especially during university education, the stress sources of students increase extra. Resources such as economic status, social support, gender, family relationships, homesickness and academic responsibilities increase the level of stress. Individuals need free time and leisure activities to buffer these stress factors, communicate and socialize. Individuals not only meet their basic needs, but also meet their needs such as inclusion, participation and acceptance in a community by communicating and cooperating with leisure activities (Altunay and Balcı, 2018: 52). While leisure activities are perceived as more socializing, the concept of leisure time participation is defined as anything that positively affects physical, emotional and mental health (Suto, 2013).

The concept of leisure participation includes domestic activities, physical, social, cultural-artistic, outdoor activities and the frequency of participation in them. The concept of stress, on the other hand, includes the prolongation of distress, anxiety, sadness and tension, an uncomfortable situation that occurs in emotions and behaviors due to internal or external effects, and the discomfort, depression, tension, and unwillingness to do something. Demographic characteristics in the research; gender, age, marital status, place of residence, education level, income level. Frequency of participation in recreational activities and leisure time participation questions are included. Developed by Cohen et al. (1983) to measure the perceived stress level, Eskin et al. (2013), the scale adapted to Turkish was used. The reliability of the scale was calculated as 0.872. According to the results of the research, significant differences were found between the variables of age, place of residence,

educational status, time allocated to recreational activities, and leisure time variables and perceived stress levels.

It is seen that there is a statistically significant difference between the perceived stress scores of the participants according to their leisure time participation ($p < 0.05$). It is seen that the perceived stress scores of the participants who do social activities are higher than those who do indoor activities. This result is due to the very low participation in social activity during the pandemic period. The majority of the participants declared that they participated in domestic activities. Because of the long-term curfews on weekends and in some periods, individuals preferred indoor activities.

Finally; It has been concluded that those who are between the ages of 22-26, those with a master's degree in education, those who live with their families, those who spend less time on recreational activities and those who do domestic activities have higher stress scores than others.