EXAMINING THE VIEWS OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS ON LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES: A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

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Abstract:
The aim of this research is to reveal out the views of prospective teachers on how to spend the leisure time, the factors that affect the participation in the leisure time activities, the factors that prevent participating in the leisure time activities, the benefits of participating in the leisure time activities, the suggestions for spending the leisure time effectively. Study is conducted via qualitative research method. Maximum variation sampling and easily accessible sampling method were used and therefore 15 volunteer prospective teachers were participated in the study. Participants mentioned that using technology, meeting with friends, going to cinema, theater, concert are among the mostly preferred leisure time activities. It is also revealed out that interesting activities increase the participation whereas economic reasons prevent the participants from participating in the leisure time activities. As leisure time activities are significant, schools should provide various activities and areas for students to spend their time effectively.

Keywords: leisure time, prospective teachers, university

1. Introduction

Free times are periods including different alternatives for people to increase the quality of life and ensure them a happy life. Individuals have to educate themselves effectively in the modern world. People should especially make use of the times that are left from daily errands positively and take care of the little errands instead of wasting these times. Although the free times were regarded as laziness and sluggishness in industrial societies, today individuals are expected to benefit effectively from leisure times (Sarıgöz, 2017). In their leisure time, which occurs in various sizes and times; people for many purposes such as getting away, resting, travelling, seeing, visiting new places, getting excited, and getting different experiences participate in outdoor or indoor

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activities (Akyüz & Türkmen, 2016). Particularly in the youth age, if individuals who live the most active period spend their leisure time in a good and qualified way by using their energy, they are protected from bad habits and develop their knowledge, skills and abilities. So it is clear that not only education given in schools but also extracurricular activities play an important role in individuals' lives (Güçlü, 2013).

Leisure time is very important at schools nowadays in case it helps to improve educational aims, students' social improvements, gain social status and the interaction between the cultures (Karataş, 2006). Expression of leisure time is defined in my ways. Tezcan (1993) defined leisure time as the time an individual spends freely and deals with the activity he/she wants whereas Karaküçük defines (1999) as the time that one does not work, is outside of life obligations and formal tasks, and which one can spend on his own will. Parker (1971) defined leisure time when the individual will be dealing with events that he or she has freed from all the difficulties or interactions for himself and others and will choose for his or her own desire. Bakır (1990) also defined leisure time as the time people chose to do whatever they want independently of the others. Most children generally spend their leisure times by playing games and reading books, whereas teenagers mostly spend their time by reading, doing sports, going to concert, theater or cinema, participating daily activities. On the other hand, retired also spend their time mostly visiting, traveling, fishing, gardening, reading, watching TV (Tezcan, 1994).

Interests and wishes of university students vary a lot. Some free time activities can be popular. The free time activities in higher education period have positive contribution to students' life satisfaction (Zerengök, 2016). The lack of places for young people to evaluate their leisure time can lead them to shift to environments that can affect their mental and physical development negatively. The number of children and young people who are inclined to use drugs and other harmful substances as a result of being in a bad environment or making mistaken friendships increase year by year (Büküşoğlu & Bayturan, 2005). It has been suggested that the positive evaluation of leisure time is beneficial in strengthening social cohesion, especially protecting the young population from harmful habits.

Teachers are one of the most important factors in the education system. They not only educate students but also they try hard to grow up mentally, psychologically, physically healthy individuals. They are not only teachers but very strong models for students. So it is very important for them to be both academically and personally role models for the students. Indeed social skills, communication skills, cultural textures of them should be strong. It is clear that spending the leisure time gives chance to people learn new things, become more cultural, social, and empathetic. It is important for prospective teachers to spend their leisure time affectively by improving themselves socially and academically in case they will be models with their healthy qualities for their students in the future. When literature is examined, it is seen that there have been studies on leisure time activities of people, students but studies conducted via prospective teachers on leisure time is missing. In this study, it is aimed to learn the views of prospective teachers on leisure time activities in order to give suggestions for

university and faculty administrators, teachers, and prospective teachers. In line with the general objective, the following questions are tried to be answered;

- What are the views of prospective teachers on how to spend the leisure time?
- What are the factors that affect the participation in the leisure time activities?
- What are the factors that prevent participating in the leisure time activities?
- What are the benefits of participating in the leisure time activities?
- What are the suggestions for spending the leisure time effectively?

2. Method

2.1 Research Design
The research is conducted via qualitative research method. The study is based on phenomenology research design. Phenomenological research design focuses on familiar but partly-understood, hence lesser known, phenomena. Phenomena can appear in the form of incidents, experience, perceptions, inclinations, concepts, and conditions (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The researcher focuses on phenomena in which s/he has knowledge of and is conscious of but does not have a detailed understanding of the phenomena (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2010; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013) and aims to discover and define the meaning of the participants' knowledge and experience about it. Namely, the researcher tries to understand his/her experiences (Creswell, 2014; Hays & Singh, 2012). Therefore, phenomenological design was used in this study because it examines thoroughly the meanings attributed to the concept of leisure time activities via prospective teachers' experiences.

2.2 Participants
In phenomenological studies, data sources are chosen from individuals who have experience and can express and reflect their thoughts and experiences regarding it (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2010). The study used the purposive sampling methods of easily accessible sampling method and maximum variation samplings together in accordance with the design of the study (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Therefore, in pursuit of answers to the research questions, a total of 15 interviews were conducted with prospective teachers. Among the participants, 9 of them were female and 6 of them were male. 3 participants were from Biology Education, 2 of them were from Primary Mathematics Teaching Program, 2 of them were from Turkish Education, 1 of them were from Gifted Education, 3 of them were from Preschool Education, 2 of them were from English Language Education, 2 were from Primary School Education. The age of the participants varied from 18 to 22.

2.3 Data Collection Tool
Revealing out the views of prospective teachers on leisure time activities was defined as the research problem. To map this problem related literature was deeply searched and the following open-ended questions were posed in the interviews: (1) How do you spend your leisure time? What kind of activities do you participate in? (2) What are the

factors that affect you in participating in the leisure time activities? (3) What are the factors that affect you in not participating in the leisure time activities? (4) What are the beneficial sides of participating in the leisure time activities? (5) What can you suggest for spending the leisure time effectively? Also it is important to emphasize that while preparing the form, more attention was paid on the questions in the interview form so that they should be clear enough to prevent misunderstandings by the participants and should be prepared in an open-ended manner so as to present their opinions as they are, without allowing questions to be directed to prospective teachers (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

2.4 Data Analysis

Between September and December 2017, semi structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants by the researcher in order to elicit the interviewers' professional life stories. Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013) point out that interviewing, which is one of the qualitative methods, is a very powerful way of determining the perspectives, emotions and perceptions of people. Interviews were mostly conducted in the researcher's office and each interview lasted approximately 55 minutes on average. The interviews allowed the researcher to attain data that represented the personal perspectives of individual participants. In order to prevent possible data loss in the interviews note taking method was used apart from the voice recorder. All the voice records listened and then transformed into words. All data were sent to experts to check out if all data were coded rightly. After the expert approval, codes and categories were formed, descriptive and content analysis were done. In the presentation of the data, striking, explanatory and extreme examples were chosen to be presented (Ünver, Talu-Bümen, & Başbay 2010).

2.5 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two of the most important measures used to ensure the credibility of research results (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

Table 1: Validity and Reliability Analysis of the Study

Validity	Internal Validity	Consistency of data and findings
		Expert view
		Participant confirmation
		Direct quotation
	External Validity	Method explanation in detail
Reliability	Internal Consistency	Examination of the consistency of the results
	External Reliability	Detailed description of the data collection period and analysis

According to Table 1, the internal validity of the research was tried to be provided with the consistency of the relevant data of the data collection tool and the findings of the research, expert examination, participant confirmation, direct quotation of findings. External validity was tried to be provided by giving information about which method was used in the research and which pattern was used in accordance with the research

method. Internal consistency was provided through the examination of the consistency of the results of the the research and external reliability was provided through the detailed description of the data collection period and analysis. Codes and themes prepared for examining whether the generated codes and the generated themes were organized effectively; they were presented then to two experts and necessary arrangements were made in line with the suggestions. For the themes and categories determined by both the researcher and the other experts, the issues of "opinion association" and "opinion separation" were discussed and necessary arrangements were made. For the reliability calculation of the research, the reliability formula proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) as Reliability = Opinion Union / (Consensus Unit + Opinion Separation) x 100 was used. The matching ratio between encoders for the calculated calculation is .92. So it is considered to be reliable for this study (Miles and Huberman 1994). During the presentation of the findings, the direct quotations are given and the prospective teachers are coded as PT1, PT2, PT3, etc. PT is used for "prospective teachers" to preserve their anonymity.

3. Results

In order for them to be easily understood, the results have been categorized systematically under five different headings: (1) views on how prospective teachers spend their leisure time (2) views on the factors that affect participation in leisure time activities (3) views on the factors that affect not participating in leisure time activities (4) views on the benefits of participating in leisure time activities (5) views on suggestions for spending effective leisure time.

3.1 Views Regarding How Prospective Teachers Spend Their Leisure Time
The views of the prospective teachers regarding how they spend their leisure time are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Views of Prospective Teachers Regarding How They Spend Leisure Time

Categories	Codes	n
Social activities	Meeting friends	13
	Going on a picnic	10
	Chatting in a coffee	8
Academic activities	Reading	14
	Foreign Language course	6
	Library	5
Cultural activities	Theater/Cinema	14
	Hand craft	13
	Travelling	11
	Museum	8
	Concert	7
Other activities	Internet	15
	Mobile Phone	15
	Watching TV	14

Sleeping	13
Doing sports	10
Shopping	9
Cooking	7
Helping the mother	5
Playing games	4
Studying lesson	3
Playing an instrument	2
Painting	1
Swimming	1

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that participants mentioned their ideas on how they spend their leisure time in five categories which are social activities, academic activities, cultural activities, other activities and no participation categories. In the social activities category, meeting friends *(n=13)*, going on a picnic *(n=10)*, chatting in a coffee *(n=8)* codes; in the academic activities category reading *(n=14)*, foreign language course *(n=6)*, library *(n=5)* codes; in the cultural activities category theater/cinema (n=14), hand craft *(n=13)*, travelling *(n=11)*, museum *(n=8)* and concert *(n=7)*; in the other activities category internet *(n=15)*, mobile phone *(n=15)*, watching TV *(n=14)*, sleeping *(n=13)*, shopping *(n=10)*, doing sports *(n=9)*, cooking *(n=7)*, helping the mother *(n=5)*, playing games *(n=4)*, studying lesson *(n=3)*, playing an instrument *(n=2)*, painting *(n=1)* and swimming *(n=1)* codes are found. Some of the participants' opinions related to how they spend their leisure time are given below.

> *"In my spare time I like reading articles, watching TV. If it is summer, swimming is my best activity."* (PT 1)

> *"My leisure time activities change due to my mood. Unfortunately, I have lessons from the lower classes so all time I study. But of course like many people I like going to cinema, go around exhibitions and like many women I like shopping and also reading is my favorite free time activity."* (PT3)

> *"If I want to stay at home, I read books or spend the time in the kitchen. If I want to go outside I like meeting with friends."* (PT7)

> *"I really wait for leisure time. I like watching soap operas, sometimes I go to theater with my friends. English is very important for me so I am trying to learn English, I translate articles into Turkish. My plan for spring is to have a violin now."* (PT8).

> *"I have an interest in painting. I am trying amateurishly."* (PT10).

3.2 Views Regarding the Factors That Affect Participation in Leisure Time Activities
The views of the prospective teachers regarding the factors that affect participation in leisure time activities e are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Views of Prospective Teachers Regarding
the Factors That Affect Participation in Leisure Time Activities

Categories	Codes	n
Quality of the activity	Curiosity	8
	Popularity	6
Place of the activity	Nearness	6
	Size	4
Time management	Planning	13

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that participants revealed out three categories which are quality of the activity, place of the activity and time management. In the quality of the activity category, curiosity *(n =8)* and popularity *(n=6)* codes; in the place of the activity nearness *(n=6)* and size *(n=4)* codes and in the time management category, planning *(n=13)* code is found. Some of the participants' opinions related to the factors that affect participation in leisure time activities are given below.

> "*If the activity makes me curious, I try to participate.*" (PT1)

> "*The popularity of the activity is important, if a play in a theater is very popular and if most of my friend went, I wonder and try to go.*" (PT3)

> "*I think that if a person is organized and planned his work, he/she can find time to spend his free time effectively. Time management here is important.*" (PT4)

3.3 Views Regarding the Factors That Affect Not Participating in Leisure Time Activities

The views of the prospective teachers regarding the factors that affect not participating in leisure time activities are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Views Regarding the Factors That Affect not participating in Leisure Time Activities

Categories	Codes	n
Economic reasons	Lack of money	13
	Scholarship	10
Familial reason	Taking care of family	8
	Permission	6
Being aware of activities	Lack of information	11
	Announcement	5
Other reasons	Transportation	14
	Laziness	12
	Time of the activity	10
	Workload	8

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that participants revealed out four categories about the factors that affect not participating in leisure time activities which are economic reasons, familial reasons, being aware of activities and other reasons. In the economic

reasons lack of money *(n=13)* and scholarship *(n=10)* codes; in the familial reasons taking care of family *(n=8)* and permission *(n=6)* codes, in the being aware of activities category, lack of information *(n=11)* and announcement *(n=5)* codes; in the other reasons category, transportation *(n=14)*, laziness *(n=12)*, time of the activity *(n=10)*, workload *(n=8)* codes are found. Some of the participants' opinions related to the factors that affect not participating in leisure time activities are given below.

> *"Sometimes it becomes difficult for me to be aware of the time of the activities and also as my home is far from the center of the city I cannot participate."* (PT3)

> *"Of course it will be wonderful for us to participate into all kind of activities but some activities are very expensive, we cannot afford the tickets so we cannot go."* (PT5)

> *"I have to limit the activities because of lack of money. Also it is important to get permission from my family, Due to the time of the activities sometimes they do not allow me to participate."* (PT7)

> *"The lessons, exams, projects prevent me from spending my time effectively. I always have to study because I am going to graduate and have to find a job or pass the exam and have to be appointed to survive."* (PT12)

3.4 Views Regarding the Benefits of Participating in Leisure Time Activities

The views of the prospective teachers regarding the benefits of participating in leisure time activities are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Views Regarding the Benefits of Participating in Leisure Time Activities

Categories	Codes	n
Academically	Professional improvement	13
	Common experience area	7
Individually	Getting rid of problems	15
	Sociality	14
	Psychology	13
	Communication skills	9
	Motivation	7

When Table 5 is examined, it is seen that participants mentioned two categories as academically and individually about the benefits of participating in leisure time activities. In the academically category, professional improvement *(n=13)* and common experience area *(n=7)* codes, in the individually category getting rid of problems *(n=15)*, sociality *(n=14)*, psychology *(n=13)*, communication skills *(n=9)* and motivation *(n=7)* codes are found. Some of the participants' opinions related to benefits of participating in leisure time activities are given below.

"We are going to be teachers, it is not enough only to have academic experience, in order to have a good communication with our students and to create common life pleasures and talk about them we have to participate different activities." (PT4)

"It is important for us to chill out in these busy days. When our brain tends to do different things from the routine we can relax, so different activities are important." (PT 6)

"It helps us to contribute some new qualities for our professions. We can use different methods and techniques when we become teachers for our students. We can give different examples, tell new stories, our experiences. Being social makes us aware of everything, we can answer question from the others by preventing us introvert. It has lots of psychological factors." (PT9)

"I can fulfill my CV with these activities. It helps me improve my communication skills. By the help of courses which I could go in my spare time I developed my understanding, empathy and writing skills." (PT 13)

"I feel myself energetic and happy, I gain experiences, and I develop my perspective." (PT14)

"It absolutely motivates people; to succeed, have more skills is important." (PT15)

3.5 Views Regarding the Suggestions for Spending Effective Leisure Time

The views of the prospective teachers regarding the suggestions for spending effective leisure time are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Views Regarding the Suggestions for Spending Effective Leisure Time

Categories	Codes	n
	Number of activities	10
	Place of activities	8
Offers	Use of technology	6
	Explore the interest area	4
	University facilities	2

When Table 6 is examined, it is seen that participants mentioned offers category about the suggestions for spending effective leisure time. In this category, number of activities *(n=10)*, place of activities *(n=8)*, use of technology *(n=6)*, explore the interest area *(n=4)* and university facilities *(n=2)* codes are found. Some of the participants' opinions related to the suggestions for spending effective leisure time are given below.

"Today most of us have chance to use internet. So by the help of the technology we can follow the web sites of the activities and find available ones for ourselves, we can go to

cinema, theater, buy books or borrow books from the libraries and read them in our spare times." (PT2)

"If a person tries to explore his/her skills, interests by doing different kinds of hobbies, it will be helpful to learn what kinds of activities make him/her happy, so we must also explore our hobby and develop ourselves." (PT7).

"Universities have to provide opportunities for its students for spending their time effectively; it has to provide different kinds of activities for the students. Most of us stay in a dormitory, and do not have enough money to pay for the activities, so we spend our time chatting, walking around sometimes running." (PT11)

"It is important to participate in the social responsibility projects. It improves and alters the people. We can also follow the national and international projects." (PT12)

"A teacher candidate should improve him/herself by reading in order to be beneficial for his/her environment, society, motherland instead of wasting time. We can improve our language by listening to music, watching English films, and reading." (PT13).

4. Discussion

As for the way prospective teachers spend their leisure time, it is revealed out that prospective teachers mostly spend their time via using technology. According to the prospective teachers, the factors that affect participation in leisure time activities are quality of the activity and the place of the activity. One of the most important findings of this research is that economic reasons, familial reasons, being aware of the activities and transportation are the obstacles that prevent prospective teachers from participating in the activities. When the benefits of participating in leisure time activities are regarded, it is clear that prospective teachers mentioned about both academic and individual benefits. Also, participants offered some suggestions for spending leisure time effectively.

The most emphasized ways for spending leisure time of the prospective teachers is the use of mobile phones and internet. The other ways of spending leisure time is meeting friends, going on a picnic, chatting in a cafe, reading, going to foreign language courses or library, going to theater or cinema, doing hand craft, visiting museum or spending time in a concert, sleeping, doing sports, shopping, watching TV, cooking, helping the mother at home, studying lesson, playing an instrument, swimming. In Yerlisu-Lapa and Ağyar's (2012) study, it is revealed out that students mostly prefer spending their leisure time by participating in the social activities which partially resemble to this study's finding. In Yavari, Aroufzad, Dehkordi, Rabieezadeh's (2014) study it is also revealed out that the most important of leisure time activities of students were respectively watching TV, sport; listening to radio and music, talk with friends, doing artworks and other activities which is similar to this finding's study. With this

regard it can be said that, with the development of technological devices most of the participants prefer using their mobile phones for listening to music, watching videos, talking with friends or messaging, but at the same time it is clear that when participants have time and opportunity they prefer social activities more. So, it can be concluded that in the future the teachers who are successful in their fields should be also social in that they have good communication with their students.

It is seen that quality of the activity and place of the activity affects the participation in an activity. Curiosity and being planned are important for a prospective teacher to participate in an activity. Also, popularity, nearness of activity to home and the size of the place that the activity will be held affects the participation. This finding of the study partially resembles to Sarıgöz's (2017) study. In Sarıgöz's study, it was determined that working with interesting things in free time and handling them by struggling will give individual the feeling of satisfaction, individual will feel pleased when he/she learned about interesting subjects, individual feel free when he/she doing activities and individual will have a good psychology in spare time. Therefore, it can be concluded that the interesting activities that appeal to participants are popular among the leisure time activities.

Economic reasons such as lack of money and scholarship, familial reasons such as taking care of the family and permission, lack of information and announcement of the activity, transportation, laziness, time of the activity, workload are the obstacles that prevent prospective teachers from participating in the activities. This finding of the study is similar to Arslan' s (2014) finding that in his study he found that lack of money, information and friends are the reasons why university students do not participate in the leisure time activities. The study findings are in accordance with Yavari, Aroufzad, Dehkordi, Rabieezadeh (2014) in which special students stated financial problems, lack of habit and farness of house from sport revenues, laziness and boredom, apathy, fear of injury as their barriers for participating in sport and physical activities. Pepe and Can's (2003) findings have similarity with the finding of this study in that they also revealed out that lack of enough areas for activities, lack of money and time are the reasons for students in not participating in the activities. So it can be concluded that economic conditions mostly affect participants in leisure time activities.

The social, psychological and professional improvement is the most expressed benefits of leisure time activities expressed by the prospective teachers. Participation in leisure time activities give the chance to prospective teachers to improve themselves; increase their motivation and communication skills, sociality. Also, it is very important to spend the time affectively for having common dialogues with the students in the future. The other most striking benefit is to forget the problems, get rid of them for a while and think healthier. On the whole it is observed that, participating in leisure time activities relax people.

The other finding of the study is the suggestions of prospective teachers to increase the participation. It will be useful to increase the number of the activities to appeal more people. The place where the activity will be held should be in the city center to increase the participation. And if people who conduct these activities

announce via the use of internet, web sites, brochures, more participants can be aware of these activities. Also, the other important finding is that prospective teachers suggested that universities should increase their facilities for their students. These findings are in accordance with Pepe and Can's (2003) study findings in a way. Pepe and Can in their study found that in order to increase the participation, awareness should be raised among the students; also suitable areas must be provided for activities and the school administrators should be more sensitive.

Based on the results of the study, some suggestions can be offered as the following: in order for students to be socially affective also, in general universities and in special educational faculties for their teacher candidate should provide various activities that appeal different habits, pleasures, interest for their students. Leisure time should be appropriately filled through planning, designing annual calendars, developing facilities and equipment, allocating adequate budgets and activity fields such as for example amphitheater, drama halls, carpet fields, etc. In order to make leisure time activities more efficient, systematic and desired, students should be informed and their awareness needs to be increased. The establishment of hobbies and clubs, the organization of various social organizations are required to include activities aimed at improving intellectual aspects. For the future studies, it can be offered that different researches with different methods including other participants such as teachers, principals, parents of the students can be made.

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