



Investigation of High School Students' Orientation to Leisure Sportive Activities and Leisure Involvement Levels

Ferhat Kilicarslan^{1*}, Tebessüm Ayyildiz Durhan², Serkan Kurtipek³

Erciyes University, Türkiye¹

Gazi University, Türkiye²

Gazi University, Türkiye³

Corresponding Email: ferhatkilicarslan@erciyes.edu.tr*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the orientation toward sports activities, leisure involvement, and participation levels in sports activities during leisure time among high school students who participate in outdoor sports activities. In this context, a total of 228 high school students, 127 female and 101 male, participated in the study. Data for the study were collected through face-to-face interviews using questionnaires. Since the collected data were found to be within the parameters of normal distribution, parametric tests were applied. According to the findings, high school students were found to have high levels of orientation toward sports activities and free time. In addition, it was determined that students' gender, perceived income levels, daily free time duration, and the type of activity most preferred during free time significantly differentiated their orientation toward sports activities and levels of interest in free time. Furthermore, leisure involvement levels account for 39% of the variance in participation levels in sports activities. Based on these results, it can be said that high school students can socialize and develop their knowledge by participating in sports activities during their free time. In this regard, it is recommended that organizations be established to help high school students use their time after school more productively and in a way that is filled with sports activities.

Keywords: High School Students, Leisure, Sports Activities, Leisure Involvement, Leisure Time Orientation.

Introduction

Leisure time is an important period during which individuals can relax, have fun, and develop themselves by stepping away from the obligations of daily life. This period is particularly critical for young individuals in terms of their physical, psychological, and social development. Research shows that regular participation in leisure activities reduces stress levels, supports heart health, and has positive effects on overall health (Zawadzki et al., 2015).

In addition, meaningful leisure activities help individuals increase their subjective well-being, meet their life values and needs, develop social relationships, and promote positive emotions (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011; Carbonneau & Freire, 2017; Kim et al., 2024). Moreover, these activities, which are an integral part of a healthy lifestyle, support individuals' personal development and create a positive climate for the moral values of society (Sytniakivska & Illina, 2022; Kourkouta et al., 2018).

High school students gain important experiences that guide their individual and social development during a dynamic period such as adolescence. Participation in sports during this period not only supports young people's physical health but also strengthens their personal development in areas such as self-confidence, responsibility, and discipline. High school sports offer experiences that can develop life skills such as self-regulation, growth mindset, and positive youth development. Furthermore, participation in sports has been shown to increase academic achievement (Fox et al., 2010), help maintain physical activity levels (Shull et al., 2020) and be associated with higher self-efficacy (Downs & Strachan, 2016). In this context, engaging in sports activities contributes to students making more productive use of their free time and increasing their psychological resilience.

How students spend their free time is of great importance in terms of developing strategies that meet their individual needs and support their personal development. Research shows that young people typically spend their free time socializing with friends, engaging in relaxing activities, and using social media (Smajović, 2023; El Hadad et al., 2024). In addition, some students prefer passive activities such as watching TV or surfing the internet (Karaderi, 2021). Factors such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, and the availability of leisure facilities are said to be decisive in the choice of free time activities. Older students tend to engage in passive activities, while younger students prioritize sports and educational activities ((Tandarić, 2019).

Within the scope of this study, it was investigated whether high school students' levels of interest in leisure time activities and their levels of orientation toward sports activities show significant differences according to individual variables such as gender, perceived income level, and daily free time duration. According to the hypotheses of the study, it is predicted that the levels of interest in leisure time activities and orientation toward sports activities will differ significantly according to the gender variable. Furthermore, it is assumed that perceived income level may have an effect on these variables. In addition, it is thought that daily free time duration may create significant differences in students' levels of interest in free time and orientation toward sports activities. These hypotheses are expected to contribute to the development of recommendations for students to use their free time more effectively.

In light of this information, the aim of this study is to examine the levels of interest in free time activities and the orientation towards sports activities among high school students attending Anatolian high schools. Additionally, it has been investigated how these variables vary in the context of individual differences such as gender, socioeconomic status, daily free time duration, and free time preferences. It is believed that the research will guide the development of policies that will contribute to high school students making more effective use of their free time.

Literature Review

The attitudes of secondary school students participating in outdoor sports activities towards sport and their levels of participation in sports activities during their free time have become an important research topic in recent years, both in terms of individual development and public health. Research indicates that the most important motivations for students' participation in outdoor sports are learning new skills, improving physical fitness, establishing social relationships, having fun, and relieving stress (Pearce et al., 2014; Black et al., 2021). Furthermore, participation levels are influenced by numerous factors, including gender, age, socioeconomic status, school type, family support, and the facilities offered by the school (Sampasa-Kanyinga et al., 2019; Çetin et al., 2023; Clutterbuck et al., 2025). Additionally, it has been determined that participation in outdoor sports yields positive outcomes such as psychological well-being, self-efficacy, resilience, social connections, and environmental awareness; however, barriers such as time, lack of motivation, and access limit participation (Kim, 2016; Black et al., 2021; Durmusoglu et al., 2023). The school environment and family support play a critical role in increasing students' participation in sports during their free time (Spruit et al., 2015; Tandon et al., 2021; Lemberg et al., 2023; Lemberg et al., 2024). Therefore, participation in outdoor sports contributes significantly to the physical, psychological, and social development of secondary school students.

High school students generally have a positive attitude toward outdoor sports. The most important motivations include learning new skills, improving physical fitness, having fun, building social relationships, and relieving stress (Pearce et al., 2014; Black et al., 2021; Peacock et al., 2021; Nguri, 2024). Social motivations and the desire for success are particularly prominent (Rocher et al., 2020). Participation levels are influenced by factors such as gender, age, socioeconomic status, school type, family support, and the opportunities offered by the school. Male students and those from high-income families show higher participation (Sampasa-Kanyinga et al., 2019; Tandon et al., 2021; Çetin et al., 2023; Lemberg et al., 2024; Clutterbuck et al., 2025). Participation in sports activities during leisure time contributes positively to students' overall health, psychological well-being, and social development (Guddal et al., 2019; Rocher et al., 2020; Jackson et al., 2021; Pasek et al., 2022; Ramer et al., 2025).

Outdoor sports promote development in areas such as self-efficacy, resilience, social connections, and environmental awareness (Hoover, 2020; Down et al., 2023; Tian, 2023). The main factors hindering participation include lack of time, lack of motivation, lack of suitable facilities, and lack of family/social support (Martins et al., 2015; Rydenstam et al., 2020; Silva et al., 2022). Facilitators include opportunities provided by the school, family and friend support, and fun and varied activities (Thompson and Rehman, 2005; Haug et al., 2008; Popović et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2025). In conclusion, high school students' attitudes toward outdoor sports are generally positive, and participation provides numerous physical, psychological, and social benefits. The most important factors increasing participation include the opportunities offered by the school, family and peer support, and enjoyable and varied activities. However, barriers such as lack of time, lack of motivation, and lack of suitable facilities limit participation. Demographic variables such as gender, age, and socioeconomic

status also lead to differences in participation levels. Strengthening the school environment and social support stand out as effective strategies for increasing participation.

Research Method

The research was conducted using the descriptive survey model, one of the survey models of quantitative research methods. A descriptive survey typically provides certain quantitative measures, such as frequency analysis of a research group. The aim is to find out to what extent the existing literature supports a particular proposition or reveals an interpretable pattern (King & He, 2005).

Study Group

High school students who use outdoor sports facilities in Ankara participated in the study. Data was collected between February and June 2024.

Data Collection Tools

The data collection tool used in the study consisted of a three-part questionnaire. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews. The first section of the questionnaire contained a demographic information form prepared by the researchers, the second section contained statements from the Leisure Involvement Scale, and the third section contained statements from the Orientation Toward Sporting Events Scale.

Leisure Involvement Scale

The Leisure Involvement Scale, developed by Kyle, Absher, Norman, Hammitt, and Jodice (2007) to measure the level of interest of individuals participating in leisure activities in the activities they participate in, has been adapted into Turkish by Gürbüz, Çimen, and Aydın (2018). The scale consists of 15 items and 5 subscales. The scale is a 5-point Likert-type scale. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale range from 0.58 to 0.80 in the original study. For the current study, they range from 0.66 to 0.88.

Orientation Toward Sporting Events Scale

The Orientation Toward Sporting Events Scale, Developed by Pons and colleagues (2006), was adapted into Turkish by Çevik and colleagues (2019). The scale consists of 12 items and 3 subscales. The internal consistency coefficients for the 5-point Likert-type Orientation Toward Sporting Events Scale ranged from 0.87 to 0.75 in the original study. In the current study, they ranged from 0.92 to 0.78.

Data Analysis

SPSS 27 software was used to analyze the data. The normality values of the data were first examined, and after it was determined that they were within the normal distribution parameters, parametric tests such as the independent samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test were applied. In addition, the percentage and frequency values of the data were

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examined. Pearson correlation tests and regression analyses were performed to determine the relationships between the measurement tools.

Results

This section presents findings regarding the analysis of data obtained within the scope of the research.

Table 1. Findings regarding the percentage and frequency values of participants' demographic variables

Variable	Category	f	%
Gender	Female	127	55,7
	Male	101	44,3
Perceived Income Level	Low	18	7,9
	Middle	162	71,1
	High	48	21,1
Daily Leisure Time	1-2 hours	30	13,2
	3-4 hours	62	27,2
	5 hours or more	136	59,6
The Type of Activity with the Highest Participation During Leisure Time	Social	59	25,9
	Electronic	66	28,9
	Personal development	64	28,1
	Resting	39	17,1

Table 1 presents the findings regarding the demographic information of the participants in the study. Accordingly, 127 (55.7%) of the participants in the study were female and 101 (44.3%) were male. The majority of participants (71.1%) had a middle-level income, and it was determined that they had 5 hours or more of free time per day (59.6%) and participated most frequently in electronic leisure activities (28.9%) during their free time. (59.6%) and that they most frequently participated in electronic (28.9%) leisure activities during their free time.

Table 2. Findings regarding the minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis values of the measurement tools, as well as their internal consistency coefficients, based on the participants' responses.

Dimensions	Min.	Max.	$\bar{x}$	S.	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Leisure Involvement	1,00	5,00	3,71	0,67	-,314	1,472	,888
Attractiveness	1,00	5,00	3,85	0,83	-,646	,367	,770
Paying Attention	1,00	5,00	3,44	0,89	-,110	-,293	,679
Social Relationship	1,00	5,00	3,78	0,85	-,672	,326	,668
Identification	1,00	5,00	3,79	0,82	-,513	,217	,665
Self-expression	1,00	5,00	3,71	0,84	-,498	,230	,775
Orientation Toward Sporting Events	1,00	5,00	3,54	0,90	-,192	-,574	,923
Socialisation	1,00	5,00	3,64	0,89	-,396	,032	,782
Emotion Seeking	1,00	5,00	3,70	1,02	-,497	-,399	,911
Information Search	1,00	5,00	3,28	1,16	-,152	-1,093	,870

Table 2 presents findings regarding the minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis values obtained from the measurement tools, as well as internal consistency coefficients, based on participants' responses to the questionnaires. Accordingly, it was determined that participants had high levels of leisure interest and orientation towards sports activities. Furthermore, since it was determined that the measurement tools fell within the parameters of normal distribution, it was decided to apply parametric tests (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013).

Table 3. Findings of the independent samples t-test conducted to determine the relationship between participants' gender variables and measurement tools

Dimensions	Gender	N	$\bar{x}$	S.	t	p
Leisure Involvement	Female	127	3,62	0,52	-2,303	,000*
	Male	101	3,83	0,80		
Attractiveness	Female	127	3,77	0,72	-1,641	,012*
	Male	101	3,95	0,95		
Paying Attention	Female	127	3,27	0,77	-3,388	,042*
	Male	101	3,66	0,99		
Social Relationship	Female	127	3,76	0,74	-,474	,002*
	Male	101	3,81	0,97		
Identification	Female	127	3,75	0,71	-,883	,005*
	Male	101	3,84	0,95		
Self-expression	Female	127	3,59	0,72	-2,624	,022*
	Male	101	3,88	0,95		
Orientation Toward Sporting Events	Female	127	3,33	0,80	-4,124	,057
	Male	101	3,82	0,94		
Socialisation	Female	127	3,49	0,78	-2,653	,034*
	Male	101	3,81	0,98		
Emotion Seeking	Female	127	3,55	0,96	-2,515	,336
	Male	101	3,89	1,06		
Information Search	Female	127	2,93	1,06	-5,443	,927
	Male	101	3,73	1,12		

*p<0,05

Table 3 presents the findings of the independent sample t-test conducted to determine the relationship between the participants' gender variable and the measurement tools. According to this, it was found that the participants' genders statistically significantly differentiated in favour of male participants in all dimensions of leisure interest levels. Furthermore, statistically significant differences were also identified in the socialisation dimension of orientation towards sports activities. These significant differences were again found to be in favour of male participants.

Table 4. Findings of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test conducted to determine the relationship between participants' perceived income variables and measurement tools

Dimensions	Perceived Income	N	$\bar{x}$	S.	F	p	LSD
Leisure Involvement	Low ¹	18	3,86	0,57	4,777	,009*	3>2
	Middle ²	162	3,63	0,57			
	High ³	48	3,95	0,92			
Attractiveness	Low	18	3,72	0,64	1,720	,181	

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	Middle	162	3,81	0,78			
	High	48	4,04	1,03			
Paying Attention	Low ¹	18	3,66	0,71			
	Middle ²	162	3,30	0,82	7,119	,001*	3>2
	High ³	48	3,82	1,05			
Social Relationship	Low	18	3,90	0,78			
	Middle	162	3,72	0,77	1,244	,290	
	High	48	3,93	1,08			
Identification	Low ¹	18	4,07	0,62			
	Middle ²	162	3,70	0,78	3,450	,033*	3>2
	High ³	48	3,99	0,98			
Self-expression	Low ¹	18	3,96	0,80			
	Middle ²	162	3,61	0,77	4,056	,019*	3>2
	High ³	48	3,96	1,00			
Orientation Toward Sporting Events	Low ¹	18	3,70	0,73			
	Middle ²	162	3,42	0,84	6,000	,003*	3>2
	High ³	48	3,91	1,04			
Socialisation	Low ¹	18	4,01	0,67			
	Middle ²	162	3,53	0,84	4,519	,012*	1>3>2
	High ³	48	3,86	1,05			
Emotion Seeking	Low	18	3,68	0,82			
	Middle	162	3,62	0,99	2,394	,094	
	High	48	3,98	1,13			
Information Search	Low ¹	18	3,50	1,02			
	Middle ²	162	3,09	1,12	8,766	,000*	3>2
	High ³	48	3,85	1,15			

*p<0,05

Table 4 presents the findings of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test conducted to determine the relationship between participants' perceived income level variables and measurement tools. According to the findings, perceived income level significantly differentiates levels of leisure interest, identification, and self-expression. It was determined that these significant within-group differences favour those at the high level over those at the medium level. On the other hand, perceived income level was also found to be a statistically significant differentiator for orientation towards sporting activities and levels of socialisation. It was concluded that these intra-group significant differences favoured participants who stated that the orientation towards sporting activities was high among those with medium and high levels, and favoured participants who stated that the level of socialisation was low among those with low levels.

Table 5. Findings of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted to determine the relationship between participants' daily leisure time variables and measurement tools

Dimensions	Daily Leisure Time	N	$\bar{x}$	S.	F	p	LSD
Leisure Involvement	1-2 hours	30	3,68	0,65			
	3-4 hours	62	3,63	0,57	,881	,416	
	5 hours or more	136	3,76	0,71			
Attractiveness	1-2 hours	30	3,98	0,84			
	3-4 hours	62	3,80	0,70	,488	,614	

	5 hours or more	136	3,84	0,89			
Paying Attention	1-2 hours ¹	30	3,35	0,91	3,927	,021*	3>2
	3-4 hours ²	62	3,20	0,80			
	5 hours or more ³	136	3,57	0,91			
Social Relationship	1-2 hours	30	3,71	0,67	,156	,856	
	3-4 hours	62	3,81	0,80			
	5 hours or more	136	3,78	0,91			
Identification	1-2 hours	30	3,77	0,85	,936	,394	
	3-4 hours	62	3,67	0,76			
	5 hours or more	136	3,85	0,85			
Self-expression	1-2 hours	30	3,60	0,89	,714	,491	
	3-4 hours	62	3,66	0,70			
	5 hours or more	136	3,77	0,88			
Orientation Toward Sporting Events	1-2 hours	30	3,27	0,89	1,831	,163	
	3-4 hours	62	3,52	0,83			
	5 hours or more	136	3,62	0,92			
Socialisation	1-2 hours	30	3,60	0,92	,278	,757	
	3-4 hours	62	3,58	0,79			
	5 hours or more	136	3,67	0,93			
Emotion Seeking	1-2 hours	30	3,42	1,01	1,278	,281	
	3-4 hours	62	3,74	0,97			
	5 hours or more	136	3,74	1,04			
Information Search	1-2 hours ¹	30	2,85	1,01	3,235	,041*	3>1
	3-4 hours ²	62	3,20	1,13			
	5 hours or more ³	136	3,42	1,18			

*p<0,05

Table 5 presents the findings of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test conducted to determine the relationship between participants' daily leisure time duration variables and measurement tools. According to the findings, participants' daily leisure time duration variables were found to be a statistically significant differentiator in the dimensions of importance and information seeking. The significant difference identified in the importance dimension was in favour of participants with 5 hours or more free time between 3-4 hours and 5 hours or more, while in the information seeking dimension, it was in favour of participants with 5 hours or more leisure time between 1-2 hours and 5 hours or more.

Table 6. Findings of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted to determine the relationship between the variables of the most preferred activity type in participants' leisure time and the measurement tools

Dimensions	Type of Activity	N	$\bar{x}$	S.	F	p	LSD
Leisure Involvement	Social	59	3,76	0,81	,818	,485	
	Electronic	66	3,76	0,57			
	Personal development	64	3,60	0,53			
	Resting	39	3,76	0,78			
Attractiveness	Social	59	3,85	0,96	,549	,649	
	Electronic	66	3,93	0,83			
	Personal development	64	3,75	0,71			
	Resting	39	3,88	0,85			
Paying Attention	Social	59	3,56	0,99	2,356	,073	

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	Electronic	66	3,55	0,75			
	Personal development	64	3,19	0,83			
	Resting	39	3,49	1,00			
Social Relationship	Social	59	3,81	1,00	,562	,641	
	Electronic	66	3,81	0,69			
	Personal development	64	3,67	0,80			
	Resting	39	3,87	0,94			
Identification	Social	59	3,79	0,91	,249	,862	
	Electronic	66	3,83	0,72			
	Personal development	64	3,72	0,73			
	Resting	39	3,83	1,01			
Self-expression	Social	59	3,77	0,96	,219	,883	
	Electronic	66	3,66	0,80			
	Personal development	64	3,69	0,69			
	Resting	39	3,75	0,94			
Orientation Toward Sporting Events	Social ¹	59	3,88	0,94	4,674	,003*	1>3 1>2
	Electronic ²	66	3,38	0,90			
	Personal development ³	64	3,35	0,75			
	Resting ⁴	39	3,63	0,94			
Socialisation	Social	59	3,85	0,92	2,084	,103	
	Electronic	66	3,64	0,84			
	Personal development	64	3,45	0,85			
	Resting	39	3,62	0,94			
Emotion Seeking	Social ¹	59	3,99	1,03	2,995	,032*	1>3 1>2
	Electronic ²	66	3,54	1,06			
	Personal development ³	64	3,52	0,88			
	Resting ⁴	39	3,82	1,05			
Information Search	Social ¹	59	3,76	1,14	5,896	,001*	1>3 1>2
	Electronic ²	66	2,99	1,21			
	Personal development ³	64	3,07	0,99			
	Resting ⁴	39	3,41	1,14			

*p<0,05

Table 6 presents the findings of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test conducted to determine the relationship between the variable of the most preferred activity type in participants' leisure time and the measurement tools. According to the findings, the activity type variable did not statistically significantly differentiate leisure involvement levels, but on the other hand, it was found to statistically significantly differentiate the levels of orientation towards sports activities in terms of total, sensation seeking and information seeking dimensions. These within-group significant differences were found to be in favour of social activities for both within-group differences identified in all dimensions where significant differences were detected, namely social and electronic versus personal development.

Table 7. Findings of the Pearson correlation test conducted to determine the relationship between leisure involvement and level of orientation towards sporting activities

	Leisure Involvement	Attractiveness	Paying Attention	Social Relationship	Identification	Self-expression	Orientation Toward Sporting Events	Socialisation	Emotion Seeking	Information Search
Leisure Involvement	1									
Attractiveness	,792*	1								
Paying Attention	,758*	,511*	1							
Social Relationship	,785*	,493*	,449*	1						
Identification	,829*	,632*	,507*	,604*	1					
Self-expression	,781*	,496*	,493*	,555*	,541*	1				
Orientation Toward Sporting Events	,587*	,399*	,452*	,485*	,409*	,570*	1			
Socialisation	,578*	,454*	,383*	,514*	,430*	,503*	,717*	1		
Emotion Seeking	,512*	,377*	,348*	,439*	,359*	,498*	,921*	,534*	1	
Information Search	,471*	,253*	,450*	,349*	,310*	,489*	,903*	,506*	,737*	1

**p<0,01

Table 7 presents the findings of the Pearson correlation test conducted to determine the relationship between the measurement tools based on the responses obtained from the participants. The findings reveal a positive and moderate correlation between leisure involvement and orientation towards sporting activities ($r=.587$). Accordingly, it can be stated that a one-point increase in leisure involvement levels could lead to a .587-point increase in orientation towards sporting activities.

Table 8. Findings regarding the results of multiple regression analysis on the prediction of leisure involvement levels

Dimensions	B	Std. Error	β	t	p
Socialisation	,308	,047	,410	6,553	,000*
Emotion Seeking	,142	,052	,216	2,703	,007*
Information Search	,060	,045	,105	1,338	,182
R=0,630		R ² =0,397		F=49,190; p=,000	

Dependent Variable: Leisure Involvement Scale, *p<0,05

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Table 8 presents the findings of the multiple regression analysis regarding the prediction of Leisure Involvement levels. According to the findings, the levels of socialisation, sensation seeking, and information seeking, which are the orientation levels of sports activities, together explain 39% of the variance in leisure involvement. The order of importance of the levels in predicting leisure involvement is socialisation ($\beta=.410$), sensation seeking ($\beta=.216$), and knowledge seeking ($\beta=.105$).

Discussion

The present study, conducted to examine the orientation towards sporting activities, leisure involvement, and participation levels in sporting activities during leisure time among secondary school students participating in outdoor sporting activities, found that secondary school students have high levels of leisure involvement and orientation towards sporting activities. A review of the literature reveals studies that support the present research (Aktop & Göksel, 2023; Canpolat & Harun Turhan, 2023; Çevik & Yılgin, 2023; Çiriş & Başkonuş, 2020; Turan & Gülşen, 2023). The results also indicate that young individuals tend to spend their leisure time in meaningful and socially interactive ways. This is consistent with findings in the literature that leisure time increases individuals' subjective well-being and strengthens their social relationships (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011; Carbonneau & Freire, 2017). In particular, the high scores on the 'socialisation' and 'emotion seeking' dimensions reveal that young people view sporting activities as a means of both forming social bonds and expressing their emotions. This finding is also consistent with studies indicating that sporting activities support young people's development of self-confidence and discipline (Fox et al., 2010). Furthermore, it highlights the importance of encouraging sporting activities and structuring after-school programmes in this direction so that secondary school students can make productive use of their leisure time.

According to the results of the analysis conducted in Table 3 to determine the relationship between the genders of secondary school students and their levels of interest in leisure involvement and orientation towards sports activities, it was found that gender significantly differentiated all levels of interest in leisure involvement and one of the levels of orientation towards sports activities, namely the socialisation level. Male students' levels of interest in leisure time were found to be significantly higher than female students' in all sub-dimensions. Studies supporting this finding can be found in the literature (Aktop & Göksel, 2023; Emir, 2024; Yaşartürk et al., 2023). This finding indicates that men tend to devote their leisure time to more structured, socially and personally fulfilling activities. A significant difference in favour of male students was observed in terms of the socialisation dimension of participation in sporting activities. This situation shows that men view sporting activities not only as physical activities but also as a means of establishing social bonds and interacting (Fox et al., 2010). The results of the study conducted by Canpolat and Turhan (2023) support the current research. These findings reveal that male students show a higher interest in leisure time activities and sports orientation, while suggesting that there may be a need for practices aimed at increasing female students' participation in these areas.

The analysis results based on the perceived income level in Table 4 revealed that the levels of involvement in leisure activities and participation in sports events among secondary school students differed significantly in a statistically meaningful way. It was found that students in the high-income group placed greater importance on their leisure involvement, identified more strongly with the activities they participated in and/or performed, and were able to express themselves more fully in leisure activities. This finding can be linked to high-income students valuing their leisure time more meaningfully. It is consistent with the literature showing that income level is an important factor influencing how individuals value their leisure time (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011). In terms of orientation towards sporting activities, it has been found that participants with low-income levels participate in sporting activities for socialising, while participants in the high-income group participate in sporting activities to seek information. According to Kantomaa and colleagues (2007), high income provides greater access to organised sports, which can offer not only social benefits but also opportunities for learning and personal development. These findings indicate that economic differences are a significant factor in students' leisure time preferences and orientation towards sporting activities.

The analysis results presented in Table 5 indicate that the amount of leisure time available daily has a significant impact on the importance attached to activities undertaken during leisure time. Furthermore, the amount of leisure time available daily significantly differentiates the level of information seeking in sports activities. It was determined that an increase in leisure time periods had a positive effect for both levels. These findings emphasise that the quality of leisure time may be at least as important as its duration. A review of the literature revealed no studies supporting the current research or reaching contrary conclusions. Although these results have not been achieved, a review of the literature reveals that studies have identified an effect of the amount of leisure time available per day on participation in leisure activities. According to the results of the study conducted by Masrour and colleagues (2010), while a significant proportion of students have more than two hours of free time per day, many prefer sedentary activities such as surfing the internet, while a smaller proportion involvement in sports.

Table 6 shows that the types of activities participated in, namely social, electronic, personal development and leisure activities, did not significantly differentiate the levels of involvement in leisure time. This situation can be interpreted as high school students not approaching the activities they will do in their leisure in terms of type. On the other hand, it was concluded that the types of activities listed above were statistically significant differentiators for the levels of orientation towards sports activities. According to the results obtained, social leisure time activities were found to have the highest impact on orientation towards sports activities. Accordingly, it can be said that social activities direct high school students towards sports. Although social activities were found to be a significant differentiator, no significant difference was found in the levels of socialisation in terms of orientation towards sports activities. It can be said that students prefer to involvement in sports activities through social activities in order to seek knowledge and emotions.

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According to the results in Table 7, which examines the relationship between leisure involvement and levels of orientation towards sporting activities, a moderately positive relationship was found between the two levels. Accordingly, it can be said that a one-point increase in high school students' leisure involvement could lead to an approximate 0.5-point increase in their level of orientation towards sporting activities. This relationship reveals that individuals who spend their leisure time in a meaningful and structured manner show a greater inclination towards sporting activities. Structured leisure time positively affects leisure time participation. Individuals who perceive their leisure time as structured and purposeful are more likely to participate in leisure activities, including sports, which increases their overall commitment and satisfaction (Tsaur et al., 2021). Additionally, the results of the multiple regression analysis in Table 8 indicate that the “socialisation” dimension is the strongest predictor ($\beta=0.410$). This finding demonstrates that perceiving sporting activities as a means of establishing social bonds and facilitating interaction plays a significant role in leisure involvement. Furthermore, the fact that the “emotion seeking” and “information seeking” dimensions also significantly support leisure involvement reveals that individuals have both emotional satisfaction and learning-oriented motivations when participating in sporting activities. The results emphasise that structuring leisure time to meet individuals' social, emotional, and knowledge-focused needs is a critical factor in increasing the orientation towards sporting activities. A review of the literature reveals that the results of the study conducted by Sindik and colleagues (2009) support the current research.

Conclusion

As a result, the present study, conducted to examine the orientation towards leisure time sporting activities in which secondary school students participating in outdoor sporting activities involvement during their leisure time, as well as their levels of leisure involvement and participation in activities, found that secondary school students have high levels of leisure involvement and orientation towards sporting activities. These levels were found to differ statistically significantly according to the variables of gender, perceived income level, daily leisure time duration, and most preferred type of leisure time activity. Furthermore, positive and moderate correlations were found between leisure involvement and orientation towards sporting activities. It was also determined that the levels of orientation towards sporting activities explained 39% of the variance in leisure involvement.

Declaration of conflicting interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this work.

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