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A Gender Analysis of Leisure Satisfaction among Undergraduate Students at a South African University

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Abstract

Leisure plays a significant role in personal and social life, as it affects all angles of human development. In other words, leisure influences both physical and

psychological transformation of individuals within a given community. Nonetheless, the leisure satisfaction may differ from one person to the other, from a female to a male student. The current study aims to assess gender leisure satisfaction among undergraduate students at a South African university. The extent to which people (students) feel that their needs are being gratified through their leisure was determined using the shortened version of the leisure satisfaction Scale (LSS). The study sample comprised a total of 443 undergraduate students enrolled at a South African university. This data was gathered through a survey that employed probability sampling. The LSS was found to be a consistent and reliable instrument for measuring Leisure Satisfaction. The results showed that undergraduate students were satisfied with leisure activities. Despite non-significant differences in the overall LSS, a gender comparison showed that females appeared to be significantly more satisfied with the educational and relaxation factors of a leisure activity than males did. However, this could be because of the distinct activities each gender chose to participate in. Based on the results, universities should establish and promote leisure facilities that link relaxation and educational performance while supporting student's physical activities that improve students' satisfaction and well-being.

Keywords: *Gender analysis, Leisure satisfaction, Undergraduate university students*

JEL classification: *D63; I20, I31, J17*

Introduction

The transition from secondary to tertiary level in the South African (SA) education phase is complex and challenging. More significantly, adaptation to the university environment is identified as one of the common issues among undergraduate students, as there is a need to balance academic and social responsibilities (Kaya, 2016). The social responsibilities include the involvement of students in leisure activities, which include but are not limited to outdoor activities. Students need to participate in leisure activities, as many academics find a relationship between leisure activity, happiness, and depression among students (Liu & Yu, 2015; Argan, Argan, & Dursun, 2018; Hartman, Barcelona, Trauntvein & Hall, 2020). The findings show that as more students participate in leisure activities, it increases happiness and reduces depression. Moreover, active participation in leisure activities increases academic performance as it endorses active lifestyles, which leads to the healthier and social functioning of students (Kim, Brown & Yang, 2019). The utility theory advocates for a direct link between leisure activities and

leisure satisfaction, such that leisure satisfaction is considered a proxy for leisure activities. According to Hsieh (1998), leisure satisfaction is a positive feeling and notion individuals obtain when participating in leisure activities or leisure choices. This usually means that individuals who participate in leisure activities or preferences are content and pleased with the past experiences associated with leisure satisfaction.

Leisure satisfaction is considered an essential human need satisfied by pleasant individual experiences. However, everyone considers their level of leisure based on their preferences and the availability of resources to meet their needs (Ahn & Song, 2021). Thus, leisure satisfaction varies among individuals, as many have different satisfaction levels depending on their needs and ambitions. That being, where specific activities provide positive satisfaction to one individual, they may not provide the same pleasure to another (See Ngai, 2005; Gökçe, 2008; Place & Beggs, 2012; Lapa, 2013). Hence, leisure satisfaction is contingent on an individual's needs, skills, experiences, time, and availability of resources. Moreover, leisure satisfaction is also dependent on demographic factors (gender, income, and age) and environmental factors (home environment and university environment) (Gohari & Reddy, 2020). Therefore, it is essential to examine how each element affects undergraduate students' leisure satisfaction and whether leisure satisfaction varies among male and female students. Before discussing the literature review, it is important to provide a brief context on South African universities.

South Africa is a country with a stagnant and high level of income and opportunity inequality (World Bank, 2022). While in the education sector, all learners (students) have similar chances to further their studies based on their intellectual capacity; the history and the family background may influence a student's adaptation and participation and leisure satisfaction in leisure activities. The high education sector is not immune to the national inequality faced by the South African population. As evidence, in 2015, due to difficulties in enrolment and paying school fees, most South African universities that aimed to address inequality have not achieved their objectives. The disparities were shown in the 2018 enrollment rates; where the rate of enrollment at Higher education institutions (HEIs) was 55% for White students, 46% for Indian students, 19% for Black students and 15% for Coloured students (Gore & Botha, 2022). In addition to racial inequality, gender inequality remains another issue within the South African high institutions, where most students are male (Engel-Hills & Ibsen, 2020). The different inequalities together with poverty may have repercussions for the university's students' leisure participation and satisfaction. Additionally,

the transition from high school to university life becomes complex for first-year students, as some of them experience loneliness and distress, leading to their disengagement in both leisure and academic activities (Pennington et al., 2018). Thus, the interplay between these factors and leisure satisfaction among university students warrants further research in the complex South African universities.

Literature Review

Prior to the presentation of reviewed empirical literature from both domestic and international studies, it is important to provide the definition of leisure satisfaction. Köse et al. (2024) describe leisure satisfaction as the level of emotion and positive perception that a person obtains as the outcome of participating in leisure activities, with significant influence in maintaining and improving leisure time participation.

Review of Leisure Satisfaction within Domestic Universities

The review of empirical evidence has highlighted two critical determinants of leisure satisfaction among university students. Firstly, there is a group of studies conducted in the South African universities to assess the determinant of leisure among South African university students.

In the South African (SA) context, limited studies have aimed to examine the factors that influence leisure satisfaction among university students. Muzindutsi and Masango (2015) investigated the effect of demographical factors on leisure satisfaction among 443 students enrolled at Gauteng universities. Using a survey and LSS, they find students' age, the size of a student's household, level of dependence on parents, monthly expenditure, and status of study significantly affected their leisure satisfaction. Moreover, gender plays a vital role in determining the level of satisfaction. Muzindutsi & Viljoen (2016) also conducted the same study, but it was tested on the leisure attitude of university students. The findings show that the mode of transport to and from campus, students' expenditure, age, race, and level of study significantly affect leisure attitude.

These studies reached a common consensus that leisure satisfaction among university students is affected by socio-demographic factors and environmental factors (Muzindutsi & Masango, 2015; Muzindutsi & Viljoen, 2016; Jdaitawi, Rasheed, Gohari & Reddy, 2020). Considering

differences between male and female leisure satisfaction, findings from Labuschagné et al. (2025) indicated that female are more satisfied by outdoor leisure acutities than their counterpart male who are mostly interest and satisfied by group leisure activities.

Review of Leisure Satisfaction in Non-South African Universities

Secondly, other studies conducted outside of South Africa on the determinants of leisure satisfaction suggested that the effect of each factor on the leisure satisfaction of university students is determined by the university students' perception of these factors (Kim & Brown, 2018; Kim et al., 2019; Cho & Chiu, 2021). More specifically, the relationship between leisure satisfaction and gender is inconsistent and time-varying. Hence, there is no agreement as to how leisure satisfaction is said to be related to gender. Some studies find that leisure satisfaction among male and female university students is the same (see Lu & Hu, 2005; Place & Beggs, 2012; Lapa, 2013). In comparison, some find the contrary (see, among others, Kabanoff, 1982; Ngai, 2005; Gökçe, 2008). The discussed findings confirm Huang's (2003) theory of the relationships between leisure participation, leisure satisfaction, and life satisfaction of college students in Taiwan. This study found a significant interaction between leisure participation, leisure satisfaction, and life satisfaction of college students in Taiwan. However, the findings of the study indicated that males had a higher rate of leisure participation than their female counterparts. The role of leisure in various activities and the satisfaction among genders were also highlighted by Lee's (2023) study findings in Korea. The study revealed that females have less leisure time, and their satisfaction is driven by satisfaction with the time spent on learning and hobbies. On the other hand, the study found that males have more leisure time, yet their leisure satisfaction depends on time spent relaxing and enjoying sports. Broughton & Beggs (2007) investigated the relationship between leisure satisfaction and demographic factors of adults participating in senior activity centres in the United States (US). The study found that age, gender, and health status impact the leisure satisfaction of 187 older adults. Beggs & Elkins (2010) also used LSS to determine factors that influence leisure satisfaction. The study findings suggested that competence, intellectual and stimulus factors were the key determinants of leisure satisfaction. However, a survey was first constructed and answered by 363 university students from Midwestern University in the US. The findings show that leisure satisfaction among male and female students is different and subject to competence and

mastery factors. Liu & Yu (2015) examined the association between leisure satisfaction and the subjective well-being of 193 students from eastern Chinese universities. Having constructed a survey, the LSS demonstrates that leisure participation is an essential determinant of students' well-being. Furthermore, male and female students' responses to leisure satisfaction were the same. The findings are in line with a study conducted by Argan et al. (2018) in Turkey. In a more recent study, Yasartürk et al. (2019) used demographical variables to determine the relationship between life quality and leisure satisfaction at Bartın University in Turkey. A survey was administered and answered by 680 university students, and later LSS was implemented with a regression analysis. It was found that family and personal income have a significant effect on leisure satisfaction. Kim et al. (2019) also examined the impact of demographics on leisure satisfaction. A survey and LSS found that leisure satisfaction among 199 male and female students at the University of Hong Kong is indifferent. Moreover, leisure satisfaction is affected significantly by active participation in sporting activities. The findings are supported by a study conducted by Chung, Rhee et al. (2020) in US universities. Similarly, Altuntaş et al. (2021) investigated the effect of time management and demographical factors on 325 students' leisure satisfaction. Using a survey, the time management inventory scale (TMIS) and LSS; they found a positive relationship between time management and leisure satisfaction. Consequently, the perception of male and female students regarding leisure satisfaction is the same.

Having reviewed both international and local literature, the following observations are evident. Firstly, there exist more international studies than local studies that have examined the determinants of leisure satisfaction among university students. Secondly, there is a consensus that socio-demographic factors and environmental factors affect students' leisure satisfaction. Thirdly, the extent to which each factor influences leisure satisfaction among university students varies among studies. That being, where socio-demographic and environmental characteristics are found to impact students' leisure satisfaction positively, they are also found to influence students' leisure satisfaction negatively. Fourthly, many studies conducted in SA tend to focus on higher-ranked universities (University of Cape Town, University of Witwatersrand, University of Johannesburg, Stellenbosch University, University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of Pretoria and North West University) as opposed to lower-ranked universities (Sol Plaatje University, University of Mpumalanga, University of Limpopo, to name a few and technical universities). Hence, an investigation must be

conducted among the lower-ranking universities in SA to contribute to the literature. Considering the points mentioned above, the study examines the extent to which university students feel that their needs are being gratified through their leisure.

Methodology

The current study followed a quantitative research design to systematically investigate the research questions. The data utilised in this study were collected through a structured questionnaire established following the Beard and Ragheb (1980) Leisure Satisfaction Scale. The questionnaire was designed to capture relevant variables for the study's objective and analysis. Subsequent sub-sections present, and discuss the sample, research instrument and data analysis.

Sample

The sample was selected utilising random sampling and the former sample comprised a total of 443 undergraduate students enrolled at a University in South Africa from which permission was granted to administer the questionnaire. Participants were randomly selected to ensure that each element (psychological, educational, social, relaxation, physiological, and aesthetic) within the population has a fair and equal chance of being included in the sample. Among 443 participants, more than half (52.82%) were first year students while the remaining 47.18% were senior (2nd and 3rd) students. Female participants (53.7%) record a higher percentage compared to their male counterparts (46.3%). The average age of the participants was 19.88 (SD=2.04) years, and the majority were single (96.8%). Race distribution showed that the majority (81.9%) of students were Africans. The majority of students (97.8%) were South African, and most of them (70.3%) were from the Gauteng province.

Research Instruments and Data Analysis

A survey questionnaire was used to gather the necessary data for this study. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, and the first part covered different aspects of participants' demographic characteristics (such as gender, age, and race), while the second was based on leisure satisfaction. The extent to which people feel that their needs are being gratified through their leisure was gauged using the shortened version of

the Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS) developed by Beard & Ragheb (1980). This scale was adopted in the current study, as many studies which used it found it reliable (Beard & Ragheb, 1980; Trottier et al., 2006; Beggs & Elkins, 2010; Broughton & Beggs, 2007). The short version contains 24 items describing a broad range of *psychological, educational, social, relaxation, physiological* and *aesthetic* factors towards leisure satisfaction. The *Psychological* subscale measures whether activities offer psychological benefits such as a sense of freedom, enjoyment, involvement, and intellectual challenge. Intellectual stimulation and how individuals learned about themselves and their surroundings represented the *educational* factor. The *Social* factors are described as activities rewarding relationships with other people while *relaxation* dimensions refer to activities that provide relief from the stress and strain of life. The *physiological* dimension refers to physical fitness, and weight control, and otherwise promotes well-being. The way individuals found the leisure environment to be pleasing, interesting, beautiful, and generally well-designed represented the *aesthetic* component (Beard & Ragheb, 1980). Each subscale has four items. The format used was Likert-type, with 1 (never true) to 5 (always true). The higher the total score in any subscales, the more satisfying areas of leisure the participants find. The lowest scores reflect that the participants are the least gratified with (leisure) Scores lower than 2 indicate low satisfaction, while scores greater than 4 show a high extent of satisfaction from a certain area (Bowtell, 1993).

Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, were used to represent the data. Cronbach's Alpha test was performed to test the internal consistency of LSS. Also, an independent samples t-test was used to examine whether there is a significant difference in overall leisure satisfaction factors and items across gender. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences statistics (SPSS) version 30 was used to analyse the data.

Results

The LSS was found internally as a reliable instrument with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92, which exceeded the suggested threshold of 0.6 suggested by Pallant (2013). Cronbach's alpha reliabilities for the psychological, educational, social, relaxation, physiological, and aesthetic subscales were 0.86, 0.85, 0.70, 0.83, 0.87, and 0.83, respectively. These results confirm the ability of these subscales to measure leisure satisfaction among university students. The results showed that overall, student participants were satisfied with leisure activities (M=3.43, SD=0.70). Further analysis

of specific items revealed that leisure activities help students to relax and relieve stress, and they enjoy them. The highest rated items were “my leisure activities help me to relax” (M=3.74, SD=1.08), “my leisure activities help relieve stress” (M=3.74, SD=1.14), and “I engage in leisure activities simply because I like doing them” (M=3.74, SD=1.12). All of these 3 items belong to the relaxation dimension, which as a result got the highest score (M=3.73, SD=0.91). Two items rated the lowest satisfaction in comparison to others were “my leisure activities are physically challenging” (M=2.75, SD=1.24) and “I do leisure activities which develop my physical fitness” (M=2.91, SD=1.19) and were both elements of physiological factor. As a result, the lowest factor was physiological (M=2.90, SD=1.01) while psychological (M=3.44, SD=0.95), educational (M=3.61, SD=0.95), social (M=3.48, SD=1.01) and aesthetic (M=3.40, SD=0.89) also showed enough level of satisfaction towards leisure activities. Table 1 shows a breakdown of satisfaction with leisure activities by factors and items.

Table 1. Leisure Satisfaction Mean Scores

Factor	M	SD
Overall leisure satisfaction	3.43	0.70
Psychological	3.44	0.95
My leisure activities are very interesting to me	3.66	1.12
My leisure activities give me self confidence	3.44	1.12
My leisure activities give me a sense of accomplishment	3.39	1.13
I use many different skills and abilities in my leisure activities	3.28	1.16
Educational	3.61	0.95
My leisure activities increase my knowledge about things around me	3.57	1.14
My leisure activities provide opportunities to try new things	3.59	1.17
My leisure activities help me to learn about myself	3.68	1.16
My leisure activities help me to learn about other people	3.59	1.10
Social	3.48	1.01
I have social interaction with others through leisure activities	3.62	1.18
My leisure activities have helped me to develop close relationships	3.67	2.12
The people I meet in my leisure activities are friendly	3.33	1.08
I associate with people in my free time who enjoy doing leisure activities	3.30	1.14
Relaxation	3.73	0.91
My leisure activities help me to relax	3.74	1.08
My leisure activities help relieve stress	3.74	1.14
My leisure activities contribute to my emotional well-being	3.72	1.10
I engage in leisure activities simply because I like doing them	3.74	1.12
Physiological	2.90	1.01
My leisure activities are physically challenging	2.75	1.24
I do leisure activities which develop my physical fitness	2.91	1.19
I participate in my leisure to restore me physically	2.88	1.18
My leisure activities help me to stay healthy	3.05	1.21

Aesthetic	3.40	0.89
The areas or places where I engage in my leisure activities are fresh and clean	3.52	1.10
The areas or places where I engage in my leisure activities are interesting	3.50	1.06
The areas or places where I engage in my leisure activities are beautiful	3.33	1.08
The areas or places where I engage in my leisure activities are well designed	3.24	1.13

Source: Authors' own estimation

A comparative T-test indicated that female and male participants did not express significant differences in overall leisure satisfaction, as indicated in Table 2. However, they differed significantly in the importance they attributed to educational and relaxation factors. The test revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between males and females ($t=-1.94$, $df=415.11$, $p=0.05$) in how they are satisfied with the educational factor of leisure activities. Females ($M=3.69$, $SD=0.90$) reported a significantly higher level of satisfaction with the educational factor of leisure activities than males did ($M=3.51$, $SD=1.00$). In this factor, the item "my leisure activities help me to learn about myself" showed a strong significant difference of satisfaction ($t=-2.43$, $df=420.55$, $p=0.01$) between males and their female counterparts. Females ($M=3.80$, $SD=1.11$) reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction with the item "my leisure activities help me to learn about myself" than males did ($M=3.58$, $SD=1.19$). There are two other items in the educational component, which showed a weak but significant difference between females and males. Those are "my leisure activities increase my knowledge about things around me" ($t=-1.73$, $df=415.66$, $p<10\%$) and "my leisure activities provide opportunities to try new things" ($t=-1.87$, $df=420.59$, $p<10\%$). In both cases, females appeared to be satisfied ($M=3.66$, $SD=1.08$ and $M=3.68$, $SD=1.13$ respectively) than male ($M=3.47$, $SD=1.19$ and $M=3.48$, $SD=1.21$, respectively). The relaxation factor shows a weak but statistically significant difference between female and male ($t=-1.77$, $df=408.67$, $p<10\%$). However, in the relaxation factor item, "My leisure activities contribute to my emotional well-being" showed a strong significant difference of satisfaction ($t=-2.36$, $df=410.35$, $p=0.01$) between males and their female counterparts. Females ($M=3.84$, $SD=1.03$) reported significantly higher levels of inclination to the item, "my leisure activities contribute to my emotional well-being" than males did ($M=3.59$, $SD=1.10$). Item, "my leisure activities help me to relax" showed a weak significant difference in satisfaction ($t=-1.74$, $df=406.53$, $p=10\%$). Females ($M=3.82$, $SD=1.01$) reported significantly higher levels of inclination to the item, "my leisure

activities help me to relax” than males did (M =3.65, SD=1.16). According to the T- test, for other remaining factors (psychological, social, physiological, and aesthetic), females and males expressed similar levels of satisfaction in leisure activities.

Table 2: Leisure satisfaction by gender

Factor	Male		Female		Sig.
	M	SD	M	SD	P
Overall leisure satisfaction	3.39	0.75	3.46	0.66	0.30
Psychological	3.37	0.98	3.50	0.91	0.15
My leisure activities are very interesting to me	3.60	1.14	3.71	1.09	0.31
My leisure activities give me self confidence	3.37	1.15	3.50	1.10	0.23
My leisure activities give me a sense of accomplishment	3.31	1.15	3.45	1.11	0.19
I use many different skills and abilities in my leisure activities	3.20	1.16	3.34	1.16	0.20
Educational	3.51	1.00	3.69	0.90	0.050
My leisure activities increase my knowledge about things around me	3.47	1.19	3.66	1.08	0.08
My leisure activities provide opportunities to try new things	3.48	1.21	3.68	1.13	0.06
My leisure activities help me to learn about myself	3.58	1.19	3.80	1.11	0.01
My leisure activities help me to learn about other people	3.56	1.12	3.60	1.07	0.690
Social	3.50	1.12	3.47	0.90	0.70
I have social interaction with others through leisure activities	3.64	1.20	3.61	1.16	0.74
My leisure activities have helped me to develop close relationships	3.82	2.97	3.54	1.17	0.22
The people I meet in my leisure activities are friendly	3.27	1.07	3.39	1.09	0.26
I associate with people in my free time who enjoy doing leisure activities	3.29	1.13	3.32	1.15	0.79
Relaxation	3.65	0.97	3.80	0.85	0.07
My leisure activities help me to relax	3.65	1.16	3.82	1.01	0.08
My leisure activities help relieve stress	3.70	1.17	3.77	1.11	0.47
My leisure activities contribute to my emotional well- being	3.59	1.10	3.84	1.03	0.01
I engage in leisure activities simply because I like doing them	3.68	1.13	3.78	1.11	0.32
Physiological	2.94	1.03	2.86	1.01	0.41
My leisure activities are physically challenging	2.84	1.22	2.67	1.25	0.14
I do leisure activities that develop my physical fitness	2.94	1.19	2.89	1.18	0.70
I participate in my leisure to restore me physically	2.91	1.16	2.86	1.14	0.65
My leisure activities help me to stay healthy	3.07	1.22	3.04	1.20	0.76
Aesthetic	3.36	0.94	3.43	0.85	0.41

The areas or places where I engage in my leisure activities are fresh and clean	3.47	1.13	3.55	1.07	0.43
The areas or places where I engage in my leisure activities are interesting	3.52	1.07	3.48	1.06	0.65
The areas or places where I engage in my leisure activities are beautiful	3.26	1.11	3.39	1.04	0.19
The areas or places where I engage in my leisure activities are well designed	3.18	1.18	3.29	1.07	0.30

Source: Source: Authors' own estimation

Discussion of the Findings

The aim of this study was to assess gender leisure satisfaction among undergraduate students at one of the South African universities. Participants indicated that leisure time assists them in relaxing and thereafter contributing to their academic success. In other words, the results of the study alluded to the fact that, overall, participants were satisfied with leisure activities. This study's finding supports the findings of Beggs and Elkins (2010) and Broughton and Beggs (2007), suggesting no significant differences in the Leisure Satisfaction Scale. The absence of differences in leisure satisfaction among the study participants (undergraduate students) may be explained by improvement in social norms and gender role. The latter, in modern society promotes gender equality in leisure participation. In other words, female and male students can now engage or participate in a wide and similar range of leisure activities. Another element is that students, male or female, have equal access and opportunities to the university facilities at their respective campuses. Consequently, instead of gender-based distinctions, leisure satisfaction for undergraduate students is subject to common opportunities for students and individual preferences.

The relaxation factor appeared to be the most satisfying element of the leisure experience compared to others, and this is consistent with the findings of Beggs and Elkins (2010), Broughton and Beggs (2007) and Lapa (2013). Beggs and Elkins's (2010) study of the influence of leisure motivation on leisure satisfaction in undergraduate college students did not clearly show factors of leisure satisfaction but when the average of four elements of relaxation factor was computed it showed the highest score in relation to others. The highest rate of relaxation factor among other subscales of leisure satisfaction was found also by Broughton & Beggs (2007) in their study of leisure satisfaction among older adult people, while Lapa (2013) found similar results in a sample of people of different ages. In this study, student participants overwhelmingly

supported that they engage in leisure simply because they enjoy doing it. This is similar to the findings of the research by Beggs and Elkins (2010) and, Broughton and Beggs (2007).

The psychological, educational, social, and aesthetic were also rated highly. This aligns with the study of Broughton & Beggs (2007) which explored leisure satisfaction in older adults. The results showed that the physiological factor was rated lowest, which is congruent with the study of Broughton & Beggs (2007). This is quite strange because Broughton & Beggs' (2007) study used a sample of older adults (65 years old and above) while this study used young participants ($M=19.88$). The current study does not support that of Brown & Frankel (1993) who found the physiological dimension to be highly rated as the most important leisure satisfaction activity in the young age population.

The data from the current study were further analysed on the basis of gender. This study did not find any difference across gender in overall LSS, as many studies did (Place & Beggs, 2012; Beggs & Elkins, 2010; Broughton & Beggs, 2007; Kaufman, 1984) and as a conclusion, these studies have suggested that females and males experienced the same level of leisure satisfaction when involved in similar activities. However, in spite of non-significant differences in the overall LSS across gender, there were two significant differences in factors. Females appeared to be significantly more satisfied with the educational factor of a leisure activity than males did, and a weak significant difference was found in the relaxation component where females seemed to be more satisfied with the relaxation factor than their male counterparts. Kaufman (1984) found that males and females differed on how satisfied they were with social factors, while many other studies did not find any significant difference in factors of LSS across gender. Several statistically significant differences between males and females were found on different items of LSS in this study. Females were more likely during leisure activities to relax and gain emotional well-being than males. There are various reasons that may justify the higher leisure satisfaction of females than males. Firstly, females are more open to socialisation and give more value to interpersonal connections. Thus, to them, leisure time has a significant role and meaning in their emotional well-being. Secondly, leisure activities preferred by female are mostly those that promote social interaction emotional expression and relaxation while male's preference turns around competitive and active activities, which sometimes are not linked with emotional well-being. The third element that may justify differences in relaxation activities between male and female is norms and cultural expectations. While females are encouraged to prioritise their

safe care and emotional wellbeing, sometimes their male counterparts experience the social pressures to mostly focus on competitive and productive activities, which may impede their emotional benefits and perceived relaxation. The point that leisure activities help more to relax females than males is consistent with the findings of (Broughton & Beggs, 2007).

It is important to recall that the aim of this study was to assess gender leisure satisfaction among undergraduate students at a South African university. The main findings suggested that females are more satisfied with the educational and relaxation factors of a leisure activity than males. This implies that females are more likely than males to use their leisure time to learn new things, learn about themselves, and increase their knowledge about the world around them. It is important to highlight that these findings are based on the responses obtained from the study participants. Therefore, this difference is due to the availability, constraints, leisure interests and preferences associated with each group (gender).

Conclusion

This study examined the level of satisfaction with leisure activities among university students and explored the level of satisfaction across gender. The analysis showed overall that student participants were satisfied with leisure activities. Having positive and satisfying leisure activities during university years is very important as students develop leisure patterns and behaviours which continue after university years. The study's findings suggest that relaxation elements of leisure satisfaction activities are of great importance, while physical components recorded low importance. In spite of non-significant differences in the overall LSS based on gender, there were two significant differences between factors. Females appeared to be significantly more satisfied with the educational factor of a leisure activity than males did and a weak significant difference was found on the relaxation component, where females seemed to be more satisfied with the relaxation factor than their male counterparts. However, this could be because of the distinct kinds of activity in which each gender chose to participate. It would be valuable to explore this matter using a sample of the population who share similar leisure activities.

The implication and contribution of this study lie in its overarching assessment of leisure activity satisfaction among South African university students. The study emphasised the general positive of insight leisure

during the academic period. The study also highlighted the importance of relaxation as an element of leisure satisfaction. Base on the obtained results, it is recommended to universities to promote more leisure activities tailored to educational and relaxation needs and encourage physical activity to address the low physiological satisfaction. Future studies should focus on assessing specific leisure activities preferred by each gender group, investigate the long-term effect of leisure satisfaction on academic performance and student well-being, and lastly, enlarge the scope of their studies to various university settings or demographic groups.

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