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Leisure Time Habits of BEd Students in Sagaing University of Education

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the leisure time habits of BEd students from Sagaing University of Education in Myanmar. A total of 400 BEd students in Sagaing University of Education participated in this study. Descriptive research design and survey method were used. "Leisure time: activities and satisfaction" section from "ISSP 2007 Leisure Time and Sports Questionnaire" was adapted and used to collect the required data. Findings from questionnaire surveys revealed that students commonly used their leisure time for relaxation and entertainment (67.25%). It was also found that there was a significant difference in students' leisure time habits by gender at $\alpha = 0.01$ level. Moreover, by four habits, male students used more leisure times for physical, emotional, and social activities because their mean values are significantly different at $\alpha = 0.01$ level. In the total mean scores, since second-year students' mean scores are highest, they used mostly their leisure times among students (Mean=37.38). The mean and percentage of "to relax" are 2.82 and 16.40% and so it is highest among reasons. Moreover, the mean and percentage of "lack of time due to school" are 1.76 and 14.75% and so it is highest among limitations. This study hopes to give some ideas to support students' leisure activities.

INTRODUCTION

Nearly twenty-four hundred years ago, Aristotle posed the question "What is the good life?" He described the good life as *eudaimonia*, or the well-lived life. Aristotle's word for this type of happiness, *eudaimonia* can be translated as "human flourishing." According to Aristotle, *eudaimonia* involves a life filled with good works. Honor, wealth, and power are not important, but, rather, happiness is created by activity that causes people to act in accordance with virtues they possess. A well-lived life is possible if a person has the ability to choose and engage in worthy pursuits. For him, unhappiness is when he cannot do good things. Aristotle mused that "happiness is thought to depend on leisure; for we are busy that we may have leisure, and make war that we may live in peace". He believed that freedom from having to be occupied was leisure, and leisure was a necessary condition for happiness. According to Aristotle, *eudaimonia* can only occur if people have leisure,

or time to freely choose activities for themselves (Archibald, 2008).

Leisure has been defined using multiple definitions as can be seen in the literature. Most inquiries into the history of thinking about leisure begin with classical Greek philosophy, specifically Aristotle (Driver, Brown, & Peterson, 1991). Aristotle defined leisure as the state of being free from the necessity of being occupied and is characterized by the performance of activity "for its own sake or as its own end". Normative denotations of leisure have traditionally been expressed in terms of free time or activity, and some scholars have added state of mind as an alternative definition of the word (Parr & Lashua, 2004). To sum up the variance in definitions, leisure has been viewed historically in three ways: as experience, activity, or time. Whereas, recreation is defined as voluntary, non-work activity that is organized for the attainment of personal and social benefits including restoration and social cohesion (Kelly & Godbey, 1992).

To understand and explain students' leisure habits, it is necessary to employ the grounded theory. Hence, the theory of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975) was chosen. The theory of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975) examined a variety of activities that appear to be highly enjoyable and intrinsically motivated, such as artistic creativity, work expected to provide great amounts of satisfaction such as composing music and teaching, and serious leisure activities like rock climbing, chess, and dance. Individuals experience optimal flow when their perceptions of what challenges and skills are equally balanced. Challenge is caused by external conditions, and the ability to handle them contributes to the "flow" experienced by the participant, and hence the degree of satisfaction gained; whereas skill comprises a function of innate ability, experience, and learning. Ryan (1991) argued that the concept of "flow" can also be used in leisure studies to explain various behaviors and affective outcomes when a tourist is faced with a range of challenges that arise from being in a new place, or when faced with the unfamiliar.

Adolescence is a time when young people begin to spend less time at home and more time socializing out of the home with peers. As youths are more energetic, and most of them cannot endure staying at home, sometimes young people's inappropriate behaviors during their leisure activities can commit crimes at leisure places. Leisure is characterized as specific types of activities (e.g., attending a movie); as time free from obligations (e.g., the amount of time not spent in paid employment and taking care of home, family, and oneself); as meaningful and satisfying experiences (e.g., feelings of satisfaction, fun, excitement and/or belonging); or as some combinations of activities, time and experiences (Mannell and Kleiber, 1997, as cited in Carroll, 2008). The higher quality of leisure life, the healthier teenagers for our society.

The amount of time young people spend away from work and school work varies significantly across populations and regions. Differences exist within the developing world. In developing country populations, boys tend to have significantly more leisure time than do girls, as the latter spend more time in household labor than do their male counterparts. In the developed world, about half of

American young people's waking hours are free, and European adolescents seem to have about the same or slightly less leisure time, while Asian young people appear to have a quarter to a third of their time for leisure (World Youth Report, 2003).

The recent academic interest in the youth population has shown a significant increase in research pertaining to leisure. For example, Carr and Axelsen (2009) claimed that there is extensive literature about the leisure choices of young people. In reference to the study by Mannell and Kleiber (1997), leisure is a vital lifestyle component, and that lifestyle balance people seem to have difficulty achieving. Therefore, students incline to gain benefits from leisure activities such as reducing academic stress (Misra and McKean, 2000) and motivating academic achievement (Bergin, 1992). Therefore, this study focuses on the leisure time habits of BEd students and hopes to give some ideas to support students' leisure activities.

METHODS

The participants of the research were taken from Sagaing University of Education by using the simple random sampling technique. The participants were 400 BEd students (200 male and 200 female). BEd students from first year to fifth year (80 students from each year) were selected for the present study. In this study, descriptive research design and survey method were mainly used.

Leisure time: activities and satisfaction" section from ISSP (International Social Survey Programme) 2007 Leisure Time and Sports Questionnaire was adapted and used to collect the required data. This questionnaire was developed by the representative experts from ISSP countries. This questionnaire was adapted to the Myanmar version and got the content validity from the experts of the Educational Psychology Department in Sagaing University of Education. Its reliability is 0.76. There are three parts of this questionnaire. They are (1) leisure activities, (2) reasons for doing them, and (3) limitations for doing them. The leisure activities were classified into four components: physical (4 items), mental (3 items), emotional (5 items), and social activities (4 items).

Data Collection Procedure: Firstly, some reference books and research papers were read for literature review. Then, a research instrument was prepared. After modifying the instrument based on

experts' reviews, the required data were collected. Participants completed the demographics section of the questionnaire followed by the *Leisure Time Questionnaire*. After collecting the required data, they were analyzed and wrote a report about research findings. After collecting the required data, quantitative data analyses were performed by using descriptive statistics and an independent sample *t*-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics of Students' Leisure Time Habits: According to Table 1, the mean percentage of emotional activities is the highest (67.25%) and that of social activities is the lowest (46.5%). Therefore, the students commonly used their leisure time for relaxation and entertainment.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics for Students' Leisure Habits

	Physical	Mental	Emotional	Social
Mean	8.83	6.25	13.45	7.44
Std. Deviation	1.814	2.118	2.102	2.293
Mean Percentage	55.19%	52.08%	67.25%	46.5%

Comparison of Male and Female Students' Leisure Time Habits: To find out gender differences in students' leisure time habits,

descriptive analysis was made. The means and standard deviations of male and female students were reported in Table 2.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics for Students' Leisure Habits by Gender

Gender		Physical	Mental	Emotional	Social	Total
Male	Mean	9.35	6.47	14.09	8.48	38.39
	Std. Deviation	1.842	2.220	2.214	2.202	5.521
Female	Mean	8.30	6.02	12.82	6.39	33.54
	Std. Deviation	1.632	1.994	1.775	1.875	5.022

Table 2 also showed that there was a slight difference in mean scores by gender in students' leisure time habits. Again, to find out the significant difference, independent samples *t*-test was used. It was reported in Table 3. According to Table 3, it was found that there was a significant difference in students' leisure time habits by gender at $\alpha = 0.01$ level. Therefore, male students seem to use more leisure time than female students.

Table 3 Independent Samples *t*-test Results for Students' Leisure Habits by Gender

Variable	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Physical	4.761	398	.000
Mental	1.679	398	.094
Emotional	5.011	398	.000
Social	8.073	398	.000
Total	7.275	398	.000

By four habits, male students used more leisure times for physical, emotional, and social activities than females because their mean values are significantly different at $\alpha = 0.01$ level. However, there is no significant difference in mental activities. Moreover, male students more used their time to take leisure activities.

Comparisons of Students' Leisure Time Habits by Grade: Table 4 showed the comparison of students' leisure time habits by Grade. In physical and social activities, second-year students' mean scores are highest and so they more used their leisure time for these activities than others. However, in mental and emotional activities, fourth-year students' mean scores are highest and so they more used their leisure time for these activities than others. In the total mean scores, since second-year students' mean scores are highest, they used mostly their leisure times among students (Mean=37.38).

Table 4 Comparisons of Students' Leisure Habits by Grade

Grade		Physical	Mental	Emotional	Social	Total
First Year	Mean	9.18	6.32	12.68	7.38	35.56
	Std. Deviation	1.650	2.152	2.123	2.329	5.234
Second Year	Mean	9.28	6.48	13.68	7.94	37.38
	Std. Deviation	1.841	2.358	2.208	2.622	6.925
Third Year	Mean	8.48	5.74	13.54	7.36	35.12
	Std. Deviation	1.344	1.712	2.224	2.008	4.543
Fourth Year	Mean	8.16	6.66	14.02	7.18	36.02
	Std. Deviation	1.973	2.191	1.974	2.362	6.345
Fifth Year	Mean	9.04	6.04	13.34	7.32	35.74
	Std. Deviation	1.989	2.080	1.791	2.114	5.638

Reasons for Doing Leisure Activities: To study the some reasons for doing leisure activities of students, descriptive statistic was used. According to Table 5, the mean and percentage of “to relax” are 2.82 and 16.40% and so it is highest among reasons. Therefore, it can be said that the

students mostly used their leisure time to relax their tension.

Moreover, the mean and percentage of “to kill time” are 1.40 and 8.14% and so it is lowest among reasons. Therefore, it can be said that the students seldom used their leisure time to waste their time.

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics for Reasons of Doing Leisure Activities

	Mean	Percentage	Std. Deviation
To relax	2.82	16.40%	.470
To have fun and excitement	2.72	15.82%	.524
To improve creativity	2.43	14.14%	.625
To improve social relations	2.72	15.82%	.545
To maintain health and beauty	2.49	14.49%	.718
To kill time	1.40	8.14%	.659
To learn a skill	2.61	15.18%	.600

Limitations for Doing Leisure Activities: To study the some limitations for doing leisure activities of students, descriptive statistic was used. According to Table 6, the mean and percentage of “lack of time due to school” are 1.76 and 14.75% and so it is highest among limitations. Therefore, it can be said that some school works limits students' using leisure time.

Moreover, the mean and percentage of “lack of time due to friend commitments” are 1.64 and 13.75% and so it is second highest among reasons. Therefore, it can be said that participating in their friends' works sometimes limits students' using leisure time.

Table 6 Descriptive Statistics for Limitations of Doing Leisure Activities

	Mean	Percentage	Std. Deviation
Lack of time due to school	1.76	14.75%	.811
Lack of time due to work	1.14	9.56%	.434
Lack of time due to family commitments	1.32	11.06%	.630
Lack of time due to friend commitments	1.64	13.75%	.675
Lack of time due to volunteering	1.59	13.33%	.702
I have difficulty managing my free time	1.59	13.33%	.787
I don't have time for a long enough session	1.49	12.49%	.641
I don't want to do leisure activities	1.40	11.74%	.647

CONCLUSION

The importance of leisure-time habits in the psychological, cognitive, and physical development of young people is recognized in all societies. Leisure-time activities include games, sports, cultural events, entertainment, and community service. Appropriate leisure programs for youth are elements of any measure aimed at fighting social ills such as drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, and other deviant behavior.

While leisure programs can contribute greatly to the development of the physical, intellectual, and emotional potential of young people, they should be designed with due care and concern so that they are not used as a means for excluding youth from participating in other aspects of social life or for indoctrinating them. Leisure-time activity programs should be made freely available to young people.

The main aim of this study was to investigate the leisure time habits of BEd students in Sagaing University of Education, Myanmar. Therefore, to study the students' leisure time habits, descriptive statistics of students' leisure time habits, comparison of students' leisure time habits by gender and grade, descriptive statistics for reasons and limitations to do leisure time activities were analyzed.

According to the findings of the research, the students commonly used their leisure time for relaxation and entertainment (67.25%). According to the result, it was found that male students seem to use more leisure time than female students. Moreover, by four habits, male students used more leisure times for physical, emotional, and social

activities than females. However, there was no significant difference in mental activities.

Again, in physical and social activities, second-year students' mean scores were highest and so they more used their leisure time for these activities than others. However, in mental and emotional activities, fourth-year students' mean scores were highest and so they more used their leisure time for these activities than others. In the total mean scores, since second-year students' mean scores were highest, they used mostly their leisure times among students (Mean=37.38).

Finally, the mean and percentage of "to relax" were 2.82 and 16.40% and so it is highest among reasons. Therefore, it can be said that the students mostly used their leisure time to relax their tension. However, the mean and percentage of "to kill time" were 1.40 and 8.14% and so it is lowest among reasons. Therefore, the students seldom used their leisure time to waste their time.

Moreover, the mean and percentage of "lack of time due to school" were 1.76 and 14.75% and so it is highest among limitations. Therefore, it can be said that some school works limits students' using leisure time. The mean and percentage of "lack of time due to friend commitments" were 1.64 and 13.75% and so it is second highest among reasons. Therefore, participating in their friends' works sometimes limits students' using leisure time.

According to this study, BEd students from Sagaing University of Education commonly do emotional leisure activities such as watching television, going to the movies, listening to music, and using the internet. However, they seldom do social activities such as getting together with relatives and friends and doing volunteering

services. It may be because students used more leisure time by using mobile phones and watching TV. Therefore, they may be absent to participate in social activities.

Moreover, they thought that they have no time to do leisure habits because of many school works and their friends. This point is showing that they need to manage systematically their time.

According to this study, the following suggestions would be given.

1. Students should be encouraged to participate in social activities in their leisure time.
2. Female students should be encouraged to use their time in not only studying but also doing leisure habits.
3. Second-year students might be trained for future sport matches and physical races.
4. Fourth-year students might be trained for competitions about mental and entertainment.
5. Students should be trained and counseled to be able to manage their time through discussions, talks and if possible, students counseling centers.
6. Some appropriate leisure time programs should be developed in the university campus.

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