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## Motivations Determining Participation in Rural Recreations: Example of University Students

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**Abstract:** In this study, the aim was to find out the activity preferences of the visitors of rural recreation areas, to determine the motivations of these visitors and finally to determine the areas and activities they preferred with the motivations. For this purpose, 250 students of Abant İzzet Baysal University were questioned. From the data obtained, factor analysis with varimax rotation method was used in order to explain participations in rural recreation and motivations. Correlation analysis was used in order to explain the relationships of the determined factors with each other and user characteristics. According to the results obtained, characteristics of recreational area, the type of recreational activity and characteristics of social structure are effective in forming the motivations.

**Key words:** Motivation, recreation, Duzce, rural

### INTRODUCTION

Several resources on traveling and leisure time have tried to explain why many people travel<sup>[1]</sup>. The studies explaining why people prefer a recreation area to another are important issues for planners and managers of recreation resource<sup>[2]</sup>. Additionally, determining the items effecting one's decision on doing recreation is very important to park and recreation offices, tourism and travel agencies and other agencies in travel industry.

Recreational preferences are formed as a consequence of attitudes or motivations and they are the most effective characteristics in the selection of the recreation site<sup>[3]</sup>. Determining motivations provide great facilities in determining potential visitors, satisfaction of these visitors, appropriate marketing and management strategies<sup>[4]</sup>.

According to Lancaster's<sup>[5]</sup> approach to consumer behavior, recreation planners have to determine the factors effecting choice behavior. In order to estimate recreational preferences, socio-economic, demographic characteristics of the visitors and characteristics of the site visited have to be analyzed very well<sup>[6]</sup>.

All the studies carried out to determine visitors' satisfaction so far have questioned the following basic issues. These are; social pressures effecting motivation, effects of preferences of recreational activities on motivations, effects of characteristics of recreational sites on motivations and effects of visitors' experiences on motivations.

Clark and Downing<sup>[7]</sup>, Shelby<sup>[8]</sup> indicated that social pressure affected not only peoples' preferences of activities but also site preferences. Field and Cheek<sup>[9]</sup> found out that social structure in the selection of recreation site had effects on both characteristics of the site and the activities aimed. Vogelsson *et al.*<sup>[10]</sup> stated that characteristics of the site had effects on the determination of motivations. Williams *et al.*<sup>[11]</sup> found out that place attachments were more effective in the selection of the site than activity preferences. Confer *et al.*<sup>[12]</sup> stated that visitor motivations in a rural recreation site changed according to the activities. Laundsbury and Hoopes<sup>[13]</sup> examined the stabilization of the motivations over time. In their study, Todd *et al.*<sup>[14]</sup>, investigated if the motivations of scuba divers differed with the experiences. As a result, they stated that experiences and motivations differed.

This study has three main goals:

- To indicate the activity preferences and participations of the visitors of rural recreation sites
- To determine these visitors' motivations
- To indicate the relationships of preferred sites and activities with motivations.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this study, a questionnaire was carried out in order to determine the demographic characteristics of people, the frequency of their participation in recreational

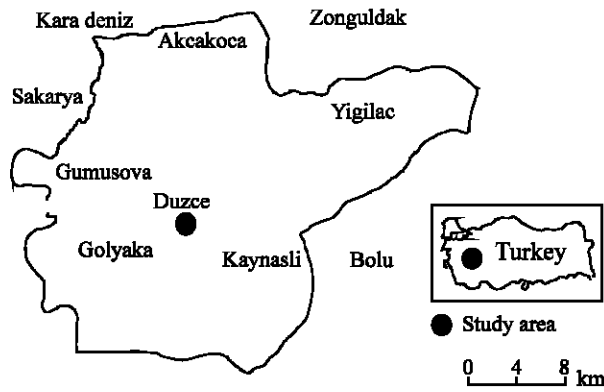


Fig. 1: Research area

activities and motivations effective in their participation. In determining the motivation items, the studies of Oh *et al.*<sup>[15]</sup>, Confper *et al.*<sup>[12]</sup> and Monfredo *et al.*<sup>[16]</sup> were used.

**Study area:** The study area, Abant Izzet Baysal University (AIBU), Düzce campus has an area of 200 ha. Totally 1100 students attend there. This campus, which is located in the northwest part of Turkey was opened in 2001. The campus is situated within the borders of Düzce, which became a province in November 1999 (Fig. 1).

**Determining the characteristics of users and their experiences:** This questionnaire done between March and April 2004 in AIBU Düzce campus consists of 250 people. Dawyer<sup>[17]</sup> found out that as the age of the users increase, their participations in the recreational activities decrease. He indicated that the highest age group of recreational participants was the young people between the ages of 18-24. This age gap defines the users at university in Turkey. For this reason, recreational experiences and demographic characteristics of the university students were examined in this study.

In the questionnaire, users' genders, income situations, departments, the places they come from, which

class they study were asked. Gender from these demographic characteristics were aligned from male to female, their department from less to more according to their leisure time, the place they come from were aligned from urban areas to rural areas. Their income and which class they study were aligned from less to more, the frequencies of participations in the recreational activities which the evaluators participate were aligned between none and very frequent, the degrees of effect of the motivations that are effective in their participations from very effective to not effective (Table 1).

**Evaluation of data:** In the first step of the study, arithmetical means of the frequencies of rural recreational activities they participated in one year and the degrees of effect of their motivations were determined. Factor analysis was used with varimax rotation system to explain the participations in recreational activities and motivations. In order to determine the reliability of the factors, Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis was used. Correlation analysis was used in explaining the relationships of the determined factors with each other and the user characteristics.

**RESULTS**

As a result of the questionnaire done in AIBU Düzce campus, demographic and recreational characteristics of the participants are grouped as follows (Table 1). Seventy two percent of the participants are male, 28% are female, 46% of them attend Faculty of Forestry, 36% Faculty of Technical Education, 18% Faculty of Medicine and Nursing school, 82% come from the cities, 10% from the towns and 8% from the villages. As for the monthly income situation of the families of the participants, 30% are on the income level of 300-499 million TL, 45% 500-999 million TL, 21% 1-2 billion TL and 4% over 2 billion TL. 10% of the participants live in the city for 1 year, 21% for two years, 28% for three years, 32% for four years and 9% for five years and

Table 1: Participations of university students in the rural recreation activities and their characteristics

	Code									
	1	%	2	%	3	%	4	%	5	%
Gender	Male	72	Female	28						
Education	Faculty of Forestry	46	Faculty of Technical Education	36	Faculty of Medicine/ Nursing School	18				
The place they come from	City	82	Town	10	Village	8				
Income (TL)	300 - 499 million	30	500-999 million	45	1-2 billion	21	2+ billion	4		
Which class they study	1	10	2	21	3	28	4	32	5+	9
Frequency of participation in the recreational activities	None	43	Rarely	18	Sometimes	19	Often	11	Very often	7
Motivations in the participation of recreational activities	Very effective	25	Quite effective	22	Effective	26	Less effective	17	Not effective	10

Table 2: Factor analysis of recreational participations

	Participations mean	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III	Factor IV	Factor V
Trekking	1.98	0.75				
Mountaineering	1.43	0.74				
Jogging	2.37	0.55				
Fishing	1.85	0.61				
Hunting	1.56	0.72				
Touring	2.00		0.39			
Swimming	2.50		0.83			
Sunbathing	2.56		0.80			
Walking	3.41		0.54			
Cycling	2.66		0.47			
Horse riding	1.34			0.59		
Skiing	1.16			0.79		
Golf	1.11			0.72		
Picnicking	2.74				0.45	
Camping	1.68				0.36	
Nature walks with the purpose of learning	1.99				0.53	
Visiting historical places	1.85				0.55	
Drawing pictures	1.91				0.66	
Watching the view	3.63				0.66	
Ball games	3.32					0.62
Free games	3.20					0.80
Mean		1.82	2.63	1.20	2.30	3.27
Variance		16.00	13.00	12.00	12.00	7.00
Alpha		0.80	0.73	0.67	0.74	0.46

Table 3: Factor analysis of motivations in participation in recreational activities

	Participations mean	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III	Factor IV	Factor V	Factor VI
Examining nature	2.51	0.73					
Spiritual relief by natural beauties	2.21	0.76					
Understanding nature better	2.66	0.82					
Being in harmony with the nature	2.73	0.82					
Improving my knowledge	2.76		0.62				
Desire for a healthy life	2.26		0.43				
Knowing different cultures	2.67		0.73				
Learning what one can do	2.76		0.77				
Improving skills	2.56		0.81				
Meeting new people	2.86			0.57			
Staying in the crowded places	3.39			0.76			
Spending time together with the ones having the same interests	2.77			0.78			
Spending time with friends	2.06			0.48			
Doing something with other people	2.54			0.70			
Having a good time	1.88				0.78		
Relieving from the stress of the lessons	2.04				0.57		
Experiencing different activities	2.58				0.48		
Avoiding from being monotonous	2.05				0.59		
Having fun	1.87				0.59		
Home mate's fondness for visiting	3.64					0.70	
Family's fondness for visiting	3.59					0.76	
Having enough money	3.38					0.65	
Moral structure	2.58					0.53	
Staying alone	3.26						0.46
Being away from the social borders	2.74						0.76
Being away from the tension	2.06						0.74
Finding quiet places	2.53						0.56
Mean		2.52	2.61	2.71	2.08	3.30	2.66
Variance %		13.00	12.00	10.00	10.00	9.00	8.00
Alpha		0.89	0.83	0.76	0.76	0.71	0.69

FI: Learning; FII: Individual development; FIII: Socializing; FIV: Entertainment; FV: Social structure; FIV: Escape

more. Forty three percent of the participants do not participate in the rural recreation activities at all, 18% of them rarely participated in those activities, 19% sometimes, 11% often and 7% very often. Motivations

effecting the participations in rural recreation activities of the participants are very effective with 25%, quite effective with 22%, effective with 26%, less effective with 17% and not effective with 10%.

Table 4: The relationships between the participation frequencies in the recreational activities and motivations

The frequencies of participation in recreational activities	Motivations					
	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III	Factor IV	Factor V	Factor VI
Factor I	-0.19**	-0.16*	-0.16*	-0.13*	-0.24***	-0.18**
Factor II	-0.16*	-0.24***	-0.29***	-0.20**	-0.28***	-0.15*
Factor III	-0.06	-0.09	-0.07	-0.08	-0.15*	-0.07
Factor IV	-0.34***	-0.26***	-0.21**	-0.18**	-0.27***	-0.23***
Factor V	0.06	-0.10	-0.21***	-0.08	-0.05	0.09

\*<0.05; \*\*p<0.005; \*\*\*p<0.001

**Recreational participation:** In this study, 21 rural recreation activities were taken into evaluation. The most preferred ones from these activities are watching the view, walking, playing ball games and free games, respectively. As seen in Table 2, five factors are found that explain recreational participation with a variance of 60%. I Factor is explained with 16% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.80. The computed alpha value shows that this factor is highly reliable<sup>[13]</sup>. I Factor includes five recreational activities. Common characteristics of these activities are that they need physical strength and they are nature sports done by small groups. II Factor is explained with 13% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.73. According to this, II Factor is quite reliable. II Factor includes five recreational activities. Common characteristics of these activities are that they are rural recreation activities done during summer and spring. III Factor is explained with 12% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.67. According to this, III Factor is also quite reliable. III Factor includes three recreational activities. Common characteristics of these activities are that they are nature sports that need a foundation. IV Factor is explained with 12% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.74. According to this, IV Factor is also quite reliable. IV Factor includes six recreational activities. Common characteristics of these activities are they are recreational activities having the purpose of learning and relaxing. V Factor is explained with 7% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.46. According to this, V Factor is less reliable. V Factor includes two recreational activities. Common characteristics of these activities are that they are entertainment-aimed active recreational activities.

**Recreational motivations:** In this study, 27 rural recreation motivations were taken into evaluation. The most effective ones from these motivations are; entertaining, having good time, relieving from stress of the lessons, avoiding from being monotonous, spending time together with friends and being away from tension and the least effective ones are; home mate's fondness for visiting, family's fondness for visiting, being in the crowded places, having enough money, staying alone. As seen in Table 3, six factors are found that explain the recreational motivation with a variance of 62%. I Factor is explained with 13% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.89.

The computed alpha value shows that this factor is highly reliable. I Factor include four recreational motivations. Common characteristics of these motivations are the desire for learning. II Factor is explained with 12% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.83. According to this, II Factor is also highly reliable. II Factor includes five recreational motivations. Common characteristics of these motivations are the desire for individual development. III Factor is explained with 10% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.76. According to this, III Factor is quite reliable. III Factor includes five recreational motivations. Common characteristics of these recreational motivations are that they have the desire for socializing. IV Factor is explained with 8% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.69. According to this, VI Factor is also quite reliable. IV Factor includes five recreational motivations. Common characteristics of these motivations are that they are gathered under the title of entertainment. V Factor is explained with 9% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.71. According to this, V Factor is also quite reliable. V Factor includes four recreational motivations. Common characteristics of these motivations are that they are under the effect of social structure. VI Factor is explained with 8% variance and Cronbach's alpha is 0.69. According to this, VI Factor is quite reliable. VI Factor includes four recreational motivations. Common characteristics of these motivations are that they have the purpose of escape.

**Relationship between the frequencies of participation in recreational activities and motivation factors:** As seen in Table 4, participation in nature sports which are done by small groups and which require physical strength gets affected from all motivation factors. While this participation is effected mostly by the motivations resulting from social structure of the participants, the motivation factor that effects the participation least is entertainment. Rural recreation activities done during summer and spring get affected from all motivation factors. This participation is effected by the desire for socialization most whereas the least effective motivation factor of the participation is escape. The nature sports requiring a foundation is only effected by the motivations resulting from the social structure of the participants. All motivation factors affect frequency of participation in the

recreation activities having the purpose of learning and relaxing. The desire for learning effects this participation most whereas the least effective one is entertainment. Frequency of participation in entertainment-aimed active recreational activities is affected by the desire for socialization of the individuals.

## DISCUSSION

As a result of the questionnaire done with 250 students in AIBU Düzce campus it has been observed that participants prefer entertainment-aimed active recreational activities most from the rural recreational activities. The one they prefer least is nature sports which are done by small groups and which require physical strength and the nature sports requiring a foundation. Hendee *et al.*<sup>[19]</sup> and Young<sup>[20]</sup> observed in their studies that male university students were inclined to recreational activities done in the natural areas. According to the data obtained from this study, frequency in participation in the nature sports which are done by small groups and require physical strength are more in men than women ( $r=-0.30$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). Physical inadequacy of women, the desire for staying in the crowded areas and safety show a lessening effect in frequency of participation. In order to increase the participation rate of women in these rural recreational participations, clubs for nature sports with in the education units and visits can be arranged in the accompaniment of guides.

In their study, Vogelsong *et al.*<sup>[10]</sup> investigated the motivations of people who visited a historical area and motivations of those who visited an area by the seaside. According to the results they obtained, the most effective motivation affecting the ones visiting a historical place is learning whereas it is an escape for the ones visiting the seaside. In this study, too, differences between the ones who visited the seaside and the ones who visited a historical place have been observed. The most effective motivation for the ones who visited a historical place is the desire for learning. However, the most effective motivation for the ones who visited the seaside area is the desire for socialization, which is different from Vogelsong *et al.*<sup>[10]</sup>. The reason for this difference is that the evaluators of the questionnaire were among the young people looking for a place in the society for themselves. Here, it is possible to conclude that the facilities that the recreational site offers are effective in visitors' motivations.

There are several studies about motivations that determine the participation in the recreational activities. In their studies, Todd *et al.*<sup>[14]</sup> examined the motivations of the ones who scuba dive. According to this study, the

determining motivation is adventure. Zwick *et al.*<sup>[21]</sup> examined the motivation of the ones who go fishing. According to this study, escape is the determining motivation factor. In the study we have done, differences in motivation factors that are determining according to the recreational activity participated have been observed. For example, the most determining motivation factor in participation in swimming is the desire for socialization whereas the most determining motivation in participation in fishing is the effect of social structure.

As a result of this study, when the relationship of entertainment motivation that is determined to be the most effective in the participation in recreational activities with recreational activities are considered, it is seen that it is not very determining. On the contrary, when the relationship between the social structure factor as the least effective motivation in participation in the recreational activities and recreational activities are taken into consideration, it is seen as the most determining motivation. According to Clark and Downing<sup>[7]</sup> and Shelby<sup>[8]</sup>, it is found out that social pressures are effective not only in their preferences of recreation sites but also in their activity preferences. In this study, the determining motivation in participation in almost all of the recreational activities is social structure.

This study tried to determine what kind of motivations forms rural recreation in Turkey. However, visitor attribute and behavior has to be searched in a more detailed way. In these researches, variables such as transportation time, first visit of the area, the type of the park (e.g. resource/setting variables), the type of use (overnight or day uses), other visitor characteristics have to be taken into consideration.

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