

**The Relationship Between Leisure Constraints, Social Isolation and Self Determination\***

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**Abstract**

*Leisure is an important tool for societies to develop a sense of integration and improve the skills of self-determined individuals. Although, the relationship between leisure and self-determination is widely studied, the relations between leisure constraints, isolation and self-determination are not studied sufficiently. Therefore, this study investigates the relationship between leisure constraints, social isolation and self-determination. The study has been conducted in Ahlat (Bitlis-Turkiye) with 248 sample group. The results have been analysed with SmartPLS which is a widely-used statistical software to test structural equation models. The result of the study reveals that there is a positive relationship between structural constraints of leisure and social isolation, and social isolation with self-determination. As mentioned in this study leisure seems to be an important variable of socialization process and self determination. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that destinations should maintain various kinds of leisure facilities and encourage the residents to engage in these activities.*

**Keywords:** Leisure constraints, social isolation, self-determination, Ahlat

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## 1. Introduction

Human is a social animal in Aristotle's words that is strongly dependent on others, and needs to live with others (Yi & Hwang, 2015). Although the actual assurance of the presence of others for these social entities living together relatively permanently in families and society minimizes the possibility of isolation, there is no guarantee that the social needs of each individual in the group will be met (Hawkley & Capitano, 2015). It is thought that the opportunities for participation in leisure activities can be seen as a way of meeting these social needs. Although in recent years recreation and leisure researchers have drawn attention to factors that limit participation in leisure pursuits (Shaw et al., 1991; Raymore et al., 1993), social isolation has received surprisingly little attention compared to other issues (Glover, 2018). Yet, leisure opportunities have the potential to strengthen social interaction and communication, and meet the needs of the individual based on self-determination, depending on the elimination of structural, personal and interpersonal constraints. Ahlat is a small county located in Bitlis-Turkiye where leisure seems to be neglected. Despite Ahlat has many areas to perform recreational activities, these areas have not been adequately evaluated, and infrastructure is not suitable for use (Çelik & Meriç, 2017). For this reason, it is possible to think that there is a structural, interpersonal and personal constraints in leisure terms. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the relationships between leisure constraints, social isolation and self-determination in Ahlat.

Although, ironically, connecting with others may seem easy, isolation is uncomfortably common in contemporary societies, and represents one of the most serious social problems of our time (Glover, 2018). When isolation is associated with the feeling of loneliness (Hawkley & Capitano, 2015), it has the potential to cause smoking, alcohol consumption, lower physical activity, poor dietary choices and behavioural changes that represent many unhealthy lifestyles (Hwang et al., 2020). However, the incredibly positive effects of meaningful social connections on health require more focus on social isolation (Glover, 2018). At this point, the difficulty of measuring social isolation necessitates considering internal and external perspectives in order to observe individual, group, community and wider social environmental factors and human interactions (Zavaleta et al., 2017). In this respect, research conducted by researchers focus on visitor orientations, motivations, needs and the social contexts that lead to visitor development in the process of being included in the coexistence of individuals (Brown & Ryan, 2004; Patrick et al., 2007). These contexts are discussed within the framework of visitor differences in environmental, personal, phenomenological or mechanical variables (Deci & Ryan, 1980), and focus on how the need for the creation of leisure opportunities can affect social participation and inclusion (Harley et al., 2016). Within the context of this study isolation is studied in accordance with leisure constraints in a non-disadvantaged (residents instead of old or disadvantaged people) group of people in a rural area. As discussed within the context of this study it is believed that the realization of social conditions among the local people in Ahlat, influence the need for competence, relatedness and autonomy as self-determination subjects.

Self-determination theory research is a macro theory that predicts human motivation, personality development and well-being (Ryan, 2009) by addressing social problems associated with sports, exercise, and prosocial behaviours in both field studies and clinical trials (Deci & Ryan, 2012). When researchers are concerned not only with how external factors affect motivation, but also with how internal factors drive self-motivation (Ryan et al., 2021), a comprehensive assessment is directed by self-determination. As a matter of fact, self-determination is a broad and empirically based meta-theory that allows examining how human motivation, personality and emotions drive behaviour within and across life domains, with mini theories each explaining specific motivational phenomena (Standage & Ryan, 2020). Based on the assumptions of recreation and leisure research leisure is one of the most ideal context to explain self determination as individuals choose activities in a meaningful, freely chosen and intrinsically motivated ways (Dattillo et al., 2018). However, although it is a leading theory of human motivation that has proven effective in determining motivation and the possibilities that affect behaviour, there are limited number of studies (Gilal et al., 2019) in the context of leisure constraints.

While the relations between the variables are revealed by empirical analysis at the end of this study, it is expected to reach an opinion on the reasons for the relations of these variables with each other and how they affect the local people. Depending on this context, there are several important benefits that the study offers in terms of theory and practice. Guiding research with a comprehensive exploratory power on the motivations of human behaviours, self-determination, aims to understand cognitive, affective, and behavioural outcomes in various fields such as parenting, education, work, relationships, physical activity, health, environmental issues and psychotherapy, and guide practices and provides opportunities to improve people's lives. (Vallerand et al., 2008). In this respect, the study will be useful in determining the importance and the need for the development of the appropriate environment and conditions for participation in leisure.

This study is important to determine the psychological effects of lack of leisure in human life. Since the constructs of this study allows to investigate the innate psychological needs of people, which are the basis of the intrinsic growth tendencies, self-motivation and personality integration (Ryan & Deci, 2017), the results of this study will enable to encourage the development of more desirable motivational strategies in the activity environment by providing important information about leisure behaviour and motivation. (Kilpatrick et al., 2002). Moreover, the findings obtained in the study will draw attention to the importance of recreational places that support the personal development and transformation of local people, while creating a foresight to help socially isolated individuals. Finally, the results of the study is effective to understand the possible negative consequences due to social isolation and to develop effective intervention methods (Hwang et al., 2020).

## 2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Literature review of the study is explained in the following headings.

### 2.1. Leisure Constraints

The limitations preventing the individuals from obtaining something they desire (Jackson & Henderson, 1995) or the factors that come between individuals' preferences and participation (Crawford & Godbey, 1987) can be expressed as constraints. In this context, the leisure constraint is, in the simplest terms, the barriers between the individual and the activity. However, in leisure studies, associating leisure constraints with barriers to pure participation leads to incomplete analysis of the effects on preferences and satisfaction (Jackson, 1991). Therefore, leisure constraint needs to be explained by referring to factors such as cultural and individual values, influence of other people, physical rest, work/stress, physical and psychological security, and lack of opportunities that lie between a possible activity and one's opportunity to be involved in the experience (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1993). These constraints exist to varying degrees, in varying intensities and in unique combinations for each individual, at least at a certain level (Jackson, 2000).

Leisure constraints often encompass a traditional set of elements such as time, costs, facilities, knowledge and awareness of leisure services and resources, physical skills and abilities, and lack of partners to participate (Scott, 2005). The influence of these elements range between members of different social groups in different ways and unequally (Woodward et al., 1989) at different levels of intensity (Kowalski & Lankford, 2010). Crawford and Godbey (1987) classifies the constraints in the leisure constraints model under individual, interpersonal and structural contexts. According to the researchers, *personal constraints* include psychological states and qualities, stress, depression, anxiety, religiosity, socialization, perceived self-ability, and subjective assessments of the appropriateness and availability of activities. Personal constraints may develop due to temporary psychological conditions such as the individual's internal mood (Chick & Dong, 2004), values, attitudes and perceptions, and antecedents arising from the feeling of guilt created by indulging in fun activities (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1993). Internal constraints arising from family members, friends, colleagues and neighbours accompanying the event, or barriers that arise as a result of interpersonal interaction are among *interpersonal constraints* (Crawford & Godbey, 1987;

Chick & Dong, 2004). Xiao et al., (2022) states that the absence of anyone to accompany to perform the event, family responsibilities, harassment and discrimination should be seen as interpersonal constraints. Finally, the absence of activity opportunities due to external conditions (Chick & Dong, 2004) such as family life cycle stage, socio-economic resources, season, climate, planning of working time, availability of opportunities (Crawford & Godbey, 1987; Xiao et al., 2022) are considered as the *structural constraints*. If the individual overcomes cost and time constraints, but not the effects of factors such as traffic, weather and proximity, which are among the structural constraints, the positive influence is going to decrease even if the place is an attraction itself (Nyaupen & Andereck, 2008).

Personal, interpersonal and structural constraints develop in an orderly fashion (Raymore et al., 1993). According to Kowalski and Lankford (2010), the individual first encounters internal constraints arising from personal self and then from the others. Structural constraints are likely to arise if internal constraints and interpersonal constraints can be negotiated, and non-participation is a possible outcome if these constraints cannot be overcome respectively. Existing constraints may affect individuals with different characteristics at different levels. In this regard, there are studies on the context of age and gender to explain this situation. In terms of demographic characteristics, Jackson (2000) states that young people are affected by the lack of opportunity and cost, on the other hand, time decreases in middle adulthood due to family and employment conditions, and in older adulthood decreasing skills and isolation problems become more important. Gender differences, on the other hand, can create direct or indirect inequalities in the engagement with any activity due to factors such as social class, income level, employment status, age and stage in the family life cycle and ethnicity (Woodward et al., 1989). Especially for women, problems such as difficulties in finding social relations to participate in activities, family occupations, lack of physical ability and competence, lack of information, transportation problems and not being comfortable in social environments are frequently observed constraints (Jackson & Henderson, 1995).

## 2.2. Social Isolation

Social isolation refers to social relations with insufficient quality and quantity at individual, group, community and wider social environmental levels (Zavaleta et al., 2017). In this context, the scope of social isolation defines an objective state of individuals' social environments and interaction patterns, the level and frequency of individual interactions, or the actual absence of casual supportive relationships (Gierveld & Tilburg, 2006; Hortulanus et al., 2006; Machielse, 2015; Hwang et al, 2020). In addition, in the definitions of social isolation, to what extent the individual is lonely is questioned by examining social isolation at one end and social participation at the other on one axis (Gierveld & Tilburg, 2006). Therefore, social isolation can be used directly or indirectly, or sometimes synonymously, with loneliness.

According to Cacioppo and Hawkley (2009), isolating individuals socially can cause other individuals in the social network to lose their ties and become lonely over time. This may be due to the fact that human, as defined in the theory of symbolic interaction, is not just a passive being who reacts to effects, but an active being who interprets, defines and makes sense of the effects coming from others through interaction (Yi & Hwang, 2015). Thus, social species, from *Drosophila melanogaster* to *Homo sapiens*, are dramatically affected and fail to develop self when isolated (Cacioppo & Hawkley, 2009; Baek, 2014). A perceived level of social isolation is a risk factor for a confirmatory bias for lower cognitive performance (Boss et al., 2015), increased negativity and depression (Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2010), increased susceptibility to social threats, and create self-protective and paradoxically self-defeating social cognition, increased anthropomorphism and a contagion that threatens social cohesion (Cacioppo & Hawkley, 2009). Therefore, it is necessary to preserve the structural integrity of social assets, which are necessary for the survival and development of people.

Machielse (2015) states that the permanence of isolation is related to the duration of the situation or the person's action orientation. Accordingly, information about the permanence of social isolation, the length of time a person is socially isolated and the extent of conditioned isolation, shows the complexity of the problem, and gives rise to the the expected intensity of assistance. Long-term isolation can lead to chronic

loneliness and boredom, resulting in detrimental effects on physical and mental health (Banerjee & Rai, 2020). The action orientation of the socially isolated person, on the other hand, refers to the individual's need and motivation to participate in social contexts, who have a strong need for contact with others. In the second case, the lack of social connections is mostly caused by the lack of the basic social network where the individual can access help, information, hugs or to guide the decision-making process (Glover, 2018).

Social isolation basically occurs as a result of lack of basic skills, not being able to reach others who will participate in the event or lack of information about the event (Hultsman, 1995; Jackson & Henderson, 1995). It is stated in quality of life studies that the absence of recreational or leisure opportunities increases social isolation (Lyons, 1993). Although social isolation and leisure constraints are not highly studied subjects in the literature and not directly examined in the recreation or leisure literature, there are studies on the race, gender, age, the disabled and disadvantaged groups with health problems (to participate in activities and the isolation of these individuals from the society (Harley et al., 2016; Aydın & Tütüncü, 2021). These constraints should be dealt in the course of personal constraints. For example, Aydın and Tütüncü (2021) draw attention to the interrelated nature of the elderly's inability to participate in leisure activities in isolation from social environments. According to the researchers the absence of activities in older ages affects isolation and therefore, effects the psychological and physical health. Another issue discussed in the literature is the isolation of women due to the personal or interpersonal constraints. In these studies, personal limitation is the gender of the women, and interpersonal limitation is the roles attributed to the women in society. In some societies, women are prevented from participating in sports activities, especially when the events are open to the public or with male participants, as the patriarchal structure causes ideological barriers placed in front of women, and prevent them from living a public life (Laar et al., 2019). In these societies, the cultural structure is normative as both an authoritative and prohibitive factor teaching people to do or not to do certain things (Chick & Dong, 2004). While the teachings of the society or family function as one of the internal constraints for the individual, finding the people who perform the activity and providing the necessary equipment despite the teachings may affect the removal of the restrictions (Crawford et al., 1991). If the constraints cannot be exceeded, it is inevitable for women to face the problem of social isolation. These studies showed that structural, personal and interpersonal conditions could be the result of the social isolation. In the leisure literature the group of people who have not any kind of disadvantage but lives socially isolated due to the lack of leisure activities is not observed in detail. Based on these assumptionsthe following hypothesis are needed to be examined.

*H1. Structural constraints positively affect social isolation of residents.*

*H2. Personal constraints positively affect social isolation of residents*

*H3. Interpersonal constraints positively affect social isolation of residents.*

### **2.3. Self-Determination Theory**

Self-determination theory represents a theory with great exploratory power that helps to organize and understand motivational processes, determinants, and outcomes in various life-related issues (Vallerand et al., 2008). Self-determination skill is gained by developing a detailed and integrated sense of self through factors that facilitate or prevent processes towards assimilation and growth (Deci & Ryan, 2004: 5; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). In this context, it is used to explain how needs and motives facilitate human development (Bauer et al., 2019) and how the individual consciously processes information in his/her mind and transforms it into behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 1980).

Although motivations are seen as a unitary variable that a person has in many theories, self-determination theory represents a classification of motivations with its cognitive and psychological contexts, which are ranked theoretically along a continuum of relative autonomy (McGuire & McDonnell, 2008; Ryan et al., 2021). While the focus of self-determination studies is seen as intrinsic motivations, it includes factors that facilitate or weaken both intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivations that are internalized over time (Kowal & Fortier, 1999; Ryan et al., 2006; Adams et al., 2017). These motivations

develop due to various reasons such as achieving the desired result or avoiding punishment, the self that is greatly influenced by the opinions and attitudes of others, behaviours guided by one's belief, and the pursuit of a valued activity (Xie et al., 2018). Self-determination is the motivation to meet the needs of relatedness, competence and autonomy to internalize behavioural tendencies such as making choices and making decisions (Dattillo et al., 1998) through being independent of external influences or interventions in one's life (Hill & Sibthorp, 2006).

According to the self-determination theory, individuals have three basic needs that develop depending on how determined they are and whether they are fed by the social environment. Based on this point of view, Deci and Ryan (2002) define the need for *autonomy* as making decisions without external pressures, with an internal locus of control, and the need for *competence* as being conscious of what has been done and conducting the search successfully. In addition, researchers state that the need to be *related* includes belonging to a group. Gilal et al. (2019) states that consumers' preference for a particular brand based on their feelings of appreciation, empowerment, and ability to express their individuality represents the need for autonomy. On the other hand, the purchases they make, depending on their feeling that they are competent, successful and performing well, meet the need for competence. If the brand evokes a feeling of worthiness, warm openness and acceptance in the individual, it provides the opportunity to meet the need for association by developing emotional attachment. These three interrelated and interdependent psychological needs of individuals that need to be met provide the basis for motivating healthy human behaviours (Hill et al., 2015), and classifying the supportive and hostile aspects of the environment towards integrated and vital human functioning (Deci & Ryan, 2004).

*Autonomy* emerges when an individual identifies with the importance of a decision-making behaviour accompanied by the experience of approval and willingness and integrate it with sense of self. Autonomous behaviour that expresses self-regulation includes approved experiences in which the person voluntarily self-organizes the behaviour (Ryan et al., 2009). In other words, an autonomous individual acts with a sense of will and psychological freedom that develops according to emotions, impulses and tendencies rather than external pressures and incentives, and a harmonious experience of self-affirmation takes place as a result of his/her actions (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Roth et al., 2019). The person may act with the motives of looking good in the eyes of other people in order to avoid shame, which can reveal autonomous behaviour by enabling to take actions that is valued (Ryan et al., 2021).

*Relatedness* reflects the tendency of connecting with others, integrating with others and being accepted by others with a sense of secure togetherness or unity within the integrative tendency of life (Deci & Ryan, 2004). The theory of self-determination suggests that each individual needs to gain a sense of belonging to the environment for a healthy life (Gillison et al., 2019) and integrate with the environment by being invited and cared by others, warmth and participation (Ryan et al., 2009). Therefore, relatedness includes the need to feel mentally and psychologically connected and being understood by others (Patrick et al., 2007).

*Competence* refers to individuals' orientation towards behaviours or struggles appropriate to their skills and capacities, including the feeling of trust and influence (Deci & Ryan, 2004). According to Patrick et al., (2007), the need for competence reflects the need of a person to feel effective in the activities that one strives to achieve and complete, and the ability to achieve desired results. It is seen that the need for competence comes to the fore especially in environments and situations where one-to-one or face to face encounters occur (Gillison et al., 2019). Since competence is characterized by a sense of mastery and the perception of being effective in what we do (Kilpatrick et al., 2002), gaining knowledge can also increase competence as it improves the sense of sufficiency (Ahn & Back, 2019). If the need for competency is not met, a change in perception, emotion and behaviour will result in amotivation (Deci & Ryan, 1980).

Self-determination is viewed as both a cause and a consequence of leisure, as many joyful and enjoyable leisure experiences foster the enhancement of self-determination through the active use of choice and appreciation (Coleman & Iso-Ahola, 1993). The fun and joyful activities motivated internally by internal

motivation related to the feeling of pleasure and satisfaction, and externally when they contain outputs such as tangible rewards, avoidance of punishment, getting the approval of others or being recognized by others (Ryan et al., 2009). When the activities are carried out for interests and personal value, they are directly driven by intrinsic motivations (Ryan et al., 2006). According to Vansteenkiste et al., (2018), intrinsically motivated activities are carried out because their content is attractive and interesting, and they involve a high level of participation, which individuals naturally prefer. On the other hand, researchers state that the underlying causes of behaviour are acceptable or internalizable to varying degrees since extrinsic motivation presents a controlled and suppressed structure. In this context, the desire of all individuals to participate in various activities or to be involved stems from the desire and needs to feel autonomous, competent and related, depending on the motivational status (Kilpatrick et al., 2002; Huang, et al., 2019). For example, it can be stated that sports events, in which social inputs are intensely observed, meet the need for competition because the intend of participants is achieving personal goals (Xie et al., 2018; Standage & Ryan, 2020). Xie et al., (2018) argue that group activities satisfy the need for relatedness because they encourage close and frequent social interaction among the participants, while individual activities meet the need for autonomy because the person directs him/herself and sets limits.

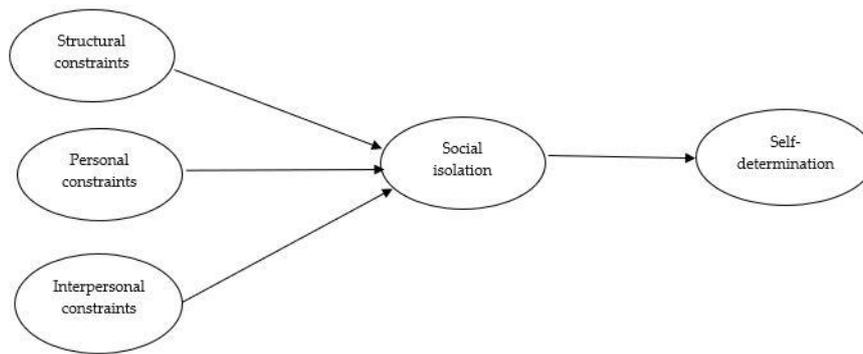
#### **2.4. Self-determination and Social Isolation**

Self-determination theory research reveals that reference groups in various role models around individuals affect and facilitate participation in and maintenance of the activity (Ryan et al., 2021). The social conditions realized here improve the individual's interaction with the environment by influencing the need for competence, relatedness and autonomy necessary for self-determination, and positively affect the perception of quality of life (McGuire & McDonnell, 2008; Roark & Ellis, 2009). This positive effect can be explained by associating the evidence-based information presented to the individual by the social environment to increase the individual's capacity to make quality choices (Moller, et al., 2006).

It is expected that the right to self-determination and the quality of life will be relatively lower if the individual's living environment is restrictive, environmental support is absent, and choice opportunities are lower (Chambers et al., 2007). In such restrictive environments, social isolation may be the result of a lack of interpersonal relationships, and people who have little interaction with others may have less chance of developing a sense of complete competence (Coleman & Iso-Ahola, 1993). The sense of relatedness autonomy and competence starts with childhood games. The games that starts with a reflection of the imagination in childhood turns into activities that give a great pleasure due to the power of depth of emotion and due to the fact that they were performed within a group in the adulthood (Gillin, 1914). Therefore, participation in quality and beneficial activities in adulthood can play an important role in social opportunities, identity development and maturation (Kowalski & Lankford, 2010). These activities are seen as a part of social life in contemporary society, as they offer opportunities for people to exercise their freedom of choice, to express their individuality through their choices, to belong to a group and to be approved (Woodward et al., 1989).

People need social support to ensure their personal development, but they may not be able to fully achieve this development since the thought of isolation causes psychological fragility (Hall-Lande et al., 2007). Self determination is a result of the individual's social relationships (Sabir et al., 2009). Thus, social isolation can be an obstacle to the development of an individual in terms of autonomy, competence and relatedness. For instance, failure to meet relatedness needs is defined as one of the indicators in the definition and measurement of internal social isolation (Zavaleta et al, 2017). The relationship of social isolation with relatedness is bidirectional. According to this point of view, as relatedness decreases, social isolation increases, and as social isolation increases, relatedness decreases (Hannafrey, 2003; Fotiadis et al., 2019). On the other hand, Coleman and Iso-Ahola (1993) stated that social isolation is a result of lack of competence and that people who have little interaction with others have a lower chance of developing a sense of competence. Therefore, according to Fotiadis et al., (2019), when evaluated in terms of business life, developing relationships by making autonomous decisions can eliminate the possibility of social isolation. With these premises in mind the following hypothesis is addressed.

*H4. Social isolation negatively affect self-determination of residents*



**Figure 1.** Theoretical Model

### 3. Methodology

Methodology of the study is explained in the following headings.

#### 3.1. Measurement of Variables

Questionnaire technique is used to collect data in this study. The measurement scales of this study have been adapted from previous studies. Structural, interpersonal and personal constraint dimensions were measured with twelve items of McGuire (1984). Self-determination dimension has three subdimensions of competence, autonomy and relatedness need satisfaction. The 12 items of these constructs were adapted from Xie et. al. (2018). Finally, social isolation was adapted from the study of Secker et al. (2009) with five items. The scale items are ethically approved by Bitlis Eren University. In total 29 items were measured by seven Likert scale.

The items of the survey questionnaire were adapted from English written articles and translated into Turkish. The back translation method was used to ensure all the items were correctly and clearly understandable (Douglas & Craig, 2007). Within the scope of the back translation method, which is used to determine the inconsistencies that may occur in the translation process, assistance was obtained from a language expert. In this sense as suggested by Behr (2017) the questionnaires first translated into Turkish and then translated back into the original language and compared. Also, to ensure the items were applicable and representative of the associated dimensions, five scholars and three residents evaluated the scale items. In this process no problems with wording or measurements found. A pilot test was conducted with 81 residents to check the reliability of measurement items, and the values of Cronbach's alpha for all the constructs were regarded acceptable as they were above .70.

#### 3.2. Data Collection

The research was undertaken at Ahlat. The research data was gathered by two undergraduate students. Therefore, first, the students were informed about the scope of the study and survey collection techniques. The research was conducted between May 30 and June 15, 2022. Questionnaires were gathered mostly from university students and young residents around Ahlat with the permission of the municipality. Within the scope of the study, 408 questionnaires were collected. However 160 of these questionnaires were extracted from the study due to the insufficient and invalid responds. As the rule of ten times for sample size is provided 248 valid questionnaires were analysed through smartPLS. The sample characteristics are summarized in Table 1 by age, gender, education, and occupation.

**Table 1.** Demographic Variables

	<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Marital Status</b>		
Female	99	39.9	Married	87	35.1
Male	149	60.1	Single	161	64.9
<i>Total</i>	248	100.0	<i>Total</i>	248	100.0
<b>Age</b>			<b>Education</b>		
16-24	103	41.5	Primary School	16	6.5
25-34	85	34.3	Secondary School	145	58.5
35-44	52	21.0	Bachelor's	58	23.4
45 and over	8	3.2	Postgraduate	29	11.7
<i>Total</i>	248	100.0	<i>Total</i>	248	100.0
<b>Occupation</b>					
Civil serv.	67	27.0			
Private sector	28	11.3			
Self employed	17	6.9			
Student	86	34.7			
Unemployed	50	20.2			
<i>Total</i>	248	100.0			

As seen in Table 1 the majority of the participants of the study are 16-24 years old (41.5%) and not attended to any university (65.0%). The participation rate of females (39.9) is lower than the men (60.1), 64.9% of those participants are single. Lastly, half of the participants are comprised of the civil servants and students.

#### 4. Findings

The measurement model, which can be seen in Table 2, was assessed through internal consistency reliability, convergent reliability and discriminant validity. Based on the analysis, eight items were removed from the measurement model. Two of these items were removed from relatedness construct, and two items were removed from interpersonal constraints construct. One item for each of the social isolation, autonomy, competence and personal constraints constructs were removed. The composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha values of all constructs exceeded the acceptable threshold level of 0.70, and average variance extracted (AVEs) exceeded the threshold of .50 (Hair et al., 2017). Therefore, results show the evidence of internal consistency and satisfactory convergent validity.

**Table 2.** Factor loading, Cronbach Alpha, CR and AVE

Variable/Indicator		Loading	$\alpha$	CR	AVE
<b>SC</b>			.836	.890	.670
SC1	There is a lack of equipment to do an activity	.788			
SC2	There is a lack of facilities to do an activity	.843			
SC3	There is a lack of information to do an	.884			
SC4	There is noanyone to teach the activity	.752			
<b>IPC</b>			.733	.881	.731
IPC3	I have a feeling that my family and friends would not approve activities	.859			
IPC4	I have a fear of disapproval by others	.914			
<b>PC</b>			.727	.843	.642
PC1	I don't know how to do an activity	.811			
PC2	I don't know the skills to do an activity	.785			
PC3	I don't have anybody to do the activity with me	.809			

<b>CNS</b>		.815	.890	.731
CNS1	I feel very competent in doing my activities.	.794		
CNS2	I have been able to learn interesting new skills recently.	.890		
CNS3	Most of time I feel a sense of accomplishment.	.877		
<b>ANS</b>		.704	.869	.769
ANS1	I feel like I am free to decide for myself.	.906		
ANS2	I feel pressured.	.847		
<b>RNS</b>		.725	.845	.646
RNS3	I have friends at the SRC who care about me.	.699		
RNS4	I feel I am a member of the SRC community	.858		
RNS5	I have a sense of belonging at the SRC.	.845		
<b>SI</b>		.830	.887	.663
SI2	I feel terribly alone and isolated	.810		
SI3	I feel accepted by my friends	.850		
SI4	I don't feel I am playing a useful part in society	.826		
SI5	I have friends I see or talk to every week	.770		

(SC- Structural Constraint; IPC- Interpersonal Constraints; PC- Personal Constraints; CNS- Competence Need; RNS- Relatedness need; ANS- Autonomy need; SI- Social Isolation)

The assessment of discriminant validity was done by examining the Fornell-Larcker and HTMT values. As can be seen in Table 3 since HTMT is less than the 0.85 threshold (Henseler et al., 2015) correlations between structures are reliable and well predicted. The results suggest that discriminant validity is achieved.

**Table 3.** Fornell-Larcker and HTMT Ratio

	PC	ANS	IPS	CNS	SC	RNS	SI
PC	(.801)						
ANS	0,113	(.877)					
IPC	0,480	0,317	(.887)				
CNS	0,164	0,224	0,099	(.855)			
SC	0,119	0,469	0,133	0,079	(.818)		
RNS	0,294	0,541	0,250	0,486	0,216	(.804)	
SI	0,150	0,608	0,194	0,217	0,511	0,572	(.814)

**Note.** Fornell-Larcker in the Parentheses.

Due to the fact that Xie et al (2018) examined autonomy, competence, and relatedness as separate variables in their research, a second-order data analysis on SDT was performed in this study. The second-order model (namely mindfulness) was assessed through indicator validity, t-value and VIF value, as suggested by Hair et al. (2017). As the first-order constructs' weights are higher than .10, they seem significant. Moreover, the t-statistics range between 8.922 and 34.222 and provide evidence that there is a relationship between the constructs. Also, each indicator weight for the construct was determined to have significant t-statistics and was valid. Furthermore, when examined the multicollinearity among the four constructs, variance inflation factors are below the threshold of 3.3.

**Table 4.** Analysis of second-order construct

Second-order construct	First-order constructs	Weights	t-value	VIF
<b>Self Determination</b>	Autonomy	.629	8.922***	1.000
	Competence	.733	16.641***	1.000
	Relationship	.840	34.222***	1.000
SDT construct CR value=.836				

**Note.** p <0.001.

The structural model was analysed through bootstrapping by using 5000 iterations. As shown in Table 5 the R<sup>2</sup> values of all the latent variables in the model are above 0.10 (Hair et al. 2017). When the results of the standardized path coefficients are examined path of structural constraints to social isolation ( $\beta_{EX \rightarrow SI} = .431$ , t value= 7.557), social isolation to self-determination ( $\beta_{SI \rightarrow SDT} = 0.474$ , t value= 8.383) have significantly positive effect relationships. On the other hand, interpersonal constraints and social isolation relationship ( $\beta_{AP \rightarrow SI} = -0.085$ , t value= 1.058), personal constraints and social isolation relationship ( $\beta_{AB \rightarrow SI} = -0.079$ , t value= 1.178) are not significant . The results of the R<sup>2</sup> and Q<sup>2</sup> values indicate that the path model has reliable predictive power and predictive relevance. Also, the Cohen f<sup>2</sup> value for effect size of h1 is 0.233, and found to be acceptable. Therefore h1 is accepted, whereas h2 and h3 are rejected. H4 is also rejected due to the indication of positive relation.

**Table 5.** Structural model

Hypothesis	Relationships	$\beta$	t-value	f <sup>2</sup>	Decision
H1	SC → SI	.431	7.557	.233	Supported
H2	PC → SI	-.085	1.058	.008	Rejected
H3	IPC → SI	-.079	1.178	.007	Rejected
H4	SI → SDT	.474	8.383	.291	Rejected

*Self-Determination R<sup>2</sup>=.222, Q<sup>2</sup>=.081; Social Isolation R<sup>2</sup>=.201, Q<sup>2</sup>=.132*

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

Self-motivated proactive people develop a natural tendency to seek innovation and learning opportunities in order to become skilled, integrate with a coherent sense of self (Standage & Ryan, 2020) and overcome innate challenges (Ryan, 2009). In this process, leisure, which tends to be rich, sensitive and social, provides an ideal platform to support the development of attitudes, behaviours and beliefs determined by the individual (Rose et al., 2008). In addition, leisure facilitates self-determination by being aware of one's self in spare time, making relevant decisions, making meaningful leisure choices, communicating these choices, and communicating effectively with their environment (Dattillo et al., 1998). However, the effect of social aspect in between leisure and self-determination is not studied sufficiently. Based on this importance of leisure in human life, this study is conducted with a limited number of samples in Ahlat, where is observed to be limited in recreational terms. Within the scope of this study, several important findings were obtained.

The findings obtained within the scope of this study revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between structural constraints and social isolation. According to Shaw et al., (1991), the researches are based on the assumption that barriers to individuals' participation in leisure activities reduce their level of participation in a preferred activity, which leads to either less participation or non-participation than they want. Finlay and Kobayashi (2018) draws attention to the fact that individuals experience more social isolation in places where the supportive infrastructure is lacking, such as cafes and restaurants. Similarly, in Ahlat, it is observed that there is a lack of areas where individuals can come together and participate in various activities. Therefore, passive leisure activities are more common in Ahlat. While passive leisure is, of course, objectively isolating, those involved may not necessarily feel lonely as contemporary forms of entertainment offer insight into the lives of strangers and spread newly assumed intimacy relationships (Glover, 2018).

The results of this study also showed that leisure constraints are not related to social isolation in terms of interpersonal and personal constraints. This findings may be related to the fact that social isolation, as stated by Majorano et al. (2015), is not always undesirable situation. It is stated in the studies that social isolation, which is a difficult variable to measure, should be examined by making the distinction between being alone together and loneliness (Zavaleta et al, 2017). As a matter of fact, individuals may seek to be socially isolated and internally motivate isolation in order to concentrate better and make more accurate decisions (Marcoen et al., 1987). Many great works of art, philosophy and literature were created by

socially isolated individuals, and isolation may create a good environment to engage in forgotten hobbies, neglected passions and unfulfilled dreams (Banerjee & Rai, 2020). However, it should not be forgotten that when people are socially isolated, they have limited access to resources and have limited social relationships (Toepoel, 2013). Organizing the activities that individuals will perform in their free time in terms of therapeutic, artistic, cultural and sportive aspects, and creating a suitable ground for use is considered important in terms of eliminating the problem of negative aspects of social isolation (Kılıç & Şener, 2012).

Another expected finding of this study was that there is a negative relationship between social isolation and self-determination. The finding of this hypothesis interestingly showed that there is a positive relationship between social isolation and self-determination. Agich (1993) implied that in an autonomous way of life, people need to be independent from others. This may be the reason of this result. That is when people feel more isolated from others they may become more autonomous. Other studies usually suggest that in areas, where self-determination skills are high, it is inevitable for individuals to develop a sense of psychological and subjective well-being (Moller et al., 2006; Roth et al., 2019). Therefore, with an approach to motivation and personality, self-determination contributes to the investigation of people's innate psychological needs, which are the basis of internal growth tendencies, self-motivation and personality integration, and the conditions that feed these positive processes (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The factors that feed these processes also include leisure opportunities and socialization. Kowal and Fortier (1999) stated when they are away from external pressures and determine their own destiny, individuals who engage in sports for fun and pleasure experience flow, and gain a high level of psychological advantage by providing internal motivation. According to Ryan et al. (2009), being more active in the life processes of individuals contributes to satisfying deep psychological needs, which causes them to feel more energetic and feel relief. Depending on the autonomy, competence and relatedness needs of individuals, being in team-oriented activity environments or doing individual activities, facilitates the feelings of acceptance, self-confidence and commitment by developing an increased sense of satisfaction and belonging (Kilpatrick et al., 2002). The finding obtained in this study could be the result of cultural differences and low expectations of the society. In Ahlat the cultural structure is highly individualistic. Therefore, the residents act with a sense of dealing with their own lives and engage in activities (if any) solely. This means that even if the residents feel isolated, they may create and maintain their own autonomy, competence and relatedness needs.

The availability of leisure activities, facilities and equipment creates a valuable place in destinations for community integration. Participation in leisure activities provides the opportunity to get to know the culture of the society, to transfer traditions to the next generations, to establish and strengthen ties with people, and to maintain communication with the family (Stodolska, 2015). It has also been proven that various activities are beneficial in terms of establishing social relations, especially in the evaluations made for the elderly and the disabled. Toepoel (2013) emphasizes that especially for older adults, activities can be an important tool in increasing or maintaining social integration. The availability and usability of leisure areas increase the self-confidence, sense of security and self-belief of individuals, as they enable participants to establish socially inclusive and supportive relationships. Moreover, increased self-confidence and a sense of security are strongly associated with a significant increase in physical activity (Picton et al., 2016).

The Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) report published within the UK Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) determined that access to leisure activities, including participation in the arts, is necessary to promote social inclusion, and emphasized the need to promote access to arts opportunities (Secker et al., 2009). This report reveals the necessity of destinations to facilitate access to leisure activities and artistic activities suitable for the cultural structure to integrate individuals into society and to minimize social isolation. The development of leisure activities aimed at reinforcing friendship relations, especially for the elderly and the disabled, will not only reduce social isolation to a minimum degree, but also strengthen individuals' ability to determine their own destiny. Destination managers and operators can establish an

advisory committee to encourage collaboration with family or professionals to identify strategies to encourage participation in events (Petrysen et al., 2001). In this way, healthier and happier societies can be created where better relations can be established among the people.

There are some limitations in this study that need to be eliminated to empower the new researches. The limitations of this study should be examined first in terms of sample size and then presenting the scale to a limited number of experts. Within the scope of this study, data obtained from a limited number of samples were analysed. It is important that the study be carried out with a larger sample group. However, the limited level of knowledge of the local people living in the Ahlat region about leisure and activities makes it difficult to collect more data in the study. In this context, it is important to reconstruct the study in accordance with the local perspective and culture. In this process, there is a need for the local municipality to be included in the study and an implementation project. In addition, it will provide a wider perspective if the study is limited to civil servants and students from larger cities, who have knowledge about higher leisure opportunities, and to implement it with a mixed method. Presenting the scale to a limited number of experts in the study can be evaluated in terms of time constraints. Some experts, to whom the study scale was sent, did not respond, while others gave late feedback. Since it was determined that the scale could be understood correctly by the local people, the data collection phase was started. It is possible for the study scale to be re-examined more broadly by field experts and language proficiency experts. In addition, performing a comparative analysis by applying the study in different rural areas may be possible in terms of both increasing the number of samples and testing the generalizability of the study findings.

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