

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARTICIPATION TO
RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND THE SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING:
AN APPLICATION ON ACADEMICIANS***

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ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ: AKADEMİSYENLER ÜZERİNDE BİR UYGULAMA*
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ABSTRACT: In this study, it was aimed to determine the relationship between the participation levels of academicians in recreational activities and their subjective well-being. A questionnaire was used as a data collection technique in the study and applied to a total of 393 academicians from Harran University, Afyon Kocatepe University and Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University. In the analysis of the obtained data, in addition to descriptive statistics, t test, analysis of variance and correlation analysis were used. According to the results of the research, singles, young people and research assistants participate in recreational activities at a higher level. However, the subjective well-being levels of women, young people, research assistants and those with low seniority were found to be higher. In the study, a positive, moderate and significant relationship ($r=0.402$) was found between the levels of participation in recreational activities in general and general subjective well-being. On the other hand, it was determined that the subjective well-being dimensions most affected by recreational activities were "friend relationships" ($r=0.498$), "activities of interest" ($r=0.455$) and "family relationships" ($r=0.443$), respectively. In addition, it was found that the recreational activities that most affected subjective well-being were "cultural activities" ($r=0.471$).

Key Words: Recreational Activities, Subjective Well-Being, Academics, University

ÖZ: Bu çalışmada akademisyenlerin rekreasyonel aktivitelere katılım düzeyleri ile öznel iyi oluşları arasındaki ilişkinin belirlenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmada veri toplama tekniği olarak anket kullanılmış ve Harran Üniversitesi, Afyon Kocatepe Üniversitesi ve Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi'nden toplam 393 akademisyene uygulanmıştır. Elde edilen verilerin analizinde betimsel istatistiklerin yanı sıra t testi, varyans analizi ve korelasyon analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre bekarlar, gençler ve araştırma görevlileri daha yüksek düzeyde rekreasyonel aktivitelere katılmaktadırlar. Bununla birlikte kadınların, gençlerin, araştırma görevlilerinin ve kıdemi düşük olanların öznel iyi oluş düzeyleri daha yüksek bulunmuştur. Araştırmada, genel olarak rekreasyonel aktivitelere katılım düzeyleri ile genel öznel iyi oluş arasında pozitif, orta düzeyde ve anlamlı bir ilişki ($r=0.402$) tespit edilmiştir. Diğer taraftan rekreasyonel aktivitelerin en çok etkilediği öznel iyi oluş boyutlarının sırasıyla "arkadaş ilişkileri" ($r=0.498$), "ilgi duyulan aktiviteler" ($r=0.455$) ve

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“aile ilişkileri” ($r=0.443$) olduğu belirlenmiştir. Bununla birlikte öznel iyi oluşu en çok etkileyen rekreasyonel aktivitelerin ise “kültürel aktiviteler” ($r=0.471$) olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rekreasyonel Aktiviteler, Öznel İyi Oluş, Akademisyenler, Üniversite

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Recreation, expressed today as leisure time and "leisure activities" (Sklar, Autry & Anderson, 2014), is an important part of human life (Zhou, Tian & Qiu, 2017) and contributes to human subjective well-being (Schulz, Schulte, Raube, Disouky & Kandler, 2018; Tkach & Lyubomirsky, 2006). In recent years, opinions that participation in recreational activities improves subjective well-being have gained increasing scientific support. Many studies have shown that subjective well-being is positively associated with participation in recreational activities (Björk et al., 2008; Brajsa-Zganec, Merkas & Sverko, 2011; Carruthers & Hood, 2004; Green, Kleiber & Tarrant, 2000; Hurtes, Allen, Stevens & Lee, 2000; Kırmızıer, 2018; Koopman Boyden & Reis, 2009; Kuykendall, Boemerman & Zhu 2018; Kuykendall, Tay & Ng, 2015; Macchia & Whillans, 2019; Mackenzie & Hodge, 2020; Mitas, 2010; Newman, Tay & Diener, 2014; Parsons, Mackenzie, Filep & Brymer, 2019; Reynolds & Lim, 2007; Schulz et al., 2018; Tian, Qiu, Lin, Zhou & Yao, 2020; Vella, Johnson & Hides, 2015; Yarnal, Chick & Kerstetter 2008). This positive relationship persisted in various subpopulations. Despite this, academics have emerged as a neglected group and no studies on academics have been found in the relevant literature. In this respect, the aim of the study is to determine the relationship between the participation levels of academicians in recreational activities and their subjective well-being.

The universe of this research consists of academicians working in public universities in Turkey. In the study, Harran University, Afyon Kocatepe University and Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University were considered as clusters and a sample was taken with cluster sampling method. For quantitative studies in calculating the minimum sample size, the formula " $n=s^2.Z_{\alpha}^2/d^2$ " proposed by Sekaran (2003) was used. Accordingly, through the findings obtained as a result of the pilot application of 40 people, the standard deviation s were taken as $Z_{\alpha}=1.96$, which corresponds to the significance level of 0.05, and the effect size indicating the sample error was taken as $d=0.1$ and the minimum sample size was calculated as 384. In line with this information, applications were carried out on 420 people by taking into account incomplete, inaccurate and low reliability data and 393 of them were evaluated.

A questionnaire consisting of three parts was used as a data collection technique in the research. In the first part, questions aiming to determine the demographic characteristics of the academicians were included, while in the second part, the Level of Participation in Recreational Activities Form prepared by Şen (2019) based on the Alberta Recreation Survey (2013) was used. A total of 56 activities were included in the form where recreational activities were grouped under 6 different headings (Physical activities 13, outdoor activities 14, group activities 5, cultural activities 5, hobbies 11 and other activities 8). In the third part of the survey, the subjective well-being scale developed by Tuzgöl Dost (2005) was used. The scale has 12 sub-dimensions as "comparing one's life with one's own past life and the lives of others, positive and negative emotions, goals, self-confidence, optimism, activities of interest, friendship relationships, outlook to the future, family relationships, envy of the

life of others, coping with the challenges of life and pessimism". Each item in the scale was subjected to a five-point Likert rating.

The demographic characteristics of the academicians constituting the sample group of the study were presented with frequency and percentage distributions, and the scales and sub-dimensions were defined by descriptive statistics such as arithmetic mean and standard deviation. On the other hand, the suitability of the data for normal distribution was determined by using Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, and since $p > 0.05$, t-test and analysis of variance were used to compare the participants' level of participation in recreational activities and subjective well-being according to demographic characteristics. The relationship between the participation levels of academic staff in recreational activities and their subjective well-being was determined by Pearson correlation analysis. In the study, reliability analysis was applied for the subjective well-being scale and the Cronbach's Alpha value was calculated as 0.87. The data obtained in the study were analyzed by using SPSS 21.0 for Windows program.

According to the results of the research, singles, young people and research assistants participate in recreational activities at a higher level. However, the subjective well-being levels of women, young people, research assistants and those with low seniority were found to be higher. In the study, a positive, moderate and significant relationship ($r=0.402$) was found between the levels of participation in recreational activities in general and general subjective well-being. On the other hand, it was determined that the subjective well-being dimensions most affected by recreational activities were "friend relationships" ($r=0.498$), "activities of interest" ($r=0.455$) and "family relationships" ($r=0.443$), respectively. In addition, it was found that the recreational activities that most affected subjective well-being were "cultural activities" ($r=0.471$).

1. INTRODUCTION

Recreation, which is expressed as leisure time and "leisure activities" (Sklar et al., 2014), is an important part of human life (Zhou et al., 2017) and is a basic need for the psychological, social and physical well-being of people of all ages and groups (Pacm, 2008). Increase in happiness, quality of life, life satisfaction, creativity, job performance and commitment; decrease in loneliness, alienation, job stress and burnout are some of the serious gains that recreation activities provide to a human life (Ahmad & AbuBakar, 2003; Eime, Harvey, Brown & Payne, 2010; Küçük, 2017; Ortaç, 2019; Sane, Devin, Jafari & Zohoorian, 2012; Shadid, 2017; Tezcan, 2007; Uçar, 2018). In recent years, the views that recreation activities also improve subjective well-being have gained increasing scientific support. Many studies have shown that subjective well-being is positively associated with participation in recreational activities (Björk et al., 2008; Brajsa-Zganec et al., 2011; Carruthers & Hood, 2004; Green et al., 2000; Hurtes et al., 2000; Kırmızıer, 2018; Koopman Boyden & Reis, 2009; Kuykendall et al., 2018; Kuykendall et al., 2015; Macchia & Whillans, 2019; Mackenzie & Hodge, 2020; Mitas, 2010; Newman et al., 2014; Parsons et al., 2019; Reynolds & Lim, 2007; Schulz et al., 2018; Tian et al., 2020; Vella et al., 2015; Yarnal et al., 2008). Although this positive relationship has been demonstrated in various subpopulations, academics have emerged as a neglected group. However, it is important that academicians (Oshagbemi & Hickson, 2003;

Randall 2006), who are revealed in current studies on academic life that they face problems such as heavy workload, long career process, inflexible working conditions, unfair wage distribution (McCabe & Johnson 2013). In this direction, the aim of the research is to determine the relationship between academicians' level of participation in recreational activities and their subjective well-being. The main hypothesis of the study can be expressed as "there is a significant and positive relationship between the level of participation in recreational activities and subjective well-being".

2. LEISURE TIME AND RECREATION

The concept of leisure has been debated for more than two thousand years. Just Edgington et al. (2003) has written more than two hundred definitions of leisure time in *Leisure Basic Concepts* (Sklar et al., 2014). The definitions usually made are similar to each other (Bulut, 2021). In order to understand its existing form, it has been necessary to analyze the relationship between work and leisure time throughout history (Juniu, 2000). Leisure time, in its most basic sense, is the time in which a person is freed from work or other tasks and can be used for the purpose of relaxation, rest, entertainment, social success or personal growth (Gist & Fava, 1964). In addition, different authors have defined leisure time as time in which one has the power to decide or the right to choose (Stebbins, 2007), when one is freed from all the limitations of one's responsibilities, when one is interested in activities that one chooses according to one's own mood as one wishes (Kelly & Freysinger, 2000). In explaining leisure time, Parker (1976) divided the time that man has in his daily life into three different wishes. The first of these time periods is the working time, which includes activities such as work, learning, homework that are necessary for a person to make a living. Another is existence, time that refers to the actions that man performs to maintain his existence. This includes sleeping, eating, and other activities they need to do to get their lives moving. Finally, it talks about the free time left to man after fulfilling his mandatory duties (Uyrun, 2021).

Recreation is related to the activities that a person performs within the free time zone or outside of the working hours of existence (Gulam, 2016). For this reason, in its most common definition, recreation is expressed as activities that people participate in in their free time (Sklar et al., 2014). It is seen as activities carried out with the aim of meeting individual needs and motivations in order to obtain the positive benefits of leisure time. However, these activities should not be evaluated only for effectiveness, but should also provide personal satisfaction (Bulut, 2021; Sklar et al., 2014; Torkildsen, 2005). Participation in recreational activities is actually a natural phenomenon inherent in human beings. Every person wants to get out of the routine life they live from time to time, experience something different, be physically and mentally refreshed, and therefore participate in various recreational activities in their free time (Gül, 2014). Although man in general tends to delegate recreation to an insignificant place in his life because of the duties and responsibilities he undertakes in terms of making a living in his life, earning money

for the family, and gaining a place in society, the impulse to recreation is so fundamental and universal that it cannot be suppressed (Gulam, 2016). Therefore, it is possible to say that participation in recreational activities is a basic human need (Gulam, 2016; Sklar et al., 2014). Leitner & Leitner (1996) explained recreational activities as a human need by developing an approach through the Pyramid of Needs (Hierarchy) created by Abraham Maslow in 1943. According to this approach, recreation can meet all the needs in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. These are; basic physiological needs (running, cycling, eating out, walking and resting in nature), security need (sports such as tennis, volleyball, basketball, football, which can be done both indoors and outdoors, should be carried out within a rule and limitation), social needs (volunteering for charities, being a member of a non-governmental organization or association), psychological needs (dealing with art, defeating an opponent after a sporting event), self-actualization (giving original artworks, dealing with performing arts such as theater, drama, music) (Gül, 2014; Leitner & Leitner, 1996).

According to Hung, a person needs recreational activity because of its physiological, psychological and social benefits. Among the physiological benefits of recreation; physical regeneration, developing ability, rest, relaxation, getting rid of excess energy. Its psychological benefits are relief from the stress of life, emotional relaxation, creative thinking, mental relaxation, the feeling of achieving success, enjoyment of life, happiness, strengthening spiritual feelings, a sense of freedom, mental development, etc. Its social benefits can be stated as understanding human relations, establishing positive relationships, making friends, empathizing, getting along with them, understanding the thoughts of others, sharing ideas, and receiving support from them (Yan, 2013). Recreation is increasingly seen as an increasing value today due to these benefits (Çelik & Dalbudak, 2021). But in order for a person to fully enjoy the benefits in question, recreation must have certain features. First, the activity for recreation needs to be carried out in the leisure time of the person. The activity should be fun, not boring. It should bring immediate and direct satisfaction to man. Man must have chosen recreational activity by his own choice. Participation is not compulsory, but must be voluntary. Recreational activity is constructive. It is not harmful to man physically, mentally, emotionally, socially or in any other way. It should help the person become a better integrated individual. Recreational activity should be socially acceptable (Gulam, 2016). However, not every activity with these characteristics provides recreation for everyone (Sklar et al., 2014). One activity may be a recreational activity in one culture, while it may be a work in another. While one activity may be a recreational activity for one individual, it may be heavy and boring for the other individual. The environment and conditions are other factors that are effective in whether an activity provides recreation or not (Hacıoğlu, Gökdeniz & Dinç, 2017).

3. SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

Subjective well-being, which is generally expressed in simple words like "I feel good" and "I feel happy" (McCabe & Johnson 2013), is seen by some scientists as synonymous with "happiness" (Bolelli, 2020). Subjective well-being is a subjective assessment of a person's entire life (Parsons et al., 2019). It provides an insight into how a person's life is going through the interaction between their circumstances, activities, and psychological resources (New Economics Foundation 2018). Subjective well-being is often conceptualized as having two basic components, affective and cognitive. As Diener (1984) suggests, the affective component reflects the degree to which a person experiences many positive emotions and few negative emotions. Positive emotions and negative emotions can be considered as a single component as well as separate components of affective well-being (Kuykendall et al., 2015). Diener (2008) states that the affective component refers to the emotions, moods and feelings of the human being. When these elements are experienced as pleasant (joy, happiness, love), the emotion is positive, and when these elements are experienced as unpleasant (guilt, anger, shame), the emotion is negative. The affective component is measured as an instantaneous emotional state at a specific time, such as "two weeks ago" or "yesterday" (Parsons et al., 2019). The cognitive component, on the other hand, refers to the general assessment of human life satisfaction (Diener, Inglehart & Tay, 2013). It is the same as life satisfaction, which is expressed as the degree to which man makes positive judgments about the overall quality of his life as a whole (McCabe & Johnson 2013; Veenhoven, 1991). Unlike the emotional component, the cognitive component is usually thought of over long periods of time, such as ten years or a lifetime (Parsons et al., 2019). Although subjective well-being and happiness are used interchangeably by some scientists (Boniwell, 2016), happiness may be thought to contribute to the affective component, while the cognitive component is largely measured by the level of satisfaction with life (McCabe & Johnson, 2013). Therefore, subjective well-being researchers measure how a person thinks and feels about his or her life to determine what makes them happy and contented (Parsons et al., 2019).

Subjective well-being can also be measured at the field level. Common areas of subjective well-being include leisure, work, family, health, finances, self, and group of the person. Like general subjective well-being, subjective well-being at the field level can be effective or evaluative. As in research by Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwarz and Stone (2004), subjective well-being scores at the field level can be added together to achieve an overall subjective well-being score. Nevertheless, in line with the suggestion made by leading subjective well-being academics Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith (1999), it is possible to say that leisure time has greater potential to improve subjective well-being than in other fields (Kuykendall et al., 2015). The measurement methods of existing studies investigating subjective well-being in the relevant literature differ significantly. While some studies focus on the affective component, some studies focus on the

cognitive component, some focus on both, while in others subjective well-being is measured at the field level (Tian et al., 2020). The main goal of all studies on subjective well-being, regardless of the measurement method, is to identify the main determinant of human happiness (Galinha & Pais Ribeiro, 2011). In this direction, various theories have been studied to explain subjective well-being.

4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RECREATION AND SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

The role played by recreation, referred to as "leisure activities" in facilitating subjective well-being (Sklar et al., 2014), is a timeless issue that dates back to the Ancient Greek Period (Kuykendall et al., 2018). Ancient Greek philosophers believed that recreation was one of the most important determinants of happiness. (Aristotle, translated by Kuykendall et al., quoted in 1980, 2015). Today, despite centuries of socio-cultural changes, scholars in a wide variety of disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, tourism, etc., still believe that recreational activities are a key pathway to subjective well-being (Kuykendall et al., 2015; Kuykendall et al., 2018; Mannell & Kleiber, 1997; Newman et al., 2014; Pressman et al., 2009; Tkach & Lyubomirsky, 2006). Recreational activities are a key pathway to subjective well-being because they provide a person with the opportunity to maintain their life values and meet their needs. Through participation in recreational activities, a person builds social relationships, feels positive emotions, acquires additional skills and knowledge, and thanks to this, improves the quality of life (Brajsa-Zganec et al., 2011). Diener and Lucas (2000) and Rodriguez, Latkova and Sun, (2008) explained the relationship between recreation and subjective well-being in the theory of need. This is a theory that assumes that the satisfaction of needs has beneficial effects on subjective well-being. According to the theory, if a person can meet his needs, he will maintain or increase his subjective well-being. Once basic biological needs, which are important predictors of subjective well-being, are met, the satisfaction of psychological needs through participation in recreational activities has a beneficial effect on a person's subjective well-being.

In the relevant literature, some research has revealed that participation in various recreational activities contributes positively to subjective well-being. Findings based on 11,834 people in Kuykendall et al. (2015) study suggest that participation in recreational activities is moderately and positively associated with subjective well-being. The findings also reveal that the relationship between an individual's participation in recreational activities and subjective well-being is stronger when participation in recreational activities is measured in terms of diversity or frequency rather than quantity. The study, conducted by Schulz et al. (2018) in a sample of 402 participants, examined the role of participation and interest in recreational activities on subjective well-being. According to the findings, participation is in stronger relationships with all dimensions of subjective well-being than interest. More specifically, it has been established that interest and participation in social activities and sports has a strong and positive relationship (in different

dimensions) with subjective well-being. In the research conducted by Kirmizier (2018) in Mersin, recreational activities that increase subjective well-being are; hobby schools where participants learn new things, shopping malls where they can have a pleasant time, gyms where they can engage in physical activities and package tours that contain many of these types of qualities. Reynolds & Lim (2007) conducted a study of 12 women diagnosed with cancer who regularly engaged in art as a recreational activity. According to the results of the research, especially during chemotherapy, art supports the subjective well-being of the participants by enabling the symbolic expression of emotions. The study, which was examined by Vella et al. (2015) in a sample of 297 people who played computer games as recreational activities, revealed that computer games had a positive effect on the subjective well-being of the participants. In Carruthers and Hood (2004)'s research, it is stated that subjective well-being can be improved by reducing negative moods and increasing positive moods and life satisfaction, and the contribution of therapeutic recreation to the development of subjective well-being is emphasized. In the research of Mackenzie and Hodge (2020), it was stated that adventure recreation increases the eudaemonic aspects of subjective well-being by supporting the satisfaction of the basic psychological needs necessary for autonomy, competence, relatedness and beneficence. Parsons et al. (2019)'s study focused on recreational activities, particularly the role of nature-based recreational activities, as a unique and beneficial way to develop, maintain, and strengthen subjective well-being. In the research conducted by Newman et al. (2014), a quantitative summary of 363 research papers was made to reveal the effects of leisure activities on subjective well-being. Based on the findings, five basic psychological mechanisms triggered by leisure activities to promote subjective well-being have been proposed: (detachment-recovery, autonomy, mastery, meaning, and affiliation). These psychological mechanisms have been shown to promote subjective well-being through bottom-up theory. In a study conducted by Macchia & Whillans (2019) on a dataset of 220,000 people from 79 countries, countries whose citizens valued leisure activities more than work reported higher subjective well-being at the country and individual level. According to research findings conducted by Tian et al. (2020) based on data collected from 447 participants at the 2018 Wuxi International Marathon event in China, leisure satisfaction is positively associated with subjective well-being. However, in the researches of Björk et al. (2008); Brajsa-Zganec et al. (2011); Green et al. (2000); Hurtes et al. (2000); Koopman Boyden and Reis (2009); Kuykendall et al. (2018); Mitas (2010) and Yarnal et al. (2008) similarly, the positive effect of recreational activities on subjective well-being has been demonstrated.

Subjective well-being and happiness are used interchangeably by some scientists (Boniwell, 2016). But subjective well-being is often conceptualized as having two basic components, affective and cognitive (Kuykendall et al., 2015). While happiness can be thought to contribute to the affective component, the cognitive component is largely measured by the level of satisfaction with life

(McCabe & Johnson 2013). For this reason, the research examined the relationships between recreational activities and happiness, life satisfaction and life satisfaction. In the studies examined, in parallel with the increase in the level of participation in recreational activities, happiness (Demirbulat & Avcıkurt, 2015; Güven & Yavuz, 2018), happiness and quality of life (Demirbaş, 2020; Ortaç, 2019), quality of life (Ellis, Compton, Tyson & Bohlig, 2002; Salihoğlu, 2016; Silverstein & Parker, 2002) found that quality of life and life satisfaction (Eime et al., 2010) were positively affected.

Although there are studies in the relevant literature that reveal the relationship between participation in recreational activities and subjective well-being in various subpopulations (Björk et al., 2008; Brajsa-Zganec et al., 2011; Carruthers & Hood, 2004; Green et al., 2000; Hurtes et al., 2000; Kırmızıer, 2018; Koopman Boyden & Reis, 2009; Kuykendall et al., 2015; Kuykendall et al., 2018; Macchia & Whillans, 2019; Mackenzie & Hodge, 2020; Mitas 2010; Newman et al., 2014; Parsons et al., 2019; Reynolds & Lim, 2007; Schulz et al., 2018; Tian et al., 2020; Vella et al., 2015; Yarnal, et al., 2008), academics have emerged as a neglected group. For this reason, the aim of this study was to determine the relationship between academicians' level of participation in recreational activities and their subjective well-being. The fact that the relationship between the two variables in academicians has not been investigated before constitutes the unique aspect of this study.

5. METHODOLOGY

This study was found ethically appropriate with the decision of the Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee of Harran University, dated 20.05.2022 and numbered 2022/86. The universe of this research consists of academicians working in public universities in Turkey. In the study, Harran University, Afyon Kocatepe University and Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University were considered as clusters and a sample was taken with cluster sampling method. For quantitative studies in calculating the minimum sample size, the formula " $n=s^2.Z_{\alpha}^2/d^2$ " proposed by Sekaran (2003) was used. Accordingly, through the findings obtained as a result of the pilot application of 40 people, the standard deviation s were taken as $Z_{\alpha}=1.96$, which corresponds to the significance level of 0.05, and the effect size indicating the sample error was taken as $d=0.1$ and the minimum sample size was calculated as 384. In line with this information, applications were carried out on 420 people by taking into account incomplete, inaccurate and low reliability data and 393 of them were evaluated.

A questionnaire consisting of three parts was used as a data collection technique in the research. In the first part, questions aiming to determine the demographic characteristics of the academicians (gender, age, marital status, title and seniority) were included, while in the second part, the Level of Participation in Recreational Activities Form prepared by Şen (2019) based on the Alberta Recreation Survey (2013) was used. A total of 56 activities were included in the form where recreational activities were grouped under 6 different headings (Physical

activities 13, outdoor activities 14, group activities 5, cultural activities 5, hobbies 11 and other activities 8). The participation level of the academicians in the activities was evaluated as "1=Never", "2=Rarely", "3=Occasionally", "4=Generally", "5=Very Often" in the Likert rating of 5. In the third part of the survey, the subjective well-being scale developed by Tuzgöl Dost (2005) was used. The scale has 12 sub-dimensions as "comparing one's life with one's own past life and the lives of others, positive and negative emotions, goals, self-confidence, optimism, activities of interest, friendship relationships, outlook to the future, family relationships, envy of the life of others, coping with the challenges of life and pessimism". Each item in the scale was subjected to a five-point Likert rating and coded as "1=No Disagree", "2=Less Agree", "3=Moderate Agree", "4=Very Agree", "5=Totally Agree" and the evaluations were made out of 5. The 20 items that are coded inversely on the scale are 2, 4, 6, 10, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 35, 37, 38, 40, 43 and 45.

The demographic characteristics of the academicians constituting the sample group of the study were presented with frequency and percentage distributions, and the scales and sub-dimensions were defined by descriptive statistics such as arithmetic mean and standard deviation. On the other hand, the suitability of the data for normal distribution was determined by using Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, and since $p > 0.05$, t-test and analysis of variance were used to compare the participants' level of participation in recreational activities and subjective well-being according to demographic characteristics. The relationship between the participation levels of academic staff in recreational activities and their subjective well-being was determined by Pearson correlation analysis. In the study, reliability analysis was applied for the subjective well-being scale and the Cronbach's Alpha value was calculated as 0.87. The data obtained in the study were analyzed by using SPSS 21.0 for Windows program.

6. FINDINGS

The distribution of the demographic characteristics of a total of 393 academicians participating in the study is presented in Table 1. Accordingly, 50.4% are women and 49.6% are men, while 22.9% are single and 77.1% are married. 60.8% of the participants were 35 years of age or younger, 33.3% were between the ages of 36-50 and 5.9% were 51 years of age or older. While 18.6% of the academicians participating in the survey have the title of Prof. Dr. and Assoc. Prof. Dr., 50.1% are Dr. Lecturers, 16.5% are Research Assistants and 14.8% are Lecturers. 41.2% of the participants have been working at the university for 10 years or less, 28.2% for 11-15 years, 24.2% for 16-20 years and 6.4% for 21 years or more.

Table 1: Distribution of Participants According to Demographic Characteristics

| Variables | Groups | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|--------------|
| | | f | % |
| Gender | Female | 198 | 50.4 |
| | Male | 195 | 49.6 |
| Marital Status | Single | 90 | 22.9 |
| | Married | 303 | 77.1 |
| Age | 35 and under | 239 | 60.8 |
| | 36-50 | 131 | 33.3 |
| | 51 and over | 23 | 5.9 |
| Education Status | Prof. Dr. Assoc. Prof.Dr. | 73 | 18.6 |
| | Asst.Prof.Dr. | 197 | 50.1 |
| | Res.Assist. | 65 | 16.5 |
| | Lecturer | 58 | 14.8 |
| Study Time at University (Seniority) | 10 years and less | 162 | 41.2 |
| | 11-15 years | 111 | 28.2 |
| | 16-20 years | 95 | 24.2 |
| | 21 years and more | 25 | 6.4 |
| Total | | 393 | 100.0 |

Some descriptive statistics on participants' participation in recreational activities and their subjective well-being are presented in Table 2. The participation levels of academicians in recreational activities in general were calculated as $\bar{X}=1.86$ in the range of 1.27 and 2.58 and this value was found to be quite low in the 5-point Likert rating. Recreational activities in which participants participate at a higher level than other activities; Other activities such as internet, tv, chess, video, book-magazine-newspaper ($\bar{X}=2.43$) and cultural activities including activities such as dance, concerts, museums, theater, fairs ($\bar{X}=2.40$) are followed by physical activities ($\bar{X}=1.91$), hobbies ($\bar{X}=1.79$), outdoor activities ($\bar{X}=1.73$) and group activities ($\bar{X}=1.70$).

According to Table 2 the participants' overall subjective well-being levels were found to be $\bar{X}=3.91$ on average in the range of 3.04 and 4.65, which is well above the median value of 3. The highest factors in terms of subjective well-being were listed as coping with life's challenges ($\bar{X}=4.17$), goals ($\bar{X}=4.12$), self-confidence ($\bar{X}=4.11$), and family relationships ($\bar{X}=4.10$).

Table 2: Some Descriptive Statistics on Participants' Participation in Recreational Activities and Subjective Well-Being

| Variables | Min. | Max. | \bar{X} | SS |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Participation in Recreational Activities | 1.27 | 2.58 | 1.86 | 0.25 |
| Physical Activities | 1.31 | 2.62 | 1.91 | 0.28 |
| Outdoor Activities | 1.21 | 2.93 | 1.73 | 0.31 |
| Group activities | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.70 | 0.43 |
| Cultural activities | 1.00 | 4.20 | 2.40 | 0.79 |
| Hobbies | 1.09 | 2.55 | 1.79 | 0.30 |
| Other activities | 1.63 | 4.38 | 2.43 | 0.54 |
| Subjective Well-being | 3.04 | 4.65 | 3.91 | 0.39 |
| Comparing your life to your past and the life of others | 2.83 | 5.00 | 1.93 | 0.55 |
| Feelings | 2.60 | 5.00 | 3.88 | 0.56 |
| Purposes | 2.75 | 5.00 | 4.12 | 0.58 |
| Self Confidence | 3.00 | 5.00 | 4.11 | 0.49 |
| Optimism | 2.50 | 4.83 | 3.91 | 0.57 |
| Interested Events | 1.50 | 4.75 | 3.19 | 0.77 |
| Friendship Relations | 2.50 | 5.00 | 3.84 | 0.69 |
| Looking to the future | 2.33 | 5.00 | 3.91 | 0.73 |
| Family Relations | 1.67 | 5.00 | 4.10 | 0.67 |
| Envy of the lives of others | 2.00 | 5.00 | 2.23 | 0.90 |
| Coping with life's challenges | 2.67 | 5.00 | 4.17 | 0.52 |
| Pessimism | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.20 | 0.95 |

The results of the t test and variance analysis to compare the participants' participation levels in recreational activities and their subjective well-being according to demographic characteristics are given in Table 3. According to the test results, the participation levels of academicians in recreational activities show significant differences according to other demographic characteristics other than gender and seniority ($P > 0.05$) ($P < 0.05$). When the average values of the groups were examined, it was seen that the participation levels of singles ($\bar{X} = 2.18$) in recreational activities were higher than those married ($\bar{X} = 1.77$), those with lower age ($\bar{X} = 1.91$) and research assistants ($\bar{X} = 2.15$) than other academicians.

The subjective well-being levels of academics show significant differences compared to other variables other than marital status ($P > 0.05$) ($P < 0.05$). When the average values in Table 3 are examined, it is seen that the subjective well-being levels of women ($\bar{X} = 4.12$), the late ($\bar{X} = 3.98$), the research assistants ($\bar{X} = 4.19$) and those with low seniority ($\bar{X} = 4.18$) are higher.

Table 3: Comparison of Participants' Participation Levels in Recreational Activities and Subjective Well-Being according to Demographic Characteristics

| Variables | Groups | Recreational Activities | | | Subjective Well-Being | | |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------|--------|-----------------------|------|--------|
| | | \bar{X} | SS | P | \bar{X} | SS | P |
| Gender | Female | 1.88 | 0.29 | 0.281 | 4.12 | 0.20 | 0.001* |
| | Male | 1.83 | 0.20 | | 3.70 | 0.42 | |
| Marital Status | Single | 2.18 | 0.21 | 0.000* | 3.88 | 0.41 | 0.297 |
| | Married | 1.77 | 0.18 | | 3.93 | 0.33 | |
| Age | 35 and less | 1.91 | 0.28 | 0.001* | 3.98 | 0.38 | 0.001* |
| | 36-50 | 1.79 | 0.17 | | 3.80 | 0.41 | |
| | 51 and over | 1.71 | 0.08 | | 3.86 | 0.08 | |
| Duty/Title | Prof./Assoc.Pr..Dr. | 1.76 | 0.18 | 0.001* | 3.85 | 0.37 | 0.001* |
| | Asst.Prof.Dr. | 1.87 | 0.18 | | 3.78 | 0.39 | |
| | Res.Assist. | 2.15 | 0.29 | | 4.19 | 0.11 | |
| | Lecturer | 1.63 | 0.13 | | 3.82 | 0.17 | |
| Seniority | 10 and less | 1.89 | 0.26 | 0.179 | 4.18 | 0.26 | 0.001* |
| | 11-15 years | 1.85 | 0.22 | | 3.82 | 0.40 | |
| | 16-20 years | 1.82 | 0.29 | | 3.78 | 0.43 | |
| | 21 and over | 1.86 | 0.09 | | 3.88 | 0.10 | |

* $P < 0.01$

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis for the relationship between the participants' participation levels in recreational activities and their subjective well-being are given in Table 4. Accordingly, significant correlations were found between all variables. However, in general, a positive, moderate and significant relationship ($r=0.402$) was found between the levels of participation in recreational activities and general subjective well-being. On the other hand, while negative correlations were found between the levels of participation in general recreational activities and the sub-dimensions of subjective well-being "comparing his life with his past and the lives of others" ($r=-0.370$), "envy of the lives of others" ($r=-0.494$) and "pessimism" ($r=-0.318$), positive correlations were found between other variables. It was determined that the subjective well-being dimensions most affected by general recreational activities were "friend relationships" ($r=0.498$), "activities of interest" ($r=0.455$) and "family relationships" ($r=0.443$), respectively. In addition, it was found that the recreational activity that most affected subjective well-being was "cultural activities" ($r=0.471$).

Table 4: The Relationship between Their Level of Participation in Recreational Activities and Their Subjective Well-Being

| Variables | Physical Activities | Outdoor Activities | Group Activities | Cultural Activities | Hobbies | Other Activities | Recreational Activities |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Comparing your life to your past and the life of others | - | - | - | -0.220 | - | - | - |
| Feelings | 0.284* | 0.314* | 0.413* | 0.423* | 0.356* | 0.443* | 0.370* |
| Purposes | 0.209* | 0.231* | 0.345* | 0.285* | 0.357* | 0.457* | 0.336* |
| Self-Confidence | 0.295* | 0.223* | 0.315* | 0.328* | 0.312* | 0.275* | 0.371* |
| Optimism | 0.271* | 0.249* | 0.326* | 0.231* | 0.477* | 0.207* | 0.300* |
| Interested events | 0.492* | 0.406* | 0.456* | 0.585* | 0.430* | 0.415* | 0.455* |
| Friendship relations | 0.594* | 0.456* | 0.400* | 0.560* | 0.302* | 0.405* | 0.498* |
| Looking to the future | 0.217* | 0.229* | 0.263* | 0.325* | 0.357* | 0.386* | 0.326* |
| Family relations | 0.315* | 0.466* | 0.312* | 0.321* | 0.389* | 0.444* | 0.443* |
| Envy of the lives of others | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Coping with life's challenges | 0.462* | 0.378* | 0.344* | 0.482* | 0.214* | 0.459* | 0.494* |
| Pessimism | 0.233* | 0.239* | 0.289* | 0.335* | 0.236* | 0.494* | 0.259* |
| | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Subjective Well-Being | 0.398* | 0.302* | 0.354* | 0.205* | 0.138* | 0.121* | 0.318* |
| | 0.311* | 0.319* | 0.269* | 0.471* | 0.326* | 0.383* | 0.402* |

* $P < 0.05$

7. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this research, which was attended by 393 academicians working at Harran University, Afyon Kocatepe University and Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, it was aimed to determine the relationship between participation in recreational activities and subjective well-being. According to the findings obtained from the research, the participation levels of academics in recreational activities in general are quite low. Some research findings in the literature confirm this finding (Kan Sönmez, 2022; Şen, 2019). On the other hand, some research findings carried out in different sample groups contradict this finding (Doğan, 2018; Güven & Yavuz, 2018; Karakan, Ertaş, Çolak & Yurtman, 2021). In Doğan (2018)'s research, students studying at the faculty of law; In the research of Güven and Yavuz (2018), municipal employees showed a moderate level of participation in recreational activities; In the research of Karakan et al. (2021), it was determined that the participation rate of local people in recreational activities was quite high. Recreation is related to the activities that people perform during their free time (Gulam, 2016; McLean & Hurd, 2012) is therefore most commonly defined as "activities that a person participates in in his free time" (Sklar et al., 2014). In this respect, lack of leisure time can be stated as one of the reasons for the low level of participation of academicians in recreational activities. In order to eliminate the inadequacy of academics with free time, in other words, the time frame that can be used freely (Broadhurst, 2001), it may be recommended to regulate the working hours by reducing the excessive course load, thesis advising and the intensity of academic activities. In addition, in order to increase the participation and interest of academicians in recreational activities

chosen voluntarily with the motives of pleasure and personal satisfaction (Butler, 1976), various units can be established on campus recreation at universities, and academicians can benefit from the consultancy services provided by experts in these units. In addition, it may be recommended that recreational activities and organizations at the university are supported by the management, planned in accordance with the academic calendar and program, the adequacy of the facilities and tools, and the participation costs are minimized. University management should have a perspective that sees these services as an investment, not a cost. Because with the increase in participation in recreational activities, it is possible to achieve serious gains both individually and organizationally. Increased subjective well-being, quality of life, life satisfaction, happiness, academic achievement, job performance, and organizational commitment; loneliness, desensitization, alienation, work stress, organizational silence and a decrease in burnout are some of these gains (Brajsa-Zganec et al., 2011; Bretland & Thorsteinsson, 2015; Cunningham & Mahoney, 2004, Eime et al., 2010, Freitas, Carneseca, Paiva & Paiva, 2014; Hernandez, 2014; Küçük, 2015; Küçük, 2017; Ortaç, 2019; Tezcan, 2007; Uçar, 2018).

The findings obtained from the research show that the recreational activities in which the participants participate at a higher level than the others are other activities such as internet, TV, chess, video, books-magazines-newspapers, and cultural activities such as dance, concert, museum, theater, fair which are below average. Physical activities, hobbies, outdoor activities and group activities were found to be quite low among the recreational activities of the participants. Accordingly, academics participate less in aerobics/fitness, badminton, cycling, gymnastics, ice skating, swimming, running, climbing, walking, tennis, table tennis, martial arts and yoga/plates than other activities and cultural activities. However, physical activities are very important for health (Shams, Kadow & Tsopanakis, 2021), and regular physical activity contributes to cognitive, psychological, and physical well-being (Guiney, Lucas, Cotter & Machado, 2015). Socialization is a supportive element in protection from undesirable bad habits and successful aging (Kalkavan, Özkara, Alemdağ & Çavdar, 2016; Small & Aries, 2004). Only the positive relationship between physical activities and academic achievement (Atkinson, 2015; Bastos, Reis, Aranha & Garrido, 2015; Mull & Tietjen, 2014), it is clear that academics' participation in physical activities should be encouraged. Academics are less involved in hobbies such as painting, writing, singing, playing musical instruments, photography, carpentry, carving, handicrafts, flower arranging, pottery and sculpture, collecting other activities and cultural activities. Apart from the obvious pleasure of engaging in a hobby and engaging one's mind in doing something new, there are advantages such as a decrease in stress level, increased well-being (well-being), increased sense of independence, and increased mental and emotional health (Akgül, 2018). It is important to support their participation in hobbies so that these advantages can be obtained by academics. In the United States, universities may be advised to sponsor hobby clubs and hobby shows, as do local

governments, educational institutions, and employers. In universities, it can also be suggested that hobby is accepted as creative activities of academicians compatible with business values, rewarding the one who does the best for different categories, giving positive references for hobbies in publications made, organizing activities for the development of hobbies (Gelber, 1991). Outdoor activities such as archery, bird watching, mountain climbing, hunting, fishing, golf, scuba diving, horse riding, camping, picnicking and going to the park, and group activities such as paintball, volleyball, basketball, bowling, football are recreational activities where the participation level of academics is less in all sub-activities. Outdoor activities are activities in which nature itself is used as a resource (Kalkan, 2012) and that create an interaction between the individual and nature (Ibrahim & Cordes, 2002). It keeps the individual physically and psychologically healthy and fit. It allows the individual to increase self-confidence and others, to take responsibility for himself and others, to make individual decisions, to manage risk, to feel happy, to socialize (Ardahan & Yerlisu Lapa, 2011; Burnett, 1994; McKenzie, 2000). Similarly, group activities are activities that enable the individual to socialize and reduce the feeling of loneliness (Şen, 2019). As can be seen, all recreational activities (physical, cultural, open space, group, other activities, hobbies) provide various benefits to individuals in physiological, psychological or sociological terms. According to Hung, individuals need recreational activities because of these physiological, psychological, and sociological benefits (Yan, 2013). Therefore, it is important to ensure participation in recreational activities.

In the study, the general subjective well-being levels of the participants were found to be well above the average. Similarly, according to the research findings of Yerlioğlu (2020), the subjective well-being of academics is at a high level. Bıçak (2021) and Dülger (2021) concluded that teachers' subjective well-being levels were high. This finding shows that academics have a high degree of judging the overall quality of their lives in a positive way as a whole, in other words, that academics love the life they live (Diener, 2000; McCabe & Johnson 2013; Parsons et al., 2019; Veenhoven, 1991). A number of theories in the relevant literature have attempted to explain how the individual experiences subjective well-being (Carruthers & Deyell Hood, 2004). Research shows that subjective well-being has an important relationship with personality; It found that extroverts (Lucas & Fujita, 2000), those prone to optimism (Taylor, Kemeny, Reed, Bower & Gruenewald, 2000), and carefree (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998) tended to have higher subjective well-being. In this direction, it can be stated that academics are more extroverted, optimistic and carefree. However, socio-economic characteristics such as being educated and having a high economic income play a positive and important role on subjective well-being. Education empowers people and enhances their ability to access better jobs, public services, and improved livelihoods (Shams et al., 2021). Accordingly, it is possible to say that the subjective well-being of academics is high because they are among the relatively educated and higher-income individuals. However, in the

study, the highest factors in terms of subjective well-being were listed as coping with life's challenges, goals, self-confidence and family relationships. In this regard, it can be stated that academicians are optimistic people who have the power to cope with the difficulties of life, determined, have goals, do not give up quickly in the face of difficulties, are responsible, loved and trusted, help and support others, are happy in family relationships and have no problems. This finding can be explained by the positive increase in psychological resilience, forgiveness skills, happiness, quality of life, life and job satisfaction, work motivation, job satisfaction, job happiness, and dedication to work as the level of satisfaction with the life of individuals, in other words, subjective well-being, increases (Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Bakker & Oerlemans, 2010; Dağ, 2019; Judge, Thorensen, Bono & Patton, 2001; Ünlü, 2020; Warr, 2007; Yaşar, 2015).

In the study, the participation levels of academics in recreational activities differed significantly according to marital status, age, and title, and singles, young people and research assistants participated in higher levels of recreational activities. The finding can probably be explained by the fact that these academics, at the starting point of their academic careers, have more free time, have fewer specific duties and responsibilities in their daily lives, and are more energetic. In groups with low participation in recreational activities, it may be recommended to investigate the reasons for the decrease in demand and to organize activities and organizations for these participants in line with the results. However, as a finding that contradicts many studies conducted in different sample groups, (Demirbaş, 2020; Kan Sönmez, 2022; Ortaç, 2019; Önaç, Birişçi, Gündel, Işikel & Çalışkan, 2018; Şen, 2019; Tütüncü, Aydın, Küçükusta, Avcı & Taş, 2011) the participation levels of academics in recreational activities according to their gender do not show a significant difference. It is possible to explain this finding by the fact that academics are essentially individuals regardless of gender and therefore the physiological, psychological and sociological benefits they will obtain from recreational activities are similar. In addition, another reason for this finding is that the motivational factors that direct all academics, regardless of men and women, to recreational activities are similar.

In the study, the subjective well-being levels of academicians showed significant differences according to gender, age, title and seniority variables, and the subjective well-being levels of women, young people, research assistants and those with low seniority were found to be higher. Gender differences in subjective well-being have been demonstrated in research conducted in various countries and groups (Tesch-Römer, Motel-Klingebiel & Tomasik, 2008). Although some of the researches confirm this finding (Dilmaç & Bozgeyikli, 2009; Gündoğdu & Yavuzer, 2012; Sezer, 2011) research showing that being a woman has a negative effect on subjective well-being is overwhelming (Costa, Terracciano & McCrae, 2001; Eryılmaz & Ercan, 2011; Shams et al., 2021; Tümkaya, 2011; Yurcu & Atay, 2015). These gender differences in subjective well-being were first explained by universal gender differences. Accordingly, women are more vulnerable to depression and

anxiety in connection with the production of estrogen and progesterone (during puberty, during the menstrual cycle and in the postpartum period). Secondly, gender differences in subjective well-being of men and women through factors related to different living conditions are explained. Opportunity structures and action resources are unevenly distributed between the sexes in many societies. Women's lives are more disadvantageous compared to men. For these reasons, it has been noted that women's subjective well-being levels may be lower than men (Tesch-Römer et al., 2008). On the other hand, research showing that the subjective well-being of men and women is at a similar level regardless of gender (Karakoç, Bingöl & Karaca, 2013; Myers & Diener, 1995; Tuzgöl Dost, 2004). These different findings may have varied according to the extent of gender inequality and cultural attitudes towards gender equality in different countries/regions. In other words, it is possible to say that it may be related to the possibility of access to resources related to the objectives of the participants.

In the study, a positive, moderate and significant relationship was found between the levels of participation in recreational activities and general subjective well-being in general. Many research findings in the literature examining the relationship between participation in recreational activities and subjective well-being confirm this finding (Björk et al., 2008; Brajsa-Zganec et al., 2011; Carruthers & Hood, 2004; Green et al., 2000; Hurtes et al., 2000; Kırmızıer, 2018; Koopman Boyden & Reis, 2009; Kuykendall et al., 2015; Kuykendall et al., 2018; Macchia & Whillans, 2019; Mackenzie & Hodge, 2020; Mitas 2010; Newman et al., 2014; Parsons et al., 2019; Reynolds & Lim, 2007; Schulz et al., 2018; Tian et al., 2020; Vella et al., 2015; Yarnal, et al., 2008). Recreational activities are also cited as a key pathway for subjective well-being by scholars in a wide variety of disciplines, including Kuykendall et al. (2015), Kuykendall et al. (2018), Mannell and Kleiber (1997), Newman et al. (2014), Pressman et al. (2009), Tkach and Lyubomirsky (2006). Because recreational activities offer a person the opportunity to preserve his life values and meet his needs. Through participation in recreational activities, a person establishes social relationships, feels positive emotions, acquires additional skills and knowledge, and thus improves the overall quality of life (Brajsa-Zganec et al., 2011), loves his life (Diener, 2000; McCabe & Johnson 2013; Parsons et al., 2019; Veenhoven, 1991), in other words, it rises the subjective well-being. The study also found negative correlations between the levels of participation in recreational activities and the sub-dimensions of subjective well-being, "comparing life with the past and the lives of others", "envy for the lives of others" and "pessimism". This result indicates that as the level of academicians' participation in recreational activities such as physical activities, cultural activities, outdoor activities, group activities, other activities and hobbies increases, they feel less guilty about their past mistakes, regret less, remember their past lives with more success, and It shows that they do not want to change, that they think their life is more trouble-free compared to their familiar surroundings, they envy them less, their belief in reaching their goals

and their positive expectations for the future are getting stronger. However, in the study, it was determined that the subjective well-being dimensions most affected by general recreational activities were "friendship relations", "interesting activities" and "family relations", respectively. According to this, with the increase in the level of participation of academicians in recreational activities, they mostly show assertiveness in their social relations, understand human relations, establish positive relationships, empathize, make friends in the quality and quantity they want, are happy in family relations, and receive support from friends and family members when they need it, It is possible to state that they lead a monotonous and not boring life, and they do enough activities that entertain them. As can be seen, all these are the social benefits of recreational activities (Yan, 2013). In this respect, it can be stated that recreational activities increase the subjective well-being of academics through their social benefit rather than physiological and psychological benefits.

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