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The Perception of Leisure Time and Concrete Historical and Cultural Heritage Awareness Among University Students

Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Serbest Zaman Algısı ve Somut Tarihi Kültürel Miras Farkındalığı

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Abstract

Studies on the perception of leisure time of university students focus more on the effect of leisure time activities on students' academic achievement. University students generally refer to the group that comes from different cities (these cities can be far or near) to the city where the university is established or lives in the same city. In this context, the awareness of students, who come from both the same city and other cities, about the historical and cultural assets of the city where the university was founded differs. Leisure time states how time spent outside the school and doing different things rather than educational activities is used for university students. At this point, a relationship emerges between the perception of leisure time and awareness of historical and cultural assets. In this study, the factors affecting the awareness of the historical and cultural heritage of university students about Bitlis which has been home to different civilisations and whose historical and cultural heritage is extremely rich, are examined. Factors affecting Bitlis Eren University students' awareness of historical and cultural heritage are the family's monthly income, number of siblings, relationship status and the region where students come from.

Keywords: Leisure Time, Cultural Heritage, Historical Heritage, University Students, Bitlis.

Öz

Üniversite öğrencilerinin serbest zaman algısı üzerine yapılan çalışmalar daha çok serbest zaman aktivitelerinin öğrencilerin akademik başarıları üzerine etkisine odaklanmaktadır. Üniversite öğrencileri genel olarak farklı şehirlerden (bu şehirler uzak veya yakın olabilir) üniversitenin kurulduğu şehre gelen veya aynı şehirde yaşayan grubu ifade etmektedir. Bu bağlamda hem aynı şehirden hem de diğer şehirlerden gelen öğrencilerin üniversitenin kurulduğu şehrin tarihi ve kültürel varlıkları hakkındaki farkındalığı değişkenlik göstermektedir. Serbest zaman üniversite öğrencileri için okul dışında eğitim faaliyetlerinden arta kalan zamanın nasıl değerlendirildiğini ifade etmektedir. Bu noktada serbest zaman algısı ve tarihi ve kültürel varlıklar hakkındaki farkındalık arasında bir ilişki ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu çalışmada üniversite öğrencilerinin Bitlis gibi farklı medeniyetlere ev sahipliği yapmış tarihi ve kültürel mirası son derece zengin olan bir kentin tarihi ve kültürel mirası farkındalığını etkileyen faktörler incelenmiştir. Bitlis Eren Üniversitesi öğrencilerinin tarihi ve kültürel miras farkındalığını etkileyen faktörler ise: ailenin aylık geliri, kardeş sayısı, ilişki durumu ve öğrencilerin geldiği bölge olarak tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Serbest Zaman, Kültürel Miras, Tarihi Miras, Üniversite Öğrencileri, Bitlis.

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Introduction

Social actors evaluate their spare time, which they can control with their own will, in different ways with different motivations and expectations. They also spend “their leisure time with their own wishes and desires in indoor or outdoor areas, passive or active by doing different activities in city or rural areas” (Lapa & Agyar, 2012: 26). Although social actors determine how to spend their leisure time depending on all the differences which they have, the common point of all is to enjoy the leisure time activity and to be satisfied with the pleasure with doing it (Celik, 2011). There are factors such as age, gender, physical or mental conditions that affect how leisure time will be spent, although how individuals spend their time outside of work or other compulsory situations varies from society to culture. These factors are the most critical one that determine the leisure time activities of individuals. For example, individuals between the ages of 18-25 and individuals aged 65 and over differ in their perception of leisure time and hence their leisure time activities.

The structure of leisure time activities that are directly related to the physical and mental quality of life and health of young individuals is particularly important in the young population (Bree et al. 1990). The leisure time is defined as “the time outside of work, sleep and self-care activities” (Robert, 2006). It can be stated that “leisure time activities are controlled by the individual voluntarily, independent of contextual conditions, and have a sense of fun and happiness. In other words, leisure time is the time when the person is not working, not necessary for his/her life and spends his/her own energy” (Kilbas, 1994: 26).

It can be indicated that “many leisure activities are concerned for young people studying at universities in Turkey, although these activities are associated with the cities’ cultural and historical heritage” (Sevinc & Aktan, 2017: 31). The quality of leisure time spent outside the school for university students directly affects their career. When we look at the literature about leisure time and university students, it is possible to say that “leisure time activities focus on students’ physical and spiritual benefits, their effects on an academic career, the relationship of leisure time with the quality of life and the change of leisure time according to demographic factors such as economic status, age, gender” (Ardahan & Lapa, 2010: 132; Sari & Kaya, 2016: 15).

Although the university students, who are between the ages of 18-25 in general, come from different cities or the city where they were born, their awareness about the historical and cultural heritage of the university city, which they studied throughout their education life, varies depending on the leisure time perception of university students. When we think about Bitlis province, Bitlis is an essential cultural encounter area that has historically hosted different civilisations. Throughout history, Hittites, Assyrians, Urartu, Scythians, Persians, Romans, Armenians, Byzantines, Arabs, Seljuks and Ottomans have dominated the city (Tekin, 2000: 10-15; Tuncel, 1992: 225-228). Different civilisations left different cultural heritages in the province of Bitlis. In this context, in Bitlis, which has a rich historical and cultural heritage, there is a direct relationship between university students’ perceptions of leisure time and the historical and cultural awareness of the city.

1. The Notion of Leisure Time

It is essential for individuals to develop their physical and mental integrity positively. It is seen as an essential awareness that people are satisfied with these activities in every way and increase their well-being by planning their leisure time activities that take a short time their mandatory work. During university education, an individual who is not in the family environment can refer the new life/friends/environment to new searches during his leisure time, and these variations may affect his/her leisure time satisfaction positively or negatively (Karakucuk & Basaran, 1997). Leisure time is defined as an essential field of activity that gives people valuable meanings of life, which is presented in different ways (psychologically, spiritually, socially and culturally) (Newman et al. 2014). More generally, meaningful leisure time activities enable individuals to develop a general sense of meaning (Iwasaki et al. 2013) and these activities are considered to be very significant for the well-being and health of individuals (Turner et al. 2000). People spend most of the time by “working, going to school or being engaged in some form of other, often imposed, duty or activity” (Anic et al. 2017: 504). There is still a considerable amount of time, according to some authors even 40–50% of the time, spent awake that is qualified as leisure time or spare time (Larson & Verma, 1999: 703). Leisure time or spare time may be “interpreted in different ways, to some social scientists, all the activities a person does when not working can be considered to be leisure time” (Brightbill, 1960); (Anic et al. 2017: 504). In other words, leisure time can be understood that in their spare time, all the things that a person can do.

Through the new communication technologies, the groups of friends have been moved to the internet mostly, and individuals have started to be included in the virtual groups of friends and spend time with them, rather than the real-life group of friends. Today, the variety and usage areas of internet-connected tools are increasing day by day. It provides “the opportunity to spend time actively or passively with social media platforms used for many purposes such as communication, playing games, researching, obtaining information, sharing ideas, chatting, watching movies, listening to

music" (Karaoglu & Atasoy, 2018: 827). With developing technology and changing living standards, the role of leisure time in the social structure has become undeniably significant (Henderson, 2010). Definitions regarding the concept of leisure time may vary according to the individuals participating in the activities. In comparison to time spent at work, university or school, leisure time makes it possible to individually determine what people want to do with whom people want to spend time, and to pick the things that people want to partake in. Those decisions might indicate "people's life purposes and motives, as well as orientations to happiness, or people's mood, and most certainly they affect people's well-being" (Anic et al. 2017: 504). Also, leisure can be satisfying "when intrinsically valuable pursuits provide people to use their skills and interact with friends and family" (Argyle, 2001: 27). Leisure time is identified, amongst other things, by the significant amount of freedom and autonomy. An individual decides "what to do and at what time, with whom he or she wants to be, where to go, etc. All that autonomy makes leisure time ideal for satisfying people's basic needs, which depend on how successful people are, enhance people's well-being" (Anic et al. 2017: 505).

Furthermore, individuals participate in leisure time activities with their own will, and these activities are considered as a process of resting, rehabilitation and become essential for a better-quality life. While leisure time activities vary according to their content and type, they ensure that individuals satisfy essential needs such as belonging to a group, physical and mental development, and self-expression; socialization enables them to get rid of work-daily life stress (Ardahan & Lapa, 2010). The research is done by Campbell, Converse and Rodgers shows that different leisure-time activities provide different benefits to individuals (Campbell et al. 1976). For example, "watching television is a simple way to relax after working hours at home, but unless somebody is watching a documentary or educational program, that person can learn what is interesting for himself/herself"; hence, the nature of leisure activities is essential, particularly the question of whether they provide sufficient challenges or structure (Shaw et al. 1995). Leisure time gives a person the perfect opportunity to engage in an activity one likes and wants to do and is therefore preferred autonomously from fundamental reasons.

Departing from theoretical notions of the rise of the modern consumer and knowledge societies, childhood and youth sociologists have focused on the effects these developments allegedly have on youths' leisure. They have pointed to "an increased structuring of young adolescents' leisure time, due to demanding leisure diaries resulting from increased participation in adult-guided leisure activities" (Zeijl et al. 2001: 382). Because "leisure time and leisure activities occupy a significant number of adolescents' daily time, it seems likely that leisure participation may have some effect on the identity development process" (Shaw et al. 1995: 247). Any analysis of the relationship between leisure and identity development needs to take gender into account. The literature provides clear evidence that variations in leisure participation and interests are associated with gender and that many adolescent activities are identified by their gender-stereotypical nature (Eder & Parker, 1987). Thus, "the relationship between participation and development may be different for male and female adolescents" (Shaw et al. 1995: 208). When the literature is examined, it is seen that "the satisfaction with leisure time activities attracts the attention of the researchers and they conduct research examining various variables related to leisure time satisfaction" (Karaoglu & Atasoy, 2018: 826). Mainly, studies that examine the context of different variables such as gender, age, job satisfaction, level of happiness and academic stress for leisure time activities and studies on how university students evaluate their leisure time are noteworthy (Suzer, 2000).

The leisure time activities of young people became the centre of increasing interest by sociologists. "Sociological research indicated apparent shifts in teenagers' leisure behaviour. It is generally conceded by many sociologists that how youth plan and use their leisure time changes as societal developments in advance" (Zeijl et al. 2001: 379-380). The sociology of leisure was created "as a sub-discipline in the 1960s, indicated by the formation of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee in 1970 and the sociology of leisure's submersion in leisure studies has been developed by the sub-discipline (of sociology) and leisure studies sharing usual specialist research tools" (Roberts, 2013: 1). Leisure is generally broken down into common-sense categories, which broadly coincide with how the leisure industries are organised (media, sport, tourism, hospitality, heritage, gambling). Sociologists have suggested new alternative analyses. One is that whether leisure is spent as a consumer (of commercial goods and services), the second is as a citizen (using public sector goods and services), and the last one is as a member (of a voluntary association), or privately.

In essence, leisure and culture were conceptualised as being defined by four aspects: participation in leisure, recreation, arts, and culture activities; perceptions associated with leisure and culture, including motives, benefits sought, and needs attainment; the experience of leisure and culture as a state of mind and the meaning and quality it holds for individuals; and the opportunities provided in support of leisure and culture, such as the variety of recreation facilities, designated open space and parks, and other arts, culture, and recreation sites. These aspects have shown over the years to be the best ways to conceptualise, recognise and measure, and understand leisure and culture in their multifaceted forms and to explore their relationship to wellbeing (Smale, 2010).

2. The Relation Between Cultural Heritage and Students

In 1995, at the Vienna Memorandum, "Historic Urban Landscape" came to the fore. These years were a period when discussed the concept of "cultural landscape" already. This holistic approach that Necessary in the management of historical cities was adopted by UNESCO in 2011 as a recommendation by the name of the Historic Urban Landscape Approach (Veldpaus et al., 2013; Ginzarly et al., 2019). This recommendation, which is consistent with sustainable development objectives, expresses that will be beneficial for states that the use of certain tools for the protection and maintenance of historic urban areas; one of the most important of these is the means of social participation. This is a very important point. In order to achieve this, important things are the public's awareness and protection of their historical heritages. In this context, we decided to research to learn the students' perspective. We try to understand how students view their historical cultural heritage while technology and tangible buildings are growing in the globalising world since, one of the important developments for Bitlis is the historical urban transformation project. This project is a very comprehensive project and will be done once only. It is very important that Bitlis is able to preserve its historical identity and that the public is conscious of the future of the city.

Bitlis is in Eastern Anatolia and located on the south-western coast of Lake Van. It is on an important position/point between Eastern Anatolia, Iran and Caucasus. It consists of seven districts: Bitlis city centre, Adilcevaz, Ahlat, Guromak, Hizan, Mutki, Tatvan. Throughout history, Hittites, Assyrians, Urartu, the Scythians, the Meds, the Persians, Seleucids, Romans, Armenians, Byzantines, Arabs, Seljuks and Ottomans dominated in the city. For this reason, Bitlis is very rich in terms of tangible and intangible cultural heritages. However, the city cannot be regarded as a developed city in terms of culture and tourism. There are so many old castles, madrasah, mosque, grave, tomb, carvansarai, church cemetery, bridge, house within the boundaries of Bitlis province. But all the historical building in Bitlis is not included in the survey. The recognizable and well-known buildings were asked students in the survey. These are; Bitlis Great Mosque, Bitlis Castle, Bitlis Gökmeydan Mosque, Sahibiye Madrasah, Yusufiye Madrasah, Complex of Sherefiye, El-Aman Carvansarai, Tomb of Kufrevi, Bitlis Hazo Hanı, Bitlis Bapshin Han, Traditional Old Bitlis Houses, Bitlis Surp Nişan Church, Tatvan Castle, Ahlat Cemetery of Seljuks, Ahlat Old Town, Ahlat Ottoman Castle, Ulu Kumbet, Tomb of Hasan Padishah, Ahlat Tomb of Emir Bayindir, Adilcevaz Old Mosque, Adilcevaz Zal Pasha Mosque, Kef Castle, Adilcevaz Mucizeler Monastery, Mutki Ak Church, Narlidere (Kasik) Bridge, Hizan Dokuktash Church, Ethnography Museum of Bitlis, Ahlat Museum. Castel of Bitlis, it is built on natural rocks, where at the confluence of two rivers in the city center. The exact date when it was built is unknown. It was used by Seljuks, Akkoyunlus, Ottomans and local managers (Bas, 2012). The oldest known visual of Bitlis is the miniature painting of Nasuhü's-Silahi (Matrakçı (Yurtaydin, 2015).

Cultural heritage conservation policies cannot be fully resolved within science and ministerial policy. It is seen that there are important deficiencies about protection consciousness spreading to the society and creating a "culture of protection". Implementation control problems, complex processes, confusion of authority in audit, inadequacy of educational tools and curricula that arise as a result of regulations are significant problems. All units in the field of education have duties to raise a new, conscious society in the recognition and protection of cultural heritage because, destruction of historical monuments is mostly done by people. It is known that "awareness to be taught especially at a young age will be more effective" (Kulcu, 2015: 30). With this survey, we aimed to create awareness among students.

In this study, it is aimed to determine how the students who studying undergraduate and associate degree in Bitlis Eren University are aware of the tangible historical and cultural heritages of Bitlis during their education at university. The Bitlis Eren University was established in 2007 and it has 9269 students (Bitlis Eren University Home Page, 2020). It is a small and developing university. For this reason, it is thought that this study will be beneficial for the development of the university and the city. Social activity opportunities are limited in the city and in the university. It is thought that students also need to be directed towards how to use their leisure time and develop their general knowledge.

University life is not only the period in which students aim for academic success, but also the periods in which they can achieve their social and personal goals. Living away from the family leads to a tremendous change in the physical, social and psychological lives of young students in particular. The fact that universities can provide social benefits and increase their contribution in the regions depends on the completion of physical, social and cultural infrastructure of the region. Therefore, "inadequacy of physical, social and cultural infrastructure in the region will affect students' perceptions of the region negatively and reduce the contribution of the university to the region" (Ozgun et al. 2010: 17).

3. Method

The study population consists of the university students of Bitlis Eren University, Turkey. In total, 1000 questionnaires were allocated to students and after removing missing data, observations of 742 students left.

The students were given a two-page form where the first page had questions regarding their demographic and socio-economic backgrounds. The second page consisted of 30 Likert type questions with 1 meaning “I totally disagree with the statement” and 5 meaning “I totally agree with the statement”. To check if the data were appropriate for explanatory factor analysis (EFA), Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy coefficient and Barlett test of Sphericity were used and these statistics were found satisfactory. Next, EFA was implemented to see the factor structure of the model and 5 questions were removed as their correlation was below 0.30. To investigate which demographic and socio-economic factors statistically significantly affect the factor scores, if there were 2 groups Independent Samples t Test, while One-way ANOVA if there were more than 2 groups. Additionally, Tukey HSD was implemented to search for the source of the differenced revealed by One-way ANOVA.

4. Results

The First of all, whether or not the data are suitable for factor analysis needs to be checked. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy coefficient is 0.97, which means that the sample size is sufficient. In addition, the p-value of Barlett test of Sphericity is 0.00. This shows that there is high correlation between the variables in the data. These two statistics indicate that factor analysis can be applied to these data.

To determine the number of factors, a scree plot can be useful. Figure 1 shows that the number of factors can be taken 3. These three factors explain 63.72% of the total variance.

Based on the loadings of the factors, the factors have been named as follows:

Factor 1: Interest in cultural heritage

Factor 2: General knowledge of cultural heritage

Factor 3: Conservation of cultural heritage of Bitlis

To investigate whether factor loadings vary by the demographic variables, we implemented appropriate statistical tests. To summarize the results by starting Factor 1, first of all, gender has no statistically significant influence on Factor 1, Factor 2 and Factor 3 (Independent-Samples T-Test p value 0.15, 0.34 and 0.07 respectively). This means that there is no statistical difference between the genders in terms of the interest in the cultural heritage, general knowledge of cultural heritage and conservation of cultural heritage of Bitlis.

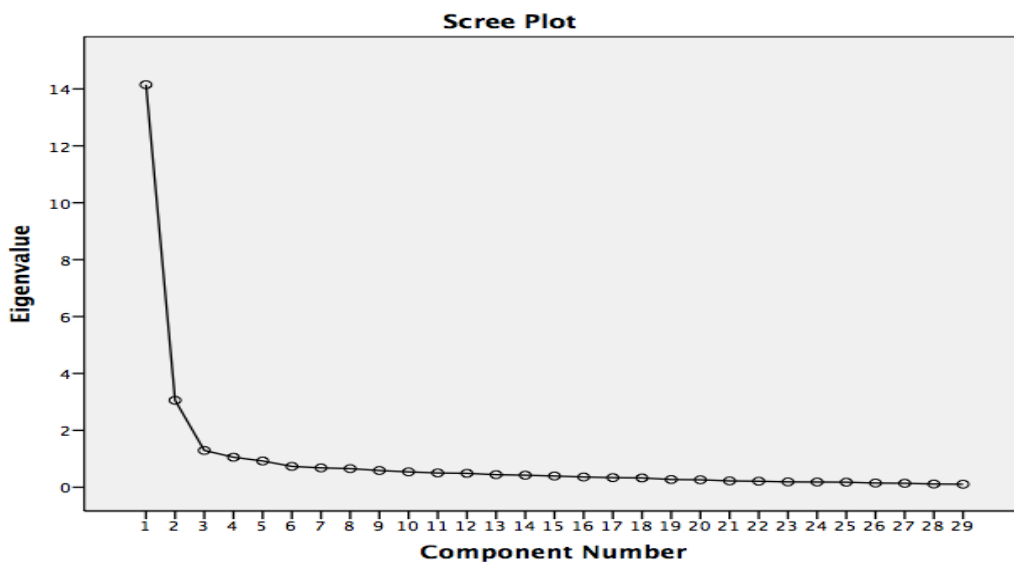


Figure 1. Scree plot

One-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD show that interest in cultural heritage differs by school type ($p = 0.00$). The first 3 schools whose students are most interested in cultural heritage are Health MYO, Ahlat MYO and Tatvan MYO respectively and the engineering faculty students are the least interested ones in cultural heritage. Similarly, students' awareness of cultural heritage differs by school types. Students with the most awareness of cultural heritage are from the Health, Ahlat, and Hizan vocational schools, while the students with least awareness are from Tatvan and Social Science vocational schools. However, conservation of cultural heritage of Bitlis does not statistically significantly differ by school type.

One-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD indicate that mother's educational status affects the level of conservation of cultural heritage of Bitlis of students ($p=0.02$). While the students whose mothers are university and master or PhD graduates have the most interested in conservation of cultural heritage of Bitlis, the students whose mothers are illiterate are the least interested ones.

One-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD show that the level of cultural heritage of students is affected by the students' family income ($p=0.00$). The students whose family income is 5000+TL have the most interest in cultural heritage, whereas the students with 0-1400TL have the least interest in cultural interest. This shows that the more the family income, the more the student's interest in cultural heritage.

One-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD indicate that the level of conservation of cultural heritage of Bitlis is affected by the students' number of siblings ($p=0.00$). While the students with 3 siblings have the most interest in the conservation of cultural heritage of Bitlis, the students with 5 and more siblings have the least interest in the conservation of cultural heritage of Bitlis.

One-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD show that the region where students come from statistically significantly influence their thoughts of conservation of cultural heritage of Bitlis ($p=0.00$). Students from the Black Sea and Aegean regions are most sensitive about the conservation of Bitlis's cultural heritage, while students from the South-east Anatolia are least sensitive.

Interest in cultural assets varies according to the type of settlement the student has spent most of his/her life ($p=0.02$). The ones that grow up in the village are the most interested, whereas the ones in the village are the least interested.

The fact that the student is originally from Bitlis influences his/her interpretation of the conservation of Bitlis's cultural heritage ($p=0.00$). As expected, students from Bitlis have more sensitivity in this regard than those who come from outside of Bitlis.

One-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD tests were conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship between the places where students were located and their sensitivity to the protection of Bitlis's cultural assets ($p=0.03$). According to this, the most sensitive students of Bitlis' cultural heritage are the ones staying with their families, while the least sensitive ones are those staying in governmental dormitories.

Independent samples T-test was used to investigate whether there was a statistically significant relationship between smoking habit and interest in cultural assets. According to this, non-smoker students are more interested in cultural heritage compared to smoker students ($p=0.00$).

Using the Independent Samples T-test, a statistically significant relationship was found between alcohol use and general knowledge about cultural heritage ($p=0.03$). Accordingly, knowledge of cultural heritage of students who do not consume alcohol is higher than that of students who consume alcohol.

Using the Independent Samples T-test, it was determined that there is a statistically significant relationship between the students' relationship status and the sensitivity to the conservation of Bitlis's cultural heritage ($p=0.02$). According to this, the students who are in relationship are more sensitive about the conservation of the cultural heritage of Bitlis than those who are single.

Conclusion and Discussion

The rapid change in economy and technology with globalisation; countries need for individuals who are more qualified, more equipped, researching, innovative thinking. The most critical task the individuals, who will play an active role in the future and development of countries, belongs to universities. Universities pave the way for economic development in their regions and accelerate socio-cultural development. Because economic and socio-cultural developments affect each other mutually. In this way, on the one hand, universities constitute the economic condition of the development of the regions as a source of income, on the other hand, they constitute the socio-cultural and scientific conditions of development. The importance of historical, cultural assets has increased. However, how are the university students' perspectives and awareness of cultural assets?

In this study, it was aimed to determine how students studying undergraduate and an associate degree in Bitlis Eren University are aware of the tangible historical and cultural heritage of Bitlis during their education in Bitlis. The awareness of young individuals about the tangible historical and cultural assets of the region where they live is closely related to leisure activities. Leisure time perception of university students depends on how the time spent outside the school is planned. During the education period, students spend most of their time on campus or in dormitories/homes with activities related to their education. In times other than education, students can direct to different leisure activities. Many factors determine the content of these activities (such as demographic, economic, culture etc.). On the other hand, the study

which was conducted by Kafadar (2021: 260) stated that “students mostly reported that cultural heritage was important since it was inherited from ancestors, it allows them to learn the past events, it reflects them, not to forget the old times, it is their culture, it is their history that is why they have an interest to see, or they have an awareness about historical and cultural heritage.

According to the findings which are obtained within the scope of the study, the most critical factors that determine the leisure time activities are parent’s education level (especially the education level of the mother) and the economic situation of the family. These two factors determine the students’ leisure time activities and awareness of the tangible historical and cultural assets in Bitlis. In this context, as it can be understood from the data obtained within the scope of the research, the students who have a worse economic situation compared to others have less information about the tangible historical and cultural assets in Bitlis province. While students with a family income of 5000+ TL are most interested in the tangible historical and cultural heritage of Bitlis, students with 0-1400 TL are the least interested students. In this context, the higher the monthly income of the students’ families, the more concise and awareness of Bitlis’s tangible historical and cultural heritage. In the study of Suzer, it was also observed that one of the factors determining the leisure time activities of the students was the amount of pocket money (Suzer, 2000). Likewise, in the study of Muderrisoglu and Uzun, it is revealed that the monthly income of students’ families is one of the most influential factors that determine leisure time activities (Muderrisoglu & Uzun, 2004). The education level of the mother affects the level of awareness of Bitlis cultural heritage. Students whose mothers are graduate, or doctorate are most interested in awareness the cultural heritage of Bitlis, while students whose mothers are illiterate are the least interested students. A similar result is emphasised in Sule Ay’s study, “The Ability of Critical Thinking, Educational Background of Parents and the Monthly Income of the Family”. Mother’s education and income are essential for awareness the cultural heritage and the dimension of thought.

Another critical finding obtained within the scope of the research is that the number of siblings of the student’s affect the level of awareness regarding Bitlis’s tangible historical and cultural heritage. While students with 3 siblings are most interested in awareness Bitlis’s cultural heritage, students with 5 or more siblings are least interested in awareness Bitlis’ cultural heritage. As the number of siblings decreases, the interest in awareness of the cultural heritage of Bitlis increases. This may be because as the number of siblings of the students’ decreases, the level of interest they receive from their parents in the family increases and obtain more information about the cultural heritage of Bitlis in the family. The region where Bitlis Eren University students were born is another factor that significantly affects the opinions of Bitlis regarding the awareness of its cultural heritage. While students in the Black Sea and Aegean regions are more sensitive about Bitlis’s tangible historical and cultural heritage, students from Southeast Anatolia are the least sensitive group. The sensitivity and awareness of students coming from the South-eastern Anatolia region are lower due to its nearness to the region. Furthermore, students who are born in Bitlis have a higher awareness of Bitlis’s cultural heritage as expected. Students from Bitlis have more sensitivity in this regard than those from outside Bitlis.

Another factor that affects students’ awareness of Bitlis’s tangible cultural and historical heritage is the relationship status. Consequently, students who are in a relationship are more sensitive than students who have no relation concerning the awareness of Bitlis cultural heritage. Students who are in a courting have extra awareness of the city’s tangible cultural and historical heritage because they spend more time on leisure activities. These students who spend more time socialising outside the school have more information about Bitlis’s tangible cultural and historical heritage thanks to short trips with their partner to spend time together. As said by Cengelci (2012), awareness about historical and cultural heritage should be acquired through education in social life in the family, schools, or social structure. Furthermore, historical and cultural heritage elements should be instructed because they are the most important elements that reflect society and make society what it is. Most of the families do not have an interest in the historical and cultural heritage elements due to economic reasons. Most of the time, they do not have time, money, and a car to have a weekend trip to see historical and cultural heritage elements. This makes it challenging to be aware of the historical and cultural heritage elements for their children. Also, awareness about historical and cultural heritage should or must be encouraged by the school system, especially by the teacher during high school and by the university administration or the lecturer during higher education. According to Kafadar (2021), educators could allow the students to conduct more activities on this subject during social studies instruction; thus, increasing student awareness on this issue.

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