

RECREATION IN THE E-WORLD: NEW INSIGHT INTO THE TERM “RECREATION”

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ABSTRACT

New communication technologies, especially the Internet and social media, offer new opportunities to people in many areas. Research has revealed that people spend a lot of time in this virtual reality, which we call social media, creating a new world for them. As a matter of fact, the term recreation, which belongs to the past, should be determined again depending on this new reality. The aim of this study is to determine the recreational activities of university students and to reveal how these activities relate to the e-world in terms of scope and content. In this respect, the basic hypothesis of the research appears to be diversifying the activities that are done willingly and preferably in the time allocated to spend time on the Internet as a new term; e-recreation.

Keywords: e-World, New Communication Technologies, Social Media.

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the speed of the developing technology, the norms, the way people communicate and the way they pass time change. People now move freely and individually, use tools that they think are more flexible and feel more secure about the opportunities that technology offers them. The biggest platform for these tools is the Internet. Moreover, knowledge's getting more important day by day pushes people to a specific route. This situation makes it necessary to define new free time activities conceptually. There are many approaches to the free time activities concept, which could be evaluated subjectively (Lafargue, 1999; De Grazia, 1964; Neulinger, 1974; Veblen, 1899; Cross, 1990; Murphy, 1974; Mclean, Hurd & Rogers, 2005).

When the change in free time utilization types is considered chronologically, it is valid to say that the Internet is ruling these utilization types. In today's world, people prefer to communicate through social media than see each other face to face. Additionally, even if they communicate face to face, the content of the interaction could be related to Internet-based activities directly or indirectly. Individuals play games and do their shopping on the Internet. Moreover, they determine the activities they would attend outside and make all the necessary

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arrangements on the Internet. Eventually, the activities that individuals rely on to meet their normal or luxury needs continue to be met on the Internet in a gradually increasing manner in terms of their access to mobile opportunities at home or in work places.

The aim of this study is to determine the recreation activities of university students in terms of place and type, using data to reveal a definition for recreation. In this respect, the basic hypothesis of the study vary the activities that are held preferably and willingly in a time that is allocated to pass time on the Internet with a name; e-recreation.

RECREATION, CONCEPTS OF FREE TIME AND ONLINE INTERACTION

There is no definition of recreation (free time) that is accepted by a great mass of people. However, in the scope of definitions that are accepted by many researchers, time that is passed freely outside of physiological necessities and work is emphasized (McLean, Hurd & Rogers, 2005; Parr & Lashua, 2004; Parry & Long, 1988; Partmore, 1983; Yukic, 1970; Gist & Fava, 1964).

Considering the definitions in the literature, Clawson & Knetsch (1974) claim that free time is an arbitrary time that the individual chose. Moreover, Clawson & Knetsch (1974) state that free time is the time that individuals pass by joining in activities determined socially that are not necessary to exist and live. Gist & Fava (1964) and Dumazedier (1960) define free time as the time that individuals use to have fun, rest, achieve social gains or make individual developments. Parr & Lashua (2004) considered free time as subjective and objective, claiming that the mental satisfaction people feel after an activity they joined in their free time is leisure time. Yukic (1970), on the other hand, stated that, with the help of the development of free time as a concept, a freedom of social and psychological needs appears. Gray (1971) emphasizes that free time is an aesthetic, psychological, religious and philosophical thinking movement. Adopting a sociological viewpoint, Bucher & Bucher (1974) define recreation as an individual getting rid of the boredom of daily life by attending social, cultural and sportive activities that he likes and that are suitable for his social identity. Finally, Mclean, Hurd & Rogers (2005) define recreation in general terms as “activities that are held in society centers, sports fields, water parks, natural parks and parks in global natural parks, cities, counties and nations with the help of public, semi public and private institutions”.

As mentioned above, different researchers define recreation by making a different part of it their focus. These definitions consist generally of sociological, psychological and economical evaluations.

The increase in commercial organizations over free time caused a “free time industry” which produces free time activities/experiences, provides the circulation of goods and cultural products (entertainment, cinema, music, etc.) and deals with the production of new pleasures and desires for stationary/active consumers. This industry involves, in its general terms, all the performance arts, mass communication devices, plays and spectacles, cabarets, stadiums, athletic facilities, circuses/fairs, mass tourism, consumption rituals, etc. (Aytaç, 2006).

Virtual webs which have improved in parallel with the developing technology in the last quarter-century form a unique communication and interaction passage for marketers. Kozinets (1999) talks about the appearance of a virtual

society driven by a consumption idea that lets marketers determine the best way to explore the different opportunities and needs of tourists, workers and other people through a variety of communication channels. According to Kozinets (1999), the online interaction appears in four types: informative, relational, transformational and recreational. These interaction types help create positive perception of people in the virtual society. Recreational interaction forms the tool for online communication for marketers. When individuals come together in a virtual environment, the social connection they form becomes relatively superficial.

THE INTERNET AND SOCIALIZING

With developing technology, structures that affect socializing appeared. In connection with this, the Internet environment has become a field where socializing takes place.

“New communication and common platform applications presented by the Internet make mutual communication possible...” (Toffler, 2008; p. 442). Thus, the interaction of the individual with foreigners increases as much as with his kin. There could be a lot of reasons for an individual to fulfill his social needs, in other words, his social contacts and relations, over the Internet. According to Caplan (2003), individuals prefer to make interpersonal social contacts in the virtual world because it is more comfortable, safer, more impressive or more effective than traditional social activities which are made face to face. Caplan (2003) points out that loneliness, depression and a lack of self-confidence also lead individuals to virtual activities. According to Kiesler (1986), the Internet extinguishes the states of race, gender, age, disabilities, shyness, etc., and this situation can create a free communication platform. Drucker (2000) emphasizes that the Internet facilitates discussions on topics like the environment, public policies, entertainment, support programs, social interactions and social movements with the help of online forums. According to Lee, Conroy & Hii (2003), young people prefer to fulfill their social needs in the virtual world because of different geographical norms—other than common interests, groups and values—that are not limited to local culture. This preference could direct youngsters to acquire global behaviors and attitudes. On the other hand, in terms of socializing over the Internet, studies that take mass dimensions of Internet use should also be taken into consideration.

THE USE OF THE INTERNET, ONLINE RECREATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Because the Internet is a leisure time tool that offers a variety of options, the leisure time experiences of individuals have changed dramatically (Bryce, 2001).

According to the data presented by the Internet World Stat in the middle of 2014, 42.3% (3,035,749,340) of the total population of the world uses the Internet. There has been a 741% increase in this subset of the population since 2000.

85% of teenagers and children between 8 and 18 years of age in America have a computer. These people use computers for recreational reasons more than educational reasons. When the common activities of these youngsters on the Internet are considered, gaming and communicating via texting attract attention. For individuals younger than 6, the Internet is used to watch cartoons, etc. (Lee, 2009).

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According to Lee (2009), youngsters use computers and the Internet to communicate study and fulfill recreational activities such as gaming online, chatting, surfing the net, downloading movies, music and pictures, recording CDs, watching movies from DVDs or CDs, creating things with the help of applications and programing.

According to Pruijt (2002), the Internet is an ideal interpersonal communication tool. Thus, it offers many opportunities for global funds to come together and log on. Today, people are able to create new friendships with the help of social networking opportunities like chat rooms, web sites and immediate text messaging programs. They can also continue their existing friendships independent of time and space. Social webs are seen as a recreational activity that plays an important role in the development of social capital (Prujt, 2002).

Thompson (2005) considering the development of online recreation in the USA, pinpoints that when the use of the Internet in the USA is considered, chatting, getting information about a variety of recreational activities, shopping, writing and following blogs are engaged in commonly. An increase in visits to porn and gambling sites is also reported, together with watching movies, listening to music and gaming.

Whitty & McLaughlin (2007) classified online recreation activities in terms of Internet use: the use of the internet for computer-based (online) entertainment, the use of the internet for offline entertainment and the use of the Internet to spread information about entertainment. The use of the Internet consists of downloading/viewing movies or visuals, listening to/downloading music, joining chat rooms, visiting news sites related to music and playing/downloading games. Offline activities consist of searching for information related to sports and sports events and learning about personal hobbies. Finally, activities like related to learning about entertainment support the use of the Internet for online recreation. Moreover, Whitty & McLaughlin (2007) emphasized that there is a significant relation between the use of the Internet and feelings like loneliness and self-efficacy.

Online recreation has a flexible time span in terms of the accessibility options it offers. This feature of online recreation makes it preferable for workers in workplaces who want to make a difference or escape from work. Studies on this topic reveal that the use of online recreation positively impacts production and affects workers positively (Oravec, 2002; Oravec, 2005; Johnson & Ugray, 2007).

We are social and Hootsuite (2017) report that more than half of the world's population now uses the Internet. Internet and the present informatics technology offer various opportunities for leisure time activities. Today, many different activities can be done online in order to watch sports matches to reading books online. In addition, internet differentiated the experience of the consumer's leisure time activities. For example, the tourism product is intangible and cannot be pretested by tourists before purchase; virtual tourism makes it possible to sense the experience through virtual reality (Ankomah & Larson, 2018). Another example can be given in sport. Some of professional sports, especially the NFL and MLB, have brought fans to the Internet in search of other ways to enjoy their favorite sports, teams and players (Farquhar & Meeds, 2007). Fantasy sports leagues are one way fans can enjoy their favorite sports away from the stadium or arena. Today, fantasy sports team using augmented reality. The technology employs a fantasy game server in communication with one or more users' electronic devices (Parisi, 2018).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In the study, in order to determine the present situation and investigate the relations among variables, a “Descriptive Research Model” and a “Relational Research Model” are applied (Hair et al., 2010).

Research Sampling

The sampling of the research consists of nine 981 (N=981) students who were enrolled in undergraduate and graduate classes at Anadolu University at the time of the study. The questionnaire was sent to all 19,774 students enrolled in a variety of departments at undergraduate and graduate levels. As a matter of fact, the whole population was accessed. 981 questionnaires were answered and filled in correctly (N=981). When the departments of the students who answered the questionnaires were considered, it was determined that the numbers were distributed evenly. In other words, the rate of the questionnaires, which came from faculties, vocational schools and institutes, is almost the same as the rate of the sample population of the study to the students studying there. Moreover, when gender in the questionnaires was considered the ratio of men to women was very close.

Data Collection Method

The data were collected through questionnaires. The questionnaire form consists of three parts. The first part consists of demographic features, recreational activities, time spent on the internet, daily free times, whether they own the gadgets they use and the impressions that they have about free time. Additionally, there is a question about the department in which the student studies. In the second part, on the other hand, expressions to determine the types and habits of spending time in the use of the Internet. The third part of the questionnaire consists of expressions related to how the habits and behaviors surrounding Internet use and free time are formed. Participants answered each question in the second and third parts with a 5-point Likert type scale from “1: Completely Agree” to “5: Completely Disagree”.

To be able to form these questions focus-group studies were held on January 3, 2014 and January 27, 2014. These studies were held in three sittings. Ten people participated in each session; every session lasted 1 h. In all the focus-group studies, the participants were asked “how do you spend your free time?”, “how would you define your way of using the Internet?” and “what do you when on the Internet?” Other than that, in forming the questions and expressions, the studies held by Katz & Aspden (1997), Caplan (2003) and Blossom (2011) were utilized.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Pre-tests were applied in order to determine the validity of the questionnaire and the final version was applied to test the validity of the scale. In other words, a validity analysis was applied and the Alpha Coefficient was determined as $\alpha=0.802$. Afterwards, an explanatory factor analysis was applied for the expressions in the third part. In terms of Factor analysis, items having a factor

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load value over 0.50 were included in the questionnaire and two items with factor load values below 0.50 were excluded from the questionnaire (Hair et al., 2010, p. 116 & 117). When the factor analysis was applied, three factor expressions were determined. In order to determine the participant's use of the Internet, the time they spent using the Internet for free time purposes and their recreative activity tendencies for the rest of the questionnaire, a frequency analysis was utilized. In order to determine the tendency for the time spent using the Internet, Cross tabulation was applied to question 6 and 7.

The normality distribution of the collected data was evaluated by Kolmogorov Smirnov test and it was determined that they do not present a normal distribution. For this reason, Non-Parametric tests, Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis analyses were utilized.

FINDINGS

Result of Exploratory Factor Analysis

In the study, whether the reasons of the tendency of Internet use (Part 3), which was evaluated by 12 variables, could be reduced or not was taken into account. In order to test the factor structure of the questionnaire a principle component analysis held with a varimax rotation analysis was used. Factors with an Eigen value higher than 1 (Eigen value>1) were included in the structure. Moreover, the items with a factor load greater than 0.50 were also included in the analysis as acceptable (Hair et al., 2010, p. 104). The sufficiency of sampling for the analysis process were calculated using the Bartlett test=2216,874, the K.M.O. test=0.785 and p=0.000. A score of 0.785 indicates that the sampled number is between medium and sufficient (Hair et al., 2010, p. 104). The analysis revealed 3 factors and 10 items, as seen in Table 1. The factors demonstrate 59,659% of the total variance (Table 2). These factors are: "comfort", "ease" and "access to information".

Table 1. Principle component analysis.

	Factor Loadings	Mean
Factor 1: Comfort		3.14
When I surf the Internet I am more comfortable than in real life	0.822	3.27
I express myself better on the Internet	0.816	2.88
I could do what I can do in real life more comfortably on the Internet	0.679	3.28
Factor 2: Ease		4.26
The Internet makes my life easier	0.716	4.5
I can communicate and share information with people simultaneously	0.501	4.14
Searching on the internet is convenient for me (fun and easy)	0.754	4.17
I can obtain the information I search for easily	0.706	4.26
Factor 3: Access to Information		3.13
Web sites with educational content contain sufficient information	0.711	3.29
I prefer searching for information on the Internet than in libraries	0.598	3.29
I download homework from homework sites	0.697	2.83

As seen in Table 1, the highness of the means of factor values, when considered in all aspects, reveals the effectiveness of the factors (Table 1). In all the factors, “ease” (4.26) demonstrates the highest factor and “access to information” (3.13) demonstrates the lowest factor (Table 1). In this respect, the “ease” dimension, with a factor load over (4.00), could be described as having the highest effect (Nancarrow & Brace, 2000).

In order to evaluate internal consistency and reliability, the Cronbach Alpha (α) coefficient of each factor was calculated.

The Alpha (α) scores of the factors are ($\alpha=0.773$) for “Comfort”, ($\alpha=0.666$) for “Ease” and ($\alpha=0.533$) for “Access to Information”. Except for Part 3 of the scale, where Principle Component Analysis was applied, the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient for the whole scale was found to be ($\alpha=0.752$). According to the determined data the reliability of the whole scale suggests that Parts 2 and 3 could be determined as sufficient (Hair et al., 2010, p. 125).

Descriptive Statistics Related to the Tendency to Internet Use

According to the gender variable the Mann Whitney U analysis concerning the “comfort” dimension is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Tendency to use the internet and gender (Mann-Whitney U).

Factor	Group	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	Mann-W. U	P
Comfort	Woman	466.95	227403	108575	0.008
	Men	514.71	254268		

When the use of the Internet in terms of comfort was taken into consideration, a statistically significant difference between men and women was detected ($p=0.008 < 0.05$). According to this, men show a tendency to use the Internet in terms of comfort more than women (Table 3).

Table 3. Tendency to use the internet for individuals using cell phones and individuals not using them (Mann-Whitney U).

Factor	Group	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	Mann-W.U	P
Comfort	Yes	51891	304079	99382	0.000
	No	44960	117592		
Ease	Yes	53273	312180	91281	0.000
	No	46751	169491		
Access to Information	Yes	50684	29700650	106454500	0.032
	No	46751	18466450		

Statistically significant differences were detected among the reasons regarding the tendency to use the Internet among individuals who log onto the Internet on their cell phones and those who do not. According to this, it was determined that individuals who log onto the Internet on their cell phones tend to use it with comfort, ease and access to information in mind more than other individuals (Table 4).

Table 4. Tendency to use the internet in terms of age (Kruskal Wallis).

Factor	Group	N	Mean Rank	Df	X ²	P
Ease	17-20	202	423.23	3	16.775	0.001
	21-24	568	503.77			
	25-28	152	507.97			
	29-32	59	556.30			
Access to Information	17-20	202	450.35	3	9.909	0.019
	21-24	568	514.69			
	25-28	152	464.68			
	29-32	59	469.83			

Significant differences were detected in the “Ease” and “Access to Information” dimensions in terms of age. According to this, the group using the Internet for its “Ease” dimension is individuals between 29 and 32 years of age. The group who indicated that “Access to Information” is their primary reason to use the Internet was individuals between 21 and 24 (Table 5).

Table 5. Tendency to use the internet in terms of free time.

Factor	Group	N	Mean Rank	Df	X ²	P
Comfort	2-3	376	457.21	3	15.840	0.001
	4-5	423	496.75			
	6-7	145	565.63			
	8 ≥	37	476			

The tendency of individuals to use the Internet for “comfort” shows statistically significant differences related to the “having free time” variable. According to this, individuals who have 6 to 7 h of free time a day are affected by the “comfort” dimension more in terms of showing a tendency to use the Internet (Table 6).

Table 6. Tendency to use the internet in terms of daily average internet use variables (Kruskal Wallis).

Factor	Group	N	Mean Rank	Df	X ²	P
Comfort	1 ≤	210	399.21	4	45.921	0.000
	2-3	443	481.30			
	4-5	222	566.01			
	6-7	58	589.16			
	8 ≥	48	516.46			
Ease	1 ≤	210	374.69	4	78.647	0.000
	2-3	443	476.47			
	4-5	222	564.73			
	6-7	58	608.41			
	8 ≥	48	650.95			

The tendency of individuals to use the Internet shows statistically significant differences when comparing the “comfort” and “ease” dimensions with daily average use of the Internet. According to this, individuals who use the Internet for “6 to 7 h” a day are affected by the “comfort” dimension more than other groups. The group affected by the “ease” dimension, on the other hand, appeared to be the individuals who use the Internet for 8 h or more a day (Table 7).

Table 7. Tendency to use the internet in terms of types of free time (Kruskal Wallis).

Factor	Group	N	Mean Rank	Df	X ²	P
Comfort	Watching cinema, theatre, opera and ballet	44	491.38	11	56.493	0.000
	Shopping	27	571.51			
	Walking, natural places and park	89	475.29			
	Going sport centre fitness, etc.	30	467.93			
	Reading book and researching	173	404.61			
	Listening and playing music	55	408.66			
	Internet	223	589.97			
	Playing digital game	31	529.82			
	Mobile phone (Game, SMS, talking etc.)	14	595.25			
	Watching TV and listening radio	57	453.35			
	Have a talk with friends	183	489.07			
	Going cafe, bar, disco, etc.	55	438.92			
	Ease	Watching cinema, theatre, opera and ballet	44			
Shopping		27	560.64			
Walking, natural places and park		89	450.05			
Going sport centre fitness, etc.		30	482.15			
Reading book and researching		173	468.69			
Listening and playing music		55	439.68			
Internet		223	552.90			
Playing digital game		31	552.27			
Mobile phone (Game, SMS, talking, etc.)		14	595.21			
Watching TV and listening radio		57	453.87			
Have a talk with friends		183	466.82			
Going cafe, bar, disco, etc.		55	459			
Access to Information		Watching cinema, theatre, opera and ballet	44	456.86	11	43.217
	Shopping	27	601.74			
	Walking, natural places and park	89	380.94			
	Going sport centre fitness, etc.	30	497.85			
	Reading book and researching	173	427.39			
	Listening and playing music	55	472.32			
	Internet	223	546.42			
	Playing digital game	31	547.51			
	Mobile phone (Game, SMS, talking, etc.)	14	545.17			
	Watching TV and listening radio	57	560.71			
	Have a talk with friends	183	483.56			
	Going cafe, bar, disco, etc.	55	539.14			

Statistically significant differences were detected among the factors and are affective in directing individuals to use the Internet in their free time across all dimensions. According to this, individuals who spend their free time with their cell phones are affected more by the “Comfort” and “Ease” dimensions than other groups. The group affected more by the “Access to Information” dimension is the group that most enjoys “shopping.” The group that prefers spending their free time on the Internet is affected by the “Comfort” dimension more.

Descriptive Statistics Related to the Time Spent on the Internet**Table 8. Daily average free time (Q6) of participants and time they are connected to the internet (Q7).**

Count		Time They are Connected to the Internet					Total
		1 ≤	2-3	4-5	6-7	8 ≥	
Daily	2-3	121	161	50	23	21	376
Average	4-5	73	217	104	17	12	423
Free	6-7	10	55	59	12	9	145
Time	8 ≥	6	10	9	6	6	37
Total		210	443	222	58	48	981

When the daily free time and average time (Table 8) are considered, the time the Internet covers during free time appears. Of the participants, 75.33% connect to the Internet from home, 6.12% from work, 7.54% from school, 2.14% from an internet café and 8.87% from a cell phone or a mobile gadget. According to these rates, participants connect to the Internet from home (75.33%) the most. Moreover, 96.02% of the participants have a computer in their homes and 91.23% of them have an Internet connection. The rate of participants who connect to the Internet via cell phone is 59.73%. 50.25% of participants have a virtual identity. The percentage of participants who log on to social sharing sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc., on a cell phone is 37.31%. When the free time the participants have and their daily average use of the internet were considered (Table 9) most of the participants who have 2-3 h free time a day spend 2-3 (N=161) hours of their free time on the Internet on average. Most of the participants who have 4-5 h of free time a day spend 2-3 (N=217) hours of their time on the Internet. Most of the people with 6-7 h of free time a day spend 4-5 (N=59) hours on the Internet. Even though fewer participants have more than 8 h of free time daily (N=37), the ones who spend 2-3 (N=10) hours and 4-5 (N=9) form the majority. When Table 9 is considered, the group who has 4-5 h of free time (N=423) forms the largest group. On the other hand, the largest group in the sampling in terms of daily average Internet use is the one who uses the Internet for 2-3 h a day.

Table 9. Free time activities that participants prefer the most.

Options	Number	%
Watching entertainment	42	4.28
Shopping	27	2.75
Walking outside	87	8.87
Working out and being active	29	2.96
Reading and researching	168	17.13
Listening to and playing music	55	5.61
Surfing the Internet	202	20.59
Gaming	30	3.06
Using a mobile phone	14	1.43
Watching TV and listening to the radio	57	5.81
Talking with friends	180	18.35
Going to cafes, bars, clubs, etc.	55	5.61
Other	35	3.57

It was determined that the participants spend time mostly on the Internet (20.59%).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It was determined in the study that university students are affected by factors regarding comfort, ease and access to information when using the Internet. According to the results of the study, it was determined that male users tend to use the Internet more for comfort than female users. People who connect to the Internet on their cell phones feel that the comfort, ease and access to information factors dominate. People who use virtual identities feel the comfort, ease and access to information factors more densely. Among age groups, ease and access to information factors show differences. According to this, those 21-24 who are at undergraduate level of study feel the Internet provides access to information more than other groups. On the other hand, those 29-32 who are at a graduate level of study tend to use the Internet because of the ease factor.

University students think that the more time they spend on the Internet, the more comfort they experience. At the same time, the ones who are connected to the Internet via cell phones think that the use of the Internet provides more ease. The ones who spend time using their cell phones in order to play games, text each other and chat are affected by the comfort and ease dimensions the most. People who spend their free time shopping are affected by the access to information dimension more.

The percentage of people who connect to the Internet with their cell phones is 59.73%. These data reveal that individuals have the opportunity to access to the Internet from home, work or via their cell phones everywhere.

When the information gathered through descriptive statistics is taken into consideration, it can be interpreted that individuals have access to the Internet everywhere via mobile gadgets except for their home and thus they have access to activities that could create recreative activities.

When daily free time and use of the Internet are taken into consideration, it is observed that individuals spend at least 50% of their free time on the Internet. This suggests that the recreational activities people perform in their real life now take a different path to be performed still in their free time, but with passive activities over the Internet. The most important factor to support this hinges on what people do while they are connected to the Internet. When what people do on the Internet is considered with this aim, it is found that they tend to check email, read about news, do research in terms of education or self-development, listen/view online movies/music and log on to social media and sharing sites. This might suggest that university students use Internet-based recreation activities are passive (Bhat & Lockwood, 2004; Murphy & Degnen, 2001). Moreover, the results of the study reveal that viewing/listening/downloading movies and music, programming for pleasure or logging on to social media or sharing sites as an environment where interpersonal interactions take place form the Internet-based recreation settings directly.

Another important finding is that the activities engaged in on the Internet vary according to the age groups of university students. While those below the age of 25 directly log onto Internet-based recreational applications, those over 25 prefer to surf sites providing education, news, self-development, etc. This suggests that individuals start to spend their free time with worries about their career at the end of their time at university, but they do this willingly and with pleasure. Furthermore, since the access to information factor affects those below the age of 25 more than those above the age of 25, this could suggest that they experience internet-based recreation activities simultaneously while using it for educational purposes.

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When the definitions of free time and recreation in the literature are considered, the definitions are generally time-oriented (Veal, 1992). In other words, the definitions include the time out of work and free time concepts in most of the articles (Veal, 1992; Mclean, Hurd & Rogers, 2005; Parr & Lashua, 2004; Parry & Long, 1988; Partmore, 1983; Yukic, 1970; Gist & Fava, 1964). Moreover, these definitions also include features of free time activities, such as personal development, pleasure, psychological and physical rest or freedom of choice via producing different alternatives. Parallel to these expressions, the “activities done in free time” expression is also mentioned in the definitions (Stebbins, 2005; Veal, 1992). Furthermore, whether free time activities are free willed or freely chosen at the beginning but become routine after a while is a topic of discussion. Stebbins (2005) claimed that the “peoples’ free will” expressions in the definitions of free time do not reflect the reality. In this respect, while choosing their free time activities, the individuals could make their choices in terms of the social groups they belong to, socio-economical structure and some other limitations. On the other hand, the most important definition related to discrimination of free time is made by De Grazia (1964). According to De Grazia (1964) free time consists of activities people do for their own good. For example, shopping could both be a necessity or a hobby for a person. Shopping, made as a hobby is a leisure time activity and gives pleasure to the person according to De Grazia (1964). However, if shopping is result of a necessity, it is a chore and does not count as free time. De Grazia (1964) expresses the following concerning free time: “Leisure time is defined as the opposite of work time. However, free time cannot be defined like this. Leisure time and free time live in two different worlds. Everyone could have leisure time but not everyone can have free time”. According to this expression, in order to form activities related to free time, one needs to have the authority to remove monetary, social, etc. obstacles. For example, when someone wants to fill his/her free time doing internet-based recreation activities, he/she needs a computer, an Internet connection and other hardware. In order to have this hardware, individuals should have economical opportunities. On the other hand, the evaluation that all the activities individuals do for their own good made by De Grazia (1964) could create arguments in terms of internet-based recreation applications because passive recreation activities would not provide beneficial results for people when their health is considered. Moreover, studies suggest that this situation makes people asocial. However, the question of whether the expression “good” implies the activities that an individual defines as good for himself or in terms of social norms should be answered.

While the assertion of Stebbins (2005) and Veal (1992), that free time activities occur in “Free Time” seems to be valid ontologically, developing technology and the spread of the Internet makes it questionable to discriminate free time activities as only “Free Time” because people can now direct themselves to make an activity that is optional, free-willed and pleasurable during their working hours, namely at work. According to the study by Kozinets (1999) a large part of time spent on the Internet is considered a recreational interaction. If the free time concept should still be used despite this claim, a new recreation sub-definition should be made because these activities could be made both during free time and work time simultaneously or in a planned manner. Thus, since these new recreation activities are held on the Internet or via a virtual web, it could be appropriate to name them e-recreation.

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