

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated the Libyan school adolescents' perception of constraints and benefits of leisure activities and their relations to actual and desired participation in active and passive leisure activities. The relationship of the perceptions of leisure constraints and benefits to selected independent variables of gender, grade level, age and SES was also investigated.

Subjects of the study comprised 1342 students (from Form 1 to 3) of 15 to 18 years old, selected from 28 high schools located in the urban areas of Tripoli, the capital of Libya (North African Country). A questionnaire was designed to obtain information on the adolescents' participation in leisure activities and their perceptions of constraints and benefits of leisure activities. The questionnaire consisted of 5 parts: (1) students' background, (2) frequency of their participation in active and passive leisure activities, (3) perception of their desire for leisure participation, (4) the average hours spent in leisure and the facilities used, (5) their perceptions of 3 categories of leisure constraints namely school, family and personal constraints and (6) their perceptions of 4 categories of leisure benefits. A 5-point Likert type scale was used for measuring their perceptions of constraints and benefits of leisure. The desired leisure and the actual participation in leisure activities was measured by a 5 point scale and each category of benefits had 6

items. A multiple-choice response was used for measuring the average hours spent in leisure, facilities and places used for leisure and the people with whom they spent the leisure time was spent.

SPSS was employed to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics, factorial multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and Pearson's product-moment Correlations were the statistical procedures used to compute the data.

In this Chapter, the summary of the main findings of the study are grouped for discussions and to draw up conclusion. These are seven sections:

5.1 Relationship of Adolescents' Desire for Leisure and their Actual Participation in Active and Passive Leisure

The finding of the study indicated that the correlations between the male students' desire for leisure participation and their actual leisure participation ranged between -.04 to .527. With the exception of the correlations between (a) the desire for participation in sports and participation in sports .334; (b) desire for watching television and actual watching of television .386; (c) desire for listening to music and reported listening to music .523; and (d) desire for sport activities and watching sports .297, no other correlation coefficients exceeded a value of .30. As for correlation between female students' desire for participation and their actual participation in leisure activities, the findings indicated that the correlation ranged from -.01 to .448. The correlations was found (a) between the desire for watching television and actual participation in watching

television .369; (b) between watching television and listening to music to be .360; (c) between desire for watching television and reading newspapers/magazines .216; (d) between watching television and spending time with family .342; (e) between listening to music and the actual time for listening to music .448 and (f) between desire for reading books and actual reading of newspapers and magazines .422.

The findings show that among the males and females' desire for one activity is related positively to actual participation in that activity. Those who showed more desire for watching television or reading books were likely to participate in these two passive leisure activities. The results also show that the desire for active sports is positively related to actual participation in sports activities. Thus, the findings supported the theoretical model of this study as well as other theories on the desire for participation in leisure and actual participation was found that, the greater the participation in a specific activity the greater the desire for participation in that activity Willets and Willets. 1986 obtained similar findings.

In summary, the findings indicated that the extent of participation in active and passive leisure activities was positively related the desire of participation in these activities.

5.2 Relationship of Adolescents' Perceptions of Leisure Benefits and Participation in Active and Passive leisure Activities

The correlation coefficients of adolescents' perceptions of leisure benefits and reported participation in leisure activities ranged from -.001 to .140. Although 50 per cent of the 108 correlation coefficients indicated were statistically significant, the strength of this relationship was very weak. The correlation of perceived physical benefits and participation in football was only .138 and the correlation of perceived social benefits and the time spent with friends was .140.

The study found the significant differences in perception of leisure benefits. Male students scored higher on perception of benefits than female students. Male students had higher mean scores than females on perception of physical benefits of leisure ($M = 16.91$) and social benefits ($M = 12.58$), whereas female students had higher mean than males on perception of psychological benefits ($M = 16.90$) and learning benefits of participation in leisure ($M = 20.33$). These findings could be due to active participation in leisure activities. For example, male adolescents play more football. Hence gained more physical and social benefits from this activity, while female students read more and spent more time with friends. Thus they gained more psychological and learning benefits from their leisure activities. Therefore, the results of the study indicated that, occupation was not related to perception of the benefits of leisure.

To sum up, the findings of this study did not support the theoretical model shown in (Figure.1) and were not consistent with the earlier works of Driver, Brown, and

Peterson (1991), Hawes (1978), Brodtkin and Weiss (1990), Shaw and Caldwell (1993) and Biddle, Salis, and Cavil (1998).

5.3 Relationship of Adolescents' Perceptions of Constraints and Participation in Leisure Activities

Another purpose of study was to examine whether perceived constraints of leisure participation are related to participation in leisure activities. The findings of this study challenge the assumption that the constraints reduce participation. On the contrary, the data suggest that perceived constraints are not associated to participation in leisure activities. Hence, it can be concluded that constraints do not lower participation in leisure activities.

The findings of the study indicate that female students were more constrained than their male counterparts, and Form III students were constrained than F I and F II.

In Libya, school adolescents are strongly committed to school studies including doing home work, and preparing for examinations to such an extent that they hardly engage in leisure activities. Even school teachers including those in charge of physical education and sports, do not encourage them to participate although sport and game facilities are provided at schools. In Libya, young females are required by cultural traditions to be engaged more in activities such as including caring for siblings, helping parents and with household activities. They have to do working for others instead of working for their own benefits which include also leisure participation.

Adolescents' perceptions of constraints were also examined in relation to their fathers' education and occupational status. The results revealed significant relationships between fathers' occupation and perceptions of leisure constraints. Students whose fathers were professionals and had university education had higher mean scores on perception of school constraints for leisure, than whose fathers were non-professionals and had no university education. Adolescents with non-professional fathers had higher mean scores in family and personal constraints for leisure.

In the Libyan context, this study showed that adolescents whose fathers are highly educated and employed in the professional occupation or higher occupational categories obtained higher income, had more facilities for leisure and leisure time with their families. Therefore they did not have family constraints, they had only school and personal constraints. On the other hand, fathers who are non-professional workers, have less income, work longer hours and have little time for leisure participation with their families.

The findings also found significant relationship between fathers' education and perceived constraints. The difference in school constraints between fathers with university and non-university education was significant. The relationship of fathers' education to students' participation in leisure activities was significant. The results show that students whose fathers had university level education indicated significantly greater participation in active and passive leisure activities. These findings support findings of other studies that higher education of one's parents is associated with their

greater participation in sports and other leisure activities (e.g. Hall, 1973; Hobart, 1975; Falk, 1995 and Chritensen and Yoesting, 1976). Thus, it can be said that fathers' higher level of education and professional status produce more available financial resources that which can motivate adolescents to participate in leisure activities.

5.4 Relationship of Gender, Grade levels, and Leisure Participation

One of the purpose of this study is to investigate the differences between male and female students' participation in active and passive leisure activities.

The present study found that mean scores for male adolescents' participation in active (vigorous and non-vigorous) leisure activities was higher than those of female adolescents. Similarly the male students had higher mean scores on participation in playing computer games, watching sports, loitering, visiting relatives and spending time with friends. In contrast, female students had higher mean scores in watching television, watching movies, listening to and playing music, reading books, newspapers and magazines; playing cards, and spending time with family. These findings are accordance with the outcome of studies done by Baron and Byrn (1977); Schneider and Smith (1973); Shaw (1985); and Stafford (1980) which concluded that male students spent more time in active leisure activities and had more access to a wide range of activities than adolescents female.

In Libyan society, there are strong pressure from parents, elders and the society in general on young adolescents, both boys and girls, to behave strictly according to their

socially and religiously defined respective gender roles. These roles include acceptance of that leisure behaviour of girls should be more controlled than of boys. Therefore, while boys are expected and encouraged to be active in leisure participation, girls are expected to be active in working at home and taking part in passive leisure activities. However, both boys and girls spend their leisure in watching television or in other passive and home activities. Thus, preference of boys and girls is due to the widespread expansion of the media network.

The grade level differences in active and passive leisure participation was also investigated. Form 1 students had higher mean scores in participation in vigorous leisure activities, especially football, than FII and FIII. Form 3 students had scored higher mean than those in FI and FII in participation in swimming, walking, exercise and picnicking, while Form 2 students obtained high mean scores in reading newspapers, magazines and print media (See Appendix A, Chart A.4) Numerous leisure studies in the industrialised western countries (Pressey and Kuhlien, 1957; Coleman, 1978; Hendry, 1983 and Garton and Pratt, 1991) support the conclusion that the participation in active leisure activities such as sports increase with age. This conclusion, does not apply to Libyan young adolescents because the concept of play is generally associated with the younger children. Hence, as they grow up, they are expected more to be devoted to work and studies. Similarly, a recent study of age differences in leisure participation (Garton and Pratt 1991) found that sports predominated in the younger age groups while gregarious and social activities are popular among 15 to16 year olds, who engage in talking,

listening to music and visiting friend. Participation in active leisure activities declines with increasing academic demands of school.

The study further suggested that 38% of Libyan school adolescents spent most of their time with their families and 42% of them spent time with their friends while 20% of school students spent leisure time alone. Also 50% of school adolescents reported that they spent leisure time at their home while 35% of them spent their leisure time out of their houses. This suggests that adolescents did not make much use of outdoor facilities including school facilities. Apparently adolescents spent time in watching television, as the mean scores for watching television was 4.20 for males and 4.10 for female adolescents out of total scores of all leisure activities. The activities spent indoors are listening to music, reading papers, magazines and books.

5.5 Conclusion

The following conclusions are made. Relationship that pertaining to the theoretical model of this study (Figure1) can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Relationship between desire for leisure activity and actual participation in leisure activities is found only in desire for some activities. For these activities, the greater desire for that leisure activity the greater the participation in it (Table 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3).

- 2) Female students indicated higher in their desire for leisure participation than male students. However, they participated less in their activities than their male counterparts.
- 3) The relationship between perception of leisure benefits and actual participation in leisure activities was found to be weak, indicating that higher level of participation in leisure activities does not necessary imply perceptions of more leisure benefits.
- 4) The relationship between constraints and actual participation in leisure activities was found to be weak. This finding suggests that (a) higher level of perceived constraints do not necessary mean less participation in leisure activities; (b) The predominate constraints of leisure participation of Libyan adolescents were school and family constraints. The study was found that female students had higher mean scores than males in perceptions of school and personal constraints (Table 4.17).
- 5) The students whose fathers were professionals and had university education scored higher significantly in perception of school constraints of leisure whereas students whose fathers were non-professionals and had non-university scored higher in family and personal constraints (Table 2.24).
- 6) The correlation between perception of constraints and the reported desire for leisure participation was week.

- 7) Students of ages 16 to 17 scored higher in perception of school, family and personal constraints than from those of other ages.
- 8) This study showed that adolescents of age 15 to 18 (FIII) participate more in passive leisure activities. As they grew older trend towards participation in leisure activities.
- 9) Male adolescents participated more in active leisure activities than their female counterparts who take part in passive leisure activities more. This is because being female itself is a constraint in a traditional Arab society like Libya. Young females not much encouraged to engage in sports because of the concept that games and sports are for boys.

5.6 Implications of the Study and Suggestions

The above findings of the study have clear implications for the Libyan society in general and for the Libyan Secretariat of Education, Vocations and Youth Development.

Following suggestions are offered for action:

- 1) Parents ought to encourage school adolescent to participate in active leisure activities and to involve in decision making processes in school policies and management of activities.
- 2) The image of the Libyan national policy (sport for all) ought to be promoted and has to be made successful so that more young people are motivated to participate in leisure activities.

- 3) Although Islam does not prevent its followers from taking active part in healthy and useful leisure activities, Libyan female adolescents have lower participation in sport activities because of family and school constraints. Therefore, school and family related constraints ought to be removed with reform movements and misguided religion beliefs ought to be discouraged.
- 4) Special studies ought to be instituted to improve the status of school adolescents and families to enable them to take active part in indoor physical activities and any constraints that inhibit their participation ought to be removed.

5.7 Recommendations for Further Research

The present study suggests future research in the following areas:

- 1) Few studies have been carried out to investigate Libyan school adolescents' participation in leisure activities and the problems encountered. . On the other hand, several related to delinquency, drug abuse, absenteeism, discipline have been carried out. Therefore it is suggested that studies on leisure activities, leisure perceptions, constraints and participation should be given prominence along with other studies on adolescence. The present study of the leisure perception and participation of school adolescents in Libya has shown that further studies are needed to provide Libyan adolescents and parents with more knowledge about adolescents' social world. Moreover, this study has discussed that Libyan adolescents spent more time indoors than outdoors. This should not

be the case as vigorous sports are needed for adolescents.

2) More research is needed to focus on the two types of leisure participation (active and passive leisure activities) and their relation to adolescents' perception of constraints and benefits of leisure.

3) The leisure participation of older adolescents and constraints should be investigated. Both rural and urban adolescents in all regions and districts of Libya should be studied.

4) Equally, more detailed studies on specific desired and participated leisure activities with their relation to the perception of leisure constraints and leisure benefits are needed in the future.

It is hoped that this study has contributed to the body of knowledge that aimed to assist those charged with the responsibility of planning and providing leisure opportunities for the adolescents in- or out- schools. On addition, it provides additional body of knowledge to those studying adolescent's leisure and its relationship to personality development of adolescents in Libya as well as in other Arab Countries. The data in the study can serve as a basic resource for future research in leisure especially in the Libyan context.