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The Moderating Role of Leisure Satisfaction in the Effect of Peer Relationships on Happiness in Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the moderating role of leisure satisfaction in the relationship between peer relationships and happiness levels. Employing a correlational research design, the study was conducted with a sample of 529 high school students, comprising 110 females (20.8%) and 419 males (79.2%). A structural equation model was constructed to test the hypotheses developed within the scope of the study, and the analyses were conducted using SPSS Process Macro (Model 1). According to the analysis results, it has been determined that peer relationships and leisure satisfaction have a positive and significant effect on happiness levels. Moreover, the moderating role of leisure satisfaction in the association between peer relationships and happiness was found to be statistically significant. Specifically, when leisure satisfaction is high, the positive effect of peer relationships on happiness is amplified. Therefore, interventions aimed at enhancing leisure activities could be implemented in schools and community programs to foster better social connections and happiness among youth.

Keywords: Adolescents, Happiness, Leisure Satisfaction, Moderating Role, Peer Relationships.



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INTRODUCTION

Happiness not only contributes to individuals' psychological balance and satisfaction but also attracts considerable research attention as a fundamental pillar of social welfare and progress (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Leung & ark., 2021). In this context, happiness has become a prominent area of study in disciplines such as sociology, psychology, economics, and education, given its impact on quality of life and social integration (Argyle, 2013; Diener & Ryan, 2009; Frey, 2010). Beyond being one of the critical indicators of social progress, happiness has also become a central focus in the policies of public institutions and organizations (World Happiness Report, 2024). In this context, happiness, as a key concept with interdisciplinary appeal, has become a prominent research area in positive psychology, particularly in studies involving adolescents (Choi et al., 2019; Freire & Ferreira, 2020). Previous studies have focused on various determinants of happiness in adolescents, highlighting the significant role of leisure activities among these factors (Roberts, 2019; Yuh, 2022). Numerous studies have identified leisure activities as one of the most important sources for enhancing happiness in adolescents (Asquith et al., 2022; Hakoköngäs & Puhakka, 2023). In adolescents, participation in leisure activities has been found not only to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression levels (Ma et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2012) but also to provide numerous developmental benefits by enhancing psychological factors, perceived control, social support, self-esteem, happiness, and the quality of peer relationships in social environments (Cassidy, 2005; Freire et al., 2016; Poulsen et al., 2008).

Globally, nearly 3 billion out of the 7.2 billion people are under the age of 25, representing 42% of the population. Of these, 1.2 billion are adolescents aged 10 to 19, and this number is anticipated to grow significantly in the coming years (WHO, 2024). Therefore, for the future of societies, fostering a psychologically and socially healthy generation of youth who can effectively communicate with their peers is a critical concern (Gibbons et al., 2012; Hall-Lande et al., 2007). Leisure activities are among the most significant factors contributing to the development of healthy peer relationships (Denault & Poulin, 2008; Zeijl et al., 2000). Adolescents who engage in leisure activities with their peers experience improved happiness levels and a healthier developmental process (Freire & Teixeira, 2018; Trainor et al., 2010). Although there is a substantial body of research addressing leisure satisfaction, peer relationships, and happiness individually, studies that explore these constructions within an integrated and interactive framework remain limited. In particular, the role of leisure experiences in the dynamics between young individuals' social relationships and their happiness has not been sufficiently examined. This study aims to evaluate these variables through a holistic approach and proposes a theoretical framework to understand how leisure satisfaction contributes to individuals' happiness through peer relationships. In doing so, it seeks to fill a significant gap in literature by elucidating the influence of social context on happiness and contributing to a deeper understanding of the social mechanisms that support the happiness of young individuals.

Literature Review

Happiness and Peer Relationships

Studies on adolescent happiness have increased significantly in recent years (Alam, 2022; Avedissian & Alayan, 2021). Within the domain of positive psychology, happiness is conceptualized through two perspectives: hedonic and eudaimonic (Deci & Ryan, 2008). The hedonic perspective focuses on subjective well-being, characterized by positive emotions and high life satisfaction, while the eudaimonic perspective emphasizes psychological well-being, defined as the pursuit of meaning in life (Diener et al., 1998; Huta & Waterman, 2014). Broadly, happiness can be described as "the cognitive and emotional evaluation of one's life" (Diener et al., 2002). Literature highlights various factors influencing happiness, including academic,

psychological, and sociological aspects, with peer relationships among adolescents being particularly significant (Bukowski et al., 2011; Leung et al., 2021).

Peer relationships play both a protective and developmental role during adolescence (Brown & Larson, 2009). Being part of a healthy peer group is crucial for safeguarding psychological health (Scholte & Van Aken, 2020). Such relationships positively impact self-esteem, academic success, social popularity, and overall happiness (McMahon et al., 2020; Scholte & Van Aken, 2020; Wu et al., 2022). Historical and contemporary research underscores the strong correlation between happiness and peer relationships (Cheng & Furnham, 2002; Chen et al., 2021; Demir et al., 2013). For instance, Cheng and Furnham (2002) found that extraverted adolescents in the UK exhibited higher happiness levels due to enhanced self-confidence and strong peer relationships. Similarly, Chen et al. (2021) reported that quality peer relationships among Chinese adolescents were strongly associated with elevated happiness levels. Therefore, it is evident that peer relationships have a direct and positive impact on adolescent happiness.

Happiness and Leisure Satisfaction

Leisure, which is closely linked to the concept of freedom (Gürbüz, 2017), is defined as activities that individuals voluntarily engage in based on their interests and abilities, typically providing satisfaction and personal fulfillment (Stebbins, 2017). Leisure satisfaction refers to the positive emotions individuals experience as a result of fulfilling their personal needs through participation in leisure activities (Beard & Ragheb, 1980). Research strongly supports the positive impact of participation in leisure activities on happiness levels (Nawijn & Veenhoven, 2012; Wang & Wong, 2014). Compared to other behaviors and experiences, leisure activities have been found to play a significantly greater role in enhancing individuals' quality of life (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011; Iwasaki, 2007). Understanding how leisure satisfaction contributes to happiness is particularly important when examining the social and emotional development of adolescents, as their participation in leisure activities can have substantial effects on their well-being and peer relationships.

Research shows that studies conducted on adolescents indicate a positive relationship between happiness and participation in leisure (Burton & Phipps, 2007; Freire vd., 2016; Hakoköngäs & Puhakka, 2023). For instance, Yuh (2022) discovered that South Korean adolescents participating in leisure activities experienced higher levels of eudaimonic happiness. Similarly, Ito et al. (2019) explored cultural perspectives on happiness in Canadian, Chinese, and Japanese university students. Canadian students emphasized personal happiness derived from physical activities like exercising, while Chinese and Japanese students associated happiness with social activities. Burton and Phipps (2007) further revealed that in countries such as the UK, USA, Canada, Germany, and Sweden, children's happiness declined when parents prioritized material interests by increasing working hours, thereby reducing leisure allocation for their children. Findings from various studies demonstrate that participating in leisure activities strongly correlates with increased happiness levels among adolescents. Accordingly, leisure satisfaction can be expected to have a direct and positive effect on happiness (Iwasaki, 2007; Nawijn & Veenhoven, 2012; Yuh, 2022; Wang & Wong, 2014).

Peer Relationships and Leisure Satisfaction

Socialization is one of the most critical needs during adolescence. Adolescents who engage in social interactions tend to excel in building self-confidence and improving their communication skills (Smetana et al., 2015). Conversely, adolescents who struggle with socialization often face deficiencies in self-confidence, self-esteem, and communication skills (Tallman et al., 2014). Research indicates that socially isolated adolescents are more likely to exhibit aggressive behavior, encounter conflicts, and engage in risky activities such as

substance abuse and antisocial behaviors (Riquelme et al., 2018; Trucco, 2020). In this context, leisure activities play a crucial role not only in promoting socialization but also in enhancing the sense of belonging and reducing such negative outcomes (Akçakese & Demirel, 2024; Mannell & Kleiber, 2020; Santini et al., 2020).

Empirical findings indicate that leisure-based peer interactions are essential for fostering key aspects of adolescent development, particularly in the social, emotional, and psychological domains (Denault & Poulin, 2008; Zeijl et al., 2000). Cassidy (2005) highlighted that leisure activities serve as foundational tools for fostering social, family, school, and peer relationships. He also emphasized their connection to psychological factors, perceived control, and social support. Similarly, Poulsen et al. (2008) found that participation in physical leisure activities is crucial for addressing the psychosocial needs of adolescents with developmental coordination disorders, enhancing their self-esteem, and strengthening peer relationships. Considering these findings, it is evident that leisure satisfaction plays an essential role in fostering and regulating adolescents' peer relationships, contributing significantly to their overall development.

Happiness and Peer Relationships: The Moderating Role of Leisure Satisfaction

For adolescents, maintaining effective communication and socializing with peers through leisure activities is critically important. Such interactions not only foster happiness but also promote active social involvement in society (Roberts, 2005). For example, a study by Koçak and Gürbüz (2024) involving participants from five European countries, including Türkiye and Romania, found that social inclusion had a significant positive impact on life satisfaction. However, this effect diminished when leisure constraints were perceived as higher, suggesting that such constraints negatively moderate the relationship between social inclusion and life satisfaction. Similarly, Akçakese and Demirel (2025) reported that recreational awareness played a negative moderating role in the relationship between social exclusion and digital game addiction. As recreational awareness increased, the link between social exclusion and digital game addiction weakened. Furthermore, Argan et al. (2018) demonstrated that leisure satisfaction serves as a crucial moderator of happiness, particularly in its relationship with well-being and life satisfaction.

Building on this information, leisure is recognized as playing a significant moderating role across various constructs (Koçak & Gürbüz, 2024; Akçakese & Demirel, 2025). Moreover, numerous studies have demonstrated that leisure activities not only serve as an effective means to strengthen peer relationships but also have a direct positive impact on adolescents' happiness (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011; Denault & Poulin, 2008; Poulsen et al., 2008; Yuh, 2022). Despite a growing body of literature emphasizing the benefits of leisure satisfaction, empirical investigations specifically exploring its moderating role in the nexus between peer relationships and happiness remain notably limited. This gap is especially critical in light of contemporary challenges faced by adolescents, who increasingly experience social fragmentation and diminished quality of peer interactions due to pervasive digital technologies and shifting socio-cultural dynamics (Twenge et al., 2018; Odgers & Jensen, 2020). Peer relationships constitute a cornerstone of adolescent psychosocial development, providing essential emotional support, identity formation, and social skills acquisition, all of which are strongly linked to subjective well-being and life satisfaction (Brown & Larson, 2009; McMahon et al., 2020). However, these relational benefits may be compromised by external stressors and environmental shifts, thus necessitating an exploration of protective factors that may buffer negative outcomes.

Leisure satisfaction emerges as a critical factor due to its demonstrated capacity to enhance positive affect, facilitate social connectedness, and promote adaptive coping mechanisms throughout adolescence (Cassidy, 2005; Shin & You, 2013; Yuh, 2022). Accordingly, its moderating role represents a central construct for advancing a nuanced understanding of the influence peer relationships exert on happiness. This study endeavors to

elucidate the subtle complexities underlying adolescents' happiness by systematically examining the moderating effects of varying levels of leisure satisfaction (low, average, high) on this association. Grounded in this conceptual framework, the investigation seeks to address the following research questions.

H1: Peer relationships have a positive effect on happiness level.

H2: Leisure satisfaction has a positive effect on happiness.

H3: Leisure satisfaction has a moderating role in the effect of peer relations on happiness level.

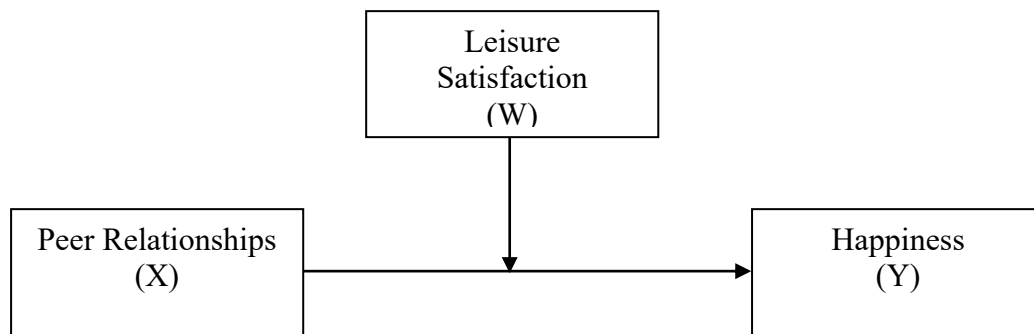
METHOD

Research Model

This research is quantitative research that is created from the perspective of numerical data in order to test the hypotheses (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2013). Within the scope of the study, the correlational survey method, which is one of the quantitative research methods, was preferred. Correlational surveys are studies that try to reveal the relationship between two or more variables (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2018). In this context, a research model was created within the scope of the study. Structural equation modeling was used to determine the cause-and-effect relationships of the model. Structural equation modeling is a multivariate statistical method that combines both regression and factor analysis (Denis, 2018; Hayes, 2017). The model includes x) peer relationships (independent variable) w) leisure satisfaction (moderator variable) y) happiness (dependent variable) variables. In line with this information, the theoretical structure of the research is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Research Model



Participants and Procedure

The study sample of this research consists of a total of 529 high school students ($M_{age} = 16.39 \pm 1.18$), including 110 females (20.8%) and 419 males (79.2%). The participants were selected through convenience sampling from various public high schools located in the provinces of Ankara and Isparta in Türkiye. Convenience sampling method refers to collecting data in the easiest and most accessible way until the sample size needed for the research is reached (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2013). Most participants were generally 2nd year high school students ($n=173$, 32.7%). While most of the sample participated in leisure activities regularly ($n=323$, 61.1%), the majority of participants reported engaging in physical activity ($n=505$,

95.5%). Furthermore, participants generally participated in leisure activities with friends (n=428, 80.9%).

Ethical approval was obtained from the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Kütahya Dumlupınar University, in accordance with the letter dated 25.10.2024 and numbered 336607 issued by the Institute of Graduate Education. In order to apply the measurement tools, the necessary written permissions were obtained from the management departments of the relevant schools. After obtaining research permission, the application form was shared with the participants, and they filled out a consent form. Participants were guaranteed detailed information about the study, its purpose, design, and confidentiality of their answers. All participants in the research participated on a voluntary basis.

Measures

Personal Information Form: The personal information form, which was prepared with the information obtained from the literature review, consists of independent variables such as gender, age, grade, participation in leisure activities, participation in physical activity and with whom they participate in leisure activities to collect information about the students.

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire – Short Form (OHQ-SF): The validity and reliability study of the Turkish version of this scale developed by Hills and Argyle (2002) to measure the happiness levels of individuals was conducted by Doğan and Akıncı-Çötök (2011). The scale consists of 8 items and one sub-dimension. The scale items are listed as (1) "strongly disagree" and (5) "strongly agree". Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient calculated on the data collected within the scope of this study was found to be .72.

Friendship Qualities Scale (FQS): The validity and reliability study of the Turkish version of this scale developed by Bukowski et al. (1994) to measure the peer relationship levels of adolescents was conducted by Erkan-Atik et al. (2014). The scale consists of 22 items and 5 sub-dimensions. The scale items are ranked as (1) "not true" and (5) "completely true". The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient calculated on the data collected within the scope of this study was .77 for the "companionship" subscale, .70 for the "conflict" subscale, .88 for the "help" subscale, .81 for the "security" subscale, and .84 for the "closeness" subscale. Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient obtained from the total score of the scale was determined as .88.

Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS): The validity and reliability study of the Turkish version of this scale, which was developed by Beard and Rahgeb (1980) to measure the leisure satisfaction levels of the participants, was conducted by Gökçe and Orhan (2011). The scale consists of 24 items and 6 sub-dimensions. The items of the scale are ranked as (1) "almost never true" and (5) "almost always true". Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient calculated on the data collected within the scope of this study was .81 for the "psychological" sub-dimension, .81 for the "educational" sub-dimension, .79 for the "sociological" sub-dimension, .84 for the "relaxation" sub-dimension, .75 for the "physical" sub-dimension, and .78 for the "aesthetic" sub-dimension. In addition, Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient obtained from the total score of the scale was found to be .95.

Data analysis

The data collected within the scope of the research were analyzed in SPSS 23 program. In the analyses, skewness and kurtosis values were first examined regarding the normality distribution of the data, and the range of $\pm 1,5$ was taken as reference (Tabachnick et al., 2013). After testing the basic assumptions of parametric tests, Pearson correlation analysis method was applied to determine the relationship between the participants' 'LSS', 'FQS' and 'OHQ-SF' (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2013). In addition, Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients of the measurement tools used in the study were calculated and found to vary between 0.72 and

0.95. These values are above acceptable levels (Hair et al., 2010). To test the moderating role of leisure satisfaction on the effect of peer relationships on happiness levels, the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Model 1) was utilized. A bootstrap procedure with 5000 resamples was employed, as this method does not require the assumption of normality for the sampling distribution of the moderation effect, thereby providing more robust and reliable estimates. A 95% confidence interval (CI) was set, and significance was determined as the interval not including zero. Furthermore, the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles of the distribution were used to operationalize low, average, and high levels of leisure satisfaction, respectively (Hayes, 2017).

Common Method Bias

Given the self-reported nature of the data, Harman's single-factor test was applied to evaluate potential common method bias. Using SPSS factor analysis, the first eigenvalue from the data matrix was computed. The results indicated that the first eigenvalue accounted for 25.55% of the total variance, which is well below the critical threshold of 50%. Thus, the findings suggest that common method bias is unlikely to have significantly influenced the results (Kock, 2020).

FINDINGS

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Scale Scores (N=529)

Scale	Item	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
LSS	24	529	1	5	3,63	0,84	-0,81	-0,31	0,95
FQS	22	529	1	5	3,59	0,67	-0,40	-0,50	0,88
OHQ-SF	7	529	1	5	3,02	0,78	0,86	0,10	0,72

Note: Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS), Friendship Qualities Scale (FQS), Oxford Happiness Questionnaire – Short Form (OHQ-SF).

When the data in Table 1 were analyzed, it was determined that the mean scores of the scales showed a normal distribution within the range of $\pm 1,5$ (Tabachnick et al., 2013). On the other hand, the mean score obtained from "LSS" (mean =3.63), the mean score obtained from the "FQS" (mean =3.59), and finally, the mean of the total scores obtained from the "OHQ-SF" (mean =3.02) were determined.

Table 2

Correlation Analysis Results

Scale	LSS	FQS	OHQ-SF
LSS	1		
FQS	0,166**	1	
OHQ-SF	0,313**	0,290**	1

Note: * = $p < 0,05$; ** = $p < 0,01$; Note***: Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS), Friendship Qualities Scale (FQS), Oxford Happiness Questionnaire – Short Form (OHQ-SF).

The correlation analysis indicates statistically significant positive relationships among the scales ($p < 0.01$). Specifically, leisure satisfaction (LSS) is positively correlated with friendship qualities (FQS) ($r = 0.166$) and happiness (OHQ-SF) ($r = 0.313$). Additionally, friendship qualities (FQS) show a significant positive correlation with happiness (OHQ-SF) ($r = 0.290$). These results suggest interconnections among leisure satisfaction, peer relationships, and happiness levels.

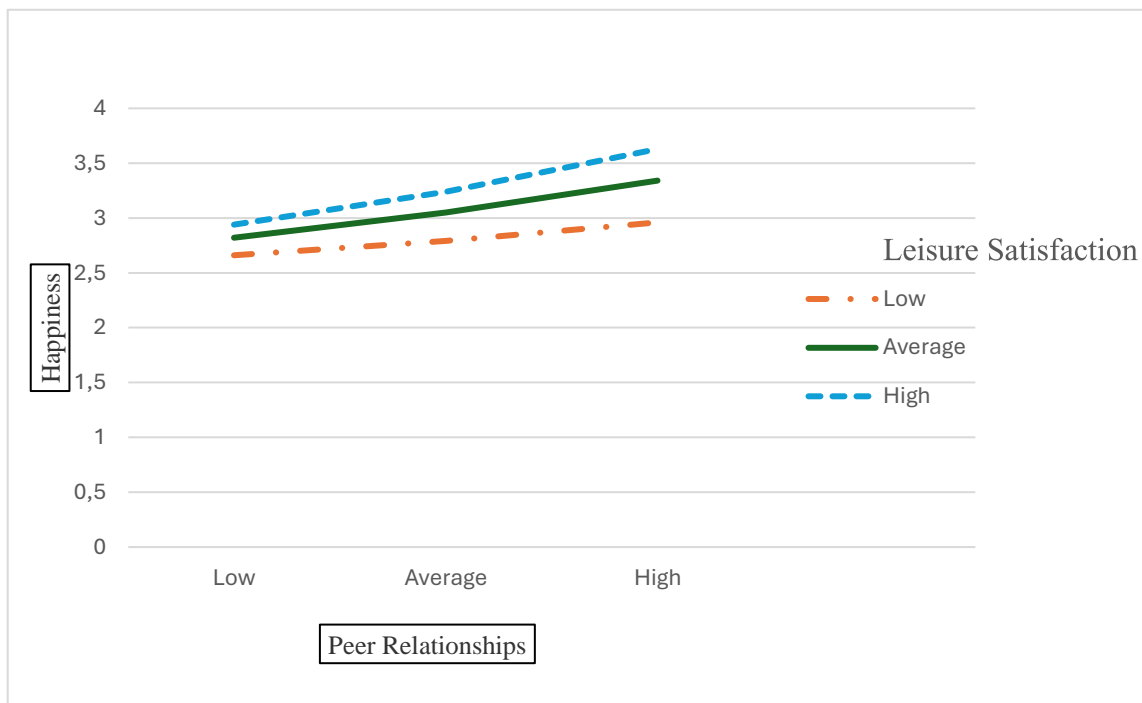
Table 3*Regression Analysis Results for the Moderating Effect*

Variable	β	SE	t	C.I.	p
Constant	3.010	.031	94.96	[2.948, 3.072]	0.00
FQS (X)	.3150	.048	6.513	[-.2200, .4101]	0.00
LSS (W)	.2613	.037	6.900	[-.1869, .3357]	0.00
X.W	.1442	.048	2.956	[-.0484, .2400]	0.02

R=.41	R ² =.17
F(3, 525)= 35.88	p=0,00

Note: Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS), Friendship Qualities Scale (FQS)

The regression analysis (Table 3) indicates that the predictor variables account for approximately 17% of the variance in happiness levels ($R^2 = .17$). Peer relationships (FQS) have a significant positive effect on happiness ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.001$, $t = 6.51$, 95% CI [0.22, 0.41]), as does leisure satisfaction (LSS) ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.001$, $t = 6.90$, 95% CI [0.19, 0.34]). Moreover, the interaction term (X.W) confirms the significant moderating effect of leisure satisfaction on the relationship between peer relationships and happiness ($\beta = 0.14$, $p = 0.002$, $t = 2.95$, 95% CI [0.05, 0.24]).

Figure 2*Graphical Representation of the Moderating Effect of Leisure Satisfaction*

As a result of the slope analysis, the effects of the moderating variable are shown graphically in Figure 2. When the conditional effects of the moderating variable were examined, it was observed that leisure satisfaction was low ($\beta = 0.19$, $p < 0.01$, $t = 3.56$, [CI = 0.08, 0.31]), average ($\beta = 0.32$, $p < 0.01$, $t = 6.56$, [CI = 0.22, 0.41]) and high ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.01$, $t = 5.99$, [CI = 0.32, 0.63]), the effect of peer relationships on happiness level increases even more. Looking at the graph, it is observed that this relationship is even stronger when leisure satisfaction is high. In other words, when leisure satisfaction is high, the effect of peer

relationships on happiness level is higher and this means that the relationship between peer relationships and happiness is moderated by leisure satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine the moderating role of leisure satisfaction in the relationship between peer relationships and happiness levels. The findings supported all the proposed hypotheses. According to the findings of the research, peer relationships had a positive effect on the level of happiness (H1). When the literature is examined, previous studies support my research hypothesis (Cheng & Furnham, 2002; Chen & Li, 2020). Previous research shows that, in addition to the time spent with parents, satisfying personal relationships established with teachers and friends in the school environment during leisure time constitute one of the strongest factors of happiness (Holder & Coleman, 2009; Mínguez, 2020). In terms of peer relationships, adolescents who make quality friendships and have a higher number of friends are less likely to have socialization and adaptation problems (Waldrip et al., 2008). In this context, adolescent individuals' bonding with people in their youth development is seen as an important factor that positively affects their well-being (Shek & Siu, 2019). Chen et al. (2021) found that high-quality peer relationships tend to be associated with high levels of subjective well-being over time. It was also determined that socially successful adolescents had higher positive affect levels than those who were not. In another study, Moore et al. (2018) found that high peer relationships at school among adolescents are directly related to high subjective well-being and mental health. Considering the studies in literature, consistent with our research, adolescence is a critical period for the health and well-being of young people (Patton et al., 2016).

Another finding of the study revealed that leisure satisfaction has a positive effect on happiness. (H2). When previous studies investigating the effect of leisure satisfaction on happiness level are examined, we show that the positive relationship between these two concepts supports our research findings (Ito et al., 2017; Liu, 2014; Liu & Yu, 2015). Through participation in leisure activities, many positive emotions are gained, such as increasing knowledge, skills and well-being, as well as establishing social relationships (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011). From this perspective, it appears that achieving a high level of leisure satisfaction is closely related to happiness (Liu & Yu, 2015). In this context, Ito et al. (2017) conducted on students from different cultures, it was determined that leisure satisfaction significantly and positively affected subjective well-being. In addition, it has been reported in the research that cultural differences play an important role in these effects. In general, when we look at literature from different perspectives, in parallel with our research findings, it reveals that leisure satisfaction positively affects happiness in all its aspects and is a very important tool in the development of adolescent individuals.

According to the findings showing the moderating effect we obtained from the research findings, it was revealed that the effect of peer relationships on the level of happiness differs depending on the individual's perception of leisure satisfaction at low, average and high levels. Namely, The higher the leisure satisfaction, the higher the effect of peer relationships on the level of happiness (H3). Previous studies have shown that, in addition to the fact that leisure contributes significantly to the healthy conduct of peer relationships (Cassidy, 2005; Denault & Poulin, 2008; Zeijl et al., 2000), it also contributes to many psychological factors such as happiness has shown that it is beneficial (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2011; Burton and Phipps, 2007; Yuh, 2022; Wang & Wong, 2014; Yalçın et al., 2025). In addition, with studies reporting that leisure satisfaction is an important predictor of happiness (Argan et al., 2018; Liu & Yu, 2015; Ito et al., 2017), it is important to examine concepts such as psychological well-being, life satisfaction, social intelligence, self-esteem and stress factors. Its existence can be seen in the concentrated studies (Doğan & Gürbüz, 2024; Freire & Ferreira, 2020; Sarol et al., 2024; Shin

& You, 2013). Unlike the existing literature, the main point to note in our research findings is that previous studies examining the relationship of peer relationships on happiness (Cheng & Furnham, 2002; Mínguez, 2020; Shek & Siu, 2019) and leisure satisfaction on happiness (Argan et al., 2018; Ito et al., 2017; Liu, 2014; Liu and Yu, 2015) not only supports our idea that leisure satisfaction is an overlooked and effective predictor of peer relationships and happiness, but also has proven to be correct.

Conclusion

The findings highlight the importance of leisure satisfaction as a crucial factor in amplifying the positive impact of peer relationships on happiness. Specifically, the study revealed that higher levels of leisure satisfaction strengthen this relationship, underscoring its significance for adolescent socialization and happiness. These results suggest that interventions aimed at enhancing leisure satisfaction could significantly contribute to improving both peer relationships and happiness levels in adolescents, especially given the challenges posed by modern technological influences on communication and mental health.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be considered. It is one of the first to examine the moderating role of leisure satisfaction in the relationship between peer relationships and happiness. This conceptual novelty adds value to the research; however, it also limits the generalizability of the findings. Additional studies are needed to validate and extend these results. Future research could explore related moderators such as leisure involvement, leisure constraints, and leisure attitudes. Another limitation concerns the sample. Participants were adolescents from a relatively homogeneous cultural background in Türkiye. To improve generalizability, future studies should be conducted in different cultural contexts and include more diverse populations. The age range of participants also presents a limitation. Since the study focused solely on adolescents, future research should examine whether similar patterns hold true for other age groups, such as adults or older individuals. This would provide a broader understanding of leisure satisfaction across the lifespan. Moreover, the proportion of male participants in the study was notably higher (79.2%). This gender imbalance may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader adolescent population. Future research should aim to include more gender-balanced samples to better explore how the relationships among the variables may differ based on gender. Finally, the use of only quantitative methods may have limited the depth of the findings. Employing mixed-method designs that integrate qualitative approaches could offer richer insights into how leisure satisfaction influences peer relationships and happiness.

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