

ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN PERSONALITY AND GENDER WITH LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES IN ADOLESCENTS

ALBA GUILLEM

TUTOR: GENERÓS ORTET

ABSTRACT

There are many studies about leisure time in adolescents. However, there are few articles that consider personality or gender in relation to the leisure time in teenagers, and even less that examine both variables. The aim of this study was to explore the relationship between leisure time activities, personality and gender. The sample was composed of 395 high school students (203 boys and 192 girls) aged between 12 and 17 years (mean = 14.22). The participants answered the Cuestionario de Actividades de Ocio y Tiempo Libre (CAO) and the Junior versión of the Spanish NEO-PI-R Short form (JS NEO-S). We found that boys practiced more sports than girls. In addition, they spent more time playing video games. Girls spent more hours on social networks, reading and resting. Neuroticism was associated with more time resting and doing less exercise, extraversion had a positive relationship with playing sports, openness was associated with reading, and conscientiousness had a positive relationship to the use of the internet with educational purposes. It should be noted that desirable activities such as talking with the family were associated with a profile of being conscientious, extraverted, agreeable and open to experience. Conversely, risky activities such as gambling were more likely in antagonistic (more antisocial) and closed to experience adolescents. According to our findings, gender and personality are relevant variables for understanding leisure time activities

RESUMEN

Hay muchos estudios sobre el tiempo libre en adolescentes. Sin embargo, hay pocos artículos que consideren la personalidad o el género en relación con el tiempo de ocio en los adolescentes, y mucho menos que examinen ambas variables. El objetivo de este estudio fue explorar la relación entre las actividades de tiempo libre, la personalidad y el género. La muestra estuvo compuesta por 395 estudiantes de secundaria (203 niños y 192 niñas) con edades entre 12 y 17 años (media = 14.22). Los participantes respondieron al Cuestionario de Actividades de Ocio y Tiempo Libre (CAO) y a la versión Junior de la forma abreviada NEO-PI-R en español (JS NEO-S). Encontramos que los niños practicaban más deportes que las niñas. Además, pasaron más tiempo jugando videojuegos. Las chicas pasaban más horas en las redes sociales, leyendo y descansando. El neuroticismo se asoció con más tiempo para descansar y hacer menos ejercicio, la extraversión tuvo una relación positiva con la práctica de deportes, la apertura se asoció con la lectura y la conciencia tuvo una relación positiva con el uso de Internet con fines educativos. Cabe señalar que las actividades deseables, como hablar con la familia, se asociaron con el perfil de ser responsable, extravertido, agradable y abierto a la experiencia. Por contra, las actividades de riesgo, como las apuestas, eran más probables en adolescentes antagonistas (más antisociales) y cerradas a la experiencia. De acuerdo con nuestros hallazgos, el género y la personalidad son variables relevantes para comprender las actividades de tiempo libre.

INTRODUCTION

ALBA GUILLEM TUTOR: GENERÓS ORTET

Leisure time promotes the personal development of adolescents (Rodríguez & Migueláñez, 2010). The purpose of conducting studies related to leisure time in adolescents is to promote the opportunities and benefits of these activities and avoid risky behaviors that could have negative effects (Crespo, Pernas, & Bóo, 2016). Different authors have found that variables such as age, gender or education can influence leisure time choices (Barnett, 2006; Kuo & Tang, 2013). It seems that the boys practice more sport than girls (Codina, Pestana, Castillo, & Balaguer, 2016). It has been proposed that personality, among other psychological variables, plays a relevant role in the choice of leisure time activities (Etkin et al., 2018; Barnett, 2013).

The aim of this research was to examine the associations between personality and gender with leisure time activities.

The hypotheses were:

- Boys would spend more time playing sports.
- Agreeableness would correlate with religious activities.
- Conscientiousness would be associated with the use of the internet for educational purposes.
- Extraversion would be mainly related to sports.
- Openness would be associated with reading.
- Neuroticism would show no correlation with leisure time activities.

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations of the Leisure Time Activities and Mean Comparisons by Gender

| | MALES M (SD) | FEMALES M (SD) | t | d |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------|------|
| VIDEO GAMES | 2.17 (1.55) | .49 (.90) | 12.92*** | 1.33 |
| GAMBLING | .36 (.90) | .12 (.53) | 3.22** | .32 |
| SPORTS | 3.35 (1.26) | 2.81 (1.43) | 3.96*** | .40 |
| SOCIAL MEDIA | 3.48 (1.22) | 3.96 (1.14) | -4*** | .40 |
| READING | 1.72 (1.31) | 2.39 (1.28) | -5.12*** | .52 |
| RESTING | 1.93 (1.45) | 2.39 (1.37) | -3.24** | .16 |
| INTERNET FOR CLASS | 2.17 (1.27) | 2.41 (1.15) | -1.95 | .20 |
| INTERNET FOR LEISURE | 2.50 (1.46) | 2.39 (1.48) | .76 | .07 |
| VOLUNTEERING | .69 (1.10) | .61 (1.05) | .76 | .07 |
| RELIGION | .30 (.76) | .28 (.70) | .33 | .03 |
| WATCHING TV | 3.36 (1.20) | 3.16 (2.50) | 1.68 | .10 |
| TALKING TO THE FAMILY | 2.60 (1.29) | 2.81 (1.31) | -1.63 | .16 |

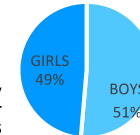
Note. Dark blue = males higher mean score; bright blue = females higher mean score. Cohen's *d* values of .20, .50, and .80 correspond to small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively (Cohen, 1992). **p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001

METHOD

Participants: 395 high school students (203 boys and 192 girls) aged between 12 and 17 years (mean = 14.22).

Measures: Cuestionario de Actividades de Ocio y Tiempo Libre (CAO; submitted) and the Junior version of the Spanish NEO-PI-R Short form (JS NEO-S; Ortet et al., 2010).

Procedure: All students completed the questionnaires voluntarily. Consent forms were handed out to parents or legal guardians.



RESULTS

Table 1. Time Spent in Leisure Time Activities

| ACTIVITIES | FREQUENCY |
|--|-----------------------|
| -Social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram...) | 1-3 hours per day |
| -Talking to family (about the day and relevant issues) -Watching TV -Resting | Around 1 hour per day |
| -Sports -Internet for class -Internet for leisure -Reading | Sometimes per week |
| -Video games | Sometimes per month |
| -Gambling -Volunteering -Religion | Never or almost never |

Table 3. Correlations between Personality and Leisure Time Activities.

| ACTIVITIES | PERSONALITY | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | N | E | O | A | C |
| Leisure time activities | | | | | |
| Video games | -.07 | -.09 | -.13 | -.18 | -.17 |
| Social media | .08 | .18 | -.03 | -.14 | -.12 |
| Internet for class | .10 | .10 | .09 | .15 | .18 |
| Internet for leisure | .08 | -.04 | .06 | -.12 | -.18 |
| Gambling | -.06 | .04 | -.19 | -.22 | -.14 |
| Sports | -.18 | .24 | -.07 | .00 | .16 |
| Volunteering | .02 | .09 | .01 | .06 | .01 |
| Religion | -.03 | .03 | .04 | .05 | .08 |
| Watching TV | -.01 | .17 | .01 | -.10 | .00 |
| Reading | .10 | .02 | .44 | .26 | .15 |
| Talking to the family | -.14 | .22 | .22 | .22 | .27 |
| Resting | .18 | -.03 | .01 | -.05 | -.11 |

Note. In bold *p* < .001. N = neuroticism, E = extraversion, O = openness, A = agreeableness, C = conscientiousness

DISCUSSION

We explored the relationships between gender, personality and leisure time activities. According to our predictions, we found that boys practiced more sports than girls. In addition, they spent more time playing video games. Girls spent more hours in social networks, reading and resting (Codina et al., 2016). Our results on the association between personality and leisure time activities are, in part, in accordance to previous studies in adults (Kuo, et al., 2014) and in adolescents (Etkin et al., 2018). Neuroticism, contrary to our prediction, was associated with more time resting and doing less exercise. However, as we hypothesized, extraversion had a positive relationship with playing sports, openness was associated with reading, and conscientiousness had a positive relationship to the use of the internet with educational purposes. Our results did not support the prediction that agreeableness would be related to religious activities. Finally, it should be noted that desirable activities such as talking with the family were associated with a profile of being conscientious, extraverted, agreeable and open to experience. Conversely, risky activities such as gambling were more likely in antagonistic (more antisocial) and closed to experience adolescents. According to our findings, gender and personality are relevant variables for understanding leisure time activities.

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