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# The Role of IT in Spending Leisure Time of Students in Physical Education Academies (Case study: Kurdistan Province)

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the role of IT in spending leisure time of high school students of physical education academes in Kurdistan province. Its method was a descriptive – correlation one. The data were collected through a research made questionnaire, statistical population included 255 boy and girl students and all of them were selected as the sample size. Descriptive statistical (e.g. frequency, percentage, mean, SD, tables, graphs) and inferential statistics (e.g. correlation coefficient and simultaneous multi-variable linear regression) were used to analysis the data. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between role of IT and spending leisure time. There was a significant relationship between the time duration of using IT subscale and spending leisure time. There was a significant relationship between the level of IT knowledge subscale and spending leisure time. There was a significant relationship between the cost of using technology subscale and spending leisure time. There was a significant relationship between the use of technology and spending leisure time. IT was a good predictor for spending leisure time.

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### Introduction

Leisure time is one of the most important parts of human life which has been able to find its importance and place in today's modern society. The need for spending leisure time is an inevitable matter for all the people of society, especially the youth ones. Leisure time and the way of spending it is one of the current and new concepts which found its real meaning after the industrialization of the societies, the growth of capitalism and the expansion of cities. The manpower replacement by technology and its development have created an opportunity for people to use their time in a desired way. In the modern era, the ways of spending leisure time are various due to the cultural, social and economic developments. Meanwhile, in the last fifty years extensive developments in IT field have caused major changes in various areas of human life. In recent years, information technologies, which are commonly referred as new technologies, in addition to having the greatest impact on human life, are rapidly changing; so that data and information are transferred quickly in the shortest possible time to all over the world thus is available for everyone.

Larousse dictionary has defined leisure times as, entertainments, recreations and activities that when people finish their ordinary and routine work do them with enthusiasm and willingness. leisure times is not the same as unemployment, since in spare time an individual does not have anything to do but in leisure time can do different activities; the difference between leisure time activities and other ordinary activities is in their type and purpose (Lumeden, 2001). The purpose of doing leisure times is to get relaxation and pleasure (Abayi, 2012). Hany Gvntrvstr believes that leisure time is a multidimensional issue that many factors are involved in it. He outlined these

factors as: the relationship between work and leisure time, the division of leisure time according to social position, age, the way of using leisure time and finally the location, economic and social aspects of leisure time on policymaking (Lippelt, 1995). The age of individuals also has impact on their sense of leisure time. Each person has different expectations and desires of leisure time for each of them leisure time has a certain meaning (Torkildsen, 2003).

The progress and industrialization of societies has provided more leisure time (Larson, 2003) thus working hours has been significantly reduced (Roth, 2009). So that today we live in an era which is called information age this naming was due to the rapid developments in science and technology area in the second half of the twentieth century which lead to the formation of new community called information society (Morrow et al., 2004). Information technology as a rich source for research, access to news, see the works of art, scientific capacity through the acquisition of digital libraries, Research around the world informed of events so expensive and less time used (Motavaze, 2011). Computer, CD, databases, magazines- books, internet and intranet are the important tools of information technology that their use is growing in contemporary societies (Jokar et al., 2009)

The effective utilization of internet network facilities in leisure time developed at the late 90's leisure among Iranian youth immediately found a growing popularity among them (Yazdanfar, 2011). The nature of internet as a new medium differs from the previous media to bring the change among young people all over the largest number of Internet users are occurring (Montazerghaem et al., 2009). Now that the leisure time is the best life investment of students and the daily use of

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information technology is increasing in society and more than ever before gains the interest of young generation and also due to the changes which had occurred in this area this area question occurred to the researcher that where is the place of information technology in spending leisure time? How much time of students' leisure time is filled with computer and internet? Is there any relationship between the use of computer and Internet in spending leisure time? Where is the place of this great global change in the leisure time? The Great importance of leisure time, fast development of Internet and computer in society and the role of information technology in the future are among the factors which will lead to profound changes in our lives and their qualitative and quantitative evolution are in need of such investigations which their absence are evident in area of students. It is hoped to discover and manage and solve the failures and problems which young people are facing through conducting the present study.

#### Methodology

The method of this study was a descriptive–correlation one. The population included all high schoolgirl and boy students of physical education academies in Kurdistan province who had enrolled for the 2013-2012 school years (n=225). 1-demographic questionnaire including age, sex, the occupation of parents, the education of parents, the income amount and residence status of individuals. 2-IT questioner: the assessment was done through the researcher made IT questionnaire which included 23 closed questions and with five qualitative scales (low, very low, medium, high, and very high) in Likert scale, while preparing the questionnaire the theses of (Mohammadi 2007, Gholizadeh 2002, Yazdanfar 2011) were used.

#### Findings

Describing the demographic characteristics of respondents: *the place of education*: the 72% of respondents were studying in Sanandaj (n=185), 15% in Qorveh (n=39), 8% in Marivan (n=20) and 4% Bijar (n=11). The highest and lowest respondents were from Sanandaj (72%) and Bijar (4%). *Sex of respondents*: based on the results, about 51% of the respondents were boy and 49% were girl. The proportion was almost the same for both sexes. *Residence of respondents*: based on the results 80% of respondents (n=204) had a private residence and 20% (n= 51) lived in a rented one. *Age groups of respondents*: based on the results (7%) of respondents had 15 years, (39%) 16 years, about (49%) had 18-17 and (1.5%) had 19-20 years old. The Majority of participants with 49% aged between 17- 18 years (n=151) and the lowest ones with 1.5% aged 19-20 years (n=4). *Previous semester GPA of respondents*: According to the descriptive findings from among the 255 respondents less than 1% had GPA fewer than 12 (n=19), about 17% had GPA 12.1 – 14 (n=43), about 45% had GPA 14.1–16 (n=115), about 21% had GPA 16.1 –18 (n=54) and less than 1% had GPA 18.1 –20 (n=24). *The occupation of respondents' fathers*: based on the findings 23% of respondents' fathers were clerk, 49% were tradesman, 4% were unemployed, 9% retired, about 8% dead and 7 % were engaged in other jobs. *The occupation of respondents' mothers*: based on the findings 7% of respondents' mothers were clerk (n=19), 2% were business women (n=5), 87% were housewife (n=223), 0.4% retired, 1.6% dead and 1% were engaged in other jobs. The highest and lowest frequencies in the occupation of mothers were housewife and retired ones respectively. *The education level of respondents' mothers and fathers*: based on the results (8% and 18%) of respondents' fathers and mothers were illiterate, (38% and 47%) under graduate diploma, (34% and 27%) Diploma, (14% and 7

%) BA and (5% and 1%) MA. The majority and minority of parents had under diploma and PhD respectively. *Income of the respondents' families*: based on the findings 38% of respondents' families earned under 200 dollars in a month, 36% earned between 200-1000 dollars, about 14% earned 1000-1500 dollars, 5% earned between 1500-2000 dollars, and about 5% had an income of more than 2000 dollars. *Respondents' interested filed*: based on the findings: 22% of respondents were interested in volleyball, 27% interested in swimming, 18% interested in football, 5% track & field, 2% handball, 4% wrestling, 6% basketball, 2% tennis, 5%, badminton, 5% hiking, 2% chess, and less than 1% were interested in other sporting activities.

The results showed that there is a significant relationship at significant level of ( $\alpha = 0.01$ ) between spending leisure time of physical education academies' students in Kurdistan province and the subscales of IT usage duration, knowledge, cost and type (Table 1).

The results showed that there is a significant relationship at significant level of ( $\alpha = 0.01$ ) between spending leisure time of physical education academies' students in Kurdistan province and the subscales of IT usage duration, knowledge, cost and type ( $F_{(4,250)} = 47.665$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0/433$ ).

Table (2) shows that duration, type of usage, level of IT knowledge and cost affect the spending of leisure time thus can remain in the regression equation.

*Research model structure*: in addition to the conducted analyses for research hypotheses testing structural equation modeling was used.

All the studied relationships in this study are confirmed, since the T path coefficient in all variables was more than 1.96, thus all hypotheses are verified. According to Table (3), the obtained values of all indices are acceptable in their area which shows the good fitness of model.

#### Discussion and conclusion

Research findings indicated that there was a significant correlation between the role of IT and spending leisure time ( $r = 0.639$ ). These findings are consistent with the results Ramazani (2011), Yazdanfar (2011), Mohammadi (2008), Rahmani (2006), Twain (2002), Tokarasky (2005), Gircup (2007), Henry (2010) Maggi & Voget (2012). It was observed that IT (computer and Internet), has found a special place in the lives of families and social life and consequently has evolved the leisure time. The dramatic development of technology in homes, schools and public places has made many families to use these facilities or try to provide one. These results suggested that information technology is a good predictor for leisure time according to the research hypothesis in which information technology variable (duration of use, access, level of knowledge, types of usage, cost) has effect on the dependent variable of leisure time, it can be said that based on the all (subscales) the mentioned hypotheses is confirmed.

Results indicated that the most determining variables in explaining leisure time are duration of use and access, so that a direct relationship exists between the duration of use and access to leisure time. The level of access to IT as well as the duration in which person is able to use information technology cause the use of leisure time. The results of this study are coordinated with the results obtained by Sjoloy and Twain (2002) found that in Norway, Most teenagers spend their time on computer games and watching TV and total on non-physical activities. These results are consistent with the studies of Henry et al. (2010), Asfanya (2001) and Khalifa (1996) in Kuwait and Burke (1994).

**Table 1. The relationship between IT and leisure time**

significance level(P)	correlation coefficient(r)	Spending leisure time M ± SD	Statistical indices M ± SD	Research Variables
0.001	0.639	2.85±0.48	2.66±0.89	Information Technology
0.001	0.616		2.89±0.93	Duration
0.001	0.575		2.70±0.97	Level of Knowledge
0.001	0.427		2.73±1.18	Cost
0.001	0.612		2.35±0.95	Use

**Table 2. Regression coefficients associated with IT prediction**

Significance level p	Rate t	Standardized Coefficients		Non-Standardized Coefficients		Dimensions
		Beta	SE	B		
0.000 *	24.573	-----	0.077	1.896		Constant
0.000 *	3.723	0.332	0.047	0.173		Duration
0.003 *	3.009	0.267	0.045	0.136		Use
0.019 *	2.352	0.232	0.049	0.116		Level of Knowledge
0.043 *	-2.037	-0.161	0.033	-0.066		Cost

**Table 3. Goodness of fit indices for model**

Result	Value for our model	Acceptable value for a good fitness model	Range	Type of index	Index
Acceptable fitness model	Chi-square = 42.21 P = 0.63	P significance level greater than 0.05	---	----	Chi-Square
Amount of independence model = 88.1729 acceptable	152.21	Lower than the independence model.	No	Information Criterion	AIC
Amount of independence model = 75.1770 acceptable	238.50	Lower than the independence model.	No	Information Criterion	CAIC
Accepted	Standardized RMR = 0.032	Less than 0.05	0 and 1	Information Criterion	Standardized RMR
Accepted	0.91	Greater than 0.9	Between 0 and 1	Comparative	GFI
Accepted	0.92	Greater than 0.9	Between 0 and 1	Comparative	TLI or NNFI
Accepted	0.94	Greater than 0.9	Between 0 and 1	Comparative	CFI
sample size 255 and larger acceptable	97.34	For different models	No	Sufficient sample size	critical N

The results of the study are also quite consistent with the results of Iranian studies, Yazdanfar (2011) stated that there was a relationship between the level of use, facilities; way of accessing the Internet and leisure time; Ramazani & Bakhtiari (2011) noted that the average duration of the use of technology and Pahlavan (2011) found that there was a significant relationship between the technology growth, access to IT and participation in leisure; Mohammadi (2008) found that there is a significant relationship between the use of ICT and spending leisure time.

As the results show, after the period of time and access variables, level of IT knowledge has great effect on the independent variable. The researcher concluded that the increasing trend of internet usage has been confirmed and it shows that the use of technology in our country as a developing country is in line with the industrialized countries and has taken a forward movement. Computer technology not only has opened the gates to information highways in cyberspace, but also has provided a space and market for entertainment which is growing rapidly and consistently. Internet is one of the modern forms of entertainment sphere which the evolution of new media has brought it. 3- Leisure time questionnaire: in order to assess this

variable a researcher made questionnaire was used which consisted of 23 closed answered questions rated in the form of a five-degree scale (Likert scale). No standard questionnaire was found for this study thus the questionnaires of experts researchers (Tondnevis 1993, Rahmani 2006, Mohammadi 2008, pahlavan 2011, Yazdanfar 2011) were used in collecting and preparing the questionnaire. Discussion this study found the study in passing the time by experts Ghraght questionnaire (Tandis 1993, Rahmani 2006, Mohammadi 2008, Champion 2011, Yazdanfar 2011) questionnaire was used to collect and prepare. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis tests were used to indicate the construct validity (validity) and Cronbach's alpha. The reliability of leisure time and IT questionnaires were  $\alpha=0.802$  and  $\alpha=0.763$ , respectively which indicates good stability and internal consistency of the questionnaire. From among the four independent variables in the regression model, the level of IT knowledge with the beta coefficient of 0.232 explained the changes of dependent variable (leisure time) which its regression coefficient was 0.16. These are consistent with the results of following researchers, Maki and Voget (2012) asserted that the impact of Internet has been increased in the leisure time, Tsai (2006) emphasized on the entertaining

aspect of Internet usage in leisure time, Lee and Gircup (2007) boys are more acquainted with computer and more play computer games. These results are inconsistent with the findings of (Kargar Nejad, 2004).

We should undoubtedly accept that the increase in the use of internet enhances the awareness and exchange of information. The growing awareness of people especially young ones of these tools and their functions are among the main issues of leisure time. Prolonged periods of adolescence and youth, the prevalence of new social behavior methods to fill the life space, individualization and fading of popular social rifts, the importance of lifestyle for youth people and disintegration of traditional network are the main areas which have provided new circumstance for young people. What is notable about these influenced trends by the growth of new media is that the diversity of leisure time should be maintained for youth. These technological developments in addition to affecting their taste, preferences and communication needs, influence their leisure time as well. The rapid changes of industry, has brought many consequences, including the quality of spending leisure time. The mechanization of industries, creating facilities and so on have changed the lifestyle of people and consequently their leisure time. Therefore, the increasing proliferation of electronic devices, such as radio and television, and in modern era computer and Internet play a great role in spending leisure time. Due to the need which has arisen in the field of social life, students' knowledge about information technology, its functions, as well as attitudes, tendencies and biases in this case are among the major issues in leisure time. In future, young people will try to enhance their knowledge and ability level through new technologies so that they will have something to say in competitive society. At the end, educational authorities of institutions are recommended to promote the ways and methods of spending time through the media, in addition to equipping all schools and universities with IT systems for the easy access of students. Also, researches can conduct this study across the country and provide a definite pattern for it.

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