

Leisure Time Spending Pattern Among College Students in Aizawl

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the patterns of spending leisure time among college students. All undergraduate student enrolled in eight government colleges within Aizawl that are administered by the Department of Higher and Technical Education make up the study's universe. A sample size of 372 college students was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan Table and the sample consists of 190 males and 182 females. Data was collected using a self-developed interview schedule. The acquired data was analyzed using SPSS. The results show that the majority of college students (39.2%) have 3-4 hours of leisure time per day, followed by those having more than 4 hours (23.1%). The students' most preferred leisure activity is internet related activities (50.5%), followed by hanging out with friends (19.1%), personal hobbies (7.5%), spending time with family (7.3%), doing sports or fitness activities (5.9%), reading (4.6%) and sleeping (4.3%). Another findings of this study revealed that majority of the students preferred to spend their leisure time at home (69.4%), followed by Hang out spots/Parks (14.2%), friend's house (12.1%), shopping mall/market/restaurants (1.9%) and gym/indoor/outdoor recreation centers (1.9%). With regards to most preferred companion to spend their leisure time, majority of the students reported preferring to spend their leisure time alone (57.3%), followed by friends (23.7%). The least preferred companion is family (8.3). It is apparent from the data that college students have ample time for leisure which can be used for participating in leisure pursuits and other activities aimed at personal development. However, if not managed properly, this extra free time might lead to unproductive behaviors.

Keywords: Leisure time, Leisure activity, College students

Introduction

Leisure is an integral part of human life. Leisure time is the free time available to people after fulfilling their obligatory tasks required for existence such as jobs, studies and household responsibilities. It is the free time when people are free from work or other obligations and can relax and do things that they enjoy. There is no particular activity which may be regarded as leisure activity as some activities may be leisure activities for some while it may not be so for others. Almost every activity can be perceived as either leisure or work, depending on one's sense of freedom. The sense of freedom to do or not do something is what defines leisure. (Iso-Ahola & Baumeister, 2023).

Leisure can be spent in a variety of ways, based on personal preferences, lifestyle, and societal or cultural influences. Some common ways leisure time can be utilized are personal development & learning such as reading books; physical activities such as doing sports or going to the gym; social &

recreational activities such as spending time with family and friends, attending social events and travelling; personal hobbies such as engaging in music, painting, writing, or photography, cooking, gardening or Do-it-yourself projects; entertainment & relaxation such as watching movies, playing online games; and community engagement such as charity works.

The way a person spends their leisure time can have a substantial impact on various aspects of life, such as physical health, emotional well-being, social interactions, and personal development. A very important and significant factor in maintaining physical and mental health is how people spend their leisure time daily (Toyoshima et al., 2016).

The present study aims to investigate the patterns of spending leisure time among college students outside of college hours and commuting time. Understanding how college students spend their free time is important for a number of reasons. A certain amount of leisure time is essential. Leisure activities help students reduce stress, anxiety, and burnout. In their study, Hodgson & Lloyd (2002) demonstrated the importance of leisure activities in reducing mental illness and substance abuse in individuals. However, not all leisure activities they engage in are beneficial for them. Therefore, understanding the patterns of leisure time spending among this demographic is important as it assists in determining if students indulge in beneficial relaxation activities or hazardous habits such as excessive screen time. The main objectives of this study are to find out the amount of time college students have for leisure, their preferences for leisure activities, where and with whom they want to spend their leisure time.

Review of literature

An average of 20 hours a week are spent on leisure activities by college students, including hanging out with friends and taking part in extracurricular pursuits (Fosnacht, McCormick, & Lerma, 2018). The findings of the study conducted by Masrouf, F.F., et al. (2012), in their study on “Investigating of Leisure Time Activities in Male Students at Iran’s Islamic Azad University: An Emphasis on Sports Participation” revealed that students' daily average leisure time was 2.7 hours and listed watching TV, watching VCDs and DVDs, working casually on computers (internet, chat, etc.), and watching satellite TV broadcasts as their top four priority for passing the time. The majority of free time was spent by both male and female students at home or in their dorms, and second, in sports and recreation facilities on or near campus. According to the students, leisure time has a big impact on their emotional and physical well-being.

Karaderi's study on leisure time patterns among university students at Girne American University in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) revealed that students mostly engaged in passive activities and internet use is the most preferred activity. Then comes enjoying oneself, fostering personal growth, broadening one's social circle, and experiencing new things, in that order. Students rate increasing productivity and creativity as the least significant aspect. They spend the most of their time outside of education at home, followed by cafes/restaurants, sports facilities, city transport, shopping, libraries, nature, city parks, and travelling outside the city. The survey also found that the majority of the students who took part in it routinely watch TV and use social media, email, websites, and search engines on a daily basis.

Morina, B et al. (2015), in their study on leisure time activity among students of Prishtina university found that listening to music was the most popular leisure activity and other popular leisure activities include watching television and video, meeting friends, do sports in a club or sports section.

However, a study conducted by Razaei (2017) found that using a mobile phone was the most significant leisure activity while physical activity and sports were among the least prioritized activities. In the same manner, Lieury, A., et.al. (2014) also found that the top ten activities performed "every day or almost every day" are predominantly digital in nature: listening to music, talking on the phone (or sending messages), using the Internet, and watching television. Boys favor physical activities, sports, video games, and action films, whereas girls choose phone calls (or messages), reality television, romantic movies, or TV shows. A similar pattern was also found in the results of the studies by Sen J. et al. (2024), which showed that the most common leisure activity among female paramedical college students, both tribal and nontribal, was internet browsing. Additionally, all internet users enjoyed playing mobile games as a form of entertainment.

Research Gap

All of the literatures reviewed for this study were written by researchers from India, except Mizoram and other nations. There have been no sociological studies or in-depth research of leisure time spending patterns among Mizo youth, especially college students. As a result, the purpose of this study is to contribute to the present sociological literature on college-going youth. It could be a starting point for new academics looking to investigate college students and their leisure habits in Mizoram.

Methodology

For the present study, a descriptive research design and a non-probability sampling technique- more precisely, convenience sampling were used in this study. All undergraduate student enrolled in eight government colleges within Aizawl that are administered by the Department of Higher and Technical Education make up the study's universe. A sample size of 372 college students was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan Table for determining sample size. The sample consists of 190 males and 182 females. Data was collected using a self-developed interview schedule. The acquired data was analyzed using SPSS.

Results and Discussion

The findings of the present study undertaken to find out the patterns of spending leisure time among college students will be presented below.

Table 5.1
Time for Leisure

Time	Frequency	Percentage
Less than an hour	19	5.1
1 – 2 hours	46	12.4
2 – 3 hours	75	20.1
3 – 4 hours	146	39.2
More than four hours	86	23.1
Total	372	100

Source: Field data

Table 5.1 presents the amount of time the respondents have for leisure daily. The findings indicate that

majority of 146 students have 3-4 hours of leisure time accounting for 39.2% of the total sample respondents and a significant portion of 86 students or 23.1% have more than 4 hours leisure time. A notable number of 75 or 20.1% students have 2-3 hours of leisure time. A small number of 46 or 12.4 % of them have 1-2 hours of leisure time daily and another small portion of 19 respondents (5.1%) have less than an hour of leisure time daily.

Table 5.2
Most preferred leisure activity

Leisure activities	Frequency	Percentage
Internet related activities	188	50.5
Reading	17	4.6
Sleeping	16	4.3
Doing sports/fitness activities	22	5.9
Hang out with friends	71	19.1
Personal hobbies	28	7.5
Spending time with family	27	7.3
Others	3	0.8
Total	372	100

Source: Field data

Table 5.2 presents the respondents preferred leisure activity which shows that the majority of 188 respondents accounting for 50.5% prefer to engage in internet related activities. Hanging out with friends (19.1%) is the second most preferred activity which is preferred by 71 respondents representing 19.1% of the sample respondents. Personal hobbies is the third most preferred activity and preferred by 28 or 7.5% respondents, followed by spending time with family preferred by 27 or 7.3%, doing sports or fitness activities by 22 or 5.9%, reading by 17 or 4.6%, sleeping by 16 or 4.3%. 3 or 0.8% students who selected the option of ‘others’ reported having no particular preference for how they wanted to spend their leisure times.

Table 5.3
Most preferred Place to spend leisure time

Location	Frequency	Percentage
Home	258	69.4
Friend’s House	45	12.1
Shopping mall/Market/Restaurant	7	1.9
Hangout spot/Park	53	14.2
Gym/Indoor/Outdoor recreation centre	7	1.9
Others	2	0.5
Total	372	100

Source: Field data

Table 5.3 shows the respondents’ preferred place to spend their leisure. The overwhelming majority of

258 students (69.4% of the total sample) preferred to spend their leisure time at home. 53 students or 14.2% preferred hangout spots or parks, while 45 students, or 12.1%, preferred friends' homes. 7 or 1.9% of students prefer recreation facilities such as a gym, an indoor hall, and outdoor playgrounds. Another 7 students, or 1.9%, preferred shopping malls, markets, or restaurants. There are only 2 students which accounts for 0.5% who opted for the option of 'others'.

Table 5.4
Preferred companions to spend leisure time with

Companions	Frequency	Percentage
Family	31	8.3
Friends	88	23.7
Girlfriend/Boyfriend	35	9.4
Alone	213	57.3
Others	5	1.3
Total	372	100

Source: Field data

Table 5.4 shows the students' most preferred companions for their leisure time. It is important to know with whom these youth would like to spend their leisure time in order to gain a better understanding of their ways of life. The result shows that majority of 213 students prefer to spend their free time alone accounting for 57.3%. Another significant proportion of 88 students (23.7%) prefer to spend their free time with their friends. Additionally, another 35 respondents or 9.4% prefer to spend their free time with their girlfriends or boyfriends, which is slightly higher than those who prefer family. Family is the least preferred companion and is chosen by only 31 respondents or 8.3%. Lastly, only 5 students selected the option of 'others' which accounts for 1.3%.

Overall, the results show that the majority of college students (39.2%) have 3-4 hours of leisure time per day, followed by those having more than 4 hours (23.1%). The students' most preferred leisure activity is internet related activities (50.5%), followed by hanging out with friends (19.1%), personal hobbies (7.5%), spending time with family (7.3%), doing sports or fitness activities (5.9%), reading (4.6%) and sleeping (4.3%). Another findings of this study revealed that majority of the students preferred to spend their leisure time at home (69.4%), followed by Hang out spots/Parks (14.2%), friend's house (12.1%), shopping mall/market/restaurants (1.9%) and gym/indoor/outdoor recreation centers (1.9%). With regards to most preferred companion to spend their leisure time, majority of the students reported preferring to spend their leisure time alone (57.3%), followed by friends (23.7%). The least preferred companion is family (8.3).

The findings from the above data revealed that college students have enough leisure time outside of college hours and a more flexible schedule, which can be used for participating in leisure pursuits and other activities aimed at personal development. However, if not managed properly, this extra free time might lead to unproductive behaviors such as excessive screen time or procrastination. Students' leisure time is heavily digitalized, as the most preferred activity is internet-related activity, with little time spent on physical activity, reading, personal hobbies and family interaction. While connecting with peers is also crucial, screen-based entertainment consumes majority students' free time, potentially impacting their lifestyle, mental and physical health, and interpersonal connections. Furthermore, home-based

passive activities are more interesting to them as the majority of the respondents prefer to spend their leisure time at home and the significantly low percentage of those who prefer shopping mall/market/restaurant and gym/indoor/outdoor recreation centre suggests the lack of interest in physical activities and consumer based activity among college students. The findings also indicate an increasing tendency of individualism among college students as a large majority of the respondents prefer to be alone during their leisure time, implying that today's youth are self contented and find contentment in their own company. On the other hand, while students appreciate isolation, social connections with peers are still a significant part of their leisure time. Furthermore, this stage of life is frequently characterized by a shift toward independence, in which adolescents emphasize personal and peer ties over family time. However, this does not necessarily suggest a lack of attachment to family, but rather represents the shifting goals and lifestyles of college going young adults.

Conclusion

The present study gives insight into leisure time spending patterns of college students studying in different Government colleges in Aizawl. It is observed that majority of the students have sufficient time for leisure and internet-related activity is the most preferred activity. Increased internet use among college students provides educational benefits and chances for personal growth, but also poses issues for mental health, productivity, and social well-being. Maintaining a healthy and effective college experience requires balancing both online and offline activities (Sen et al., 2024). Das and Barman (2019) discovered in their study that spending more time on entertainment activities has a negative impact on the mental health of college students. Since internet-related activities are the most preferred leisure activity amongst the majority of sample respondents in the present study, it is suggested that parents at home should intervene and monitor how these young people use the internet and educational institutions should organize awareness programmes about the potential risks of excessive screen time so that college going youth would develop a healthier and more productive leisure habits which will contribute to their overall well-being and academic success. Participation in physical activities should also be encouraged.

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