

## Leisure Time Activities of Students with Visual Impairment

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### ABSTRACT

*The involvement in active leisure activities requires physical and mental energy. There are some activities which require physical involvement, whereas, some leisure activities require only substantial mental effort such as playing chess and painting a picture. These physical and mental activities also overlap too much. School is place where the students with visual impairment can enhance their physical, mental emotional, social skills by which they can adopt the changing conditions of the progressive world. In this study the efforts have been made 1) to identify types of leisure activities used by students with visual impairment, 2) to explore the difference in the selection of leisure activities of students with visual impairment on the basis of their gender and level of impairment (blindness and low vision)*

**Keywords:** Leisure time activities, students with visual impairment, indoor and outdoor games

### INTRODUCTION

Leisure is an essential part of human life and finds many different forms which are shaped naturally by individual interests but also by the surrounding social construction. Leisure activities can be communal or solitary, active or passive, outdoors or indoors, healthy or harmful, and useful for society or detrimental. A list of typical activities could be almost endless including most human activities, a few examples leisure time activities are reading, playing or listening to music, watching movies or TV, gardening, hunting, hobbies, sports, studies, and travel. Not all leisure activities can be considered wise, healthy, or socially acceptable or useful (Bruce, 1995).

There are two types of leisure activities: 1) Physical leisure is about engaging in exploration, sports or outdoor games. These recreational activities require the movement of large muscle and physical potential of body. The health benefits of physical activity include a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, some types of cancer, osteoporosis, diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, depression, stress and anxiety (Gilmour, 2007). Physically active pastimes such as these are most beneficial if they are done routinely, and the pleasure derived from them makes this more likely. It also promotes health by providing a cushion for stress and creating a sense of balance. For instance, recreation and leisure can give people a break from a stressful situation. Indeed, physically active recreational activities can be powerful proactive coping strategies. 2) Social recreation/leisure is also important to one's health. Research supports the importance of social networks in maintaining health. Leisure activities have the potential to increase social involvement and friendships in many ways, for many recreational activities, such as playing cards or being on a sports team, need the involvement of others. Other leisure activities, such as watching movies or participating in concerts, are often just reasons to get together with friends and help maintain social relationships ([tucollaborative.org/inclusion/recreational\\_leisure.html](http://tucollaborative.org/inclusion/recreational_leisure.html)).

Participation in leisure activity has a role to play in personal development. It improves physiological and mental functioning and gives rise to feelings of physical, psychological and

social competence. It is extremely enjoyable and can increase a person's resistance to stress (Hannon, 2005). Research has consistently indicated that physically and socially active recreation and leisure activities are related to a higher quality of life in the general population, as well as in people with various special needs. This is especially true of activities that help people feel a part of neighborhood life, including such simple activities as eating in a restaurant, visiting a library or walking in a park. But research has also found strong relationships between physical activity and physical health as well as between physical activity and mental health (DionGabrial, 2013).

These leisure activities and experiences provide the same benefits to students with visual impairment as they do for their peers who are sighted. Leisure activities are often viewed as optional; their value to people with visual impairment may not be recognized. Without specific instruction to master prerequisite skills and modifications, students who are blind or visually impaired are frequently excluded from such activities. Many of the motor skills learned during childhood do not develop naturally in students who are visually impaired. Moreover, parents have over protective behaviour toward these children and their participation in leisure activities often discouraged. The provision of specific, timely instruction and opportunities to practice newly acquired skills will ensure students derive pleasure from participation in an array of recreational and leisure activities.

Blind people face significant challenges in accessing the world. Blind individuals may be unwilling to move freely and comfortably or, out of anxiety, society restricts movement of the blind individual. Research shows that there lack of participation in physical and social activities hinder many other areas of development that can ultimately result in unemployment, lack of participation in the community, social isolation, psychological maladjustment, and a host of physiological infirmities ([worldaccessfortheblind.org/node/103](http://worldaccessfortheblind.org/node/103)).

Shandrow, Hilliker & Bishop (2005) highlighted following problems:

“As blind people we encounter more obstacles due to our limitations, fewer opportunities and lack of social support. It is crucial that we get involved in recreation by finding activities that we as blind people can do independently or participate in a group equally with our sighted peers. For example, most people enjoy watching movies, where we often miss out on critical elements such as action, scenery, and facial expressions. This can be frustrating and even depressing, taking the enjoyment from something that should be fun and relaxing.

There are many leisure activities which utilize other senses than sight, for example, music can be both appreciated and created. News programs and radio plays can also be listened to, and movies and television also have audio elements that can be enjoyed apart from the visuals. Although different skills are required for those who are blind to cook, cooking emphasizes texture, smell and taste. Gardening is also rich with sensations. The blind can do activities that focus on the movement of their bodies too, such exercising, walking and hiking, swimming or martial arts.

Many other activities can be adapted so that they are accessible to the blind. The blind can access books through the reading of someone else, audio tapes or by scanning books into a computer and having them read by text-to-speech software. This software, along with speech-to-text software and Braille displays, can also make it possible for blind people to use computers and the Internet to reach a wealth of information, play games and communicate with others. Cards and board games can be adapted for the blind, through a combination of Braille and an increased role of memory (Clark, 2013). Taking into consideration the importance of leisure activities for students with visual impairment, the researchers

conducted this research to investigate the types of leisure time activities used by students with visual impairment.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identify types of leisure activities used by students with visual impairment.
2. Explore the difference in the selection of leisure activities of male and female students with visual impairment.
3. Explore the difference in the selection of leisure activities of students with visual impairment on the basis of their level of impairment (blindness and low vision).

### **METHODOLOGY**

Methodology can be discussed under the following headings:

#### **Population of the Study**

Population of the study consisted of all students with visual impairment enrolled in inter, graduation and master's programmes in six districts of Punjab province.

#### **Sample of the Study**

A sample of forty (60) students with visual impairment (males= 30, females = 30) was selected by using snowball sampling technique from Punjab, Lahore, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, Bahawalpur, Chakwal and Chaniot. Among these sixty (60) participants, thirty seven (37) were totally blind and twenty three (23) were low vision. Their qualifications ranged between intermediate =20, B.A =20, M.A =20. Their age ranged between 16-30 years (16-20=22; 21-25=28; 26-30=10). Informed consent by the participants was obtained.

#### **Instrument of the Study**

After reviewing the related literature, a questionnaire containing twenty five (25) questions with five (5) options ("0%", "25%", "50%", "75%" and "100%") was developed. The questions were related to leisure activities used by students with visual impairment such as book reading, games (indoor & outdoor), use of electronic gadgets and information communication technology.

The reliability of the instrument was 0.82 (Cronbach alpha).

#### **Data Collection Procedure**

First of all, the telephone numbers of students with visual impairment were collected with the help of some dedicated persons with visual impairment enrolled in University of the Punjab. Then personal and telephonic contacts were made with all sixty subjects belonging to different cities of the Punjab. They were informed about the purpose of the study. They were requested to spare 15 to 20 minutes for filling up the questionnaire. They were assured that confidentiality and anonymity will be observed.

#### **Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed by running frequencies.

### **MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The data collected were tabulated and analyzed as under:

**Table 1. Demographics information of the respondents**

	<i>Variables</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Interpretation/Findings</i>
<i>Gender</i>	a. Male with visual impairment	50	The sample was equally distributed
	b. Females with visual impairment	50	
<i>Disability Type</i>	a. Blindness	61.7	Majority of the respondents (61.7 %) were suffering with blindness.
	b. Low Vision	38.3	
<i>Age of the Respondents (in Years)</i>	a. 16 to 20	36.7	There were three groups with the age range from 16 years to 30 years. Majority of the respondents were with age 21 years to 25 years.
	b. 21 to 25	46.7	
	c. 26 to 30	16.6	
<i>Major Cities</i>	Lahore	45.0	The respondents were belonged to six cities. Majority (45.0%) of them were living in Lahore.
	Bahawalpur	15.0	
	Rawalpindi	16.7	
	Faisalabad	18.3	
	Chakwal	03.3	
	Chiniot	1.7	

**Table 2. Frequency distribution of responses**

<i>Types</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Resp.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Findings</i>
<i>Book Reading</i>					
General Books	How much you like to read general books other than your syllabus in leisure time?	0%	1	1.7	Only (36.7%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (75%) that they like to read the books other than their syllabus in leisure time.
		25%	13	21.7	
		50%	8	13.3	
		75%	22	36.7	
		100%	16	26.7	
Novels	How much you like to read novels in leisure time?	0%	13	21.7	Only (23.3%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (50%) that they like to read the novels in leisure time.
		25%	9	15.0	
		50%	14	23.3	
		75%	11	18.3	
		100%	13	21.7	
Story	How much you like to read	0%	6	10.0	Only (28.3%) of the

<i>Types</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Resp.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Findings</i>
	stories in leisure time?	25%	12	20.0	students with visual impairment responded to (75%) that they like to read the stories in leisure time.
		50%	14	23.3	
		75%	17	28.3	
		100%	11	18.3	
Drama	How much you like to read Dramas in leisure time?	0%	15	25.0	Only (26.7%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (50%) that they like to read the dramas in leisure time.
		25%	11	18.3	
		50%	16	26.7	
		75%	11	18.3	
Poetry	How much you like to read Poetry in leisure time?	0%	11	18.3	Only (30.0%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (100%) that they like to read poetry in leisure time.
		25%	8	13.3	
		50%	12	20.0	
		75%	11	18.3	
		100%	18	30.0	
<i>Games (Indoor &amp; Out door)</i>					
Defeat	<i>How much you like to play defeat in leisure time?</i>	0%	18	30	Only (30.0%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (0%) that they do not like to play “defeat” in leisure time.
		25%	14	23.3	
		50%	11	18.3	
		75%	6	10.0	
		100%	11	18.3	
Cards	<i>How much you like to play cards in leisure time?</i>	0%	29	48.3	Almost half (48.3%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (0%) that they do not like to play “cards” in leisure time.
		25%	11	18.3	
		50%	7	11.7	
		75%	6	10.0	
		100%	7	11.7	
Ludo	How much you like to play ludo in leisure time?	0%	10	16.7	Only (30.0%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (25%) that they do not like to play “Ludo” in leisure time.
		25%	18	30.0	
		50%	16	26.7	
		75%	12	20.0	
		100%	4	6.7	
Draft	How much you like to play	0%	30	50.0	Half (50.0%) of the

<i>Types</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Resp.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Findings</i>
Board	draft board in leisure time?	25%	14	23.3	students with visual impairment responded to (0%) that they do not like to play "Drought" in leisure time.
		50%	10	16.7	
		75%	03	5.0	
		100%	03	5.0	
Snake & ladder	How much you like to play Snake & Ladder in leisure time?	0%	27	45.0	Almost half (45.0%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (0%) that they do not like to play "Snake & Ladder" in leisure time.
		25%	13	21.7	
		50%	9	15.0	
		75%	7	11.7	
		100%	4	6.7	
Chess	How much you like to play chess in leisure time?	0%	32	55.0	Majority of the students with visual impairment (55.0%) responded to (0%) that they do not like to play "Chess" in leisure time.
		25%	10	16.7	
		50%	8	13.3	
		75%	6	10.0	
		100%	3	5.0	
Cricket	How much you like to play cricket in leisure time?	0%	5	8.3	A reasonable proportion (40.0%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (100%) that they like to play "Cricket" in leisure time.
		25%	6	10.0	
		50%	10	16.7	
		75%	15	25.0	
		100%	24	40.0	
<i>Electronic Media (i.e., TV, Radio)</i>					
News	<i>How much you like to watch/listen the News on TV./Radio?</i>	0%	1	1.7	A reasonable proportion (45.0%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (100%) that they like to watch/listen the "News on TV./Radio" in leisure time.
		25%	8	13.3	
		50%	9	15.0	
		75%	15	25.0	
		100%	27	45.0	
Current Affairs	How much you like to watch/listen Current Affair Programs on TV/Radio?	0%	5	8.3	Only (31.7%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (100%) that they like to watch/listen "Current Affair Programs" on TV./Radio in leisure time.
		25%	8	13.3	
		50%	14	23.3	
		75%	14	23.3	
		100%	19	31.7	
Drama	How much you like to	0%	6	10.0	Only (26.7%) of the

<i>Types</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Resp.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Findings</i>
	watch/listen Dramas on T.V/Radio?	25%	11	18.3	students with visual impairment responded to (75% & 100%) that they like to watch/listen "Dramas on TV/Radio in leisure time.
		50%	11	18.3	
		75%	16	26.7	
		100%	16	26.7	
Musical Program	How much you like to watch/listen musical programs on T.V/Radio?	0%	7	11.7	Only (38.7%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (100%) that they like to watch/listen Musical Programs on TV/Radio in leisure time.
		25%	7	11.7	
		50%	10	16.7	
		75%	13	21.7	
		100%	23	38.3	
<i>Information Communication Technology (ICT) i.e., Mobile &amp; Computer &amp; Internet</i>					
Mobile SMS	How much you like Messaging on Cell-phone in leisure time?	0%	7	11.7	Only (31.7%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (100%) that they like Messaging on Cell-phone in leisure time.
		25%	15	25.0	
		50%	8	13.3	
		75%	11	18.3	
		100%	19	31.7	
Gossips	How much you like gossip with friends on Cell-phone in leisure time?	0%	3	5.0	Only (28.3%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (75% & 100%) that they like gossip with on Cell-phone in leisure time.
		25%	9	15.0	
		50%	14	23.3	
		75%	17	28.3	
		100%	17	28.3	
Cell-Phone Games	How much you like to play games on cell-phone in leisure time?	0%	40	66.7	Majority of the students with visual impairment (66.7%) responded to (0%) that they do not like to play games on Cell-phone in leisure time.
		25%	9	15.0	
		50%	6	10.0	
		75%	2	3.3	
		100%	3	5.0	
Music on mobile	How much you like to listen music on Cell-phone in leisure time?	0%	14	23.3	Only (23.3%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (0% & 25%) that they do like to listen Music on Cell-phone in leisure time.
		25%	14	23.3	
		50%	12	20.0	
		75%	11	18.3	
		100%	9	15.0	
Games on	How much you like to play	0%	24	40.0	A reasonable proportion

<i>Types</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Resp.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Findings</i>
Computer	games on computer in leisure time?	25%	12	20.0	(40.0%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (0%) that they do not like to play games on Computer in leisure time.
		50%	11	18.3	
		75%	8	13.3	
		100%	5	8.3	
Music on Computer	How much you like to listen Music on Computer in leisure time?	0%	7	11.7	Only (30.0%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (50%) that they like to listen Music on Computer in leisure time.
		25%	11	18.3	
		50%	18	30.0	
		75%	10	16.7	
Edit Music on Computer	How much you like to edit the music by using different software's on computer in leisure time?	0%	20	33.3	Only (33.3%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (0%) that they do not like to edit the music by using different software's on Computer in leisure time.
		25%	16	26.7	
		50%	8	13.3	
		75%	9	15.0	
Books on Computer	How much you like to read different books on Computer in leisure time?	0%	6	10.0	A reasonable proportion (43.3%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (100%) that they like to read different books on Computer in leisure time.
		25%	5	8.3	
		50%	9	15.0	
		75%	14	23.3	
Skype on Internet	How much you like to use Skype software on Internet in leisure?	0%	7	11.7	Only (30.0%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (50%) that they like to use Skype software on Internet in leisure time.
		25%	13	21.7	
		50%	18	30.0	
		75%	12	20.0	
Facebook	How much you like to use face book on Internet in leisure time?	0%	19	31.3	Only (31.7%) of the students with visual impairment responded to (0%) that they do not like to use face book on Internet in leisure time.
		25%	14	23.3	
		50%	17	28.3	
		75%	5	8.3	
Chatting	How much you like to chat on Internet in leisure time?	0%	15	25.0	Only (25.0%) of the students responded to (0%) do not like to chat on
		25%	12	20.0	



Types	Questions	Resp.	F	%	Findings
		50%	13	21.7	internet in leisure time.
		75%	9	15.0	
		100%	11	18.3	

**Table 3. Results of Various Tests**

<i>Independent sample t-test on the basis of gender</i>	
F	.636
Sig.	.428
Result	The result of independent sample t-test on the basis of total scores and leisure time activities on gender basis reveals that Levene' test of equality of variance indicates variance between two groups of sample (F=.636, Sig= .428). The result of t-test indicates that there is no significance difference in selection of leisure time activities on the basis of gender.
<i>Independent sample t-test on the basis of nature of disability</i>	
F	2.319
Sig.	.133
Results	The result of independent sample t-test on the basis of total scores and leisure time activities of students with visual impairment on the basis of their nature of disability was run. The result of Levene' test of equality of variance indicates that the variance between two groups of sample (F=2.319, Sig: 0.133) is not significant. The result of t-test indicates that there is no significance difference in the leisure time activities of blind and low vision students.

**Table 4. Showing mean and standard deviation of leisure time activities carried out by students with visual impairment.**

<i>Leisure Activities</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Division</i>
Book Reading	16.28	5.06
Games	29.28	7.52
Electronic Gadgets	14.60	3.27
ICT	43.41	9.90

Table 4 indicates that most students with visual impairment spend their leisure time with information communication technology.

### CONCLUSIONS

The present study revealed that most of students with visual impairment use information communication technology as such as chatting with their friends on internet and play games

on computer. Moreover, they said that avoid to play games on cell-phone and chess is their leisure time.

Almost half of students with visual impairment do not like to play cards and chess in leisure time.

A reasonable proportion of students with visual impairment read different books on computer, play cricket and watch television vision news in leisure time. Only few of students with visual impairment read story book, novel, dramas and other general reading books in their leisure. They said that they do not enjoy music and dramas on television.

Some disliked activities by students with visual impairment includes indoor games (e.g. Ludo, Defeat, Drought, Chess and Snake & Ladder), listen music on cell-phone. They also do not like to play video games, chatting, editing of music in leisure time.

There is no significance difference in the leisure time activities of students with visual impairment on basis of gender and their level of impairment (blindness and low vision)

## **DISCUSSION**

The principal objective of the research is to explore the types of leisure activities used by students with visual impairment. The major findings of this study reflects that they use information communication technology as such as chatting with their friends on internet and play games on computer. These findings are consistent with the results of a study conducted by McDonald-Legg (2010). This study highlighted that modified key boards and computer technology has increased the use of computer among students with visual impairment.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Following recommendation are made on the basis of the conclusions of the study:

1. Audio and braille materials (novels, stories and dramas) must be available in the school's libraries so that students with visual impairment could pass their leisure time effectively.
2. Seminars and workshops must be arranged at schools/colleges and universities to aware parents about the better leisure time activities for their visually impaired children.
3. Electronic media should prepare some special programs exclusively for the entertainment of students/persons with visual impairment as well to sensitize the community about their leisure needs.
4. Various interschool/colleges/universities competitions must organize to aware the students with visual impairment about indoor games (i.e. Defeat, Drought, Ludo and Chess) are promoted for better use of their leisure time. These competitions will help them to utilize their hidden capabilities.

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