

# Knowledge and Use of Leisure Time Among Adolescents

## Abstract

Leisure is commonly understood as free time, an activity, and/or a state of mind. Leisure hours are defined as the waking hours when a person is neither in school or college nor at work. Leisure plays an important role in the lives of adolescents. The use of leisure time by young people is of particular interest. Among this group, adolescents hold an important place. Their available time, excluding the usual factors that generally affect leisure, is also affected by the subject they choose to study and by the option they have according to the city in which they are living. Leisure has also been related to developmental action. The importance of leisure time activities in the psychological, cognitive and physical development of adolescence is recognized in all societies. With the view to find out the knowledge and use of leisure time among adolescents of 21<sup>st</sup> century, when much is talked about time management among them, a study was undertaken on 350 randomly selected adolescents from Vadodara city. The questionnaire contained two sections, where section I was a knowledge scale consisting of equal number of positive and negative statements regarding leisure. The section II consisted of different leisure time activities of adolescents and the reasons for selecting the leisure time activities. Descriptive statistics and relational statistics were used for statistical analysis. The study would have implications for the other target groups namely adults, youth and elderly for utilizing their leisure time in view of a healthy life style.

**Keywords :** knowledge of leisure, use of leisure time, adolescent

## Introduction

Time is an intangible resource. It cannot be saved, stored, or accumulated. Once it is lost, it is never regained. According to Gross and Crandall (1967), Durant (1938), time can be divided into three i.e., work, rest and leisure. Proper time management necessitates a proper balance among all these three. Everyone has some time free for their personal use. This time, free from compulsion of any sort and which a person can use as she likes is known as the leisure time.

Leisure is derived from the latin word "licere" meaning to be permitted. It can be explained as waking hours not at work. It is time which is free from spending on the activities for maintenance of people (Bright Bill, 1960). Gross, Crandall and Knoll (1980) have defined leisure as "all nonwork hours or all waking hours not spent in work." For individual's recreation or pursuing leisure time activity consists of doing those things each one wants to do in his own time and at his own pace (Nickell et al., 1960). According to Oxford English dictionary leisure means "freedom or opportunity to do something; opportunity offered by unoccupied time; the state of having time at one's own disposal; free time which one spends as one pleases and wishes. Miller (1963) defines leisure as "freedom from the necessity of being occupied. Activity engaged in during leisure is performed for it's own sake or it's own end." Leisure activities may be broadly interpreted as anything not classed as work or rest, and in this interpretation include such uses of time as eating and dressing. (Gross and Crandall, 1954)

Grandjean (1973) states that large part of leisure time serves for relaxation and is the counter part of the work periods. A review of human habits during the present century demonstrates a general practice of dividing the 24 hours cycle into three parts: 8 hours sleep, 8 hours work and 8 hours leisure. This three part cycle is universally regarded as sensible and desirable though there are many departures from it.

Adolescence is a time when young people begin to spend less time at home and more time socialising out of the home with peers (Hendry, Shucksmith, Love and Glendinning, 1996). Adolescents learn cultural leisure behaviours mainly from the family but also through community and neighbourhood groups in which they

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participate (MacDonald, McGuire & Havighurst, 1949). The literature suggests that young people of different social classes belongs to different groups, clubs and participate in a variety of free time activities. Havighurst, 1949).

Adolescents need free time to explore their own interests, be with friends or just unwind as it can be a great way to build your relationships. All individuals are different. But many like to spend their free time doing things like shopping, going to parties, being with friends, using the computer for games or other online activities, social networking, texting, watching movies, reading and going to the beach or park. Individuals are also spending an increasing amount of their free time in structured extracurricular activities such as arts and sports. And research shows they often feel bored with unstructured spare time.

Participation in leisure activities during adolescence has consistently been associated with a variety of benefits including psychological, physiological and social benefits. Leisure participation improves mental health of participants (Larson & Kleiber, 1993) by increasing self-esteem (Marsh & Kleitman, 2003; Tiggemann, 2001) and decreasing levels of depression (Field et al., 2001). Physiological benefits of leisure include decreasing levels of body fat (Klentrou, Hay & Plyley, 2003), reducing illnesses (Klentrou et al., 2003), decreasing body dissatisfaction (Tiggemann, 2001) and increasing feelings of physical attractiveness (Bowker et al., 2003). In addition, participation in physical activity decreases drug use among adolescents (Field et al., 2001). Adolescent leisure participation also has numerous social benefits including improved relationships with parents (Field et al., 2001), and having greater access to support from teachers, coaches, advisors and other non-familial adults (Eccles et al., 2003). Moreover, leisure participation promotes having peer groups of friends who engage in the same activities (Eccles et al., 2003).

Adolescent leisure participation also is related to numerous positive academic outcomes. Strong positive relationships have been found between extracurricular activities and grades (Darling et al., 2005; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Eccles et al., 2003; Field et al., 2001; Marsh & Kleitman, 2003; Spreitzer, 1994), attitudes towards school (Darling et al., 2005; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Eccles et al., 2003), and time spent on homework (Marsh & Kleitman, 2003). In addition, leisure participation is associated with high academic aspirations (Darling et al., 2005; Marsh & Kleitman, 2003). In particular, relationships have been found between adolescent leisure participation and the likelihood of attending and graduating college or university (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Eccles et al., 2003; Marsh & Kleitman, 2003). This relationship is especially strong for male participants (Marsh & Kleitman, 2003). Moreover, athletic participation during adolescence is positively related to total years of post-secondary education (Eccles et al., 2003).

Recreation and leisure activities may be related to identity development as they comprise an incredibly important part of an adolescent's daily life.

Every day, adolescents spend 40 to 50 percent of their time awake engaging in some sort of leisure pursuit (Caldwell, 2005a; Kleiber, Larson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1986; Shaw, Kleiber & Caldwell, 1995). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1993, as cited in Lobo & Niepoth, 2005), adolescents between the ages of 15 and 24 spend approximately six hours each day in free time activities.

It is generally acknowledged by the sociologists that the way in which adolescent's organize and spend their leisure time changes as societal developments advance. The proliferation of leisure activities on offer, the omnipresence of the media, the increase in financial resources of parents and children, and the perseverance of the negotiating household, which is characterized by a strong child-orientation on the part of parents, have contributed to youngsters being able to orient themselves towards a wide variety of commercial leisure product, fashions, music styles, leisure clubs and hobbies and to construct their own leisure biographies (Buchner, 1995; Hengst, 2001).

Researchers have identified many intrinsic and extrinsic motives for engaging in leisure activities (Iso-Ahola & Allen, 1982; Lounsbury & Hoopes, 1988; Ryan, Fredrick, Lepes, Rubio & Sheldon, 1997; Tinsley & Kass, 1979). These include such reasons as selfactualization (Tinsley & Kass, 1979), self-esteem (Tinsley & Kass, 1979), self-control (Tinsley & Kass, 1979), personal competence (Iso-Ahola & Allen, 1982; Ryan et al., 1997), escape (Iso-Ahola & Allen, 1982), social interaction (Iso-Ahola & Allen, 1982; Lounsbury & Hoopes, 1988; Ryan et al., 1997; Tinsley & Kass, 1979), relaxation (Iso-Ahola & Allen, 1982), spending time with the opposite sex (Iso-Ahola & Allen, 1982), interest (Ryan et al., 1997), power (Tinsley & Kass, 1979), compensation (Tinsley & Kass, 1979), security (Tinsley & Kass, 1979), social service (Tinsley & Kass, 1979), exercise (Lounsbury & Hoopes, 1988; Tinsley & Kass, 1979; Ryan et al., 1997), and physical appearance (Ryan et al., 1997). Youth seem to be most motivated to participate in leisure by fun, enjoyment, skilldevelopment and challenge (Fredrick-Recascino, 2002).

#### **Methodology**

The present investigation was a descriptive research conducted on 300 adolescent's selected from six faculties of Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara through random sampling. The sample for the study comprised of 50 students from each of the selected faculties viz., Arts, Commerce, Science, Family and Community Sciences, Fine Arts and Technology, thereby totalling 300 students. The students of different faculties were approached who were studying in first year, second year, third year, junior and senior master. The tool to collect data was a questionnaire which contained Likert type scales (1) Knowledge scale having 3 point continuum for the responses 'Agree', 'Disagree' and 'Undecided' which were scored 3 through 1 respectively for the positive statements and for the negative statements the scoring was reversed. The possible minimum and maximum scores were divided into 3 categories having equal interval for all the three scales which determined the extent of knowledge regarding leisure

among adolescents. (2) Frequency of activities carried out in leisure time scale. It contained a list of leisure activities carried out at home such as 'Entertainment', 'Hobbies', 'Relaxing' and 'Miscellaneous' and outside home such as 'Hobbies', 'Physical activities', 'Social activities', 'Entertainment' and 'Miscellaneous' with a response structure of 'daily', 'several times a week', 'several times a month', 'several times a year' and 'never'. Score of 5 through 1 were ascribed respectively to these responses. The respondents were also asked to state the reasons for choosing leisure activities. The knowledge scale was subjected to establishment of content validity by giving to the panel of five judges who were experts in the relevant field. The 80% of the agreement between the judges was taken as a yardstick for inclusion/omission of the statement in the final scale. The reliability was established through split half method. Spearman Brown coefficient of correlation formula was applied and reliability was found to be 0.68.

**Major Findings**

The major findings of the study are reported broadly under the heads of background information, extent of knowledge regarding leisure time among adolescents, frequency of leisure activities carried at home and outside home and reasons for selecting leisure activities.

**Background Information** consisted of respondents', age, education, occupation of their father and mother, total monthly family income, type of family and number of family members.

**Age of the respondents** The age of the respondents ranged between 12 to 20 years. Less than one half of the respondents were between the age group 18 to 20 years. More than one fourth of the respondents were between 15 to 17 years while rest were between 12 to 14 years of age (Fig. 1).

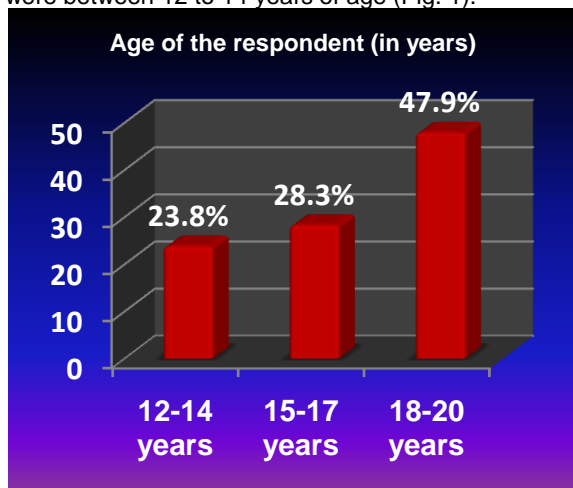


Figure 1: Distribution of respondents according to their age

**Education of the Respondents**

One half of the respondents were graduates. Less than one third of the respondents were in their senior secondary while rest were in their higher secondary (Fig. 2).

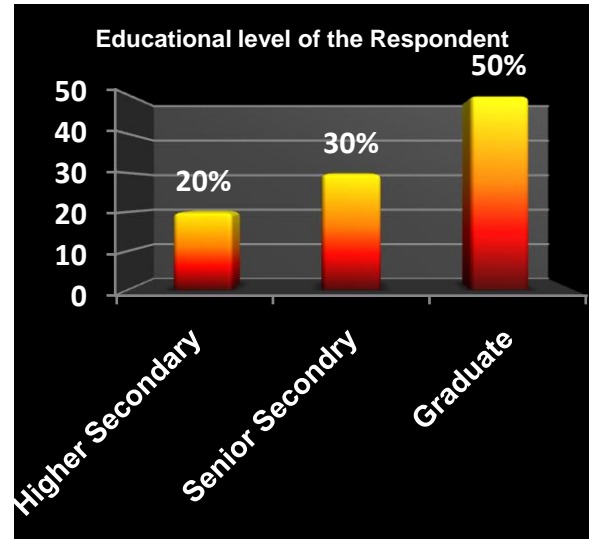


Figure 2: Distribution of respondents according to their educational level

**Occupation of father and mother**

A little less than one half of the respondent's father was in service sector followed by business. Very few were self employed. Majority of respondent's mother were housewives. Rest of the respondent's mother were working women. Less than one fifth of the respondent's mothers were placed in service sector while remaining was businesswomen and self employed respectively (Fig. 4).

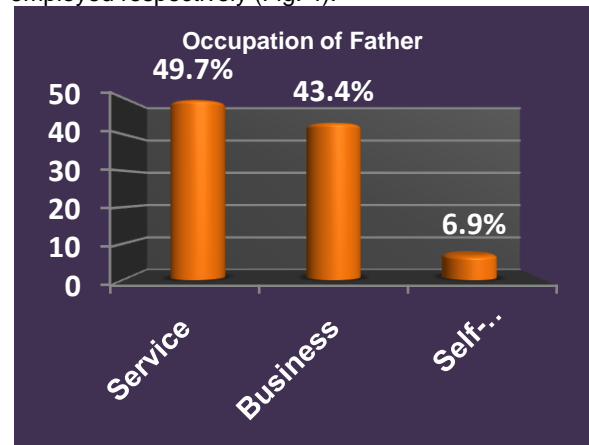
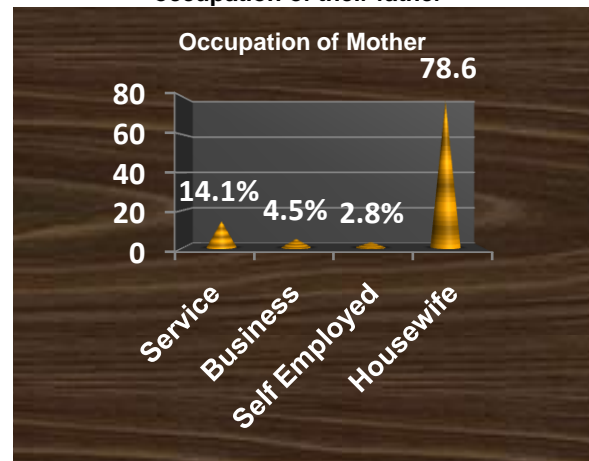
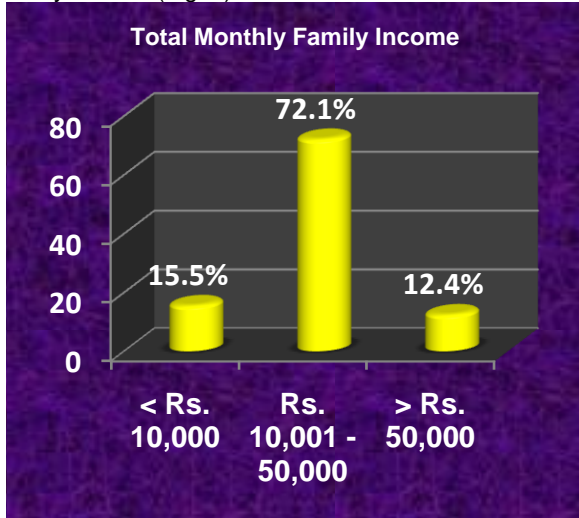


Figure 3: Distribution of respondents according to occupation of their father



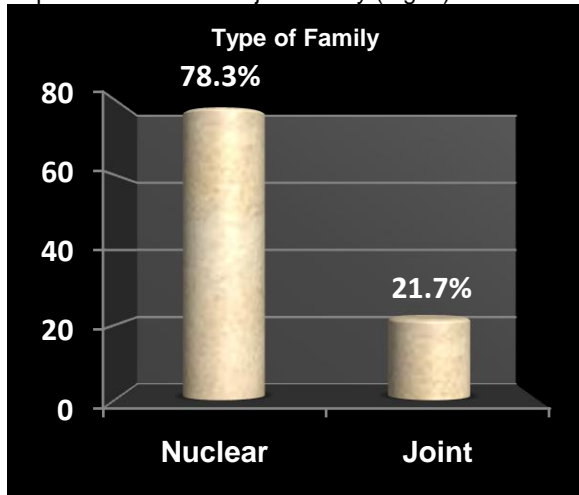
**Figure 4: Distribution of respondents according to occupation of their mother**  
**Total Monthly Family Income**

Majority of the respondents were having total monthly family income between Rs. 10,000/- to Rs. 50,000/-. Less than one-fifth of the respondent's total monthly family income was less than Rs. 10,000/-. Remaining percentage of respondents was having more than Rs. 50,000/- as their total monthly family income (Fig. 5).



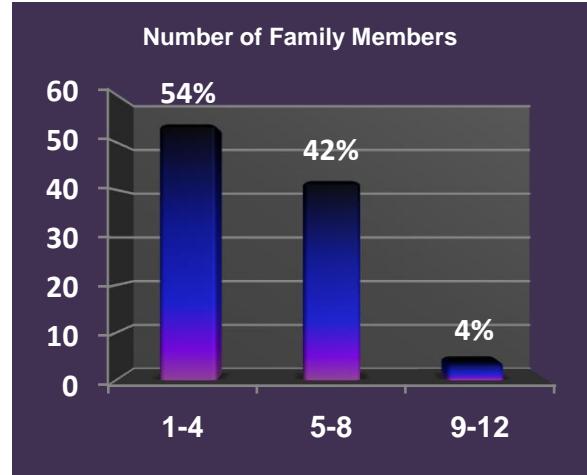
**Figure 5: Distribution of respondents according to their total monthly family income**  
**Type of Family**

Majority of the respondents belonged to nuclear family. Less than one-fourth of the respondents were from joint family (Fig. 6).



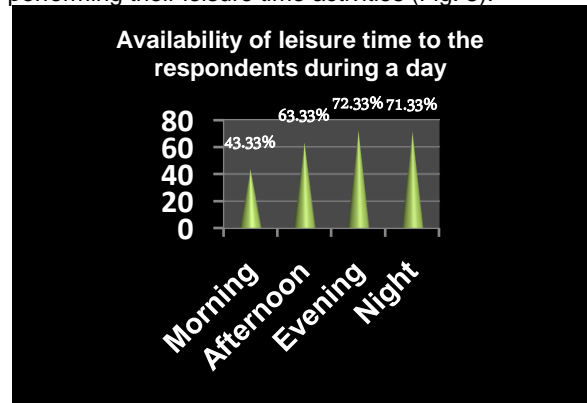
**Figure 6: Distribution of respondents according to their type of family**  
**Number of Family Members**

More than one-half of the respondents had a small sized family having one to four family members in their family. Less than one-half of the respondents had middle sized family having five to eight family members. Very few respondents had large family having nine to twelve family members (Fig. 7).



**Figure 7: Distribution of respondents according to number of family members in their family**  
**Availability of Leisure Time**

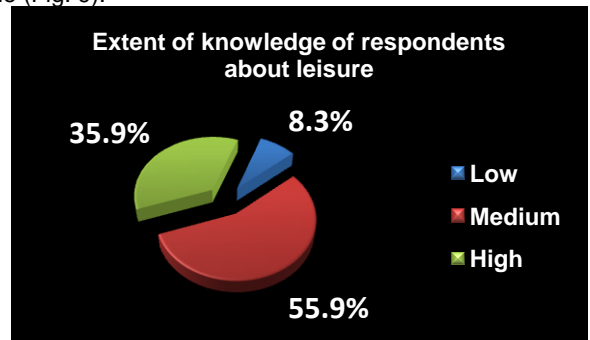
the respondents were asked to indicate the availability of leisure time during a day. Majority of respondents perform their leisure activities during evening time followed by night. More than three fourth of the respondents utilized afternoon time for performing their leisure time activities (Fig. 8).



Multiple responses

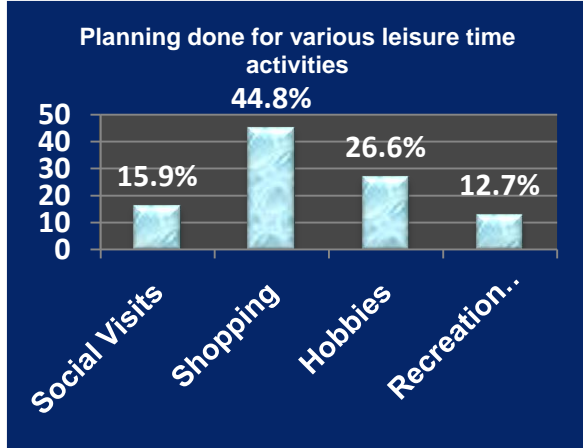
**Figure 8: Distribution of respondents according to availability of leisure time during a day**  
**Extent of Knowledge regarding leisure time**

It was found that more than one half of the respondents were having moderate level of knowledge about leisure time. More than one third of the respondents had high level of knowledge regarding leisure time while very few of the respondents had low level of knowledge on leisure time (Fig. 9).



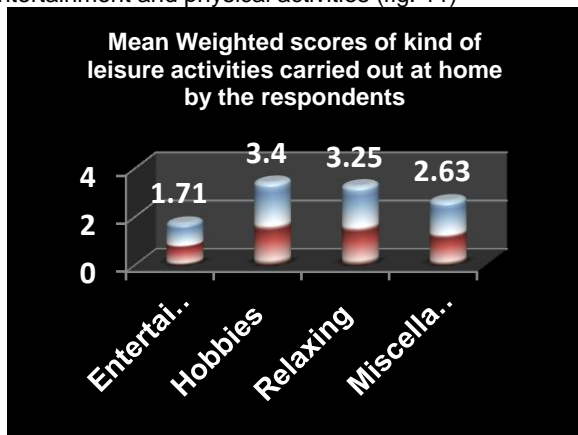
**Figure 9: Distribution of respondents according to extent of knowledge about leisure Planning for leisure time activities**

The findings revealed that about less than one half of the respondents do planning for shopping. A little more than one fourth of the respondents plan for their hobbies. A very less percentage of respondents plan their social visits and recreational activities respectively (Fig. 10).

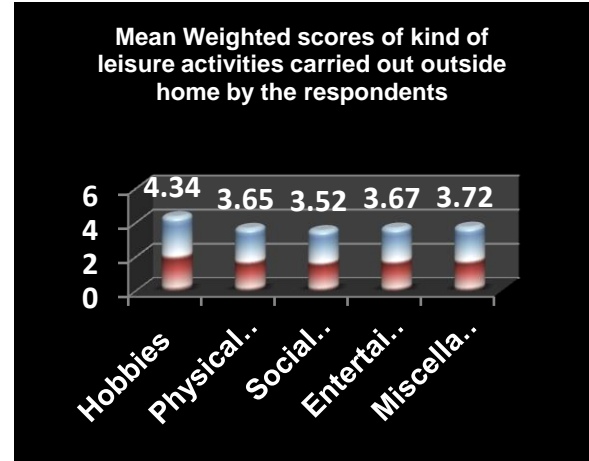


**Figure 10: Distribution of respondents according to planning done for leisure time activities Kind of leisure activities carried out at home and outside home**

Adolescents' mean weighted scores on kind of leisure activities carried out at home by the respondents revealed that they spent their leisure time on pursuing their hobbies in and outside home. It was also found that entertainment activities were least carried out at home during leisure time by the adolescents'. The adolescents' engage themselves in miscellaneous activities such as Helping in house work, Workout or exercise at home, sitting and thinking and sitting idle outside home followed by entertainment and physical activities (fig. 11)

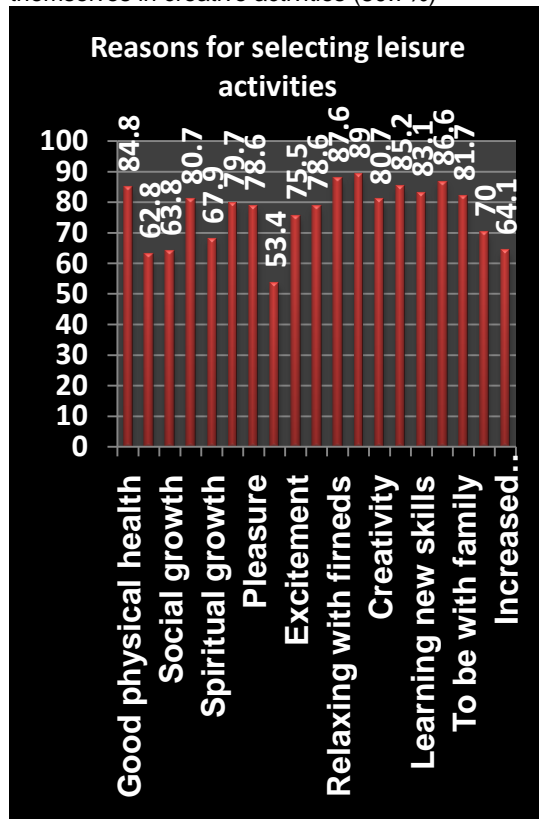


**Figure 11: Distribution of respondents according to their mean weighted scores of kind of leisure activities carried out at home by respondents**



**Reasons for selecting leisure activities**

The data revealed varied reasons for selecting leisure activities (Fig. 12). The average mean weighted scores on reasons for selecting leisure activities revealed that majority of the adolescents choose leisure activities namely relaxing with friends (87.6%), to do something new (86.6%), to enhance their physical health (84.4%), moreover to be with their family members (81.7%) and engaging themselves in creative activities (80.7%)



**Figure 12: Distribution of respondents according to their reasons for selecting leisure activities**

**Hypothesis Testing**

1. The adolescence differed in their leisure activities at home and their type of family.
2. The adolescence leisure activities outside home significantly varied with their family's age, income and number of family members.

3. The adolescence leisure activities at home significantly varied with their age, number of family members and their father's employment.
4. The knowledge of the adolescence regarding leisure significantly varied with their father's and mother's employment.
5. Their exists a relationship between the adolescence leisure activities at home and outside home and their reasons for choosing leisure activities.
6. Their exists a relationship between the adolescence leisure activities at home and outside home and their knowledge regarding leisure.

**Conclusion**

1. The study revealed that the knowledge level of the adolescent's was found to be at moderate level. Therefore, there is a need to enhance the knowledge of the larger segment of the adolescent's regarding leisure. This can be done through formal and non-formal education.
2. Most of the respondents spend their leisure time in relaxing and hobbies at home and outside home. Therefore, they should be encouraged to spend their leisure time on some physical and social activities too.
3. It was also found that the respondents make a plan for shopping in advance. In real sense as everyone make plans for every important work, every leisure time activity should be planned in advance.