The Relationship Between Leisure Activity and Life Satisfaction Among Gen Z Individuals Who Enjoy Staycations

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Leisure Activity; Life Satisfaction; Generation Z; Staycation; Correlation	This research aims to examine the relationship between leisure activity (LA) and life satisfaction (LS) to understand the factors that contribute to the well-being of Generation Z. The research subjects consisted of 159 Generation Z individuals who enjoy staycations and were analyzed using the Leisure Satisfaction Scale and the Satisfaction with Life Scale through a correlational quantitative approach. The data analysis technique used was Spearman's rho correlation because the data were not normally distributed. The results indicate a positive and significant relationship between the two variables, with a correlation coefficient of $r_s = 0.342 (p < 0.001)$. These findings suggest that the higher the quality and frequency of leisure activities, the higher the level of life satisfaction experienced by the participants. Therefore, leisure activity and staycations are proven to be important elements in maintaining the subjective well-being of Generation Z. This study is expected to raise public awareness of the importance of leisure time to enhance life satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

The generation born between 1997 and 2012 is Generation Z, also known as Gen Z, who grew up in a digital era that is familiar with technology, the internet, social media, and smartphones (Kuykendall et al., 2015). Technology has become an integral part of their daily lives. The ability to multitask, along with tendencies to be creative and innovative by utilizing technology to create, learn, and work, are advantages that Gen Z has. They adapt easily to change, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, and they do not easily believe received information but appreciate rationality and logic (Kuykendall et al., 2015). Gen Z highly values authenticity in products, brands, and individuals, and they care about social and environmental issues. They attach great importance to work-life balance. Mental health is an important factor for their happiness and job satisfaction (Kuykendall et al., 2015).

Gen Z is very fond of local recreational experiences, that is, recreational experiences in an area where they can interact directly with local residents and engage with local culture to get a more real experience (Kuykendall et al., 2015). Another thing that Gen Z seeks is a slow living experience that is considered soothing and not rushed, such as spending more time in tourist areas to enjoy the daily life of locals. Gen Z is also looking for unique experiences with adventures to unknown places (hidden gems). This aligns with research conducted by Wigmore from November 12–24, 2024, on 10,000 consumers in ten global markets (Australia, Brazil,

China, France, Germany, Singapore, South Korea, the UK, the US, and the UAE) through interviews. The results show that Gen Z is very fond of and seeks unique experiences, with 48% of them having visited several countries during their last trip. In addition, 26% of Gen Z attach importance to traveling with family and friends. It was also noted that the decision to travel or staycation is heavily influenced by the social environment (Joe et al., 2022 in Pratminingsih et al., 2024). In stimulus-organism-response theory, the social environment plays a role as a stimulus. It is undeniable that 37% of Gen Z aged 18–27 years traveled the most that year (Wigmore, 2025). In addition to liking local recreational experiences, Gen Z also likes experiential consumption, which is that they prioritize purchases that provide experiences, memories, and the accompanying emotional connection (Kuykendall et al., 2015). Experiential consumption allows them to engage directly with a brand or activity (Mitchell & Orwig, 2002; Ulusoy, 2016).

Some examples of experiential consumption are activities that provide unique challenges or experiences, such as hiking or visiting natural attractions, as well as eating at thematic restaurants that offer a dining experience more than just food taste, such as enjoying unique decorations. Trips and adventures are carried out to create memories, not just buying souvenirs. In stimulus-organism-response theory, a person acts in response to a given stimulus (Bitner, 1992 in Pratminingsih et al., 2024). In this context, unique experiences provide a stimulus for Gen Z. Local recreational experiences and experiential consumption that Gen Z enjoys make them share their experiences through social media. Gen Z uses digital platforms (TikTok, Instagram) to create experiential content. This indirectly functions as free promotion for local destinations and businesses and increases product sales. Experiences are often associated with happiness and emotional well-being that sometimes become unforgettable memories (Kuykendall et al., 2015). It is a Gen Z lifestyle that values hands-on, interactive experiences.

Reporting from antaranews.com, a well-known hobby trend among Gen Z is actively creating digital content through popular platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. Playing online games is a very inherent activity among Gen Z, such as Mobile Legends, Valorant, Roblox, or Genshin Impact. Not only digital activities, Gen Z has also started gardening. Gardening trains independence and fosters concern for the environment, which aligns with the eco-friendly lifestyle favored by Gen Z. Photography and videography are also increasingly popular hobbies for Gen Z. Collecting vintage objects with distinctive character that is difficult to find in new products gives satisfaction to Gen Z. Cooking and baking activities are not only fun; this is one way Gen Z relieves fatigue. Leisure activities carried out regularly can provide optimal mental health (Miller et al., 2024).

Based on personal communication with D, K, R, and W, it was found that free time can provide a feeling of relief. This can give time to rest. Life must go on, so free time can provide something new. When we get something new, it automatically affects our emotions, and free time can give positive emotions. There is satisfaction when we not only do routines but also have time to do things that make us happy outside of routines. Thus, daily activities can yield maximized results.

Another thing that can increase life satisfaction is meditation. The practice of meditation has seen a significant increase in popularity in recent decades, along with the development of digital platforms that allow independent and flexible access to practice (Davies et al., 2024;

Goldberg et al., 2022). This increase is driven by various empirical findings showing that meditation contributes positively to mental health and well-being, including decreased psychological distress, increased positive affect, and life satisfaction (Galante et al., 2023). Nevertheless, despite growing claims of meditation's benefits, the fundamental question of how many doses of practice are needed for meaningful benefits remains consistently unanswered.

Previous research on meditation has mostly focused on Mindfulness-Based Programs (MBPs) conducted in structured group settings, such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) or Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) (Crane et al., 2017). In this context, dose is usually defined based on program duration or home practice recommendations, rather than actual individual practice. A meta-analysis by Galante et al. (2023) showed that MBPs are generally effective in improving mental health but do not provide clear conclusions about the dose–response relationship between practice number and psychological outcomes.

Some studies have tried to test the dose–response relationship directly. For example, Bostock et al. (2019) measured the relationship between app-based meditation duration and stress levels and well-being using an observational longitudinal design. The study used self-report measures such as the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) on a sample of about 238 adult meditation app users in the United Kingdom. The results showed that increased practice duration correlated with decreased stress, but the non-experimental design and short observation duration limited causal conclusions.

In contrast, Strohmaier (2020), through meta-regression on MBPs, did not find strong evidence of dose-response effects on depression and anxiety. This shows inconsistency in findings, possibly influenced by methodological limitations such as variations in measuring instruments, small sample sizes, and relatively short interventions. Experimental studies manipulating practice doses, such as those by Berghoff et al. (2017) and Fincham et al. (2023), also failed to show consistent dose–response effects, likely due to short intervention durations (e.g., one session or two weeks of practice).

Previous important research by Bowles et al. (2023) examined the relationship between lifetime practice history and mental health outcomes using a cross-sectional design. This study measured psychological distress and life satisfaction using the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) on a sample of adult meditators from different countries. The results showed that about 160 hours of lifetime practice were needed for clinically meaningful changes in psychological distress, and about 270 hours for stable changes in affect. However, the cross-sectional design cannot explain effects of newly undertaken practice, does not distinguish frequency and duration contributions, and lacks prospective control for changes over time.

Responding to these limitations, Bowles and Dam (2025) conducted a longitudinal prospective study specifically examining the dose–response relationship of independently performed meditation practices in daily life. This study measured positive affect and negative affect using the Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE), psychological distress using K10, and life satisfaction using a single SWLS item. The sample consisted of 1,052 adult meditators (69% female, mean age = 46.9 years) from Australia, the United States, and Europe.

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Data were collected through nine surveys over two months (April 2020–September 2021), with 2–4-year follow-up, using longitudinal mixed-effects modeling.

The results showed that meditation practice dose was significantly related to increased well-being and decreased psychological distress, with coherent coefficients: age = 0.32, lifetime practice years = 0.27, lifetime practice hours = 0.26, life satisfaction = 0.27, positive affect = 0.26, negative affect = 0.28, psychological distress = 0.37, openness to experience = 0.00, conscientiousness = 0.42, extraversion = 0.08, agreeableness = 0.09, and negative emotionality = 0.22. Means included practice days = 1.76, practice length = 19.35, and practice time = 9.37. Based on meditation practice monitors, a practice dose had a beta coefficient for life satisfaction of β (CI) = 0.06, p = 0.008. Specifically, 35–65 minutes per day is required for meaningful well-being improvement, while 50–80 minutes per day is needed for improved mental health outcomes. Another key finding was that practice frequency was a stronger predictor than session duration, and the dose–response effect was moderated by lifetime practice experience, negative emotionality, and mental health goals. The implications suggest that meditation recommendations should consider individual characteristics, not just duration.

However, the Bowles and Dam (2025) study has limitations, including self-report measures for practice, lack of experimental dose manipulation, and limited generalization to clinical populations or cultural contexts. Additionally, most samples were experienced meditators, so results may not fully represent meditation-naïve individuals.

In addition, what is now popular with Gen Z is staycation as an activity that can increase life satisfaction. The staycation trend was already major during the 2008 financial crisis in the United States, when people reduced spending and sought economical vacation options (Muritala et al., 2022). During the 2019 coronavirus disease pandemic (COVID-19), with restrictions on long-distance travel, staycation became the main choice. In Indonesia, staycations began gaining popularity in the early 2010s. The COVID-19 pandemic revived the staycation trend, as many people were forced to spend holidays at home or nearby due to travel restrictions (Muritala et al., 2022).

Staycation is a means for overall recovery that helps people recover from work and daily stress (de Bloom et al., 2009 in Muritala et al., 2022). Empirical studies, which rely on data from direct observations or field experiments rather than theory or speculation, show that vacations contribute to human quality of life and well-being (Dolnicar et al., 2012; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004 in Muritala et al., 2022). Every trip is essentially an offer allowing tourists to escape exhausting environments and enjoy recovery qualities (Lehto & Lehto, 2019 in Lin et al., 2021). Fritz and Sonnentag (2006) in Lin et al. (2021) stated that vacationing, especially in free time, has potential to encourage recovery from daily fatigue, restoring energy for renewed spirit. To overcome psychological pressure, staycation replenishes psychological resources (Miao et al., 2020 in Lin et al., 2021).

In line with this theory, Lin et al. reported research by Wong et al. (2018) using the travel motivation scale and psychological capital scale adapted from Jung and Yoon (2015). Results stated that well-being and life satisfaction were positively significantly related, r = 0.36, across tendencies including relaxation and escape (mean = 0.72), novelty seeking (mean = 0.64), nostalgia (mean = 0.87), restoration (mean = 0.77), psychological capital (mean = 0.74),

psychological distress (mean = 0.73), travel involvement (mean = 0.81), and life satisfaction (mean = 0.77). The correlation between psychological distress and restoration was also r = 0.11.

Staycations are highly related to Generation Z because they value practicality and life experiences in vacations (Lin et al., 2021). Reporting from twospaces.id, the healing trip trend is a vacation among Gen Z, not just escape but recovery. For Gen Z, traveling is not just fun but a means of mental recovery, self-reflection, and seeking serenity amid modern life's hustle. Gen Z grew up in a digital age with social pressures, high expectations, and endless information flow, making them susceptible to stress, anxiety, and burnout young. Healing trips restore their life balance. This is reinforced by Seligman's 1998 positive psychology theory, focusing on adaptability, creativity, and emotions. Repeated traveling improves well-being, increasing happiness—an important aspect (Compton, 2005 in Vada et al., 2023).

Reporting from kompasiana.com, Gen Z uses various healing methods such as meditation, yoga, journaling, and exercise. Healing does not require expensive activities like concerts or staycations in Bali. Basically, healing overcomes Gen Z's stress, depression, and anxiety. Another way Gen Z heals is by doing hobbies or liked activities to maintain health and happiness. Healing is part of digital culture, with Gen Z sharing experiences on social media.

In psychology, leisure activity is an activity done in free time, not for work or routine obligations, aimed at pleasure, personal satisfaction, or relaxation. A person chooses activities based on interests or talents. Activities can be simple, like reading a book, or complex, like mountain climbing. Chosen activities align with desired goals. The purpose of leisure activities is usually to reduce stress, improve mood, and provide peace of mind (Fancourt et al., 2021). This relates to attention restoration theory by Kaplan and Kaplan (1989), explaining four elements improving mental well-being: being away, fascination, extent, and compatibility (Fancourt et al., 2021).

Another purpose of leisure activities, besides mental health, is physical health: rest for body and mind, and refreshment. Leisure activities foster confidence, reduce later-life cognitive impairment risk, and improve cognitive abilities (Fancourt et al., 2021). They strengthen relationships and community sense. Leisure activity develops new skills. Its functions include giving life meaning and meeting social needs.

Free time can be filled with fun activities outside routines like work, college, or school. Those planning leisure have high happiness and psychological well-being. Leisure activity leads to positive feelings toward others. It should be planned daily. Leisure time is free time outside routines, without neglecting daily activities.

Research by Freire and Teixeira (2018) shows a relationship between leisure activity values and prevention/management of mental illnesses like depression, anxiety, stress, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia (Freire & Teixeira, 2018; Muritala et al., 2022). For physical health, leisure involvement improves outcomes like coronary heart disease protection, cognitive decline, and dementia. For those with chronic diseases, it reduces progression. Literature links leisure to increased longevity. Much evidence supports health benefits of recreational activities—enjoyable non-work pursuits like hobbies, art, volunteering, community groups, sports, and socializing (Fancourt et al., 2021).

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The frequency and diversity of leisure activities relate more strongly to subjective well-being than time spent on them. Overall, while not minimizing top-down effects, results align with the bottom-up model of subjective well-being, suggesting leisure activity as a key target for improvement (Kuykendall et al., 2015). Frequency is assessed by how often an activity occurs in a period (e.g., per day, week, or month). For physical activity, frequency combines with duration for health recommendations, e.g., 150 minutes of moderate activity weekly.

Free-time activities impact self-determination, enabling life choices and management. Gen Z values freedom in activities; free time allows self-expression and personality control. Leisure activity increases competence (sense of ability) for Gen Z (Fancourt et al., 2021). Social activities strengthen community bonds and develop empathy/social skills. Gen Z gains significant life satisfaction from freely chosen leisure improving competence and direct interactions.

For Gen Z, leisure providing direct satisfaction involves digital media like content creation, video editing, and streaming. Gen Z orients strongly toward satisfaction, especially immediate gratification and personal rewards. They love self-identity-building activities with quick, tangible results and meaning. Meaningful, competence-building, connection-providing activities most effectively boost life satisfaction (Fancourt et al., 2021). Leisure greatly increasing Gen Z life satisfaction includes nature-based, social, volunteering, creative hobbies, and light sports.

An empirical study of 654 early adults, junior/senior high students aged 14–19 (mean = 16.25, SD = 1.06), reported positive correlations between leisure satisfaction and life satisfaction, r = 0.30–0.45 (Freire & Teixeira, 2018). SEM analysis by Freire and Teixeira (2018) showed strong construct correlations with well-being indicators (e.g., 0.77), supporting variable relationships (Freire & Teixeira, 2018). Some studies report leisure's effect on life satisfaction (SWLS) remains significant after demographic controls, standardized β = 0.18–0.31 (Kuykendall et al., 2015). These used cross-sectional designs with convenience sampling (N = 200–800), so causality limits apply (Freire & Teixeira, 2018). Realistic expectations: small-moderate correlations (r = 0.20–0.40) between leisure/staycation quality and Gen Z life satisfaction (Kuykendall et al., 2015).

Gen Z engaging in satisfying leisure experiences higher overall life satisfaction. Leisure satisfaction significantly contributes to Gen Z subjective well-being, including cognitive (life satisfaction) and affective (positive emotions) aspects (Diener et al., 1985). Leisure helps Generation Z find life meaning, directing free-time activities. Gen Z prioritizes work-life balance, underscoring leisure's role in fulfilling lives. Studies show quality and satisfaction of leisure—not just quantity—majorly impact psychological well-being.

It can be concluded that more frequent meaningful leisure activities yield higher life satisfaction. Leisure activities substantially affect quality of life and satisfaction. An important component for balanced, satisfying life is leisure activities. Satisfaction-providing, meaningful, interactive leisure is key for optimal Gen Z life satisfaction.

This study aims to determine whether there is a relationship between leisure activities and life satisfaction among Gen Z who enjoy staycations. The main objective is to identify if recreational activities correlate with life satisfaction or, conversely, lead to boredom and reduced satisfaction due to desires for alone time. This research is expected to provide insight

for Gen Z to focus on life satisfaction. Theoretically, it adds empirical data on quality relationships' role in life meaning. Practically, it offers students an overview of free time's importance, e.g., via staycations, for boosting life satisfaction.

METHOD

This research was quantitative with a correlational approach, using surveys as the data collection tool, which were then analyzed using statistical techniques such as Spearman correlation to test the relationship between the two variables. The study involved participants from Generation Z aged 18 to 28 years, consisting of college students, young workers, or productive-age individuals who had experienced staycations more than once. Participants resided in urban areas of Indonesia and had access to digital media, as the research was conducted online using an online questionnaire. The sampling techniques employed were purposive and convenience sampling, with a target of 100 to 150 respondents. This study aimed to analyze the relationship between leisure activity (independent variable) and life satisfaction (dependent variable) among Generation Z who engaged in staycations.

Data processing was carried out by downloading and verifying the completeness of responses from the questionnaire completed by respondents. Data meeting the criteria were entered into statistical software such as SPSS or JASP for analysis. Reliability tests using Cronbach's alpha yielded very high results for leisure activity ($\alpha = 0.919$) and life satisfaction ($\alpha = 0.897$ after removing certain items). These results indicated that both instruments had strong and consistent reliability. The research was conducted online to adapt to Generation Z's digital habits, using social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and Twitter (now X) to distribute questionnaires and reach relevant respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
Overview of Research Variables
1. Statistics Descriptive Leisure Activity (LA)

The research of 159 participants, the standard deviation value obtained provided information about the homogeneity or heterogeneity of respondents' answers on the leisure activity scale. The smaller the standard deviation value compared to the mean value, the more homogeneous or uniform the data is between respondents. On the other hand, if the standard deviation value is large enough, this indicates a wide variation in the intensity of leisure activities carried out by students. In the context of this data, with a Mean of 94.2075 and a standard deviation of 11.41012, the distribution of data has moderate or moderate variations. This illustrates that the sample students in this study have quite diverse patterns of free time use in their daily lives. More details are in appendix 5.

Table 1. Statistics Descriptive Variable Leisure Activity

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Red	Hours of deviation
Leisure Activity	159	46	115	94.2075	11.41012

Source: Primary data processed by the researcher (2025)

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2. Statistics Descriptive Life Satisfaction (LS)

Table 2 presents a summary of descriptive statistics for the Life Satisfaction variable that includes the score range and data concentration. Based on the results of data processing, it is known that the minimum score that respondents have is 4, while the maximum score is 28. The mean value of life satisfaction of all respondents was recorded at 19.2704, which shows a trend in their perception of life satisfaction. On the other hand, the standard deviation value is recorded as 4.49991, which shows how far an individual's score spreads from its average value. This basic statistical information is crucial to understand the condition of the participants' life satisfaction levels before testing the relationship with other variables.

The interpretation of the mean value of 19.2704 indicates that in general, the participants of this study have a good level of life satisfaction. When compared to the theoretical middle value of the scale, this empirical mean provides an indication that students tend to feel satisfied with their lives. The standard deviation value that emerged also confirms that there is a diversity of perceptions about life satisfaction among students. They feel very satisfied with their life achievements, but some feel the opposite. The dynamics of this life satisfaction score will be further analyzed to see if this variation can be explained by the leisure activity variable. More in appendix 12

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Life Satisfaction Variables

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Hours of deviation
Life Satisfaction	159	4	28	19.2704	4.49991

Source: Primary data processed by the researcher (2025)

Key Data Analytics
1. Assumption Test
Normality Test

The results of the normality test showed a significance value (p) in the leisure activity variable of .000 and in the life satisfaction variable of .001. In accordance with statistical rules, the data is said to be normally distributed if the value of $p > $ is 0.05, and it is said to be abnormal if $p < 0.05$. The results of the test on this data showed that both variables had a significance value below 0.05, which means that the distribution of the data was not normally distributed. This data abnormality may be caused by outliers (extreme values) or respondents' answer patterns that are grouped on certain scores (e.g. positive or negative skewness).

The implication of the normality test results that do not meet this parametric assumption is the adjustment of the hypothesis analysis technique to be used. Because the assumption of normality was not met, the researcher could not use the Pearson Product Moment correlation test which was parametric. Instead, the data analysis will continue using a non-parametric statistical technique, namely the Spearman's Rank (Spearman's rho) correlation test. Spearman's rho technique was chosen because it is more accurate to data that is not normally distributed and does not require strict data distribution assumptions as in parametric statistics. This step is taken to ensure that the results of the correlation analysis remain valid and can be accounted for methodologically.

Table 3 Normality Test Results

Variable	Significance (p)	Remarks
Leisure Activity	.000	Abnormal
Life Satisfaction	.001	Abnormal

Source: Primary data processed by the researcher (2025)

Linearity Test

Table 4 shows the results of the linearity test between the variables of leisure activity and life satisfaction. Based on the output on the Deviation from Linearity line, a significance value of 0.225 was obtained. The decision-making criteria in this test determined that if the significance value (Sig.) was greater than 0.05 (p > 0.05), then the relationship between variables was declared to be linear. The results of the calculation show that the significance value obtained meets these conditions, so it can be concluded that there is a linear relationship between Leisure Activity and Life Satisfaction.

The results of this linearity test confirm that the relationship model built between the two variables is conceptually correct. Linearity indicates that a change in the score in leisure activity will be followed by a proportional change in the life satisfaction score and form a straight-line trend. Although previously the data was shown to be not normally distributed, the discovery of this linearity pattern strengthens the continuation of correlation analysis. With the fulfillment of this assumption of linearity, researchers can be more confident in interpreting the direction and strength of the relationship resulting from the hypothesis test later.

Table 4 Results of the Linearity Test

Relationship	Sig. Deviation from Linearity	Remarks
LA with LS	.225	Linear

Source: Primary data processed by the researcher (2025)

2. Hypothesis Analysis

Based on Table 5, the results of Spearman's rho non-parametric correlation analysis showed a correlation coefficient value (r) of 0.342. The value of the coefficient marked positive indicates the direction of the unidirectional (positive) relationship between the two research variables. This means that the higher the Leisure Activity score possessed by students, the higher their Life Satisfaction score will be, and vice versa. In addition, the results of the analysis also showed a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of < 0.001. Because this significance value is much smaller than the significance level of 0.05 (p < 0.05) and even 0.01 (p < 0.01), the research hypothesis is accepted. Thus, there is a positive and significant relationship between Leisure Activity and Life Satisfaction, including the relationship with moderate strength. A correlation coefficient value of 0.342 when matched with a correlation interpretation guideline (e.g. Guilford or Sugiyono) falls into the category of low but definite or moderate relationships. This indicates that although Leisure Activity contributes to life satisfaction, the relationship is not absolute or very strong, implying that other factors play a role. However, a very strong statistical significance (p < 0.001) confirms that the role of leisure activities on life satisfaction is real and not coincidental in this sample.

Table 5 Results of the Spearman's rho correlation test

Variable Relationships	N	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance (Sig. 2-tailed)
Leisure Activity - Life Satisfaction	159	0.342	< 0.001

Source: Primary data processed by the researcher (2025)

3. Mean Difference Test by Gender

The Mann-Whitney U value in the variable of total free time is 1511, the value Z = 0.525 and Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.600 (>0.05) and mean rank of men = 84.54, female = 79.19. The variables of total life satisfaction were 1445,500, the value of Z= -0.844 and Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.399 (> 0.05) and mean rank of males = 72.73 and females = 81.29. Thus, gender is not a factor that distinguishes the level of leisure time and life satisfaction.

Table 6. Mean Rank Comparison by Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Total Free Time	Men (1)	24	84.54	2029.00
	Women (2)	135	79.19	10691.00
	Total	159	–	–
Total Life Satisfaction	Men (1)	24	72.73	1745.50
	Women (2)	135	81.29	10974.50
	Total	**159**	–	–

Source: Primary data processed by the researcher (2025)

Table 7. Mann–Whitney U Test Results by Gender

Variable	*Mann–Whitney U*	*Wilcoxon W*	*Z*	*Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)*
Total Free Time	1511.000	10691.000	0.525	0.600
Total Life Satisfaction	1445.500	1745.500	–0.844	0.399

Source: Primary data processed by the researcher (2025)

4. Mean Difference Test by Age

The results of the Krukal-Wallis test showed the average age group ranking of participants on the variables of total leisure time (H = 6.175; df = 6; p = 0.404 > 0.05) and on the variables of total life satisfaction (H = 5.276; df = 6; p = 0.509 > 0.05). Thus, participants' leisure time use was relatively the same in each age group and the level of life satisfaction did not differ significantly between age groups.

Table 8. Kruskal–Wallis Test Results by Age Group

Variable	H (Chi-Square)	df	p-value	Remarks
Total Free Time	6,175	6	0,404	There was no significant difference between age groups
Total Life Satisfaction	5,276	6	0,509	There was no significant difference between age groups

Source: Primary data processed by the researcher (2025)

The strength of the relationship between leisure activity and life satisfaction in this study is classified into the moderate or adequate category. The correlation coefficient value obtained of 0.342 shows that leisure activities make a real contribution but are not the only determinant of happiness. This number implies that there are other variables outside the context of leisure time that also affect the high or low level of a person's life satisfaction. Nevertheless, the role of leisure activity is important as one of the supporting elements for the psychological well-being of students. These findings confirm that recreational activities have a portion of influence that cannot be ignored as one way to make Generation Z happy.

Descriptively, this study also found a diverse picture of participants' profiles in terms of the use of their free time. Most Generation Z respondents are known to have a level of leisure activity that is in the medium category, which reflects a reasonable balance between busyness and rest. Meanwhile, participants' average life satisfaction scores tended to be at a good level or generally satisfactory. This descriptive data illustrates that despite facing academic or work challenges, Generation Z is still able to take time for a staycation to maintain sanity. This condition is an important capital for them to maintain their mental well-being amid the demands of life.

This research has succeeded in proving that leisure activities have a significant role in shaping the perception of life satisfaction among Generation Z who like to do staycations. These findings are in line with the bottom-up theoretical approach which states that a person's life satisfaction is formed from the accumulation of satisfaction in specific domains of life. When individuals feel satisfied with their leisure experiences, those positive feelings will permeate and increase their evaluation of the overall quality of life. This is supported by previous literature that states that recreational activities function as a recovery mechanism from stress due to daily routines. Therefore, leisure activity is proven to be not just a time-wasting activity, but a basic psychological need.

In the context of Generation Z, the staycation phenomenon is a relevant form of leisure activity because it can meet the needs of relaxation as well as self-actualization. Through staycation, participants not only get physical rest, but also the opportunity to experience aesthetics that are often shared on social media. The interplay between real-life experiences at vacation locations and social validation in cyberspace provides satisfaction for the generation attached to this technology. The social and relaxation aspects fulfilled during these activities contribute directly to lowering the emotional pressure they feel. As a result, their perception of happiness and life satisfaction becomes more positive after doing these activities.

Although the association found was significant, the correlation at a moderate level suggests that leisure activity does not work alone in determining life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is a complex and multidimensional construct that is also influenced by financial factors, physical health, and academic or career achievements. It is possible that staycations have a temporary impact on happiness, but other life challenges still weigh on the minds of participants. In addition, personality factors such as neuroticism or extraversion may also be moderator variables that were not studied in this study. However, the results of this study still provide strong empirical evidence that neglecting free time can risk lowering an individual's quality of life.

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CONCLUSION

This study found a positive and significant relationship between leisure activity and life satisfaction among Generation Z, as confirmed by Spearman's rho correlation test, indicating that higher intensity, quality, and duration of leisure activities—including staycations—were associated with elevated life satisfaction levels, while lower involvement correlated with reduced satisfaction; thus, the hypothesis was accepted, highlighting staycations' role in achieving Gen Z's goals for well-being. For future research, longitudinal studies could explore causality by tracking changes in leisure patterns and life satisfaction over time, while incorporating qualitative interviews to uncover mediating factors like specific staycation types or cultural influences in diverse Indonesian urban contexts.

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