



A RESEARCH ON DETERMINING THE FACTORS AFFECTING MOTIVATION TO GO TO PARK GARDEN AND GREEN AREAS

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Abstract:

In modern times, park gardens and green areas are seen as one of the most important leisure time activities. At the same time, parks that are open spaces for common use within the city are indispensable places for the individual in terms of interaction and socialization. However, it has been seen that there is not enough research on park gardens and green areas in Turkey or in other countries. The purpose of this study is to reveal the factors that affect the motivation to go to park gardens and green areas. In order to accomplish this aim, it was applied a survey of 204 individuals selected with easy sampling method. As a result of the research, it is seen that there are four factors: discharge, personal development, quality life and economic situation and sports activities. Looking at the average of the factors it was determined that discharging has the highest average. This is followed by sports activities and personal development. However, the quality of life and the economic situation are found to have the lowest average.

Keywords: leisure time, motivation, park garden and green spaces, recreation

1. Introduction

The rapid progress of technology and industrialization increases the prosperity levels of individuals and provides more comfortable life standards. Depending on the

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technological developments, in particular individuals' working hours are gradually reducing. Therefore, the time individuals spare for themselves is increasing, as well (Tütüncü and Kuşlivan 1997: 9-10). On the other hand, along with the developing technology, individuals spend more and more time away from nature, stuck in towns, in a fast life tempo and between home and work monotonously (Kızılaslan, 2007: 3). For this reason, it is important for individuals to spend their leisure time outside of work with various social activities so that they can stay healthy.

It is a known fact that the activities that are performed in the leisure time help the individual to express himself / herself, to gain new experiences, to improve the social environment and to increase his productivity (Kılbaş, 2001: 28). Because of this, resignation and authority holders are increasing the number of places where individuals can make use of their leisure time outside of their work areas. In this context, public spaces such as parks, gardens and green areas are being built and leisure time areas where people can easily reach are being created. Parks, gardens and green areas, which are open to public use within the city texture, are indispensable places for the people living together in urban culture. Moreover, urban parks are places where individuals from different cultures and socio-economic classes come together and unite with nature.

With respect to how recreational spaces in cities that have emerged as a result of new planning through the modernization process of the city take place in our everyday lives and in the process of social interaction, there is a greater need for studies to investigate the place of our city-area-human interaction in our everyday life and leisure time. However, it has been seen that this issue is ignored both in Turkey and in other countries. The current studies are generally evaluated under the title of alternative tourism and the studies on park, garden and green areas have remained limited. In this study carried out in this scope, factors affecting the motivation to go to park, garden and green areas were determined. It is thought that this study will fill the gap in the relevant literature and contribute to future research.

2. Theoretical Framework

Therefore, individuals can behave as they wish in their spare time without having to worry about working. As a matter of fact, if the individuals are satisfied with the activities they are doing, it means that they have realized leisure time activities (Yılmaz et al., 2012: 880).

Park, garden and green areas offer environments for both individual and group recreational activities. In this context, park gardens and green areas play a role of

strengthening social unity by creating a kind of living space for every segment of the society. In addition, these areas positively affect the sensory development of individuals in allowing the residents of the city to engage with nature. Therefore, the importance of parks, gardens and green areas, which have a positive effect on the individual, cannot be underestimated. As a matter of fact, it is thought that the role of the areas expressed within the scope of the individuals being healthy and having their spare time effectively spent is considered to be great. In this context, the related literature has been searched and the factors affecting the motivation to go to park, garden and green areas are explained below.

According to Güneş and Gülgün (2007), recreational areas are organized living spaces that provide the nature and activities that the individual needs. In other words, the planned activities are places that provide the possibility of **discharge** to the people of the city and on the other hand, they constitute the lungs of the city with the green texture they have. Therefore, park, garden and green areas ensure that individuals stay alone in a quiet environment and that the person is discharged.

Another factor affecting the motivation to go to the park, garden and green areas is **personal development** (Awake, 2016). Activities carried out in parks, gardens and green areas contribute to the personal development of the individual as well as physical and mental health. In other words, an individual going to the park, garden and green areas will be able to communicate with children more easily and socialize, which will also contribute to personal development and self-awareness.

In modern times, people prefer park, garden and green areas for **sports** purposes. Park, gardens and green areas provide both walking opportunities in the nature and sports equipment that allows individuals to exercise in the open field (Awake, 2016). Besides, individuals tend to physical activities such as skipping rope, cycling, playing soccer, basketball or volleyball.

Park, garden and green areas are recreational areas that contribute to improving the quality of life of individuals in cities and provide ecosystem services such as noise control, biodiversity support, etc., as well as recreation areas that allow individuals to get rid of the negative effects of daily life (Tütüncü, Aydın, Küçüksusta, Avcı and Taş, 2011; 2017). The economic situation is another factor affecting the motivation to go to park, garden and green areas (Health, Morçin, and Erdoğan Morçin, 2014; Karaşah, 2017). Karaşah (2017) in his/her research states that the greatest cause of workers' failure to go to recreational areas is time insufficiency, while workers say they cannot go because of the economic situation.

3. Method

A questionnaire was applied to 204 people, selected with easy sampling method, in order to determine the factors affecting the motivation to go to the park, garden and green areas. The questions in the questionnaire were created by the researchers as a result of field research and academicians' opinions. Besides this, we have also been benefited from research on this subject (Raadik, et al., 2010, Akinlabi Fadamiro, and Joseph Adedeji, 2014). The survey questions consist of two sections. Accordingly, in the first part, a Likert scale of five points ranging from I Do Not Totally Agree (1) to I Totally Agree (5) is used. In the second part, age, education, gender, etc. oriented questions are included to define the participant profile.

The following hypotheses will be tested for the purpose of the research.

H₁: The motivation for going to park, garden and green areas varies according to gender.

H₂: The motivation to go to park gardens and green areas varies according to age.

4. Findings

105 of the participants were male (51.5%) and 99 (48.5%) were female. When the age groups of the participants were examined, it was found that 82 were between the age range of 25-34 (40.2%), 80 were 15-24 (39.2%), 31 were 35-44 (15.2%), 11 were 45 and above (5.4%). A large number of participants (139.6%) go to park, garden and green areas once a week, 36 (17.6%) once in three days, 19 (9.3%) once in two days and 10 (4.9%) every day.

4.1. Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the questions used to measure different concepts before testing research hypotheses. Four items (1. 9. 15th and 21st questions) which were found to be loaded with more than one factor were extracted from the scale. A Bartlett sphericity test was performed to determine the suitability of the data for factor analysis and the BMD value was calculated. As a result, the Bartlett test was significant (Chi-Square = 1619,127, sd = 136, p = 0,000) and the KMO value was calculated as 0.869. These results show that data are suitable for factor analysis. Factor analysis was then performed. Principal Component Analysis method was used as the analysis method and when the factor number is determined, the criterion that the calculated eigenvalue is greater than 1 is used. As a result of the analysis, the data were

loaded on 4 factors. The total variance explained by the factors is seen to be 64.62%. This suggests that the analysis-generated factors adequately represent the data. The loads of the variables on factors are shown in Table 1. In order to facilitate interpretation, the factor loadings were rotated by the Varimax method and factor loadings with a factor load of less than 0.40 were not shown. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated on each question group in order to measure the reliability of the question groups loaded on the factors, and the results are shown in Table 1. The questionnaires were averaged to be used in later analyzes and new variables were created. The variables created are called Discharge (1), Personal Development (2), Quality Life and Economic Condition (3), and Sports Activities (4).

Table 1: Factor Analysis

	Factors			
	1	2	3	4
I go to the park, garden and green areas to get rid of the daily routine.	.838			
I go to the park, garden and green areas to integrate with the nature.	.775			
I go to the park, garden and green areas to refresh / revive in nature.	.766			
I go to the park, garden and green areas to see different landscapes.	.750			
I go to park, garden and green spaces to spend a nice time with my family.	.748			
I go to park, garden and green areas to get rid of the noisy traffic.	.631			
I go to park, garden and green areas to cool off.	.598			
I go to park, garden and green areas to see an environment full of peace and serenity.	.579			
I go to park, garden and green areas as I think it helps me develop my self-esteem.		.848		
I go to park, garden and green areas as I think it helps me develop my self-efficiency.		.843		
I go to park, garden and green areas as I think it helps me discover myself.		.826		
I go to park, garden and green areas to find the opportunity to think about my problems and solve them.		.658		
I go to park, garden and green areas because it is a cheap activity.			.752	
I go to park, garden and green areas to stay away from TV and technology.			.700	
I go to park, garden and green areas to stay away from cigarettes and alcohol.			.558	
I go to park, garden and green areas to benefit from the sports equipment.				.751
I go to park, garden and green areas for walking.				.728
Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	.888	.852	.585	.604

Deductive Method: Basic Component Analysis. **Rotation Method:** Varimax

Table 2: Findings of Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviations of Question and Factors

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Discharge	3.98	.74
I go to park, garden and green areas to see an environment full of peace and serenity.	3.96	1.09
I go to the park, garden and green areas to see different landscapes.	3.90	.95

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I go to the park, garden and green areas to integrate with the nature.	4.18	.87
I go to the park, garden and green areas to refresh / revive in nature.	3.91	1.04
I go to the park, garden and green areas to get rid of the daily routine.	.838	.92
I go to park, garden and green spaces to spend a nice time with my family.	4.06	1.00
I go to park, garden and green areas to get rid of the noisy traffic.	3.84	1.06
I go to park, garden and green areas to cool off.	3.87	.96
Personal Development	3.19	.90
I go to park, garden and green areas as I think it helps me develop my self-esteem.	3.02	1.09
I go to park, garden and green areas as I think it helps me develop my self-efficiency.	2.94	1.07
I go to park, garden and green areas as I think it helps me discover myself.	3.19	1.06
I go to park, garden and green areas to find the opportunity to think about my problems and solve them.	3.61	1.10
Quality Life and Economic Condition	3.03	.92
I go to park, garden and green areas to stay away from cigarettes and alcohol.	2.69	1.34
I go to park, garden and green areas to stay away from TV and technology.	3.43	1.16
I go to park, garden and green areas because it is a cheap activity.	2.96	1.24
Sports Activities	3.27	.92
I go to park, garden and green areas to benefit from the sports equipment.	2.64	1.18
I go to park, garden and green areas for walking.	3.90	.99

4.2. Difference tests

In this section, findings about whether the motivation to go to park, garden and green areas differ according to gender and age variable are given. Prior to this, it was determined whether the data were normally distributed to determine the method of analysis to be used. For this purpose, Kolmogorov Smirnov Test was applied and sig (p) was determined as 0.01. Accordingly, the data shows a normal distribution ($p < 0.05$). In addition, the Skewness coefficient of the data was calculated as -0.808 ± 0.170 and the Kurtosis coefficient was calculated as 2.439 ± 0.339 . Therefore, the data were analyzed with non-parametric tests.

Table 3: Comparison of motivation to park gardens and green areas according to gender variables

Dependent variables	Gender	Mean	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	p
Personal Development	Male	107.55	4667.500	9617.500	-1.264	.206
	Female	97.15				
Discharge	Male	104.63	4974.000	9924.000	-.532	.595
	Female	100.24				
Sports Activities	Male	94.15	4320.500	9885.500	-2.111	.035
	Female	111.36				
Quality Life and Economic Condition	Male	99.51	4883.500	10448.500	-.750	.453
	Female	105.67				

According to Table 3, it is seen that with the sport activities variable, difference between the motivation to go to the park with gardens and green spaces variable.

Therefore, H_1 is rejected.

Table 4: Comparison of motivation to park garden and green areas according to age variable

Dependent variables	Age	Mean	Chi-square	p
Sports Activities	15-24	103,74	4.906	.179
	25-34	96,95		
	35-44	101,35		
	45 and above	138,09		
Quality Life and Economic Condition	15-24	112,38	4.585	.205
	25-34	94,82		
	35-44	103,27		
	45 and above	85,73		
Personal Development	15-24	114,44	11.264	.010
	25-34	98,30		
	35-44	99,98		
	45 and above	54,05		
Discharge	15-24	97,61	1.824	.610
	25-34	109,07		
	35-44	100,74		
	45 and above	94,09		

According to Table 4, it is seen that with the personal development variable, difference between the motivation to go to the park with gardens and green spaces variable.

Therefore, H_2 is rejected.

5. Conclusion

Leisure times and forms of use are directly related to the quality of life of the individual. Leisure time, which is effectively and efficiently assessed, provides physical and mental benefits to individuals. However, in the modern age, park, garden and green areas are considered to be one of the most important leisure time activities. At the same time, parks, with the characteristic of being open area for common use within the city, are indispensable places for individuals living in urban environment with respect to interaction and socialization.

However, it is seen that there is not enough research on park, garden and green areas in Turkey or in other countries. In this study, the factors affecting the motivation to go to park, garden and green areas are revealed. The data obtained in the research are shown below.

It is seen that there are four factors in the research in total: discharge, personal development, quality of life and economic situation and sports activities. Considering the average of the factors, it is seen that discharging has the highest average. It is followed by sports activities and personal development respectively. However, the quality of life and the economic situation have been found to have the lowest average (see: Table 2). From this result, it can be said that the individuals went to park, garden and green areas in order to be discharged.

It is seen that individuals mostly go to park, garden and green areas in order to integrate with nature. The second reason is seen to be revive/refresh in the nature. On the other hand, it is seen that the expression with the lowest average is to benefit from sports equipment. This is respectively followed by "*I go to the park, garden and green areas to stay away from cigarettes and alcohol, and I go to the park, garden and green areas as I think it helps me develop my self-efficiency*" (see: Table 2). Therefore, it is possible to say that individuals do not go to park, garden and green areas in order to do sports.

It is observed that the motivation for going to the park, garden and green areas varies according to gender variable. According to this, it is seen that there is a difference between the sport activities and the motivation to go to the park, garden and the green areas, but there is no difference between the other variables. From this result, it is seen that sports activities in park, garden and green areas motivate women more. In other words, cardiovascular sports can be made in park, garden and green areas. On the other hand, it is thought that this difference has arisen because the men tend to do sports that require more strength.

Motivation for going to the park, garden and green areas varies according to age variable. According to this, it is seen that there is a difference between the personal

development variable and the motivation to go to the park, garden and the green areas. From this result, it is seen that mostly young people prefer park, garden and green areas for personal development. The development of technology enables young people to grow up more consciously. From this result, it can be deduced that as a result of the awareness of the young, they go to park, garden and green areas to enhance their personal development.

When the results of the research are evaluated in general, these findings point to important issues and can be a guide for the development of park, garden and green areas. One of the most important limitations of this research is that the research sample consists of 204 people. Therefore, it will be useful to repeat the study using a larger sample in the future.

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