Recreational Need Assessment of 15 – 64 Years Old Citizen in Shiraz City in Personal, Environmental- social & Cultural Dimension in 2013

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Abstract

The objective of this research was the recreational need assessment of 15 – 64 Years Old Citizens in Shiraz City in three dimensions of individual, environmental-social and cultural. The research method was a descriptive survey. The statistical population of the study consisted male and female citizen of Shiraz from which 496 were selected using stage sampling method (appropriate to sample size). The research instrument was a researcher questionnaire containing 65 close ended questions. The reliability of the questionnaire proved to be 0.96 using Combrash’s alpha coefficient and validity of the questionnaire was a superficial and content validity. The data was analyzed both through descriptive (frequency, percentage and standard deviation) and inferential (one-variable t-test, Independent-sample t-test, One way analyzed of variance, LSD test and Freidman) statistics. Analysis of the findings revealed that the most important recreational needs of Shiraz citizens are the need for recreational programs for adolescents considering the individual dimension with the average of 4/06, the need for recreational facilities part in (parking, enough light and recreational facilities) considering the environmental - social dimension with the average of 4/12, and the need for places to hold sport classes considering cultural dimension with the average of 3/86. The recreational needs of citizens were above the average in all three dimensions. No meaningful difference was seen in citizens, recreational needs in the three dimensions regarding age, sex and income. A meaningful difference was seen among recreational needs in individual dimension considering education, marital status and occupation. In addition, there was a meaningful difference among recreational needs in environmental-social dimension regarding owning a car. The most obstacles for participating in recreational program was the distance between recreational places and living place.

Introduction

Recreation and planning for it has preoccupied many individuals, experts, and the concerned organizations and has captured the attention of many scholars in the field as a slight inattention to this aspect of life may result in serious complications such as depression, behavioral abnormalities, delinquency, and other social harms. Increasing numbers of cities and urban population and the prevalence of the spirit of urbanism can be considered as the most important social developments of the last half century (Jensen and Nayleor j, 2000). Recreation has also another meaning. In its literal sense, recreation refers to the experience of unity and oneness which in turn results in the revitalization of one’s powers. Like other emotions, this type of experience and feeling has other capabilities and can be called as a sublime experience in its most powerful form. Therefore, the experience of recreation recharges our batteries during our waking hours. Like sleeping, recreation as the word suggests is a type of human reformation. While most studies have defined need as the gap between what exists at present and what should be exist, need in the present study has been emphasized as something that people want and their demands for future means what they want to have in their lives (Jensen and Nayleor j, 2000). In fact, previous studies have attempted to focus on what exists in reality. However, the present study describes needs in keeping with different dimensions. As mentioned earlier, the present study looks at the need for recreation from different angles. At the personal level, the need for recreation has been considered people’s age, gender, occupation, income level, and their personal skills that have the greatest impact on individuals’ need for recreation. Besides, people’s need for recreation has been assessed based on their need to participate in the community and their willingness to communicate to other people. Finally, at the cultural level the need for recreation has been taken into the account in this need analysis based on the existing culture in the society and values and norms accepted by people. (Nor Akbar, 2006).

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Shiraz is one of the major industrial cities in Iran and is considered as the Iranian cultural center with a fixed population of 1460665 persons. Planning for recreational activities in this metropolis can solve its problems. Accordingly, based on a need analysis Shiraz citizens’ needs for recreation have been identified. Then the utilization of amenities in each region has been addressed based on a need analysis the micro (citizenship) level and the macro (organizational) level to design civic spaces in the form of a calm, pleasant, and different environment for the citizens’ participation in different recreational activities. Shiraz as the center of Fars Province is 40 km long and 15 to 30 km width with an area of 1268 square kilometers is located at E 33°29’ and N36°29’. Shiraz is 1500 m high from sea level. Besides, it has been the Iranian capital for different time periods in the past. Shiraz has undergone considerable development during recent decades and has changed into one of the beautiful and important cities in Iran. (sareh, 2013).

Literature Review:

Most studies have been conducted sporadically and have revolved around a given topic. Theses studies have addressed people’s recreational needs and the way they spend their free time but they have paid less attention to a need analysis of factors affecting people’s participation in recreational activities.

However, it should be noted that the literature on recreation is not so widespread in Iran and we may say that the number of such studies are limited and they have often focused on free time and leisure activities. The literature in the field mostly dates back to 2000. The present study has used more general and new studies on the problem under investigation.

Research methodology:

Before selecting an appropriate research methodology, attention must be paid to the problem and research objectives. In most cases a reliable study depends on research questions and a practical methodology to explore research questions (Batacharba and Johnson 2009). The goal of selecting a research methodology for the research is to determine which method or approach must be adopted to answer research questions more quickly and accurately. (Bazargan and Hejazi 2009). One of the most common quantitative research methods is descriptive-survey method. It is descriptive as the researcher wants to reports what exists in reality. It is also a survey in the sense that the researcher’s aim is to examine the respondents’ opinions on a given topic (Naderi and Seif Naraghi 2009). A survey research is a systematic data set which is called the variable matrix in terms of case-based data. In this matrix, the researcher examines the characteristics of each variable under study and obtains a systematic data set (Khaki, 2005). Accordingly, the present study has employed a descriptive-survey research method to perform a analysis on recreational needs of 15 to 64 year old citizens in Shiraz at personal, social-environmental, and cultural levels.

Research population:

The population under study included all 15 to 64 year old citizens in Shiraz in 2012 based on the 2011 Census (the last census) by Shiraz Registry Department (See Table 1):

Table 1: Shiraz population based on participants’ gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shiraz Population</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1460665</td>
<td>732380</td>
<td>728285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sampling and sample size:

The sample is a group of the population members who represent the whole population and have more or less the same characteristics of the population (Skaran, 2007). In the present study, firstly 30 questionnaires were distributed among the population and then after the calculation of the population confidence level and variance, the sample size was determined based on the information in Table 3-1 through the following equation:

\[ n = \frac{N\delta^2}{(N-1)D^2 + \delta^2} \]

Where, \( N \) is the sample size, \( \delta^2 \) is the variance for the early 30 person pilot sample, \( D \) is the standard error, and \( n \) is the sample size which was determined as follows:

\[ n = \frac{N\delta^2}{(N-1)D^2 + \delta^2} = \frac{1460665 \times 124}{1460664 \times 0.25 + 124} = 496 \]

Table 2: Sample size information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Population size</td>
<td>1460665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Estimation error</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \delta^2 )</td>
<td>Population variance</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The sample size was determined as 496 persons using the above equation and the number of the participants for each of the nine districts in Shiraz was determined through stratified sampling technique.

**Sampling method:**

The sampling refers to the selection of a section of the population as the representative of the population in order to make sure that the sample selected is the real representative of the population under study. Researchers usually choose the sample through random methods. One of the advantages of selecting the sample from among a big population is that it saves the time and costs needed (Salimi, 1997). In the present study, stratified random sampling method was used based on the sample size. To do so, first of all, the population is divided into several subpopulations or clusters. Then the researchers select a number of random samples based on the population size and the number of participants in each subpopulation (Sanjabi, 1997).

**Data Analysis:**

Data analysis was performed in the present study by SPSS Software (Version 19) at the two levels of descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included statistical measures such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Accordingly, inferential statistics included univariate t-tests, t-statistics with two independent groups, one-way ANOVA, LSD post hoc test, and Friedman test.

**Results:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 1:** Sample frequency distribution based on the participants’ gender.

The aim of the present study was to perform a analysis on recreational needs of 15 to 64 year old citizens in Shiraz at individual, social-environmental, and cultural levels. Accordingly, 496 persons were selected through random stratified sampling based on the sample size equation with the sampling error of 25%. The instrument used to collect the data was a researcher-made questionnaire the included 65 items based on a one way five-point Likert scale whose reliability was determined equal to 0.96 in the preliminary phase.

**Discussion and Conclusions:**

Data analysis was performed at the two levels of descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (univariate t-test and Friedman test). The results of data analysis indicated that the most important recreational needs of citizens in Shiraz at the personal level are the need for recreational programs for youth with a mean score of 4.06, the need for recreation based on social-environmental factors including the existence of sufficient facilities in parks (such as health facilities, appropriate parking spaces … with a mean score of 4.12, and the recreational needs at the cultural level such as holding exercise classes and sports programs with the mean score of 3.86. As it can be seen, the participants’ recreational needs are higher than average at all three levels. Besides, there is no significant difference between different needs for recreation in terms of the participants’ age, gender, and their income level at the personal, social-environmental, and cultural levels. In contrast, there is a significant difference between the participants’ need for recreation in terms of the participants’ level of education, marital status, and their jobs at the personal level and their need for recreation in terms of having a personal car at the social-environmental
level. Furthermore, it was noted that the main problems in using recreation programs and places are the great
distance between recreational places and the participants' residential places with a mean score of 3.63, the
crowdedness of recreational places with the mean score of 3.55, and the lack of suitable time for citizens to use
such places with the mean score of 3.52. The results of the present study were in line with findings by Mottahari
(2001) who suggested that people's personal needs must be taken into account in order to satisfy them. The
results of the study were also compatible to Ahmadi Renani (2007) who recommended the construction of
recreational places for children and youth and Shihidi Zandi (2009) who have emphasized the attention to be
paid to the significance of personal factors on how to spend free times. The present study is also in line with
Nour Akbar (2006) who observed that intrapersonal factors are important for the Malaysian women's
participation. The harmony between the findings concerning the need for recreation at the personal level may
point to the high significance of recreational programs for children, teenagers, and youth; generations that are
supposed to construct the future of the society and that their physical and mental health is the first priority for all
citizens.

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