



EVALUATION OF THE VIEWS OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE IN THE RECREATIONAL USE OF PARKS

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Abstract:

The people of today who are struggling with intensive environment and difficult living conditions in cities face with psychological, physical and social problems. The negative change in the people's environment increases the need for recreation of today's people. To meet the vital needs of the urban population who face such a negative situation, therefore, recreation environments should be established. As a matter of fact, many needs of people should be taken into consideration when making urban plans. At this point, the parks in the cities are important areas that will have a positive impact on people's physical, social and psychological aspects. It is very important that the parks in the city centers offer better opportunities for people and the views of the local people in using them for recreational purposes. The study was conducted by semi-structured interview method with 10 female and 10 male individuals residing around the Abbasaga Park in Besiktas district of Istanbul. In the research, the demographic characteristics of the individuals, the ways of evaluating their leisure time, the ways to use the park, the reasons for choosing them and the innovations that can be done in the park were carried out. The majority of the participants is composed by university graduates which spends their free time with their friends. They usually benefit from sports and walking. They stated that they preferred the park because they were close to their homes. The new ones to be brought to this park indicate the development of sporting areas for elderly and disabled individuals. As a result, individuals living in the vicinity of Abbasaga Park spend a certain part of their spare time in the park and they stated that there are shortcomings in the park.

Keywords: recreation, leisure, environment, outdoor recreation, park recreation

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1. Introduction

Leisure may be both qualitative and quantitative. On the one hand, leisure is very important to most people. In fact, there is evidence that leisure may be becoming more and more important in our lives. On the other hand, the scope of leisure is also vast in terms of the use of time, the expenditure of financial resources, and its relationship to home, family, and community.

If leisure is beneficial to the health of the citizens of a society, it benefits the society in general. That has been the most common argument for the support of leisure programs. The origin of the recreation movement in the world stemmed from the rise of the industrial cities, their lack of recreation space and opportunity for children and youth, and the quite evident problems of physical and social health.

The term recreation stems from the Latin *recreationem* which refers to restoration or recovery. The term implies the re-creation of energy or the restoration of ability to function. Unlike leisure, which has more and more been defined as a human phenomenon in its own right rather than something different from or leftover after work, recreation contains the concept of restoration of wholeness of mind, spirit, and body. It presupposes some other activity that depletes, tires, or deteriorates that wholeness (Kelly, 1989).

The people of today who are struggling with the environmental problems that are concentrated in the cities and the conditions of life that have become difficult / he has to live together with physical, psychological and social problems. This negative change in people and its environment leads to a dramatic increase in the recreation need of our age.

The most crucial principle that is taken into thought when establishing cities is to meet the basic vital needs of the resident of the city, and thus to create the living spaces and instruments that meet the requirements. Cities play a role in organizing and enhancing not only the compulsory time periods for the individual to go to school, but also the propensity of people to leisure. It also plays a role in regulator and developer in leisure time trends. Leisure trends tend to vary considerably in cities, with a wide range of services for different socioeconomic groups. As a matter of fact, urban planning requires the planning of contemporary living spaces for individuals to live humanly by considering the physical and mental needs of individuals. Recreation can be defined as all of the actions that people enjoy in their free time in terms of rest, recreation and progress in every age, instead of spending more energy or eliminating the fatigue of daily life, renewing themselves physically and spiritually, connecting to life and renewing their energy (Torkildsen, 2006). Since the desire of nature and recreation in different stages of the life of human beings is different in different qualities and dimensions, areas that can meet this desire in urban areas should be formed and presented in a wide range.

The fields of recreation activity can vary or vary depending on the shape, duration, style of participation, climate, economic, geographical conditions and community culture. These factors can be added to the country's industrialized structure

and policies. Because the development levels of countries create changes in the understanding and practices related to the empty time. Countries can have leisure time opportunities in proportion to their development or riches. In the selection of the activities of the people, the living environment, the opportunities available in this environment, the socio-economic level of the family, the customs and traditions of the region, age and gender, personality characteristics and friends can be effective. For example, activity programs among different age groups are the only way to support individuals over middle age for physical activity. Together with these programs, students develop mobility between adults, academic units and local people. (Harper, 1999).

The fields of recreation activity are explained by grouping with various activities. Bucher states the areas of recreational activity as follows. (Bucher, 1972).

- music endeavors: instrumental music studies, orchestral studies, choral ensembles, chamber music studies and so on.
- dancing activities: folk dances, social dances, modern dances, ball activities.
- arts and small handicrafts: plastic arts, leather works, graphic arts, ceramics, mining works, photography, art articles, sewing and embroidery.
- sports and games: archery, badminton, table tennis, tennis, ball games, fencing, golf, educational games.
- stage work: games, festivals, club events.
- outdoor activities: camps, picnic, fishing, campfire and entertainment, canoeing, nature conservation activities.
- various activities: gardening and floristry, discussion and forum, paper games and mental games, hobby clubs.

Parks are a crucial feature of local government supply. They provide a focal point for a group and generally contain elements of both active and passive recreation. Urban parks have their roots in the mid-nineteenth century. These come to light in response to a need, in urban areas, for the working residents to have somewhere to relax from their labours (Gentil, 1991).

2. Material and Method

In this respect, a case study has been made by analyzing one or more situations in their own boundaries and by interpreting and interpreting the situations alone or comparatively.

The population of the study consists of local residents residing in Beşiktaş, Istanbul. The sample is composed of local residents residing around the Abbasağa Park in the district of Beşiktaş, Istanbul. 10 female 10 male residing in the district of Abbasağa were randomly selected with a random sampling method and interviewed on a voluntary basis. Participants were informed about recreation and parks and data were interpreted by content analysis technique. Participants were coded from K1 to K20.



Figure 1: Abbasaga Park

3. Results

Table 1: Demographic Information of Participants

| Participant | Age | Gender | Education Status | Profession | Income Level |
|-------------|-----|--------|------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| K1 | 25 | Male | University | Software Engineer | Middle |
| K2 | 24 | Male | University | Footballer | Low |
| K3 | 25 | Male | High School | Waiter | Middle |
| K4 | 25 | Male | University | Referee | Middle |
| K5 | 23 | Male | University | Self-Employment | Middle |
| K6 | 19 | Female | High School | Waitress | Low |
| K7 | 20 | Female | High School | Waitress | Middle |
| K8 | 20 | Male | High School | Pageboy | Low |
| K9 | 37 | Male | High School | Cameraman | Middle |
| K10 | 20 | Female | University | Translator | Middle |
| K11 | 19 | Female | University | Waitress | Middle |
| K12 | 35 | Male | University | Business Owner | High |
| K13 | 23 | Female | University | Pet Shop Employee | Middle |
| K14 | 21 | Female | University | Veterinary | Middle |
| K15 | 34 | Male | High School | Business Owner | High |
| K16 | 49 | Male | University | Folk Dance Teacher | High |
| K17 | 18 | Female | University | Student | High |
| K18 | 19 | Female | University | Student | High |
| K19 | 18 | Female | University | Student | Middle |
| K20 | 18 | Female | University | Student | Middle |

In Table 1, residents of Beşiktaş Abbasaga Park were included in the survey and coded for age, gender, education level, profession, and economic status.

Table 2: Age, Gender, Educational Status and Economic Status of Beşiktaş Residents Participated in the Study

| Personal Information | | n | % | F |
|----------------------|-------------|----|----|----|
| Gender | Male | 10 | 50 | 20 |
| | Female | 10 | 50 | |
| Age Groups | 18-28 | 17 | 85 | 20 |
| | 29-39 | 2 | 10 | |
| | 40-50 | 1 | 5 | |
| Education Level | University | 15 | 75 | 20 |
| | High School | 5 | 25 | |
| Economic Situation | High | 5 | 25 | 20 |
| | Middle | 11 | 55 | |
| | Low | 4 | 20 | |

Table 2 shows the sex, age groups, education levels and economic status of the residents of Abbasaga Park in Beşiktaş. 50% of the female participants and 50% of the male participants. The highest rate of participants according to age groups is 85% among the 18-28 age group, 75% according to education level and 55% according to economic situation.

Table 3: Main Theme and Codes

| Themes | Codes | Participations |
|--|--|---|
| How do you rate your leisure? | Going to the cinema | K1, K10, K19, K20 |
| | Sport | K2, K4, K8 |
| | Spends time with friends | K3, K6, K7, K9, K11, K12, K13, K14, K18 |
| | Resting | K5 |
| | No Leisure | K15 |
| | Traveling | K16, K17 |
| Which aspects do you use from Abbasaga Park? | Meeting point | K5, K6 |
| | Spends time with friends | K7, K8 |
| | Sport | K1, K2, K4, K10, K11, K12 |
| | Walking | K13, K14, K15, K17, K18, K20 |
| | Resting | K3, K9, K16, K19 |
| Reasons to prefer Abbasaga Park compared to surrounding parks? | Close to home | K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K7, K10, K11, K12, K13, K14, K17, K18, K19, K20 |
| | Spacious and comfortable | K8 |
| | For Feeling Free | K9 |
| | There's no reason | K15 |
| | Having a quiet place | K16 |
| What are the innovations that can be brought to Abbasaga Park? | Toilet | K1, K7, K10 |
| | Expanding sport areas | K2, K3, K9, K12, K17 |
| | Arrangement for elderly or disabled citizens | K5, K14, K18 |
| | Expanding play areas | K8, K20 |
| | Increasing seating areas | K11 |
| | Increasing activities | K4 |
| | Increasing green areas | K6 |
| | Increasing security | K15 |
| | Increasing lighting | K19 |
| | Markets | K13, K16 |

In Table 3, the opinions of the participants about the park were evaluated according to the answers they gave to the leisure time behaviors on four main themes.

Looking at Table 3, four different themes are discussed: how the participants evaluate their free time, the ways in which they use Abbasaga Park, the reasons why Abbasaga Park is preferred compared to the surrounding parks, and the innovations that can be brought to Abbasaga Park.

3.2 How do you rate your Leisure time?

As a result of the interviews with the participants, they spend their time with 9 people, 4 people go to the cinema, travel and do sports. One person rested and another person stated that he did not have free time.

3.3 Which aspects are used in the Abbasaga Park?

The majority of the participants stated that they used the sports and hiking from Abbasaga Park (n = 6) to evaluate their free time and then to spend time as a resting place and as a meeting point.

3.4 Why choose Abbasaga Park compared to the surrounding parks?

Considering the reasons for preferring the Abbasaga Park compared to the surrounding parks, the majority of the participants (n = 16) stated that they were close to their homes. The other participants stated that the park is a quiet place, feeling free, large and comfortable and there is no reason for it.

3.5 What are the innovations that can be brought to Abbasaga Park?

The majority of the participants stated that for the innovations to be made for Abbasaga Park, the majority of them should be developed for the development of sports fields, for the elderly or disabled citizens, and for the needs of the toilet and markets. In addition, there were people who stated that the development of playgrounds, increasing the living areas, increasing the activities, increasing the green areas, increasing the security and increasing the illumination should be increased.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the data obtained after the investigations and interviews, the interview was conducted by 10 male and 10 female participants. The majority of the participants are young people aged 18-28. It is equally distributed in terms of gender. Most of them stated that the education level is university and the level of income is at the middle level. The participants who stated that the participants went to the cinema in their spare time were mostly women and university graduates, while the ones who did sports did generally stated that they were male and university graduates. It is seen that male participants usually benefit from the park for sport and recreation purposes, while female participants use it more for walking purposes.

The reason why the participants prefer Abbasağa Park plays the most important role is that some of the male participants stated that they preferred the park of Abbasağa large and comfortable, giving them a free feeling, being a quiet place and not having any reason.

The participants think that the expansion of the sports areas of Abbasağa Park, the arrangement for the elderly and disabled citizens, the development of the toilet, playgrounds and the provision of the buffet services should be new.

Koçyiğit and Yıldız (2004) in the study called a recreation practices in local administrations needs in Konya province stated that, more attention should be given to recreation and parking areas, recreational organizations and services for the needs of the people, because there is a need for spaces where leisure time activities can be realized with increasing urban population. In this respect, it is similar to our research.

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