Assessing the Effective Factors of Citizens’ Social Participation in Maintaining Green Space in Mashhad Metropolitan (Case Study: District 3 of Mashhad Municipality)

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Extended Abstract
1. Introduction
There is a two-way relationship between the city and the citizens as human beings make cities and cities can have an impact on their life conditions. Such a relationship is required for the optimization of the urban reform which can be organized through urban management. Citizen’s participation in decision-making, planning, and all other activities related to social development are considered by the managers, planners, and experts. It can be said that public participation in municipal affairs is one of the key elements of democratic governance which can bring balance to the city as well. It can be said that green space is a goal which cannot be accomplished without public participation. Having annually millions of pilgrims and tourists, green space is more required in Mashhad than other cities. The main objective of this paper is to examine the relationship between social factors and the participation of citizens in the maintenance of green spaces in the city of Mashhad (3rd District) based on the findings and results of the field study. It aims at investigating the factors that influence the level of citizen’s participation in the maintenance of green spaces.

2. Review of Literature
The citizen’s participation has been the extensive issue in urban planning since 1950. Urban planners tried to consider the comments of citizens in municipal decision making and implement their programs with their cooperation. In this study, the main emphasis is on the social participation as one of the requirements of urban life. Participation is referred to as a process through which people influence the structure, organization, and the authorities to provide adequate municipal services. Therefore, participation can increase the capacity of people to participate and empower the local governance. Reviewing opinions and theories, it can be concluded that social participation is a multidimensional phenomenon as it requires special requirements.

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3. Method
This research has applied the descriptive-analytical method. The statistical society is the district three population of Mashhad who are among the low income citizens and have the lowest per capita green space compared to the other municipality's 13 regions. The sample size is 380 people chosen through Cochran random sampling method. To analyze the data, employing SPSS, statistical methods of Kruskal-Wallis test, Spearman, and Kendall were performed. Also, five indicators of economic conditions, a sense of belonging and ownership, immigration, level of citizens' satisfaction with green spaces, and education are investigated.

4. Results and Discussion
The indicators of the participants show that

- 68% of them are self-employed, 15.5% have government jobs, and 16.5% are unemployed.
- 54.11% of them are owners, 44.6% are tenants, and 1.27% live in social housing.
- 59.18% of residents are under 5 years old. The rate of residents who live in the region between 5 to 10 years is 6.33%. 19.3% of the residents are between 10 to 15 years, 9.49% are between 15 to 20 years, and only 5.7% of residents who live in the region are above 20 years.
- Regarding satisfaction, 63.29% of them have expressed to have too low satisfaction, 13.61% have too high, 11.71% have the average, 6.96% have low, and 4.43% have high satisfaction from the green spaces.
- The largest number of respondents (74.3%) have diploma or lower. Approximately 2% of them have undergraduate education while 23.7% are illiterate.
- Checking the status of citizen participation in the maintenance of green spaces in the 3rd district of Mashhad shows that 59.49% of their participation is too high, 18.35% is the average, 9.18% is low, 7.59% is high, and 4.75% is too low.

5. Conclusion
This study expresses the rate of participation of the residents of district 3 of Mashhad as it follows,

- The evaluation of the impact of participation was positive and most citizens believed that they could take part in the urban management and the maintenance of green spaces.
- There was no significant relationship between economic status of individuals and their participation.
- There is a significant relationship between indicators of sense of belonging to the location and the extent of their participation in the green spaces.
- There is a negative relationship between citizen migration and their participation in the maintenance of green spaces.
The more satisfactory the services are in parks and urban green spaces, the more willing the citizens are to contribute to the maintenance of green spaces.

The level of the education is not effective on the extent of their participation.

According to the results, the following strategies are recommended:

- Since the majority of respondents expressed willingness to cooperate with the civil administration in the field of maintenance of green spaces, it is appreciated that the municipal administration runs special programs by the people who are the target users for the maintenance of green spaces.
- The development of social capital, increased levels of social trust, decrease levels of inequality, increasing green spaces per capita, increasing media cooperation, gain the trust of citizens and design web poll.

**Keywords:** Urban green space, Social participation, District 3, Mashhad, Iran

**References (in Persian)**


References (In English)


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