

THE USE OF PARKS AND GREEN AREAS OF A CITY: SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

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ABSTRACT

The following research aims to investigate the social and environmental benefits provided by parks and green areas of a city in constant growth. Also, detect the problems within them, and the diverse activities carried out by the people who visit and make use of these spaces. Therefore, the city of Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico, where parks and green areas were used, was selected as the study area. The research is of quantitative type, and to select the sample a non-probabilistic sampling was used for convenience, determining a sample of 70 people. For the collection of the information, a questionnaire was applied consisting of six closed-type variables, for the processing of the information the computer program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19 was used, where the variables were treated in tables of frequency. Of the results obtained, 27.1% of people make walks, 10% develop exercise, 20%, simply visit the parks for distraction, 1.4% make use of these spaces by medical description, and 15.7% use them for different activities. However, negative aspects were found within the parks and green areas, we have that 18.6% of the people surveyed expressed that there is garbage in the parks, this demonstrates the need to take steps to give the necessary maintenance to these spaces, because it is of utmost importance to conserve its surroundings for the healthy subsistence of the population.

Keywords: Green areas, social welfare, city, parks, population.

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, attention to the care of cities and their image has been imposed as a nucleus of action for municipal entities that try to offer a model of urban habitat for citizens (Puyuelo and Gual, 2009). Likewise, the comfort generated by the parks and green areas of a city bring social and environmental well-being to the city dweller, in addition, they create an atmosphere of tranquility in the city, reducing the constant stress of the day.

It is worth mentioning that, the cities that make up these parks and green areas in their urban environment give a substantial balance to society in general, having as favorable results a better natural environment and a better quality of life.

From the above, the city is a creation of the human being, a social entity in whose design, form and configuration it is possible to visualize the society that creates it, uses it and at the same time nourishes it with meanings (López-Oviedo, 2013), and at the same time, creating green spaces and public parks that give the identity of an urban city in constant growth.

Thus, the park is one of the most recognized urban scenarios in what concerns recreational spaces. The parks, as part of the public space, are a symbolic representation of well-being (Martínez and Maritza, 2014).

Parks and Green Areas

The parks must be open spaces of great dimensions, for the ecological value of the large plant masses and their effects on the environment (García, 1989). Thus, urban parks are generally understood as delineated, open, public access areas whose use is predominantly recreational (Vargas and Roldán, 2018).

From the above, vegetation and trees dominate the landscape and constitute the main green spaces of an urban settlement (Vargas and Roldán, 2018). The parks or spaces with green areas have been used culturally as areas to play, for social coexistence, distraction, exercise, recreation, the idea is not to lose that essence and give it the same uses, but with the advantage of social knowledge about the city (Ávila, Ríos and Rodríguez, 2012).

Social Benefits

Urban green areas have a high potential for generating benefits for their inhabitants, both direct and indirect, which can help solve many of the problems related to urban agglomerations or life in society (Frutos and Esteban, 2009).

Miranda (1997) refers that the urban park is an open space for public use, it establishes human relations of leisure, recreation, sports, community coexistence, education and culture within the city; express in the concrete one of the forms of society-nature relationship.

Thus, urban parks offer a range of recreational, cultural and environmental options for their population; they are spaces of concurrence that recreate symbolic values and strengthen bonds of social coexistence (Bascuñan et al., 2007).

Environmental Benefits

Green areas in cities can reduce some pollutants to some extent. They are reduced directly when dust and smoke particles are trapped in the vegetation (Frutos and Esteban, 2009). Certainly within the environmental improvements can be cited the reduction of high temperatures hit the large cities of asphalt, regulating the changes in temperature thanks to the islands of trees within the urban sprawl.

The work of the green areas as such, should be a mainstay of integral development of society, with this vision the administration and management of the green spaces of the city should be understood (Rivas, 2005). The spaces in a city with a greater number of square meters per inhabitant improve their quality of life and establish biogeochemical flows and comfort conditions that the set of faunal elements can take advantage of, like the man himself (Anaya, 2001).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the research are:

1. to investigate the social and environmental benefits provided by the parks and green areas of the city,
2. to detect the problems within them, and the diverse activities carried out by the people who visit and make use of these spaces.

METHODOLOGY


Study Area

The following investigation was carried out in the city of Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico, located geographically: north 23°05', south 20°36' north latitude, east 103°43', west 105°46' west longitude. The state borders on the north with Sinaloa and Durango, on the east with

Durango, Zacatecas and Jalisco, on the south with Jalisco and the Pacific Ocean, on the west with the Pacific Ocean and Sinaloa (aregional, 2009).


Therefore, parks and green areas of this city were used to carry out this research, then a description of the parks and green areas to be studied is given:

Table 1. Plaza colonia 2 de Agosto

Features	Location
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Plaza colonia 2 de agosto Surface: 9,943 m² 	
Green Area	


Source: H. Ayuntamiento de Tepic 2012-2014, Fondo municipal

Table 2. Plaza Las Banderas

Features	Location
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Plaza Las Banderas Surface: 6,488 m² 	
Green Area	

Source: H. Ayuntamiento de Tepic 2012-2014, Fondo municipal

Table 3. Parque “El Tecolote”

Features	Location
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Parque “El Tecolote” Surface: 1,892 m² 	
Park	

Source: H. Ayuntamiento de Tepic 2012-2014, Fondo municipal

Table 4. Parque Rodeo

Features	Location
Name: Parque Rodeo	
Surface: 10,032 m ²	
Park	

Source: H. Ayuntamiento de Tepic 2012-2014, Fondo municipal

Selection of the Sample

It should be mentioned that the research is of a quantitative type, and for the sample selection a non-probabilistic sampling was used for convenience, it is understood that the convenience sampling is the one with which the sample units are selected according to the convenience or

accessibility of the researcher (Tamayo, 2001). Based on this technique, a sample of 70 people was determined to study in the parks and green areas presented previously.

Gathering Information

For the collection of the information, a questionnaire consisting of six closed-type variables was applied to a sample of 70 people who make use of the parks and green areas of the city of Tepic, as shown below:

1. What is your sex?
2. How old are you?
3. Every when you frequent the parks and the green areas of the city?
4. What activity do you do in the parks and green areas?
5. Is it important to preserve the environment of the parks and the green areas of the city?
6. What problems do you detect in the parks and green areas of the city?

Processing of Information

For the processing of the information, the computer program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19 was used, where the variables were treated and processed in frequency tables for the analysis and later presenting the results obtained from this investigation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

What is your sex?

The following results were obtained, 54.3% belong to female users, while 45.7% are male people who frequent these green areas. You can see the difference that women use and frequent more these spaces available to perform various activities.

How old are you?

Also, within the survey results of the ages of the users were shown, 26 to 35 years 28.6%, 36 to 45 years 22.9%, 46 to 50 years 22.9% and 51 years or more 25.7%, it is therefore determined that The majority of the people have an average age of 30 to 50 years, therefore, they are people who because of their age take advantage of these spaces for recreation, health or simply distraction.

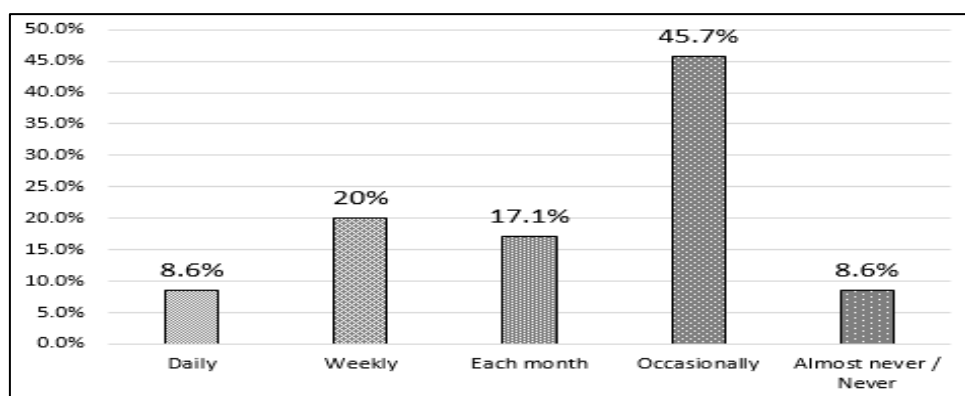


Figure 1. Every when you frequent the parks and the green areas of the city?

Every when you frequent the parks and the green areas of the city?

Now, it was asked that they frequent the parks and the green areas of the city, 8.6% frequent it daily, 20% each week, 17.1% each month, 45.7% frequent it occasionally, and finally 8.6% never, as it is observed in above figure 1.

What activity do you do in the parks and green areas?

Likewise, the people who frequent and make use of the parks and green areas of the city were asked what activities they carry out, the results are the following: 27.1% hike, 10% develop exercise, 20%, simply visit the parks for distraction, 1.4% are people who make use of these spaces by medical description, and 15.7% use them for different activities, as shown in figure 2.

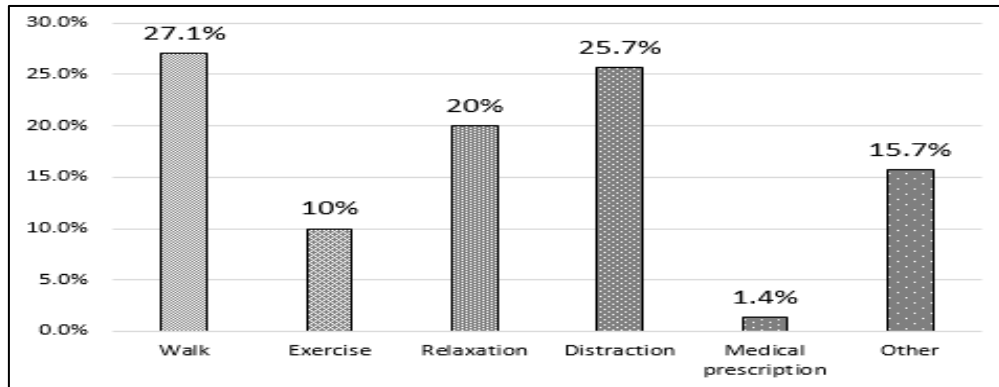


Figure 2. What activity do you do in the parks and green areas?

Is it important to preserve the environment of the parks and the green areas of the city?

It is worth mentioning that, 100% of the people surveyed responded that it is important to take care of the surroundings of the parks and green areas, since they are true lungs of the city, and they help us to conserve the ecosystem, thus, through them reflects the well-being of a healthy city, giving the city an emotional stability, providing great social and environmental benefits, serving as places of recreation and recreation for families.

What problems do you detect in the parks and green areas of the city?

Negative aspects were also observed within the parks and green areas of the city, the results are the following, 18.6% expressed that there is garbage in the parks, 5.7% bad odors, 24.3% the parks and the green areas are neglected, 7.1% within the parks there is not enough green area, 7.1% there is noxious fauna, 15.7% there is insecurity, 15.7% observe other types of problems and finally 5.7% say that there is no problem within these spaces, as shown in the figure 3.

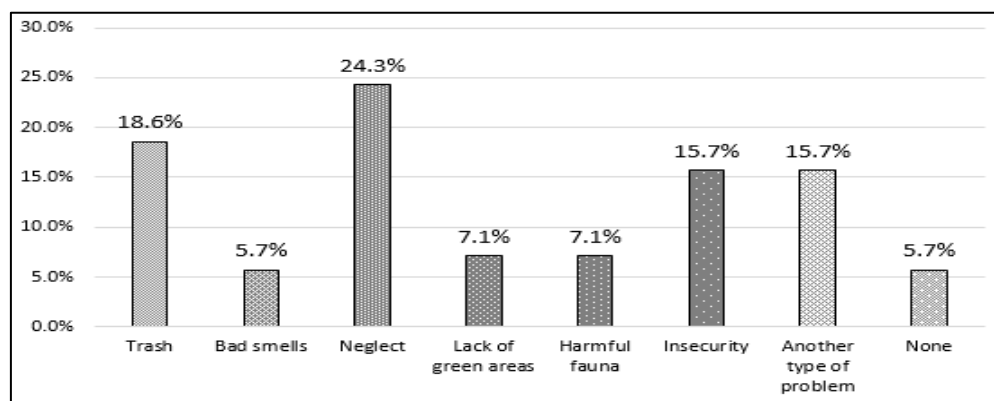


Figure 3. What problems do you detect in the parks and green areas of the city?

CONCLUSION

We can conclude that the parks and green areas of a city are of great importance, since they provide a great amount of environmental and social benefits, that is, they are the lungs of a

city that gives the ecological balance, gives the necessary stability to the city families and visitors.

It should be noted that, of the results presented 18.6% I think there is garbage in the parks and green areas, this shows the need to carry out negotiations with the competent authorities to give the necessary maintenance to these spaces, because it is important to preserve their environments, which are important for human subsistence.

In this way, these areas provide a positive impact because through the trees they provide us with benefits and in the same way we have to keep this ecological environment in good condition. Also, within the social factors can be identified that people visit the parks either to take a walk, to improve health, simple distraction or to have a moment of relaxation with the family.

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