

Thesis on a study into how culture and living standards influence healthy lifestyle...

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Introduction

Santa Monica is a beachfront city found in Los Angeles, California. According to the 2010 census, Santa Monica is home to approximately 89, 736 people. The inhabitants include Hollywood celebrities, students, professional surfers and affluent single-families. Santa Monica has a long-term general plan, which takes into consideration land use, housing, conservation and safety among other key attributes. In the last few years, city planners have been concerned that the existing zoning plans do not match the demands of the inhabitants, especially with regards to healthy lifestyles.

Literature Review

Santa Monica, like the rest of the Los Angeles, has a horizontal zoning plan. The simplified zoning plan was designed with the aim of promoting health. However, it is now becoming apparent that the land rules implemented to protect public health in the past are becoming health hazards. For example, the zoning plans implemented in the past encouraged reliance on automobiles and made people live sedentary lives. As a result, there was need to review the planning and zoning code with the objective of encouraging healthy lifestyles. The changes made to the plan included expanding pedestrian sidewalks and requiring new buildings to reserve at least 5% of their parking for bicycles. The rationale behind this idea is that developers have been neglecting sidewalks and bicycle parking,

Objective of the Study

The major aim of this study is to determine how Santa Monica zoning and planning layout addresses the issue of healthy lifestyle. Secondary objectives

of the study include:

- Determining how the culture of the people in Santa Monica affects zoning and urban planning. Specific issues measured in this case include elements of culture. This will involve determination of their language (the most spoken languages), their ethnicities, and religious beliefs. These elements affect their daily choices hence there is a probability that such elements of culture are factored into the zoning and planning of Santa Monica.
- Determining how living standards of the people in Santa Monica affect the zoning and urban planning of the region. Specific issues measured in this case include household income, family size, unemployment rates, and their residences (whether permanent or temporary). Again, there is a probability that Santa Monica takes these issues into consideration when doing their plans.

Rationale

In the case of Santa Monica, health design ordinance is an issue that does not receive the seriousness it deserves. As a result, there is little academic attention towards the issue. In the wake of the revelations that zoning plans implemented in the past were not health-friendly, there is need to study the past planning and zoning codes and the efforts being made to address the issue of health. Again, it is important to determine how the culture and living standards of the people in Santa Monica affects zoning and planning, with a view of determining how this influences planning for healthy lifestyles.

Research Methods

All the information presented in this study will be collected from secondary sources. Quantitative data will be obtained from census results, housing statistics, and social security statistics. Government databases, as well as other related databases, will be the main source quantitative data. On the other hand, qualitative data will be obtained through the use of semi-structured interviews administered to the relevant authority (individuals in charge of the planning commission of Santa Monica). Probability sampling will be adopted to select those to answer the semi-structured interviews. The use of both quantitative and qualitative data will help to re-contextualize pres-existing information, and gain a real-time insight into the research question.

Data Analysis

In cases where necessary, qualitative and quantitative data will be analyzed with the help of the SPSS software. Matrix/logical analysis will also be helpful in analyzing the data.

Results

As stated earlier, the results of the study will be presented in the form of charts, tables and graphs.

Discussion

This section will consist of a detailed discussion of the results. The discussion will also compare results of the study with literature from other areas.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This section will include inferences drawn from the study. Relevant recommendations will also be made in this section, with a view of improving the planning and zoning of Santa Monica, Los Angeles.

Acknowledgements

This section will be used to thank those who helped me in bringing the study to fruition.

References

All the secondary materials used to prepare the study will be included in this section. All the sources will be referenced using the APA referencing style.

Appendices

Graphic pieces of information (such as tables, graphs and charts) that are of relevance to the study will be included in this section.