

# Importance of outdoor recreation



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Leisure, recreation and tourism are generally viewed as key components in people's lives (Lynch and Veal 1996). Outdoor recreation brings happiness to people as it gives recreational opportunities to them. Leisure means various things to different people and therefore it consists of many definitions given by many researchers. For instance, Fava(1964) stated that leisure is the time which an individual has free from work or other responsibilities and which may be used for the purpose of relaxation, diversion, or personal development. In contrast, according to Godbey (1999), a leading researcher in the field of leisure education said that leisure is typically related with spare time or situations in which people have the luxury of choice. Sylvester (1999) stated that , it must not neglect the fact that in ancient time, leisure was considered as a luxury and was affordable by affluent people only.

## **Recreation**

The term recreation is derived from the Latin word of recreatio and recreate which means “ to refresh” and “ to refresh” and “ to restore” (Edginton et al 1995).

Examples of outdoor recreation involve:

Visiting parks and natural areas.

Visiting historical and archaeological sites.

Outdoor concerts and festival.

Golf and kite flying

Forest activities like wildlife safari, camping and tree climbing.

## **Importance of Outdoor recreation**

Research has shown that outdoor recreation activities undoubtedly contribute positively to one health as well as well being (Boniface 2000; Dickson et al; 2008). Through recreation activities, people get the opportunity to enjoy the natural environment if they are doing adventure activities, interact with other people (Berman & Davis-Berman, 1995, 2000).

Moreover, study has illustrated that the way life alters with the loss of link which inevitably result to poor lifestyles (Godbey et al; 2005). Nowadays, the new generation mainly children are more likely to be at risks than their parents. Children currently have more possibilities of health problems to such children, such as asthma, obesity, vitamin D deficiency since they have inactive lifestyle as well as lack of physical exercises, consequently, it may lead to cardiovascular, pulmonary and mental health problems in adulthood. Children from poor background are more likely to be away from green space as they have ‘ built environment’ such as bad housing condition, traffic congestion and so forth.

Today the world is connected with technological gadgets and children tends to stay more in front of their computers, television, playing video games and after school hours they need to complete their homework therefore youngsters miss the contact with the natural setting, they also miss the chance for stress reduction, healthy development , physical activity and restoration.

## **Motivation for outdoor recreation**

According to Iso-Ahola (1980), individuals are encouraged through defined objectives as well as rewards which can be either extrinsic or intrinsic. When a particular activity is occupied in to acquire compensation, it is known as extrinsically motivated. In contrast, intrinsically motivated is when a person is self motivated to achieve something or engaged in the activity for its own sake.

Moreover, Iso-Ahola thinks that leisure behavior is mainly caused by intrinsic aspects which are linked to self-expression, competence as well as agreement which implies freedom of choice. Nevertheless, recreation choice should not be regarded as unlimited. The ability for individual to choose from a range of recreational activities cannot be compromised due to the fact that individual's motivation to be indulged in a given outdoor recreation is projected in the selection made from various outdoor activities.

Furthermore, choice is encircled by many pitfalls such as physical capability, affordability, awareness, time restrictions and family obligations. These limitations differ among people and the demographic, socio-economic and other groups.

## **Demand and Participation**

Demand is an economic term used in order to illustrate the link that exists between the quantities of a good that people will buy as well as the prices that they will have to pay. In other words, it refers to the ability and willingness to pay for a particular product. The elements of demands are as follows:

Effective, expressed or actual demand is the actual number of participants, for instance it reflects the number of people that participate in countryside recreation. The number of people involved in such activity might be expressed per day or per year.

Latent or suppressed demand refers to unfulfilled demand. Therefore, it is where an individual's desire to participate has not been fulfilled due to some reason. But if the situation alters such a desire may ultimately become effective demand. However, such demand is not easy to quantify as it relies on people's wishes and desires as well. When taking into account suppressed demand it can be emphasized that the latter gives rise to two elements namely: deferred demand and potential demand. When reference is being made to deferred demand refers to demand that is unfulfilled due to a lack of amenities, for example, if a large number of people wish to go to the swimming pool but the problem is that if there is no swimming available then this want will be unfulfilled and demand will be postponed until a swimming pool is provided. In contrast, potential demand is demand that is unfulfilled simply because there is a shortage of personal resources such as income or mobility. But, if there is an improvement in terms of personal situation it can undoubtedly be fulfilled in the future.

Lastly it can be said that there will be people who will surely prefer not to involve in recreational activities and this is known as no demand.

### **Factors affecting demand for outdoor recreation can be classified into :**

Demographic characteristics

Socio-economic characteristics

Situational characteristics

## **Demographic Characteristics**

In terms of demographic characteristics there are several factors that affect the recreation preference and it includes age, sex, marital status and family diversity. Research has shown that young male who are single are more likely to involve in outdoor recreation and even if they are married they are unwilling to have children (Booth, 1989; Genet 2001; Booth & Peebles, 1995). These participants are really interested in their education and they inevitably want to get well paid jobs.

## **Socio -economic characteristics**

### **Price**

From an economist's perspective, price is considered to be a key factor in determining price as customer's decision but the price of leisure is complicated with regards to many other products. For example, a normal product consists of a single price but while comparing it to the price of leisure activities it is different as it consists of separate elements such as the valid nature of the leisure, other price like costs of transport, parking, equipment, clothing and accommodation might be charged. Economists stated that as leisure involves time, therefore the opportunity cost of that time in terms of its possible earning power should also be included in the list mentioned above.

According to Gratton and Taylor (1985) he argued that the price of a product affects demand in two different ways. First and foremost, the average cost of <https://assignbuster.com/importance-of-outdoor-recreation/>

participation which involves all types of costs such as entrance fee, equipment and so forth might affect demand in terms of decision making to involve in the activity. Thus, the higher the average cost, the lower the participate rate. Secondly, marginal cost is the cost that has an impact on the frequency of participation. For example, in association with leisure activities there may be fixed costs involved like membership fee, buying of equipment and so on.

## **Income**

Income can be viewed as a feature that enables people to buy a leisure product. Research has shown that in the second half of the nineteenth century there has been a drastic change with regards to income growth. It was then that the development of mass leisure started and simultaneously there was a constant increase of income and this has definitely an impact on growth of leisure. Affluent people have always enjoyed their leisure; therefore it can be made crystal clear as income increases people will surely have more leisure.

## **Situational characteristics**

### **Time**

Self-employed people generally have better control concerning their time plan and these people are more likely to have more leisure time.

### **Mobility**

Car ownership has increased dramatically because the income of people has risen and cars are more affordable to buy and run. If a person does not

possess a vehicle, therefore he or she might be disadvantaged in terms of site, journey, timing and duration of the trip.

### **External factors affecting demand for outdoor recreation are:**

Recreational opportunity is highly dependent upon availability and accessibility of recreation sites. Thus, the nature of recreation sites as well as availability will surely rely upon several things such as carrying capacity, ownership, distribution, quality, access and degree of development. These reflect three important elements which consist of economic, behavioral and political. Hence, it helps both private and public sectors in terms of good decision making with regards to recreation provision.

While making decision to visit any particular recreational sites, accessibility is considered to be a key element in influencing participation. Moreover, how crucial it is, as an element in decision making in influencing the ‘ what’ and ‘ where’ of recreation involvement is explained by Chubb and Chubb (1981: 153) : ‘ People participation will increase if all other external and personal factors support participants, however if the site is not accessible it might certainly be a problem.’

### **Recreation travel behavior**

While going to any particular site for recreation, distance is really important and for most movement, a distance-decay effect can be known so that the power of interaction diminishes as distance increases. In this context, if a recreational site consists of greater distance and involve more effort and time, might not be supported by participants. But, not all activities are time



consuming as it relies on the types of activities that one is taking part in. The impact of longer distances will be negative to some extent as the more a person travel, he or might be tired and found it to be unpleasant. On the other hand, such effect may be encouraging in situation where a person is travelling by cruise. The latter may enjoy and the longer the distance the greater the desire to extend it.

## **Recreation choice behavior**

Forecasting of recreation behavior would have been taken into account if more was known with regards to factors influencing decision-making to attitudes, motivations and perceptions. This would be very helpful as it would explain:

Why some sites and activities are suitable;

Why some recreational firms are failures while others are satisfied by participants;

Why and how alternative recreation are ranked.

The recreation alternative process is influenced by people's perceptions of what recreational opportunities are available.

## **Natural environments as recreation settings**

Driver et al. (1987) demonstrates that natural surroundings are really crucial in attaining the preferred result from leisure. Research conducted in Colorado have shown that participants like to enjoy mostly in nature, therefore, natural environment plays an integral role in achieving the result

as well as satisfaction required from involvement in certain forms of recreation.

According to Kaplan and Kaplan (1989), participant's satisfaction is associated with natural settings through integration mind and body in the leisure activity. Hence, environmental aspect beyond doubt is considered to have a dominant influence on recreation behavior and this has first derived from gurus like Schreyer et al. (1985), he propose that the most helpful demonstration of the environment for the explanation of behavioral choice is considered as important. They also stated that people are more likely to explore the natural environment location which will undoubtedly allow them to behave in the ways they wish and consequently this will enable them to achieve a desired cognitive state. Thus, the theory that recreation experiences are closely linked to recreation location is fundamental with regards to the notion of the recreation opportunity spectrum.