



RESEARCH PAPER

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## Mechanisms for attracting citizen participation of 19<sup>th</sup> tehran region in the development of green space in Velayat Park

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### Abstract

One of the criteria for assessing the environmental quality of the city is public green space. This study aims to identify ways to engage citizens in Region 19 of Tehran in development of green space park. The research involving all citizens in district 1 and 19 of Tehran is the total of 84,242 persons, which 384 persons were selected with Morgan table and simple random sampling method. The tool of the research is questionnaire that is completed by interview. The results implied that from the citizen point of views holding all kinds of workshop in Velayat part, informing citizen about the consequences of damage to green space, holding happy ceremonies, teacher music and races in the park, emphasizing on participation value, encouraging local councils for participation in activities related to green space, combination of public and expert views and educating the participation to children from the low education level explained 77.2 percent of variance the development of Velayat park green space.

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## Introduction

Today, the concept of urban green spaces without affecting other forms are unthinkable. Consequences of urban development and the complexity of environmental problems have made the availability of green space and expanding it always inevitable (Hekmatnia and Mousavi, 2007). Creating the Adequate green space in urban and industrial environment not only has the refreshing influence on the human psyche, but also play very effective role in reducing air pollution, noise reduction, dust removal, etc. (Khajehdin *et al.*, 2006). The green spaces also play a decisive role in supporting social and ecological city. Urban green spaces can make valuable recreational opportunities for those who live in cities, and by providing environmental, mental, social and physical functions, make city more than any other factor as a factor for closing humans and nature to each other. Hence, public green spaces, especially urban parks urban environment both in terms of needs and providing an atmosphere of leisure and social context and interaction are prominent place (Ghorbani, 2007).

One of the important elements that contribute to urban revitalization is participation. Participation is one of the four pillars of sustainable urban development. In other words, public participation in the long run will result in a stable environment. Similarly, one may hope to reform, preserving the environment, relying on people power always finds a continuation of the cycle and the day continues with more strength (Baghebani and Ganji, 2005). Public participation and the evolution of their culture, is one of the best ways to develop urban green space. In addition to conventional sources of development resources experts say such funds, facilities, and physical inputs, new input like human plays a very effective role in the development process.

Aukli and Marsden (1991) argue that participation is a redistribution of power that its citizens who currently in the process of social, political and economic, have been left out, enable to gradually in the future is

called for participation. John (2006) declared the participation is the factor for community life. Participation was considered essential element in the sustainable development process, it is referred to as the missing link in the development process (Chisura, 2004).

Some recommended strategies to maintain and develop urban green spaces in Tehran are preparing a comprehensive plan for green space, promoting the role of citizen participation in the development of green space, and improve productivity of ecological green socio (Sarvari *et al.*, 2010).

In Marshall Research (2007) the level participation in municipal affairs was moderate downward and the most important variables affecting participation in this research include socio - economic, social trust and social relations network. Ryan *et al.* (2002) in a research considered easy access to the decision-making process, the information needs of people with managing their affairs, and the integration of public and expert views as factors affecting on environmental participation. Luzar & Diagna (1999) study showed that there is a significant positive relationship between the level of citizen participation and their attitude towards the environment. Zare *et al.* (2010) found those citizens' attitudes toward participation in parks than other variables may affect their willingness to participate in forest parks. The more people go to the park and they are familiar with the problems of the region are more willing to participate. Moreover, much of the communication channel and perception of participation influences their willingness to participate in the affairs of the park. Ismaili (2007) in their study concludes that there is a significant relationship between the variables of age, education, resources, teaching methods and knowledge of citizens' awareness towards a healthy environment.

Development of urban green spaces in Tehran has been growing. The development of green spaces in Tehran from 1990 to 2001 is approximately 11,431

acres. Number of parks with a total area of 4.408 ha in 1978 to 1987 that was 50 was decreasing and from then until the end of the 2002 was increasing (Department of Statistics and Computing, 2002). Tehran area is about 636 acres now. More than 1,700 large and small parks are located in the city. The largest park in Tehran is Velayat park. The Park is the largest park in the Middle East is an area of 270 hectares and is located in Region 19 of Tehran and its phase is 70 hectares and in 2011 was exploited (Sabeti-Rad, 2011).

Given that, the garden in addition of great physical area, has the biggest impact of social, cultural and economic development of the city and will be a model for other large cities. The study tries to investigate mechanisms for citizen participation in the development of green space of Velayat Park. Hence, the main purpose of this study is to identify strategies for attracting citizen participation in the development of Velayat park green space, park district 19 of Tehran. Delimitation of Research is located in District 19 of Tehran and is the period 2012-2013.

## Materials and methods

### *Research method*

This is applied study; in terms of data collection non experimental, according to the method of is survey.

### *Population & Sampling*

The population of this study consisted of district 1 region 19 of Tehran's citizens that their total number is 84,242. To calculate sample size, with Morgan, 384 persons were choosed by simple random sampling.

### *Research tool*

In the present study, the main instrument for data collection is a questionnaire which is based on review literature and five Likert scale designed to measure validity questionnaire, the questionnaire was given to advisors and consultants who carried out the necessary corrections and their views on reform the

questionnaire was obtained. To gauge the reliability questionnaire prepared by a preliminary study of 30 copies of the questionnaire was completed by the citizens of region 1 District 19 of Tehran. Questionnaires completed using SPSS, the Alpha coefficient for research tools are in the 95% -89% ranges.

### *Variables*

The dependent variable of this study is developing Velayat park green space that was used for the measurement of 12 items.

### *Data analysis*

For data analysis of this research, descriptive and inferential statistics were used.

### *Findings*

#### *- Description of personal characteristics*

Findings suggest that 7.22 of the citizens of District 19 of Tehran have participated in courses related to the protection of green spaces. Satisfaction most of respondents from park management was in moderate (39.1%). Satisfaction of most citizens (5.32%) of the Velayat park features was at a low level and awareness of most people (2.39) of the importance and benefits of parks and gardens was in the medium level.

#### *- Respondents view regarding development of Velayat park*

In order to understand citizens' views regarding the amount of green space park, a 12-item Likert format is used. The results indicate that the majority of the subjects (43.1 percent), believe that developing green space provincial park is moderate and just (9.3%) believe that the development of green spaces in Velayat Park is completely undesirable (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Respondents view regarding development of green space Velayat park (n=384).

Influence	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Completely undesirable	32	8.3	9.3
Undesirable	123	32	45.2
Moderate	148	38.5	88.3
Completely desirable	40	10.4	100
Non respond	41	89.3	-
Total	384	100	

Mode & Median: Moderate

- *The mechanism of attracting participation in green space*

In order to understand citizens' views on strategies for attracting citizen participation in the development of green space, a 19-item Likert scale has been used. The results in Table 2 indicate that the majority of the subjects (61.8 percent), believe the strategies to engage citizens in large green space development play main role and only (8/1%) of them believe that strategies to engage citizens the development of green space play medium role.

**Table 2.** Respondents view regarding mechanism of attracting participation in green space (n=384).

Influence	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Little	51	8.3	9.3
Moderate	6	32	45.2
Much	210	38.5	88.3
Very much	73	10.4	100
Non respond	44	89.3	-
Total	384	100	

Mode & Median: Much

**Table 3.** Coefficients of factors on attracting citizen participation in green space.

Variables	B	Beta	Sig
training classes	0.458	0.556	0.000
informing citizens of the damaging consequences of greenery	0.167	0.206	0.000
fun events	0.456	0.484	0.000
description of the participation	0.191	0.297	0.000
encouraging local councils to participate	0.298	0.333	0.000
combination of public and expert views	0.171	0.225	0.000
participation of children with low levels of education	0.177	0.168	0.000
Constant	0.067	-	-

- *Determining factors on attracting citizen participation in green space*

To determine the collective effect of independent variables on the dependent variable, multiple regression was used. Using stepwise variable to hold the 7 types of training classes and working in a provincial park, informing citizens of the damaging consequences of greenery, fun events , games , music, theater and parks, description of the participation, encouraging local councils to participate in activities related to your local green space due to combination

of public and expert views on education and participation of children with low levels of education (schools and children 's advertising ) were entered to regression which the variables explained totally 77.2 % of the green space development.

**Discussion**

Results of stepwise regression indicates that Region 1 district 19 of Tehran citizens point of view, the variable of holding variety of educational classes and working with the Velayat park is the most important

variable influencing on the development of green spaces as this variable alone explain about 54.9% of the development of green space velayat Park.

Providing training and information to citizens about the development of green space by organizing various training classes and workgroups in Velayat Park is considered as a crucial factor. Training classes in the development of green space, cause that citizen gain access to required information about preservation of green space. This awareness led to the preservation of green space and prevents their degradation, management of street trees and Parr Public Aid, enhancement of ability to analyze problems and select appropriate solutions to the problems of green space. Increasing the participation level of citizen and informing them about their impact on preservation of green space and preventing from damage to environment or creating adherence sentiment toward public space for citizen can be improved by providing training course.

These findings are consistent with the results of the research of Shariati *et al* (2005), Luzar & Diagna (2000), Zare *et al* (2010) and Hejazi and Arabi (2008) is. According to the results of the regression suggestion are outlined below:

- Enhancing the role of the honorary and voluntary participation of citizens in order to protect urban green space, supporting local communities (NGO)
- Attraction of social participation of local citizen in administration of local city affair regularly and continuously

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