

Survey of elderly leisure and its social factors

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Abstract

The present research has attempted to study the effect of social factors on elderly people's leisure considering the presence or absence of such characteristics as gender, age, education, marital status and type of house. This is a descriptive-analytic study and population is 400 elderly people in Kermanshah who were examined using questionnaires and by cluster sampling. Data analysis was performed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Finally, the T-test, Pearson correlation coefficient and Spearman correlation coefficient were used in significant level 0/05% in Spss software. The findings suggest that many people were in the age group 60 to 75 years. According to the findings, %72 of participants were male and %28 female. In the study of literacy, 35 percent of respondents were illiterate, %29 percent were undergraduate students, %20 percent had diploma degree, 6% percent had diploma associate degree, %9 percent having bachelor degree and %1 percent having master of art degree. In terms of marital status, %84 were married and %16 were single. As for the type of house, 86/3 percent of homes lived in villas and 13/8 percent lived in an apartment home. Also the mean of variables of leisure time: going to parks, places of cultural, religious and sports, respectively are 4/39, 4/33, 3/86 and 3/80. These numbers indicate that the variables in population under survey are too high. Comparison of correlation coefficients shows that age and education variables have solidarity with all the aspects of leisure and shows a significant relationship. The results of the study demonstrate that in fact, collection of leisure programs is a fairly complete, goal-oriented and the most active in the field of Lei-

sure elderly and if design and implementation of a comprehensive and detailed plan is acting at the national level the desired result will follow.

Keywords: Elderly, social works, Leisure Time.

Introduction

Leisure time is a particular area of human experience which can be planned by pleasure seeking individuals according to their choice, creativity, and self-satisfaction (Zokaei, 2007). Leisure time and quality of passing it is a new discussion that excites the attention of sociologists followed the industrial revolution and the growth of industries and technologies and has become an important subject in the field of sociology (Wang, 2001). The concept of leisure time used against fighting and work routine that is often fatigue factor and its define has led to opening of new branches of the social sciences as "Leisure sociology" and "anthropology of leisure" (Fakouhi, 2003). In today's stressful world where humans always feel fatigue because of many preoccupation reasons, the importance of leisure time is well known for everybody. Leisure can have a positive impact on the people's lives that can enjoy their life. This effect does not just belong to individuals, but because people make up society, any appropriate leisure time will also help community in the macro programs (pour Ismail, 2006). The Charter of the Leisure was approved Directors of World Leisure Board in July 2000, states: "It is important to provide as much leisure time to provide quality health and education"(Rajkumar, 1988 & Netuveli, 2006) . Leisure is not specific to a particular group and thus it is vary among the different sex, age

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groups and classes and starts from childhood and will continue until old age pension and also varying the type and quality of leisure activities among different groups. Leisure as a cultural- social phenomenon is a common issue in economic, political and social dimension for all strata of society with seniors and retirees have been forgotten in this field (Leitner,2004). Spending leisure time is required for seniors in effectively way to stay healthy. Movement, sports and entertainment cause satisfaction of life for elderly and will enhance their confidence and save them from inactivity, inefficacy and a feeling of being unimportant (Parry, 1999). Knowing how elderly spend their leisure time, reveal their real needs and helps the planner to plan according to the wishes and needs of seniors. Due to the growing elderly population, it is clear that serious action is needed to deal with the phenomenon of aging in the near future. Therefore it is absolutely necessary to plan for an aging, to elderly can enjoy from their potential happy and productive time (Walker, 1987; Fransson, 2003& Edginton, 2002). Life cycle in its different periods has changed functions of age, sex and class variables in terms of leisure activities. In other words, employment, intentions and activities of individuals is changed in different periods of life and the same applies by creating new conditions can be effective on leisure(Mohammadi, 2009).

What we know today as aging or senescence is not made contemporary. This means that the old definition was not based on absolute but factors such as changes in appearance and physical abilities that will not necessarily be based on a specific age, was known as age benchmark, but today there is a clear definition: "age at which most people retire from work and are entitled certain types of welfare benefits such as pensions(Conn,2003 & Kahn,1997).

Aging will affect economic and political aspects and cause a sharp increase in public spending and imposes additional pressure on social security(Yin LH,2008). Not only increasing number of elderly people means increased pension costs, but also it means increased demand for health care services, home care services, house care for vulnerable seniors and nursing homes and etc(Jenkins, 2003).

Stafford (2004) in review of countries like America, leisure time is considered as the most important key to the health of older Americans and healthy aging. In this regard, studies have shown that active participation of older people in leisure and sports activities (exercise once a week) aimed at preventing age-re-

lated performance problems have been interventions effective(Stafford,2004). Blaine and Netoli (2008) concluded in their research that leisure activities can have a significant effect to improve people's understanding of health, independence, lifestyle, life expectancy and quality of life (Ebrahimpoor,2010). Research on leisure in developing countries such as Iran, have done more review of leisure time of young people and have not considered the other groups(Fakouhi,2003& Jomepoor, 2004& Khajenuri, 2000 & Ebrahimi, 2011& Volcker, 2008 & Samadi, 2007). Most existing studies have pointed out on the lack of support and lack of sufficient trained on the problems and needs of the aging and the inappropriateness of quality of leisure activities(United Nation, 2006).

The world's population is aging rapidly and a large part of this changing is taking place in developing countries in the first century of third millennium. According to the forecasts of UN Population Division, ratio of elderly population in the world from about 10/5 percent in 2007 increase to about 21/8 percent in 2050(Rahimi,2010). In Iran, General census in 2006 showed that elderly are comprise 3/7% of the country's population (five million and 120 thousand are seniors from 70 million and 472 thousand Iran 's population) that will be to 14/7 percentage in next 20 years(Statistical Centre of Iran, 2006 & Saei, 1998). These figures show if country's planners and policy makers have not a enhanced and specific plan now, the country is facing crisis and fundamental problem for removal of problems and economic, health, social issues for this stratum.

The importance of study about leisure and recreation conditions of seniors is that the elderly population are threatened due to factors such as entering retirement, lack of work, solitude, lack of social support, industrialization of communities and emotional- Mental segregation of families (Wang, 2001 & Strain, 2002 & Silverstei,2002). Therefore with respect to the issues raised, the present study has done aimed social factors (gender, marital status, age, place of residence and level of education) on recreation of the seniors in city of Kermanshah. According to what was said there is leisure time in the countries like Iran (as a developing country) and various cities such as Kermanshah which are important subject in research studies.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive – analysis one which examines the impact of social factors on leisure time

of seniors in Kermanshah. Present study was taken among seniors in Kermanshah with cluster sampling method in the first half of 2012. 400 elderly have been selected and questionnaires were given them. Volume of the total sample were 377 that was obtained by using the formula Census Population Kukran and based on housing rehabilitation in 2006 and were performed by the assistance of Department of Social Welfare in Kermanshah. Respectively, there are about 126 thousand elderly in Kermanshah province.

At first closed questions were offered based on age, sex, marital status, education, type of job before aging and retirement and home. According to the existing areas of the city for leisure activities, those activities and places were divided into park and green space and cultural places such as cinemas, theaters, museum, cultural center, library, sports complex and religious places. Using cluster sampling, city map and the population density in the different geographical locations of each of the North, South, East, West and Central city of Kermanshah, a street randomly selected from the list of streets of that region and researcher visiting the homes located on that street, he invites if the person is eligible to participate in the study. Preferably the questionnaire was answered by an aged person unless that senior was patient, illiterate or low-literate and is not able to fill the form in which the interview was conducted with elderly people to complete the questionnaire. For each cluster, a sample size was considered 18 persons. Resort to the home had started from the beginning of the street and there was continued until the necessary samples were complete. In situations where two or more aged persons existed in a household, randomly one of them was selected for the study. To measure each of the variables listed in the survey, scoring method was designed for questionnaires in five-item Likert (very low (1), low (2), somewhat (3), high (4), very high (5)) and data were collected using questionnaire techniques. After completing the questionnaire by respondents, collected data were analyzed using Spss software (ver 16) in two levels of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. To describe leisure time was used the Pearson correlation coefficient test. Pearson correlation coefficient test (r) is used When the research variables are in scale level. Pearson correlation coefficient is formed from the independent and dependent variable (Rahimi, 2010). U test is used to compare the means of two samples (Madah, 2009). To confirm the reliability of the questionnaire consisted of 30 seniors were selected in Kermanshah and after

the questionnaires were distributed among them, to determine reliability of questionnaires was approved by Cronbach's alpha. Validity and reliability of present study was determined and verified using Cronbach's alpha. coefficient alpha was 82%, which was demonstrator a good reliability and suitability of the instrument for data collection.

Results

Descriptive Findings

The findings suggest that many people were studied in the age group 60 to 75 years. Result the majority of this age group represents the state of being healthier existing situation in terms of leisure places in Kermanshah to the presence of this senior to more older adults. Based on the findings about 28% of participants were men and 72% of participants were women which shows the presence of men in the society. In education, 35% of the respondents were illiterate, 29% of them were undergraduate students, 20% were diploma, 6% were skill degree, 9% were bachelor and 1% were master and higher education. 84% of respondents were married and 16 percent were single due to death of spouse, etc. 86/3percent of respondents lived on villas home type and 13/8 percent of respondents lived in an apartment home.

Analytical results

Response rate elderly to each of the variables entered in the following tables to obtain early identification through needs and tastes of leisure elderly in Kermanshah city.

Table 1. Test of mean difference between choice of leisure facilities by gender of Seniors

Variable	Sex	Frequency	Average	T	Significance level
Use of sporting facilities	Woman	112,	4/3516	8/032	000/0
	Man	288,	3/5938		
The use of cultural sites	Woman	112,	4/4431	1/778	0/046
	Man	288,	4/2930		
Going to religious places	Woman	112,	4/2444	7/846	000/0
	Man	288,	3/7188		
Going to the park	Woman	112,	4/5551	3/094	0/002
	Man	288,	4/3374		

Table 2. Test of mean difference between choice of leisure facilities by marital status of Seniors

Variable	Marital status	Frequency	Average	T	Significance level
Use of sporting facilities	Single	64	3/1641	3/808	000/0
	Married	336	3/9282		
The use of cultural sites	Single	64	4/4063	0/818	0/414
	Married	336	4/3214		
Going to religious places	Single	64	3/8262	-0/475	0/635
	Married	336	3/835		
Going to the park	Single	64	4/1224	-2/961	0/004
	Married	336	4/4509		

Table 1 shows the comparison of the mean choice of leisure location is based on gender status. The findings of T test suggest that there are significant differences among men and women in all aspects of selection of leisure site. Therefore, the Hypothesis test results show that in all cases the null hypothesis has been confirmed.

Outputs of T-test are listed in Table 2 for comparison of single and married people in leisure locations. Significant levels suggest that from the variety

of leisure places (Using of sport facilities and going to the park) the difference between is significant among married and single individuals but with two-variable (Using cultural places and going religious sites) is not significant. Therefore, in this hypothesis there is some difference among married and single individuals about type of leisure facilities, we can conclude that the null hypothesis has been confirmed in all cases exception using cultural places and going religious sites.

Table 3. Test of mean difference between choice of leisure facilities by type of home.

Variable	Type of home	Frequency	Average	T	Significance level
Use of sporting facilities	Shelters	345	3/8264	0/870	0
	Apartment	55	3/6773		
The use of cultural sites	Shelters	345	4/3551	1/324	0/186
	Apartment	55	4/2091		
Going to religious places	Shelters	345	3/9134	3/296	0/001
	Apartment	55	3/5682		
Going to the park	Shelters	345	4/4005	0/143	0/886
	Apartment	55	4/3848		

Table 4. Pearson correlation coefficients between Leisure places and old age variables.

Variables	The correlation coefficient	Significance level
Going to religious places	0/464	00 0/0
Use of sporting facilities	0/367	000/0
Going to the park	0/250	000/0
The use of cultural sites	0/121	0/016

Results Table 3 show the comparison of the mean choice of leisure location based on type of home. The findings of T test suggest that there is no significant difference among respondents in all aspects of leisure location cases with the exception of going to religious places. We can conclude that hypothesis test has confirmed the null hypothesis in all cases except going to religious places and research hypothesis is rejected in none of the cases.

Table 4 shows Pearson correlation coefficients between leisure time and age of the elderly variables. According to the existing data in the table can be

said that Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the hypotheses because the assumption of this hypothesis is scale. Thus, the results of correlation test show that the null hypothesis has been confirmed in all cases. Accordingly, we can conclude that there is a significant and direct correlation between choice of leisure facilities and elderly age.

Table 5. Test of the relationship between choice of leisure facilities and education.

Variables	The correlation coefficient	Significance level
Going to religious places	0/367	000/0
Use of sporting facilities	0/367	000/0
Going to the park	0/250	000/0
The use of cultural sites	0/121	0/016

Spearman correlation coefficients are shown in Table 5 between four variables (use of sports facilities, going to cultural sites, going to religious places and going to the park) with education variable.

The table data shows:

Correlation coefficient significant levels indicate that there is significant relationship between education levels with different type of leisure activities. Strongest and weakest relationship is between going to religious places and cultural sites respectively 0/464 and 0/121. Considering the significance level is less than 0/05 with 0/95 of confidence can be said:

Hypothesis of relationship between education and choice of leisure facilities is confirmed in aging.

Discussion and Conclusion

The results indicate that:

Test of Descriptive data for research, including age, gender, education, marital status, type of home and elderly's comments about the use of leisure facilities, the following results were obtained for each personal and economic variables:

- Research findings about elderly type gender was found a significant relationship in selection of sports facilities, using cultural sites, going religious places and going to the park. In most studies is gender to be examined as an effective factor associated with the leisure and usually women had less lei-

sure time in previous studies that is done in country (Saberian, 2003 & Delaware, 2007 & Safari, 2000). Getam *et al* (2007) in Nepal showed that 23/5% of elderly men and 9/5% of elderly women participants engaged in physical activity in their daily leisure time. Results of this study also indicate men have high leisure than women in all aspects (Safari, 2006). Also, the results of Delavar (2001) and Safari *et al* (2008) found that in general leisure activities in men are more than women (Ghanbarian, 2001 & Torklidsen, 2003). These results are consistent with the above study.

- Pearson correlation coefficient between the elderly age variable in the choice of location for leisure shows there is a strong and positive correlation between age and using cultural place, going to religious place and going to the park (p -value $< 0/05$). If the age variable does not correlate with the sports places ($R = 0/021$) and (p -value $> 0/05$). Results of Ghanbarian *et al* (2011) is consistent with present results (Ghanbarian, 2001).

- The results of the Pearson correlation coefficient have an impact between elderly education on the selection and use of leisure facilities. That means that with higher educational level, the amount of time becomes more and the other hand, people with higher education have more leisure, such as watching television, reading, use of internet and so on. As Thorokildsentitled type and duration of education was closely associated with the environment of growth, class, occupation, income and other factors are influencing in leisure time. All of these factors contribute to the higher amount of individual's association. Education can also be influence partly on selected leisure time (Ahahdi, 1991). The results Ghanbarian *et al* (2011) is confirmed the above results. (Ghanbarian, 2001).

- The results of the index of T test in terms of marriage show impact of marital status factor of elderly in selected leisure places. This finding is consistent with research of J. Lee and Bargava (2004) that married people have less time to devote to leisure activities than individuals (Bhargava, 2004).

- Coefficient T test shows the type the house of residence variable (shelter or apartment) just affect going to parks variable and have been ineffective in using cultural, sports and religion places. The results of Ghanbarian *et al* (2011) confirmed the above present study (Ghanbarian, 2001).

This research is a small step toward the long term and enhanced goal and become more fruitful the aging period through planning for a maximum

period of leisure time. The importance of leisure time in people's lives as it is essential for the proper planning. The sum of these results can be explained this fact that explanation of leisure time is not easy by any means. When we think about the influencing factors leisure of people, we find that there are complex interactions among these. Variety factors such as personal, social and environmental situation alone or in combination with other agents or collectively influence on leisure time. Moreover, even if the conditions and environment of all people are the same, again each individual may be done quite different from one another in their work. However, the present study has achieved understanding and some interaction that there is between social factors and some of the seniors' participation in leisure activities which can be useful in explaining leisure time. Since the passage of the current status of the elderly, needs, interests, and their view points about selecting usable locations for leisure time, it is necessary be provided solutions for improving and establishment leisure places of and more compatible with elderly.

Strategic offers for senior leisure:

1-Any planning about senior needs must involve knowledge of the requirements, capabilities and expectations of old age, because understanding these criteria that have said as geometry of during old age is the first step in codification of systematic and logic plans programs for elderly generation.

2- Any activity related to removal of the elderly needs must be accompanied by active participation: In other words, elderly should participate responsibly in their favorite programs.

3- In designing the national programs should note to spirit of renewal and diversification particularly geriatrics and provide creative tools and innovative for them.

4- In orientation of special programs and activities for elderly should be considered to be fresh and refreshing to the spirit of vitality and freshness reserved and continues to flourish and persist in elderly activities and senior enjoyed the programs and activities fits with the mood of their age.

5- During the implementation of activities and programs is blown the spirit of hope and confidence in the future, government and revolution in elderly mind.

6- Designing of program should be adopted in order to group participation and team work tends to rise among the elderly and avoid the individualism and self-sufficiency.

7- In national and regional planning to meet the needs of both sexes (ladies and gentlemen) should be noted and even paid special attention to solve basic problems of older women because of their multiple deprivations.

8- Leisure programs for seniors should be continuous and dynamic and ongoing and avoid temporary, inconsistent and transient programs.

9- In national programs particularly in the older generation should be pay attention to the needs of the elderly in urban and rural are as such that urban population and increased urbanization process should not be a factor to ignore the elderly in rural areas.

10- The design and implementation of leisure programs must be set in the context of a two-fold strategy that not only meet the needs and expectations of the elderly (legal aspects) but also have noted about civil society needs in the areas of development and deprivation in cultural, social and economic interest.

Modern policies and strategies and the role of the state

1- Government due to the wide range of opportunities and authorities that are and also considering the development of the functions that have been in foretime and new expectations that people have of them, they should have a major role in planning and measures for the improvement of measures in order to improve and enrich the elderly leisure time. This arises from the fact that even in west countries where individualism is the basis of philosophy, the intervention of government has expanded in various aspects of social life. Governments are involved in many private activities that have aspects and public safety. Indeed moreover providing social status by government that has been a permanent functions, they have taken over roles which eventually led to provide the public welfare and for this reason have become recuperative, public welfare or the public servant government.

2- Such efforts are evident in most countries. Among the measures that most governments have done in related to elderly leisure are policy and planning, encouragement and supervision. It is worth noting that political considerations impact on this progress. Because elderly and at least some of them enjoyed entertainment and fun and impede them to participate in activities which may be against the government. Governments show greater sensitivity

especially in the mass media such as radio, television, press, and also places like cinemas and sports clubs. However, a large gap between the capacity of executive programs affiliated government with the real needs of the elderly on the one hand and the right economic, social approach of government to transfer affairs to the private sector on the other hand, besides the fact that: because of top attractiveness and demand market of leisure activities, a lot requires in elderly have purely economic justification, which requires a national commitment in order to mobilize the resources of the country including public and private field.

3- First, according to this fact that major leisure facilities in the country including staffing and funding is in the executive authority. Secondly, the importance of leisure activities is not considered in culture and also due to economic problems, yet the cost of leisure activities has not a significant share in an Iranian household spending basket, it is deserved to take all appropriate measures by the government and correct attitudes and policies on youth recreation programs and their qualitative and quantitative upgrade be acting through increased public participation.

4- Considering the above facts, it is necessary that active institutions in the Islamic Republic try in order to expand people's programs, leisure with a focus on people in three axes as follows:

5- Axis I: development of public Participation, NGOs and the private sector in leisure seniors.

6-Axis II: optimization of existing facilities and inflorescence leisure facilities and infrastructure of country.

7- Axis III: Qualitative and quantitative development of executive recreation program.

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