

Benefits of Public Parks Increase Physical Activity and Health - A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

The aim is to acquaint the public about the benefits of public parks in context to public health, which is explained by establishing the relationships between park and different benefits such as physical, social, psychological, economic, environmental and cultural benefits. Increasing reliance on motorized transport has reduced physical bodily function, so it is important to generate physical activities for fixed time for every age group so that the individual may remain away from different diseases.

Key Words: Benefits; Public parks; Physical Activity; Health

Introduction

Parks are one of the major source of overcoming the anxiety within an individual as when person enters into the park, he enjoys the nature and forgets his/her worries due to which a person keeps cool & calm and analyzes the surrounding developments with the peaceful mind. Parks are the biggest source of relaxation for any age group where one forgets his/ her worries [1]. The daily routine physical activities like jogging, regular walk or other physical exercises may

help both male and female in reducing of their weight [2]. A regular physical activity can reduce morbidity and mortality by decreasing cardiac diseases, diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, depression/anxiety, hypertension hypertension and reduction in overweight. It may also help in building up healthy bones, muscles, and joints. Lack of physical activity makes person unfit and lazy due to which he/she is liable to many health disorders. In fact, physical fitness is the basic need of every person. None of a single example dictates that rich has the purgative to enjoy good and healthy life while poor does not. It is a renowned statistic that by doing regular physical exercise keeps the person way from various diseases and this itself produces strong immunity in a body [2]. As a result it enhances our freshness of face and ultimately helps in living of healthy and productive life [3, 4]. Presently, Government of Punjab is taking serious steps in maintaining the pollution free parks for better health of general public [5,6,7] . For this matter, private sector has been invited under the private-public partnership in order to maintain public parks [5,6,7] in term of physical activities, social environment, psychological

health benefits, provision of natural environment, economic development and cultural beliefs, having different and impressive features for the attraction of general public [9]. In Lahore, Pakistan, is known as a city of parks where they are established & sustained by Parks & Horticultural Authorities, famously known as PHA for the enjoyment and entertaining purposes for every age group. These parks have different and separate attractive facilities / amusements like indoor/outdoor gymnasium, swimming pool, cycling track etc. for everybody [8]. Parks bring people close to the nature and that provides them with good mental health. The importance of parks has increased in the presence of maximum reliance on motorized transport and leisure-time physical activity may become important in fulfilling physical activity levels [9]. Such physical activity may be conducted in a variety of community environments, such as local parks, which are often accessible to citizens at low or no cost. In fact, parks have common community features which provide opportunities for physical activity to park users.

Methodology

We surveyed different public parks in order to assess the benefits of public parks in context to health of the individual. Although the focus of this subject field is on the health welfares, that can be obtained by developing a positive relationship of public parks with physical, psychological, social, economic cultural, and environmental benefits.

Results

Physical Benefits: Health benefits of parks

In the physical benefits, health was best analyzed. It is seen that for carrying out any

activity, person should be physically fit and healthy. If he / she is not healthy he/she would not be able to participate in daily routine activities, as a result society constrains from that person. By assessing it, we came into this knowledge that parks has certain role in making person away from several diseases like by doing walk and jogging obesity, hypertension, and diabetes are minimized. Intake of clean and fresh air, open lungs and reduces risk of asthma.

Psychological Benefits

In psychological benefits, personal benefits were best analyzed by giving opportunity to concentrate on thinking and generate new ideas. It was observed that public parks also improve quality of life where fresh and cool breeze makes person mind fresh and healthy. Accessing to parks makes person physically fit by availing all the facilities provided in the parks like running, walking and jogging tracks.

Social Benefits

Social benefits were best analyzed with respect to opportunity for talking to people and opportunity to make friends. Parks are a great source of developing understanding and interaction among people and gave an opportunity for talking to others of different areas, cities and background. By making healthy talk with others we generate new ideas and also help us in improving our knowledge. By talking to others, we sometimes find the solutions of our problem too.

Sharing sorrows and happiness is very important in life. If person did not find anyone with whom he/she share problems it leads them towards mental illness. Parks play efficient role in it. Parks provide person with friendly environment

to make new friends who stand in their hard time, consider their problem as his /her problem, find solutions of their problems and tell solutions of how to tackle problems in most appropriate way. This make person mentally free and relaxed.

Environment benefits: Reduction of air pollution by parks

Environment had great impact on human health therefore, it is important that pollution free environment should be provided to the individuals. Fresh and healthy environment is found only in parks. Trees in the parks provide shade in extreme hot weather. At evening, families prefer to rush towards parks in order to enjoy cool and fresh breeze blown in the parks. Cool and fresh breeze makes mind healthier.

Economic Benefits

Economic benefits were best analyzed with respect to basic environmental, appealing and recreational facilities. Parks are rich in providing cool breeze, fresh air that soothes individual heart mind and soul. It is important that the atmosphere providing to the visitors free from dirt. Recreational facilities are for enjoyment, amusement, fun and pleasure such as swimming pools and sport areas for both children and adults; small play land areas for children and everybody visiting parks had access to it. Every small town and areas should have parks with recreational facilities and charging of such parks are at economical rates so that people access to these parks is more as compared to make them at increased charges, this is very helpful for the health of the people as it makes them away from various diseases such as reduces obesity and joint pains by doing physical activity. This on the other hand increases the economy of the

country, that if the parks are provided with good recreational facilities and charge some money that was affordable to the visitors then it will not decrease the visitor's tourism to such parks.

Cultural Benefits

Cultural health benefits were best analyzed with respect to tourism and social unity. In cultural benefits, parks also have very important contribution towards tourism and social unity. Inner-city parks are the significant location for conducting arts and cultural programs. During the late 19th era, parks are known for melodious occasions. By the establishment of the 20th era, the new-fangled medium of movie began to be signified in parks program design. But now it is the high time for the creation of creative and cultural activities in inner-city parks. Both parks and the arts are equally favorable and play an essential role in energizing a park, and the parks in turn can help to resolve difficulties confronted by artists and arts organizations. Since parks are the self-governing places of a city, where societies are organized to express their individualities, the matrimony of parks and the arts makes picture-perfect sense. Parks can be dynamic place for the cultural appearance of a public and a town.

Conclusion

No doubt parks play vital role on the health of those persons who regularly carry out physical activity and due to which it reduces the morbidity and mortality in those persons by minimizing the risk of heart diseases, diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, feelings of depression/anxiety, and weight. Such activities may also lead to building up and maintaining healthy bones, muscles, and joints. Due to increasingly reliance on motorized transport,

physical activities have been reduced for which, it is important to generate some physical activities for fixed duration of time keeping in mind the age limitation so that the individual may remain away from different diseases. By providing opportunities for physical activity, parks can facilitate physical and psychological health benefits.

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