

## The Study of Urban Environmental Management with Women's Participation to Preserve Green Spaces

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**Abstract:** Today that the environment is demolishing, cultivation towards the preservation of the environment, considering the women's impact on the human society, plays a key role in education and awareness. The current study aimed to analyze the women's participation on the urban environmental management using the descriptive method. The population included 20000 women residing in Bandar Imam City and 412 women were chose among them using the Krejcie and Morgan table for determining sample size. The sample choice was based on the convenience sampling method and the women willing to collaborate with the researcher. The data collective tool was a questionnaire edited by the researcher. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire, based on Cronbakh's alpha, was 91% and the data analysis was based on descriptive statistics and SPSS software. The result shows women's participation as a key factor in creating green spaces and cultural education for preservation of the environment. The result also showed education has a direct relationship in women's participation in preserving the environment.

**Key words:** Environment, Women's participation, urban environment management, descriptive method.

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### INTRODUCTION

One of the major concerns of the current development's unsustainable process is urbanization's rapid growth and its equivalent lifestyle in the world. The unprecedented increase in urban population has deleterious consequences for the biosphere. The environment is exposed to serious threats in national and international levels and these threats include global warming, biodiversity loss and various pollutants. With the outbreak of environmental pollutions and the reduction of general living level, especially in urban communities during the past two decades, the development program was suggested by the United Nations at the end of the 20th century and was determined as the 21th century's agenda in international, regional and local levels.

Therefore, we must attain a logistic perspective towards the environment not only to have optimal and sustainable productivity of the natural resources but also to have sustainable development towards preserving the national assets for the future generations. Promoting environmental education is one way. We must not underestimate the women's key role in this, for the women, representing half of the population, play the crucial role in the family.

Improving environmental awareness in women can lead to awareness of the other members of the family and improving the family's awareness can improve the society's environmental awareness. From another perspective, women's nurturing and life giving nature towards humans is the reason they understand nature better and why they are well motivated to protect it.

Women's active role in spreading the environmental cultivation and the need to create the necessary means towards a sustainable development is an accepted matter by the world.

One of the most important duties in urban management is to provide decent living conditions in the cities and to improve the urban environment. (MajidiKhameneh, 2009) sustainable urban development is a form of today's development which can guarantee the sustainable development of the cities and future communities from a different perspective (MousaKazemi, 2001)

Sustainable urban development seeks to balance the population of large cities and its existing resources so that it can predict and overcome its current and possible future generation issues and to prevent the resources waste (Zarabi, 2000). The truth is the same formula does not work for all countries to attain sustainable urban development and that every country should find its own unique measures to attain sustainable development considering its social, financial, cultural and ecological circumstances (MojtahedZadeh, 2000).

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Given the important role of women as an effective force on social activity levels and their close relationship with various age groups and their activity's wide range of impact in promoting and transmitting the environmental cultivation, the current research aims to answer the following question: what are the affecting factors in women's participation?

**Objectives:**

1. Determining women's participation factors in urban environmental management based on their occupations.
2. Determining women's participation factors in urban environmental management based on their age.
3. Determining women's participation factors in urban environmental management based on their education level.

**Research Methodology:**

Considering these questions, the following research is a practical research using a descriptive method to study women's participation in preserving green spaces as the urban environment management.

**Research Variables:**

The current research has considered different social indexes (age, education level, number of children) financial status (occupation, household expenses) and residential status (residential status such as ownership and accommodation type) so it can determine the women's participation role and method in urban environmental management in general. In addition, women's participation in urban environmental management is the main variable under study in the current research.

**Statistical Population, Sample and Sampling Method:**

The statistical population of the current research includes married women residing in Bandar Imam Khomeini province and the data collective tools were a questionnaire of 32 questions. Four Hundred and twelve of the 20000 women gave complete answers to the questionnaires and their observed data were eventually analyzed (Krejcie and Morgan 1970). The sample choice was based on the convenience sampling method and the women willing to collaborate with the researcher. Scoring the questionnaire was based on five-ordered response level of Likret type scale from rarely (1) to frequently (5).

Gaining the highest score in this scale represented the highest score of participation in urban environmental management.

The data analysis was done by SPSS software, version 19 and the descriptive statistics such as frequency, frequency percentage, Mean and standard deviation. The level of significance to test the theory was 0.05.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The result of the demographic population data analysis is summarized in descriptive tables.

As you can see in table 1, the age group of 26-35 and the age group of 56 and higher with respectively 45.4 and 3.4% frequency include the maximum and the minimum reply to the questionnaire. Therefore, the age group of 26 to 35 has the most effectiveness in urban management through the establishment and maintenance of green spaces.

**Table 1:** Frequency Distribution of Sample According to Age Group.

Percentage	Frequency	Age
14.3	59	15 to 25 years
45.4	187	26 to 35 years
26.5	19	36 to 45 years
10.4	43	46 to 55 years
3.4	14	56 years and higher
100	412	Total

Table 2 shows the effect of the educational level in urban management through the establishment and maintenance of green spaces. According to this table, considering that most of the women residing in Bandar Imam Khomeini have educational level of a high school Diploma and second after that less than a high school diploma, professional training of urban management needs to be allocated to this group from the relevant authorities.

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution of sample according to the number of their children, as you can see 25.2% of the participants have two children and are very keen to preserve green spaces and urban development.

As you can see in table 4-6, the majority of the samples of the current research (about 60%) own a personal property and about 40% of the statistical samples of the research live in rental households.

**Table 2:** Frequency Distribution of Sample According to Educational Level of the Women Residing in Bandar Imam Khomeini.

Percentage	Frequency	Educational level
3.4	14	Elementary school
24.3	100	Less than high school Diploma
38.6	159	High school Diploma
14.8	61	College Degree
18.9	78	Bachelors Degree and higher
100	412	Total

**Table 3:** Frequency Distribution of Sample According to the Number of Children of the Women Residing in Bandar Imam Khomeini.

Percentage	Frequency	Number of Children
23.5	97	None
22.8	94	One child
25.2	104	Two Children
13.8	57	Three Children
8.7	36	Four Children
6	24	Five Children and more
100	412	Total

**Table 4:** Frequency Distribution of Sample According to Occupation, Household type and Ownership Status of the Women Residing in Bandar Imam Khomeini.

Total	Percentage	Total	Frequency	Statistical Variable	
100	41	412	169	Employed	Occupation
	59		243	Housewife	
100	45.9	412	189	Apartment	Household Type
	54.1		223	Villas	
100	60.4	412	249	Personal Property	Ownership Status
	39.6		163	Rental	

**Frequency Distribution of the Answers Given by the Samples to the Questionnaires:**

After studying the demographic population of the current research, we shall review the sample's given answers to the questionnaire categorized by the research factors. Table 7 shows the status of the samples answers to the questionnaire.

**Table 5:** Frequency Distribution of the answers given by the samples to the Questionnaires.

Row	Questionnaire	Standard Deviation	Average
1	Creating green space in their town	1.24	2.31
2	Having a garden	1.32	2.79
3	Preserving green spaces of their town	1.30	2.74
4	Optimize energy consumption	1.11	3.48
5	Efficient use of water	1.14	3.48
6	Waste segregation	1.33	2.69
7	Putting out the garbage on time	1.11	3.88
8	Placing the garbage at the advised location	1.14	3.89
9	Proper usage of refreshners and insecticides	1.25	3.32
10	Proper usage of detergents to avoid side effects	1.18	3.28
11	Paying attention to the product's packing to generate less waste	1.33	2.82
12	Paying attention to the product's recycling capability	1.27	2.50
13	Buying products which are built from recycled material	1.09	1.96
14	Using disposable products which are recyclable	1.26	2.51
15	Not using nylon and plastic bags	1.22	2.60
16	Using cloth bags and shopping baskets	1.17	2.1
17	Using paper bags instead of plastic bags	1.16	2.06
18	Dedicating time to segregate garbage	1.18	2.32
19	Dedicating separate bins for garbage segregation	1.26	2.46
20	Paying attention to environmental messages	1.06	3.42
21	Putting environmental matters into action	1.11	3.40
22	Encouraging others to pay attention to environmental messages	1.14	3.07
23	Reducing waste by reducing household expenses	1.16	2.99
24	Smart shopping to reduce household waste	1.20	2.88
25	Recycling disposal materials to reduce household waste	1.10	2.64
26	advertising, educating and encourage to promote recycling	1.08	2.46
27	Working with municipalities to promote recycling	1.26	2.55
28	Proper usage of personal vehicle	1.25	3.18
29	dedicating time to improve the neighborhood's environment	1.21	2.88
30	working together with the neighborhood to improve its environment	1.18	3.04
31	Following up on local environmental issues	1.25	3.11
32	Educating children to preserve environment in the future	0.95	4.14

As you can see, considering the given answers to the questionnaires, question “32” with the mean of 4.14 answers is the first of the most influential factors in women’s participation in urban environment management with the approach towards sustainable development and the last factor includes question “13” with the mean of 1.96 answers.

**Conclusion:**

The result shows participation and awareness in recycling and green spaces include factors such as creating, protecting and preserving green spaces, garbage segregation, collaboration and following up on neighborhood’s environmental issues and by following them women can take a great step towards preserving the environment and can increase their participation level. Women’s participation in these matters, in neighborhood’s level, can protect the environment from destruction, Planting trees is one of the most effective and economical ways to soften the urban environment. Planting on rooftops, front yards and neighborhood’s parks not only cleans the air but also enhances the city’s look.

Since women represent the most influential social group on the environment, as the household’s managers they can play the most important and crucial role by collaborating and taking part in garbage segregation from where it starts. Household waste segregation is the most important step in reducing environmental risk. Separating wet waste such as fruit peel, used tea, greens and food leftovers can increase the production of compost fertilizers, which are made from recycling wet waste. Separated dry waste which includes all kinds of garbage such as glass, paper, cardboards, plastic, metals, iron, aluminum and bread will not only be reused but will also prevent the loss of national assets. In addition, women can reduce the toxin waste level of the landfill leachate by separating hazardous household garbage such as Insecticides, Fluorescent lamps, shaving razors, paper napkins and batteries. Garbage segregation from its origin in executing the recycling project is a continuous attempt, which can make long-term goals of recycling waste possible, and women play a key role in this matter. It is obvious that lacking a specific program for stability and continuity of this plan can lead to the project’s failure. This result is consistent with the Rahmani and Majidi (2009), Samadyar (2011), Movahed (2011), D. Darkey (2012) and Agbogidi (2007) results.

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