Recreational Services In Pakistan: A Case Study of States' Budget Reliant To Proposed Self-Sustained Transformational Mechanisms

Farah Naz*

School of Management Studies,
The University of Faisalabad
Email: farah.naz@tuf.edu.pk
*Corresponding author

Tayyab Zeeshan Shahid

Institute of Agricultural and Resource Economics,
University of Agriculture, Faisalabad

Saria Jabeen

Institute of Agricultural and Resource Economics,
University of Agriculture, Faisalabad

Muhammad Salman Waseem

Institute of Agricultural and Resource Economics,
University of Agriculture, Faisalabad

Saher Jabeen

Institute of Agricultural and Resource Economics,
University of Agriculture, Faisalabad

Abstract

Resources are considered a valuable entity across the globe. When natural resources become a part of discussion, situation hits the worse, because of their attribute that designates them among the extremely

vulnerable resources. Although, the maintenance of natural resources is a core authoritative obligation of the administrations that ultimately leads towards induced environmental perspectives by enhancing the natural beauty, uplifts the public health and more importantly, attracts the visitors to the sites that are considerable source of earning for such recreational sites. Under the initiative, an effort has been made to further strengthen the mechanism of maintenance of natural habitats that serves as recreational sites, uniquely be less dependent of the institutional funding rather being autonomous, standalone or self-sustained and self-reliant entities. Purposefully, data by means of well-structured questionnaire developed. Main objectives of the study were to identify consumer's willingness and affordability to pay for visiting recreational sites. Within persuasion of the perspective, by utilizing random sampling technique, 100 responses were recorded at the recreational sites including, Gutt Wala and Kaleem Shaheed Parks, Faisalabad. To identify the strengths of the under study mechanisms, their adaptability and further to understand the multifactorial functionalities, key statistical techniques were incorporated. Results indicated that approximately, 85 percent respondents were willing to pay interns of the contribution towards maintenance of the recreational services. These results further suggested that the adaptability of the transformed mechanisms could contribute to the sustainable domestic tourism and the society as well.

Biographical notes: Farah Naz is a lecturer in School of Management Studies at The University of Faisalabad. Dynamically, she's been having multiple experiences handling graduate and post graduate students throughout her career. To better serve the cause, under her research oriented career, she has addressed multidimensional researches oriented problems. By her academic contributions, she has always served her field by means of proposing unique adaptations for a better tomorrow.

Tayyab Zeeshan Shahid is a Ph.D. Scholar belongs to the Institute of Agricultural and Resource Economics at University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. Previously been having versatile experiences over managerial positions in private organizations and also being a part of teaching fraternity at different government and semi-government institutions. His career as a researcher and being a Ph.D. fellow, he has been a part of a number of research orientations and till the venture is on the run.

Saria Jabeen is a serving Deputy Registrar at The University of Faisalabad. Throughout her career, she gained versatile experiences while working under various institutions over multiple positions. She has done her M.phill in Economics from University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. Her teaching, research and managerial experiences provided her vast command over Behavioral Economics, Behavioral Finance and Micro Finance.

Muhammad Salman Waseem is a Ph.D. scholar at the Institute of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. Remarkably in his career, he served a number of multi-ethical organizations including UNICEF, Pakistan as research Officer and as visiting lecturer at Government College University, Faisalabad. He is having a vast research experience in the field of Health Economics and efficiency.

Saher Jabeen is a Ph.D. scholar at the Institute of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. Through her journey so far she has served many educational institutions including Government College University, Faisalabad as a faculty member. She excelled in her career, especially in the area of economic research and prosperity

1. Introduction

Ecotourism is a phenomenon that explores the aspects of recreational visits destined to the natural habitats with a responsibility to conserve, maintain and further to improve the environment of the habitat as well the welfare of its residents (Newsome et al., 2012). Ecotourism can help to generate the revenue that could in terms be utilized for multidimensional purposes where the maintenance of these recreational sites including payoffs to the employees,

developing infrastructure and protection of natural environment are top of the line. Ecotourism has played an important role in the conservation of natural resources as well as for the growth of any economy. For the developing countries, the literature has explored the eminent features associated with the key entrance fee imposed by the regulatory authorities that ultimately contributes positively towards the protection of parks (Khan, 2009).

Like other developing countries, Pakistan is striving to conserve and expanding its national parks by revitalizing the tourism sector. In terms of bio-diversity, Pakistan is considered to be poorest among South Asia. According to World Resource Institute in 1996, Pakistan has faced the increasing rates of deforestation. Statistics depicts an alarming situation where the forest covers only 5% of the total country area. Due to increasing population even the forests are used for residential areas that decreased the forest covering capacity. In the recent years the Government of Pakistan is keen to tackle this matter and has shown a great interest for the conservation of national parks of the country and forests.

A number of parks are been situated throughout the country including refuges and reserves. Instead of their limited numbers the management of national parks is not satisfactory. This is may be due to less or insufficient funds by the government and also due to the open access by the visitors. There is a need to investigate that how these recreational sites to be further better managed and by what means the environment could better be conserved. Recreational services or the activities are different, they varies from region to region, culture to culture and even according to the demographical status of any person.

Individually, there exists a variety of responses that varies as per the individual attributes, behaviors and preferences including the income, age, gender, and family type. In many of recreational activities, visiting a park is considered to be a healthy activity that directly affects the health and mental ability as well. Parks being the recreational sites are the places that facilitate different services for a healthy atmosphere for human as well as for the wildlife (Solecki, 1995). These types of recreational sites are very important for the people whom are living in urban areas and very rushed life styles. This will provide a plat form to the residents of the urban areas like Faisalabad.

As Faisalabad is the second largest city of Punjab and third largest city of Pakistan in terms of population. And also have fewer sites for the recreational services. It is a city having industrial and services base with much pollution. There is a lack of health facilities and other recreational facilities as compare to

increasing numbers of population. There is a need to investigate that in what ways these parks can be managed and how the environment can be conserved by providing the best recreational services to the people who come to enjoy the environment (Ashfaq et al., 2017).

1.1. Research Problem:

Public goods, benefits the society in a number of ways. They provide the recreational facilities to the visitors as well as perform ecological functions. There are only few parks in the country but are threatened by a variety of factors especially pollution created by the visitors as well as encroachment by the incumbents. Thus the overall negative and undesirable input caused by one or the other reason may be associated with insufficient facilities for managing these parks (Anteneh, 2014; Hockett et al., 2017).

Usually the management of recreational sites has two main sources of funds, the federal and provincial government budget. Alternatively, there is a fee mechanism that may be charged by the park management.

In Pakistan, budget is usually constrained by the amount, availability of funds and thus provided with certain limitations that most of the time affects the maintenance of these sites (GoP, 2016). As the government budget has to meet other projects, then there is a strong need to comprehend a detailed alternative approach that could fulfill the budget deficit and ultimately could provide them self-sufficiency in order to beat their own requirements. This revenue in turn can be utilized for the availability and enhancement of recreational services at the parks. The main objective is to construct a parallel approach that could transform the persistent budget dependent mechanisms to self-sustained set of mechanics that the managements could incorporate for the betterment of the recreational services offered at the sites. Basically services are more important that actually satisfies the customer than the standards because they create a true relation between the customer and the service (Sarwar and Amin, 2019). This study focused the Gutwala Park and Kleem Shaheed Park from Faisalabad city, Punjab. Pakistan.

1.2. Research Question:

Under the current world's scenario, resources are considered to be valuable entity. Within the persuasion of the perspective, there actually exists some value

for environmental resources for their ability to be designated as the marketable goods. As per the scarcity of the natural environmental resources and their ability that attributes the multiformity, comes with a variety of maintenance that ultimately strings along a variety of the costs associated with the phenomenon.

Further, the question appears that either to put the maintenance cost fringed by the environmental resources to be designated to the public entities or to be designated as the governmental obligations. Either the case might be but someone out to bear the cost. To simplify the matter, research question has been developed that specifically attributes the common features of public interest that either the ones who attain benefits out of such utilization of the resources for recreational purposes must be getting paid for their maintenance as well.

2.   Literature Review

Khan (2006) described the relationship between park visitation and travel cost. Study also examined the visitor's willingness to pay for the recreational activities and also identify that whether the improvements in recreational activities affect the numbers of visitation to the park. For the purpose data was collected from 1000 respondents by using questionnaires. Study used three different approaches to estimate the results. Findings showed that people were willing to pay for the recreational services and their willingness to pay was more and now they were willing to pay additional 20 rupees in the entrance fee. That can be a great source of revenue for the management of park and could be utilized for the facilitation of visitors. But overall this addition will reduce the actual consumer surplus in terms of income. This would lead to the situation where poor would be unable to pay more as they have less income.

Ahmed and Sattar (2007) explained the Willingness to pay of households for the safe drinking water services in district Hyderabad. The main objective of the study was to estimate the level of formal awareness of people about system and their willingness to pay for safe drinking water. For the purpose primary data was collected from the 514 households. To analyze the data Multinomial Logit Regression model was used. The results showed that education level was more significant among the female's decision makers in using more expensive or any way to purification of water. And the willingness to pay was higher among the female's decision makers as compared to male decision makers.

Khan (2009) estimated the elasticity's of demand and WTP for the improved resources. For the analysis the data was collected from two national parks, first was the Margala hills park and second was the Ayubia national park. Questioners were used to collect the data from the visitors. Questionnaire was consisted on two parts. First was of questioned contained the general information ad second part contained the information regarding visitors behavior and their views on recreational services. Cost valuation method was used. Findings showed that there was a positive relationship between income and WTP. The estimates of elasticities were general and also greater than zero. Study concluded that improvements at park were much favorable and beneficial for the people having low income rather than the people having high income.

Halkos and Matsiori (2012) examined the determinants that have strong effect on the willingness to pay for high quality programs covering environment, recreational services and drinking water quality. For the evaluation of economic benefits of coastal zone the contingent valuation method was used to collect the data and general statistical techniques were used to analyses the data. Findings showed that major variable that was affecting the willingness to pay was strongly in relation with environmental behavior. For the improvements of coastal zone's quality the major determinants were coastal recreational activities, gender, age and income.

Khan et al., (2014) estimated the WTP for the recreational activities. The main focus of the study was to identify the determinants that affect the visitors WTP. Study used a random sample technique to collect the data from 500 visitors. Multiple techniques were used to analyses that are there a consistent relationship between the economic theory and determinants of WTP. In all the cases the own price elasticity was insignificant and negative. Cross price elasticity and income elasticity were have significant and positive affect the visitors' willingness to pay.

Abbas et al., (2015) estimated the willingness to pay of onsite visitors and also from the nearby areas of Shahdra and Lahore for the conservation of Ravi River. Open and close ended questionnaires were used to collect the data. Face to face interviews were conducted from 300 respondents. Findings showed that 2.7 percent of people were visiting alone to the Ravi River and 39 percent were visiting Ravi with their friends. Almost 99 percent visitors agree on the conservation of Ravi River and its green spaces. On an average people were willing to pay 149 rupees for the conservation of Ravi River. Study concluded

that people strongly have a urge to visit Ravi river again due to its ecosystem and environment.

Rathnayake (2016) estimated the demand of visitors for the environmental friendly programs at parks and level of satisfaction of visitors by those schemes as well. To collect the data face to face interviews were conducted from 336 respondents. Collected information was mainly about the visitor's perception about ecotourism schemes and its characteristics and level of satisfaction. General statistical methods were used to identify the results. Study showed that ecotourism schemes were satisfactory for the visitors. Now they were willing to pay more in the entrance fee for the ecotourism schemes that the management can gain more revenue that in turf can be used for the fulfillment of schemes cost. Study suggested that how and to which extent the visitor willingness to pay is can be useful for environmental resource planning systems.

3.   Methodology

To estimate the values of different environmental resources the study undergone parallel approaches. Travel Cost Method (TCM) and the Contingent Valuation Method (CVM). The Travel Cost Method is an important and prominent method that is uses to measure the cost of travelling to the recreational site or the benefits that are provided by the recreational management. TCM is the non-market process technique where the parks are evaluated by having ideas about how much people time to access have the park and how much money they are willing to pay for the recreational services.

TCM are further divided into two types, one is the individual cost method and other is the zonal cost method. Individual travel cost method is used to have the information about the individual who were visiting the parks and by using this technique the information can be collected more easily. The travel Cost method shown in various studies that when the cost to access the site increases the number of visits by the consumers decrease at the site. Travel Cost Method estimates that visits rate are totally related to the price that is bear by the customer to access the site and also by the substitute site and its benefits and most importantly the economic and social characteristics of the consumers (Garrod & Willis, 1999).

Therefore, Contingent valuation is a method with which the value of a specific good is assessed by the amount the one can directly forgo in order to attain that

specific variety of good. All of the phenomena is based on an hypothetical arena of market structure that actually do not exists but in terms helps identifying the actual forgo able amount that otherwise is impossible to be estimated by either of the means, directly or indirectly. Contingent Valuation Technique, under the utilization of specific commodities that are not designated as the regular market commodities. The hypothetical situations in Contingent Valuation Methodology (CVM) particularly response dependent, represents the actions that actually one could adopt by the time of need. Examples may include the amount actually one needs to beat the level of pre-disaster level of utility or actually to reach near it (Anteneh, 2014).

3.1. Variables and Data

The theory regarding economic perspectives and experience of the managers who were working at recreational sites depicted that the demographical variables and many other independent variables are considered to be have strong effects on the recreational sites visitation. Besides demographic variables, there are the number of variables that have strong effect includes the travel time, travel quality and most important travel cost and the demographic variables includes, age, gender, income, education, family size and family status.

On the basis of intuitive, age is the variable that appears to be important variable that determined the demand for the visitation of recreational site and parks. Gender is the other important determinant. In a society we live it is expected that as compare to women, men are more likely to visit the parks and recreational sites. Income of the family is consider to be have positive relation with the visits of recreational site or the parks as people will have more income the more they will participate in the outdoor activities. It is also considered that the more the income of people will be they the higher the level of willingness will be by the people. Recreational demand is also strongly affected by the recreational demand, the relationship among the parks visitation and travel cost may be indirect (Weaver & Lawton, 2007). Number of respondents said that the fuel, tires, food and other accommodations costs mostly effect their decision of trip. For the collection of data, site leveled survey was conducted.

Data was collected from the 100 respondents by using questionnaire majorly from Gutt Wala and Kaleem Shaheed Parks, Faisalabad. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to collect data about the behaviour of visitors towards the services at the recreational site. The questionnaire was consisted on three parts. The first part of the questionnaire was consisted on the demographical variables,

second part covers the specific questions related to recreation site like number of visits, total time spend by the person etc. Third part of questionnaire covers the questions about the willingness to pay and affordability to pay by the people.

Regarding the number of samples, Scheafferc et at. (1996) states that a systematic sample is generally spread more uniformly over the entire population and thus may provide more information about the population than an amount of data contained in a simple random sample." This study used systematic random sampling. In case of refusal by one individual, another visitor was interviewed.

4.   Empirical Results

Table 1: Ranges of Frequencies of Demographic Variables

Variable	Frequency	Relative frequency
Age		
15 - 25	48	0.48
26 - 35	17	0.17
36 - 45	20	0.2
46 and Above	15	0.15
Gender		
Male	73	0.73
Female	27	0.27
Education		
Less Than Matric	38	0.38
Intermediate	25	0.25
Graduation	23	0.23
Masters and Above	14	0.14
Family Type		
Nuclear	67	0.67
Joint	33	0.33
Occupation of Visitors		
Student	36	0.36
Labor	25	0.25
Government Employ	18	0.18
Private Employ	09	0.09
Own Business	12	0.12

Income Per Month		
0 – 8000	39	0.39
8001 – 16000	20	0.20
16001 – 24000	10	0.1
24001 – 32000	13	0.13
32000 and above	18	0.18

Table 1 shows the descriptive variables and also the participation by those descriptive variables. First variable is the age that shows between the ages of 25 the 48 percent people visits the park. In this age people like to visit the park more while more than 46 are those who want to visit less as age number increases. Second descriptive variable is the gender and results showed that male were visited the park more relative to female. Third variable is the education and results showed that people who were visited the park more relatively others were belong to less educated people.

Table 2: Ranges of Frequencies of Analytical Variables

Variables	Frequency	Relative Frequency
No. of Visits (Last Year)		
1 to 2	14	0.14
3 to 4	57	0.57
5 to 6	11	0.11
7 to 8	10	0.1
9 to 10	8	0.08
Travel Time to Access Site (Min)	39	0.39
less than 30	25	0.25
31 – 45	15	0.15
46 – 60	11	0.11
61 – 75	10	0.1
76 and Above		

Time Spent on Site (Hours)		
1	25	0.25
2	39	0.39
3	21	0.21
4	10	0.1
5 and above	05	0.05
Kind of Recreation:		
Sightseeing	15	0.15
Walking	10	0.1
Bird watching	8	0.08
Relaxation	30	0.30
Exercising	12	0.12
Boating	05	0.05
Combination	20	0.20
Travel Cost (Rs)		
0 - 75	45	0.45
76 - 150	23	0.23
151 - 225	14	0.14
226 – 300	18	0.18
Distance to Access The Site (Km):		
1 to 3	32	0.32
4 to 6	29	0.29
7 to 9	16	0.16
10 to 12	09	0.09
13 and Above	14	0.14

Fourth variable in table 1 is the family types and tables shows that people who were visited the park were belongs to more single families as compare to joint families. And most of them were students as table showed that 36 percent students who were visited the park more as compare to other visitors from other occupations. It was also analyses that people having low income visit the park more.

Table 2 shows that 57 percent visits the park 3 to 4 times in a year but this totally depends how much time is used to access the site and table shoes that 39 percent people access the site in 39 minutes. Table revealed that 39 percent visitors spend 2 hours in the park for enjoying the various recreational activities. Among those

activities relative to other 30 percent people visit the park for the relaxation. But to avail that relaxation time they have to bear a certain amount and results showed that 45 percent people bear the cost of maximum 75 Rs as a travel cost to reach at the site. Table no 2 also shows that 32 percent people travel 1-3 km to reach at the park. Nature of service and quality of service is a multidimensional phenomenon or construct that can have different aspect and different meaning for the people belongs to different area or age group or income group (Aslam & Najaf, 2017).

Table 3: Willingness to Pay and Affordability to Pay Indices

Variable	Frequency	Relative Frequency
WTP:		
If willing = 1	85	0.65
If not willing = 0	15	0.35
ATP (Rupees)		
0 to 10	11	0.11
11 to 20	15	0.15
21 to 30	24	0.24
31 and above	50	0.50

Table 3, Shows the willingness to pay and affordability pay by the visitors for the improved recreational services at the park in form of ticket. And results show that 85 percent people were willing to pay for the attainment of improves recreational services at the park and they 50 percent people were to pay more than 30Rs in the ticket fee.

5. Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to estimate the Willingness and Affordability to Pay, against the recreational services. Results indicated that the visitors were willing to contribute in terms of the contribution to be utilized as the maintenance

cost. Although, majority was agreed on contributing toward the better maintenance of the recreational sites but majority of the visitor were students and laborers by profession. As per their professions the amounts they can forgo in terms of the maintenance charges were opt to be small that is all explained by Khan et al. 2014.

The study also revealed that the other than professions, the income, family sizes travel cost and distance them travel to reach the recreational sites was also involved apparently. Study further suggested induced maintenance strategy to be adopted and to be followed by the management authorities especially in terms of the entrance fee. In addition, all the core recreational sites that are been serving the visitors, must charge a fee depending upon the facilities they provide so that they could somehow became able to afford their own expenses and to gain the status of self-sufficient and self-reliant as well. The study at hand further suggests that there is a dire need that key governance mechanism to be evolved and thus to be enforced at these type of sites in order to achieve better outcomes and regulatory landmarks that ultimately enhances the collaboration among variety of sects and sectors of the nascent economy (Zeeshan Shahid et al., 2019; Shahid et al., 2020)

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