

## EVALUATION OF RECREATIONAL AREAS IN SİİRT

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates how users evaluate Siirt recreational areas in various variables. The study includes 200 voluntary participants selected from users of such areas via the convenience sampling method. To collect the study's data, the Recreational Areas Scale (RAS), whose validity and reliability studies were conducted by Ulaş and Ayan (2017), was used in terms of the proximity to recreational areas, frequency of use, and various variables. The data was evaluated via the SPSS 26 package program. As a result, depending on the proximity to the recreational area, there was a statistically significant difference in terms of equipment, functionality, diversity and quantitative adequacy of the area, general adequacy of the area, the ability to meet basic needs, and adequacy of sanitation and the mean score ( $p < 0.05$ ). A slight difference was found in terms of the frequency of use of the recreational areas. In addition, it was determined that there was no significant difference in the mean score and all sub-scales depending on the gender variable ( $p > 0.05$ ). In conclusion, future investments in recreational areas considering various variables are expected to yield more positive results.

**Keywords:** Recreational Areas; diversity; equipment

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# SİİRT İLİNDEKİ REKREATİF ALANLARIN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

## ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı Siirt ilinde bulunan rekreatif alanların kullanıcılar tarafından çeşitli değişkenler açısından değerlendirilmesidir. Çalışmaya bu alanları kullanan, uygun örnekleme metodu ile seçilmiş toplam 200 gönüllü kişi katılmıştır. Çalışmada veri toplamak amacıyla, rekreatif alanların yakınlığı, kullanım sıklığı ve cinsiyet değişkenleri ile birlikte, geçerlilik ve güvenilirlik çalışması, Ulaş ve Ayan (2017) tarafından yapılan “Rekreatif alanları değerlendirme ölçeği” (RAD) uygulanmıştır. Elde edilen verilerin değerlendirilmesi SPSS 26 paket programında yapılmıştır. Veriler incelendiğinde; rekreatif alan yakınlığına bağlı olarak, alanın donanım, işlevsellik, çeşitlilik ve nicel yeterlilik boyutu, alanın genel yeterlilik boyutu, temel ihtiyaçları karşılayabilme ve hijyen yeterlilik alt boyutlarında ve genel ortalama istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark olduğu tespit edilmiştir ( $p < 0.05$ ). Rekreatif alanların kullanım süresinde ise, kısmi fark bulunmuştur. Ayrıca cinsiyet değişkenine bağlı olarak genel ortalama ve tüm alt boyutlarda anlamlı bir fark olmadığı tespit edilmiştir ( $p > 0.05$ ). Sonuç olarak, rekreatif alanlara yönelik yapılacak yatırımların değişkenler gözetilerek gerçekleştirilmesi daha olumlu sonuçlar verecektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Rekreatif alanlar; çeşitlilik; donanım

## INTRODUCTION

In the wake of the industrial revolution, countries rapidly became industrialized, causing migration from small cities, towns, and villages to big cities (Çakır, 2011). For this reason, the population of industrialized cities is higher and increasing day by day (Ficher, 1994). This rising population causes more people to live in tighter and more sedentary places (Sağlam, 2011). According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, basic needs, including breathing, resting, and food and water, are at the bottom of such a condo. In contrast, safety needs include the security of health, hygiene, or fears at the second level (Henden, 2018). It can be argued that the availability of areas where the individual can physically engage in activities is the first or second step of the pyramid.

People living in big cities engage in physical activities to renew themselves and relax in their time out of work, and such activities are called recreational activities (Badrić et al., 2016). Recently, people's recreational needs have begun to increase, and therefore the number of courses they attend for recreational purposes has increased (Dattilo et al., 2012). This shows that the recreational areas in the cities bring movement to the congested world of people and prevent the formation of an unhealthy society, which causes the need for recreational areas to increase gradually (Karakuş, 1995; Koçer, 1980; Krous, 1985).

Participation in recreational activities and increasing users also raise social awareness, contribute to public health, and prevent several diseases. Studies show that recreational activities provide physical fitness and benefit mental health (McKenzie et al., 2010; Bucworth & Dishman., 2002; Long, 1993; Gill, 1986). Besides, they are helpful in the fight against stress, which has become one of the biggest problems of modern lives in recent years, and recreational activities also help block out work intensity, which in turn results in lower levels of stress levels and increased self-confidence (Wijndaele et al., 2007; Coleman & Iso-Ahola, 1993; Soyer et al., 2012; Sarı, 2012; Kirkcaldy et al., 2002).

As people's interest in recreational activities increases, they need recreational areas at higher levels. It can be suggested that this urges local governments to open new recreational areas and make up for shortages. Local governments are responsible for providing these services with their maintenance (Ökmen & Özer, 2013). In this context, local governments have a great responsibility to raise healthy generations (Çakırer & Boz, 2015). They have conducted various studies to evaluate recreational areas in Isparta, Osmaniye, and Konya, respectively (Akten, 2003; Metin et al., 2020; Koçyiğit & Yıldız, 2014). And this study has been designed to evaluate the recreational areas in Siirt in terms of users and reveal the shortages and deficiencies that users find in the light of scientific data.

## **METHOD**

### **Study Group**

Participants aged 200 (age =  $32.2 \pm 6.6$ ; male = 143; female = 57; married = 124, single = 76) living in Siirt province voluntarily participated in the study. Necessary information was given before the participants filled out the scales. It took 10 minutes to complete the scale.

### **Data Collection Tool**

#### **The Recreational Areas Scale (RAS)**

The Evaluation of Recreational Areas Scale was developed in the study by Ulaş and Ayan (2017). The form containing the personal information of the participants in the descriptive information section prepared by the researcher was used to evaluate the recreational areas. The scale consists of 3 sub-scales and 19 questions. Considering the content of the items, Factor I ((1, 2, 3, 4) includes "Field General Competence Dimension", Factor II (7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17,18,19) includes "Domain Hardware, Functionality, Diversity and Quantitative Competency Dimension" and, Factor III (5, 6, 11, 12, 13) has "Basic Needs and Hygiene Adequacy Dimension". In this study, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale was found to be .95 in RAS total, .85 in Field General Competence Dimension, .93 in Domain Hardware, Functionality, Diversity and Quantitative Competency and .83 in Basic Needs and Hygiene Adequacy Dimension.

### **Data Analysis**

SPSS 26 statistical program was used in the analysis of the study. Arithmetic means and standard deviation values were determined for descriptive information. An independent sample t-test was used for the proximity to recreational areas, frequency of use of recreational areas, and gender variable.

## FINDINGS

In this part of the study, the responses regarding the evaluation of recreational areas in Siirt province were examined.

**Table 1.** T-Test Results of the RAS Scale Scores Depending on the Proximity to Recreational Areas Variable

	N		$\bar{x}$	SD	df	t	P
	Close	Distant					
Field General Competence	106		2,55	,95	198	3,451	<b>0,001*</b>
	94		2,10	,92			
Domain Hardware, Functionality, Diversity and Quantitative Competency	106		2,44	,87	198	2,885	<b>0,004*</b>
	94		2,08	,88			
Basic Needs and Hygiene Adequacy	106		2,55	,84	198	3,380	<b>0,001*</b>
	94		2,14	,85			
The RAS Total	106		2,49	,79	198	3,398	<b>0,001*</b>
	94		2,10	,83			

p<0.05

Table 1 shows a statistically significant difference among groups in the RAS scores of users in terms of the proximity of recreational areas based on the t-test results (p<0.05). This indicates that recreational areas are adequate for users closer to recreational areas in terms of all sub-scales and mean scores.

**Table 2.** T-Test Results of the RAS Scale Scores Depending on the Frequency of Use of Recreational Areas Variable

	N		$\bar{x}$	SD	df	t	P
	Once A Week and More	Twice A Week					
Field General Competence	110		2,20	,97	198	-2,276	<b>0,024*</b>
	90		2,51	,93			
Domain Hardware, Functionality, Diversity and Quantitative Competency	110		2,16	,89	198	-1,884	0,061
	90		2,40	,88			
Basic Needs and Hygiene Adequacy	110		2,22	,81	198	-2,612	<b>0,011*</b>
	90		2,53	,91			
The RAS Total	110		2,18	,82	198	-2,330	<b>0,021*</b>
	90		2,46	,83			

p<0.05

Table 2 shows a statistically significant difference among groups in the RAS scores of users in terms of the frequency of use of recreational areas based on the t-test results (p<0.05). This indicates that recreational areas are adequate for users to use recreational regions twice a week or more in general adequacy and sanitation, as well as mean scores.

**Table 3.** T-Test Results of the RAS Scale Scores Depending on the Gender Variable

	N Female/Male	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	t	P
Field General Competence	143 57	2,32 2,39	1,00 ,85	198	-,477	0.634
Domain Hardware, Functionality, Diversity and Quantitative Competency	143 57	2,25 2,31	,95 ,73	198	-,375	0,708
Basic Needs and Hygiene Adequacy	143 57	2,36 2,36	,92 ,72	198	-,025	0,980
The RAS Total	143 57	2,30 2,34	,90 ,66	198	-,334	0,739

p<0.05

Table 3 shows a statistically significant difference among groups in the RAS scores of users in terms of the gender variable based on the t-test results (p<0.05).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It is known that recreational activities meet the needs of individuals, such as self-renewal, rest, relaxation, pleasure, and improving social relations with their environment (İskender et al., 2015). As living conditions are gradually changing, people residing in cities are looking for a recreational area where they can make the best use of their free time to keep away from the stress, fatigue, pressure, various troubles, and problems caused by the intense tempo (Demirel & Harmandar, 2009). In particular, the value of these areas has been further understood during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the subject's trends have increased. So much so that, along with these trends, studies on the evaluation of recreational areas have gained significant importance. This study was carried out to contribute to current needs and research by focusing on assessing recreational areas in terms of users in the province of Siirt.

Based on the study's findings, there was a statistically significant difference in the proximity to the recreational area used by people (p<0.05). Accordingly, it was concluded that in all sub-scales of the Evaluation of Recreational Areas Scale and the mean score, users close to the relevant areas see recreational areas as more adequate. Results of various previous studies overlapped with the results of this study. In a survey conducted by Kara et al. in the province of Istanbul, it was found that there are differences between the districts regarding recreational areas, and the population density in the sections is a factor affecting the use and access of the areas. The old settlements (Fatih, Eminönü, Beşiktaş, Şişli, Zeytinburnu, Bakırköy) host more recreational areas and the people living in these districts have easier access to recreation areas compared to those living in other sections (Kara et al., 2008). It is not possible to compare the socio-economic structure of Istanbul with the province of Siirt. Still, the proximity to recreational areas and the abundance led to similar results for both sections. In a study on the region of Konya, which is the largest city in Turkey in terms of area and has metropolitan status in terms of population, findings on the relationship between people and the recreational areas were revealed to

emphasize that more importance should be given to investments in recreational areas along with a further need for renewal of existing facilities (Koçyiğit & Yıldız, 2014).

Another related study was carried out by Akten in 2003 in Isparta, concluding that most of the participants did not know the location of the recreational areas. In this respect, the study is inconsistent with our research findings on the province of Siirt. Demirel and Harmandar's (2008) research on university students is noteworthy as a study in which the problems related to recreational areas come to the fore in their findings. In the related research, the facilities in the recreational areas and the difficulties experienced by the participants in transportation were emphasized. Likewise, in Sandal and Karademir's (2008) study on the province of Kahramanmaraş, the emphasis was on problems such as lack of security, lack of hygiene in places where recreational areas are located, environmental pollution, lack of necessary equipment, and crowded recreational areas. Zorba et al. (2006) studied recreational areas in the province of Muğla based on the attitudes of local governments in Muğla towards recreational areas and activities. They concluded that the facilities and personnel were inadequate.

Another finding of the study conducted in the province of Siirt is a statistically significant difference in terms of the frequency of use ( $p < 0.05$ ). Recreational areas are more adequate for people who use recreational areas two or more times a week in terms of general adequacy, the ability to meet basic needs and adequacy of sanitation, and the mean score of the Evaluation of Recreational Areas Scale. Along the same lines, Demir (2019) studied the province of Çankırı to conclude that individuals differed significantly according to the frequency of use of recreational areas and that there were significant differences in terms of functionality, equipment, diversity, and quantitative adequacy of the area, general adequacy of the area, the ability to meet basic needs and adequacy of sanitation.

It was observed in this study that there was no statistically significant difference depending on gender. Parallel to this study, the research conducted by Metin et al. in Osmaniye is remarkable. The study concluded that there was no difference in the mean score and all sub-scales in terms of the evaluation of recreational areas scale according to the gender variable (Metin et al., 2020). However, Demir found that the overall scale and all sub-scales differed significantly according to gender (Demir, 2019).

As a result, considering the previous studies, the need for recreational areas is commonly accepted by people regardless of provinces. In terms of the findings obtained from the participants who supported our study, it can be said that while there was no significant difference depending on the gender variable in the use of recreational areas, there was a considerable difference depending on the proximity to recreational areas and the frequency of use. Based on these findings, considering the need for recreational areas, the importance of diversifying the features of the areas and facilitating access to these areas has been understood once again. Local governments, other public administrations, and even the private sector have significant roles. It is thought that the satisfaction of the services offered to the citizens will increase even more by making the recreational areas attractive.

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