

## **The Perception of Residence about Role of Non Government Organizations (NGO's) in Preserving the Urban Green Spaces in Tehran**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this research was to study the role of non-governmental organization in preserving of urban green areas in the city of Tehran. This is a descriptive-correlation research method. Population of this study was 120 active members of two non-governmental organizations in Tehran. After distributing the questionnaires, 62 questionnaires were returned. Content and face validity of the instrument were confirmed by experts in the field of agricultural extension and education and environmental protection. Reliability of the questionnaire measured by cronbach's alpha coefficient and its coefficient was 0.83. The results of spearman correlation coefficient test indicated that there was significant relationship between access to the educational materials, contacts with municipality and non-governmental organizations, providing financial resources to non-governmental organizations as independent variables and dependent variable. Results obtained from multiple regressions analysis show that providing financial resources to non-governmental organizations, participating in municipality planning programs and level of education had impact on preservation of urban green area.

**Keywords:** Adult education; Non-governmental organization; Urban green area.

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## INTRODUCTION

The role of technology in human's life and increasing population forced human to find different ways to fulfill their needs. In this regard, people directly or indirectly destroy the environment or natural resources. For instance, urbanization of Tehran has resulted by destructing the old gardens in Tehran (Bahman Pour & Moharam nejad, 2005). It is clear that participation of all people, government and Non-government organizations as inhabitant of the big cities can be very useful to decrease the rate of destruction. Because of that, at year of 2003, Tehran municipality divided the management of natural resources, into two main departments: prevalence of the culture of green areas among the different levels of the people and also, participating and organizing the governmental organizations and Non-governmental organizations in the urban green areas activities. Vadaon (2008) emphasized that cooperation of Non-governmental organizations with governments has been a necessary requirement for development.

Furthermore, Non-governmental organizations could help in improving the natural resources in many ways such as: increasing awareness and empowering the people; transferring of new appropriate knowledge and technologies to achieve proper ways for solve many eco-environmental problems; performing the training courses, and improving skills.

Non-governmental organization plays an important role to increase the potentials and capabilities of their target groups and their activities which are necessary to improve the socio-economical conditions. It can give the feeling of responsibility to the people about their environments (Chandy, and *et al.*, 1993).

There are two main roles for Non-governmental organizations in this field: Cultural promotion and developing information; Encouraging people to participate in different natural resources projects in scientific and working fields (Hedayati; Barze kar, 2002).

To follow the mentioned roles, they must organize their activities in three parts: Educational activities: by publishing the environmental brochures, performing different meeting for citizens to aware them about common environmental problems; Scientific activities: by publishing articles and designing website to develop the news; Symbolic activities: by participating in natural resources and environmental exhibitions, general walking (Mohajerani, *et al.*, 2002).

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of non governmental organizations, in adult education, to preserving urban green areas. The objectives are as follows: To identify the personal characteristics of active members of Non-governmental organizations; To determine the measure of utilization of educational contents to preserve the urban green areas; To determine the effective elements on the role of Non-governmental organizations to preserve of urban green areas.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

This is an applied research with descriptive-correlation method. The population for this study which used by census was the active members of 2 Non-governmental organizations in Tehran which they are active in urban green area and environment fields (N= 120). From 120 questionnaires which have been distributed, after several follow up, finally 62 questionnaires were completed and returned, and analyzed the data by SPSS/win. Content and face validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by the experts in the field of agricultural extension and education. Also reliability of the instrument research was estimated by cronbach's alpha coefficient with 0.83. To determine the relationship among the variables spearman coefficient correlation and to determine the most measure of the effect of independent variables on depend variable, multiple regression are used.

**RESULTS AND DISSCUTION**

The results obtained from descriptive analysis showed that 53 percent of the members were male and 47 percent were female. The average year of membership experience of respondents in Non-governmental organizations was 6.5 years. Also, regarding their level of educations, according to the result, 45 percent of the members had bachelor degree, and 21 percent holding above bachelor, 21 percent of them had high school diploma and higher. Regarding to the activities of Non- governmental organizations, the responses of members showed that the level of usage of Non-governmental organizations from educational-extension elements and their communication with municipality are at the medium level and also, the level of communication with governmental organizations, communication with other Non-governmental organizations, and participation in municipality planning programs are at the low level. These results are showed on table1.

**Table1: The perception of respondents about Non-governmental organizations activities**

Activities of NGO's	Mean	SD
Access of non-governmental organizations to the educational aids and devices	3.07	0.96
communication with municipality	3.52	0.98
Communication with governmental organizations	2.63	1.02
Communication with other non governmental organizations	2.38	1.06
Providing financial resources to non governmental organizations	2.52	0.91
Participation in municipality planning programs	2.53	1.08

According to the responses, obtained from Non-governmental organizations members, the rate of using extension journals and magazines with the preservation of urban green areas and natural resources, educational and extension classes and internet are at the medium level. However, the amount of using educational movies, audio and visual programs are at the low and lowest levels. The results are showed on the (table 2).

**Table2: Means of the usage of educational elements by Non-governmental organizations**

Using educational elements by NGO's	Mean	SD
Extensional printed materials	3.16	0.96
Education and extension classes	3.44	1.09
Internet	3.06	1.36
Educational movies	2.30	1.12
Usage of audio programs (radio)	1.88	1.8
Usage of visual programs (TV)	1.68	1.01

**Table3: The results of correlation between independent variables and the role of Non-governmental organizations in preserving of urban green areas**

Variables of research	R	Sig
Educational level	0.486**	0.000
providing educational facilities in non governmental organizations	0.709**	0.000
Communication with municipality	0.323*	0.015
Communication with governmental organizations	0.297*	0.34
Communication with other non governmental organizations	0.503**	0.001
Providing financial resources to non governmental organizations	0.051	0.721
Participation in municipality planning programs	0.103	0.474

\*: p<0.05; \*\*: p<0.01

In the case of level of educational-extension elements usage by Non-governmental organizations-six elements predicted in this study (table 4). To explain the level of usage of educational instruments by Non-governmental organizations, the results indicated that the usage of extension journals and magazines with the least coefficient variation is on the first

priority and the usage of visual programs (especially TV programs) with the most coefficient variation is the last priorities. Totally the extension journals and magazines have been used on acceptable level and the audio programs (especially radio programs) and visual programs (especially TV programs) had been used on a weak level by Non-governmental organizations.

**Table 4: Priority level of usage educational elements by Non-governmental organization to preserving of urban green area**

Educational elements	N	Mean	S.d	C.V	priority
Extension journals and magazines	59	3.16	0.96	30.38	1
Educational and extension classes	58	3.44	1.09	31.69	2
Internet	58	3.06	1.36	44.44	3
Educational movies	60	2.30	1.12	48.70	4
Usage of audio program (radio)	59	1.88	1.8	57.45	5
Usage of visual program (TV)	58	1.68	1.01	60.12	6

By using the results of correlation between independents and dependent variables, the correlated variables were chosen to enter stepwise regression analysis. According to the result as the (table-5), shows, 67 percent variance in the role of Non-governmental organization in preservation of urban green areas is explained by three variables of providing financial resources of Non-governmental organizations, Participation in municipality planning programs, and the educational level of their active members.

**Table 5: Results of stepwise multiple regression.**

Variables	B	Beta	T	Sig
The amount of financial resources of non- governmental organizations	0.453	0.396	3.37	0.002
Participation in municipality planning programs	0.320	0.341	3.04	0.005
Educational level	0.248	0.341	3.04	0.005

$R^2=0.67$

**CONCLUSION**

The results obtained from the priority of the level of usage educational elements by Non-governmental organizations, showed the usage of audio-visual program were at the low level, while Hedge (2005) mentioned that radio is more effective than TV programs, because there is no limitation on its availability. So, adults can use the radio while they are working, or getting stuck in traffic. Also, according to the correlation analysis, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of possessing of Non-governmental organizations from training aid devices and the role of Non-governmental organizations in preservation of urban green areas, it means that whether the possessing of Non- governmental organization from training aid devices increase or not, they have more role in preservation of urban green areas. This result consists in other study by Shariati and Motevali (2004). As the regression analysis showed, the providing of financial resources of Non-governmental organizations, participation in municipality planning programs and educational level of their members indicate 0.67 variance of the role of Non-governmental organizations in preservation in urban green areas.

In today world growing population and developing urbanization, humans dependency to the environment and natural resources have been increased; so preserving of green areas as a part of this resources is one of the important activities in the cities (Nikname, 2006). To achieve this goal, participation of governmental and Non-governmental organizations seems to be a necessity. On the other hand, educating of the adults as one of the major user of these urban green areas is very noticeable in preserving of them.

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