

Investigating the Relationship between Sociological Factors and Environmental Behavior of Citizens of Shiraz

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Introduction

The environmental crisis seems to be one of the major challenges that mankind faces in the current century. The term environmental behavior comes from contemporary conditions in which social studies investigate the environmental behavior. Explaining the environmental behaviors of individuals is one of the important issues in environmental sociology. Environmental behavior is a behavior that a person encounters in the environment. Individuals of each society, in terms of their particular social- cultural context and their personality, have different approaches toward the environment. These behaviors may be quite positive, pro-environmental or vice versa, totally negative, and contrary to the environment. In the last two decades of the twentieth century, human activities and environmental damages have become very important. The world which faces more than six billion people in the future should be sensitive to this issue. Recently, environmental issues have social meaning and also have cultural-social roots. Shiraz city, as one of the cities that has involved in numerous environmental crises, such as the water crisis, the crisis of the destruction of historical gardens, the massive production of garbage and all kinds of other crises, should be given special attention. This study aims to examine the sociological factors contributing to the environmental behavior among Shiraz citizens.

Material & Methods

This research was conducted in 2017 through a survey method. The study population includes all people over 15 years old in 11 zones of Shiraz. According to the latest statistics, the population of Shiraz is 1,565,572, and based on the Cochran formula, the total sample size is 384 people. By using the map of Shiraz according to the latest changes by the Shiraz municipality, along with the number of households, questionnaires in each zone were provided and distributed. In the next step, the building blocks were randomly selected in each zone. From each block, households and from each household, one person was studied. Statistical samples were obtained using multi-stage cluster sampling. A questionnaire was used to collect data. The number of questionnaires distributed in zones 1 to 11 are: 42 in zone 1, 45 in zone 2, 51 in zone 3, 67 in zone 4, 37 in zone 5, 33 in the zone 6, 47 in zone 7, 9 in zone 8, 35 in zone 9, 35 in zone 10 and 26 in zone 11, respectively. Research hypotheses were analyzed using SPSS software.

Kollmuss and Agyeman's (2002) Environmental Behavior Model has been used in this study as the theoretical framework. To sum up, according to the multi-stage cluster sampling method and based on

Cochran formula, questionnaires were distributed among 384 cases in 11 zones of Shiraz.

Discussion of Results & Conclusions

In this research, it was tried to identify the environmental behavior of citizens of Shiraz from a sociological point of view. Considering that Shiraz city is one of the most important metropolises involved in environmental hazards, no organized research has been conducted to investigate this phenomenon in Shiraz. The city of Shiraz, as one of the major metropolises of the country suffers from multiple environmental crises. Thus, the results of this study can be used by other researchers. According to the results, 60.8% of people reported moderate level of environmental behavior, while 20.3% and 1.6% reported low and high levels of environmental behavior, respectively. Correlation test showed that the sociological factors including age, environmental awareness, environmental knowledge, emotional involvement, environmental attitude, locus of control, values, responsibilities and priorities, and motivation on one hand and contextual variables such as gender, employment status, and income on the other hand had significant relationships with environmental behavior. The results of multivariate regression

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equation test showed that environmental awareness, emotional involvement, gender, age, income, and locus of control were able to explain 41.7% of environmental behavior.

Keywords Environmental Behavior, Environmental Knowledge, Environmental Value, Environmental Awareness

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