

## **ARE THE FITNESS EQUIPMENTS IN THE PARKS USED FOR THEIR PURPOSE?**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to investigate the purpose of using exercise equipment in recreational parks. A total of 129 healthy individuals with a mean age of  $44.9 \pm 12.6$  years participated in the study voluntarily. Exercise purpose and injury history form which was prepared by researcher used to collect data. SPSS used to analysis. As a result of the analysis; major reason was for choosing the exercise areas was leisure time activity (27.7%). 30.3 % of the participants know enough where the tools are operated. 41.1% of them use them to lose weight. Leg area (65.0%) was the most injured area and 50.0% of these injuries were caused by unconscious use of tools. It was determined that the participants did not have enough information about the use of exercise equipment in the parks. It can be said that regulations such as educational activities and instructions for use for individuals using these areas can be an effective strategy in preventing the usefulness of instruments and injury.

*Key words:* Recreation, exercise, public park, injury

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### **1. Introduction**

In the process of increasingly developing and industrializing business life, thanks to electronic devices, people have the opportunity to spend less work power. People doing less work started to become more immobile. It is reported that sedentary life increases the risk of developing various health problems (obesity, cardiovascular diseases, muscle joint disorders, etc.) (ACSM 1998, McAuley 1994, Taylor et al. 2004, Blair et al. 2001).

Experts make suggestions such as moving, exercising, doing social activities to deal with this situation. Exercises to be performed should include at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercises and the frequency is recommended to be at least 5 days/week/1 hour for young people, while this frequency should be applied as 5 days/week/ 30 minutes for the elderly (Tucker 2009, Haskell 2007). These activities can be done at leisure times outside of business life. Such activities are defined as recreation activities. Another definition is; as individual or group activities that take place outside of leisure time, to take action and protect general health. (Karaküçük, 1997). Recreation places can be listed as; public parks, garden, natural environments, gymnasium, shopping malls, etc. The activities carried out in these places are; sports, physical exercise and play, arts and cultural activities can take place (Hanneman, 2006, Houston, 2005).

The reasons for individuals who want to use their leisure time by doing sports activities prefer the exercise areas in park gardens as the activity area, the purposes of individuals to use

these areas, and the results of the disability related to the use of these areas are insufficient in the literature. For this reason, the aim of this study is to determine the purpose of the individuals who come to the park gardens to use this area and to determine the suitability of the tools there.

## 2. Methods

**Participants:** A total of 129 individuals who live in the center of Çanakkale Province and whose average age is  $44.9 \pm 12.6$  years participated in the study voluntarily. The study included individuals who used exercise areas in parks for a minimum of 6 months and at least 2 days a week. All participants signed the voluntary participation form stating that they voluntarily participated in the study.

**Data collection tools:** In the study, “Exercise purpose and injury history form”, which was created by the researcher by using similar studies and expert opinions in the literature, was used as data collection tool. The questionnaires were applied to the parks in 5 different regions, between hours of 10:00/19:00 for 2 weeks. 5 different interviewers directed the questionnaire questions and recorded their answers to the individuals who accepted to participate in the study voluntarily in 5 different regions.

**Statistical analysis:** The data obtained were analyzed in SPSS program. The findings were evaluated as frequency (f) and percentage (%).

## 3. Results

**Table 1.** Demographic variables of participants

<b>Gender</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Female</b>	88	68,2
<b>Male</b>	41	31,8
<b>Total</b>	129	100,0
<b>Education level</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Primary school</b>	19	14,7
<b>Middle school</b>	24	18,6
<b>College</b>	46	35,6
<b>University</b>	40	31,1
<b>Total</b>	129	100,0
<b>Monthly income (Turkish Lira)</b>	Mean	SD
	2859,9	1159,3

Descriptive characteristics of individuals participating in the study are shown in Table 1. Accordingly, it is understood that a total of 129 individuals, 88 women and 41 men, participated in the study. Participants who preferred the exercise are as in the park gardens showed us the finding regarding the level of education, they are most at; Individuals who prefer the sefield shave 35.6% high school land 31.1% university education. Again, the answers given to the question about determining the monthly income of individuals who prefer to use the sefields showed that; Participants have an average monthly income of  $2859.9 \pm 1159.9$  TL.

**Table 2.** Distribution of participants' purpose of use of the exercise area in the parks

<b>Exercise frequency (day/week)</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>1-2</b>	80	62,1
<b>3-4</b>	33	25,5
<b>5-6</b>	7	5,5
<b>Everyday</b>	9	6,9
<b>Total</b>	129	100,0
<b>Reason to select exercise placef</b>		<b>%</b>
<b>Being free</b>	22	16,5
<b>Easy to reach</b>	34	25,4
<b>Having good view</b>	11	8,2
<b>Being social</b>	18	13,4
<b>Spend time</b>	38	28,3
<b>Having healthy problem</b>	11	8,2
<b>Total</b>	134	100,0
<b>Reason to use exercise tools</b>		<b>n</b>
<b>Straighten posture</b>	19	14,7
<b>Lose weight</b>	53	41,1
<b>Strengthening the muscle</b>	9	6,9
<b>Being social</b>	20	15,5
<b>Spend time</b>	28	21,8
<b>Total</b>	129	100,0
<b>Which areas do exercise tools operate?</b>		<b>n</b>
<b>I know very well</b>	12	9,4
<b>I know well</b>	27	20,9
<b>I know enough</b>	39	30,3
<b>I know less</b>	34	26,3
<b>I do not know</b>	17	13,1
<b>Total</b>	129	100,0

The findings of the questions asked in order to determine the purpose of use of exercise tools in the park gardens of the individuals participating in the study are shown in Table 2. When the table is examined, most of the participants (62.1%) come to the park gardens at least 1-2 days a week. It is seen that the purpose of using the seareas is concentrated in the “filling time” option (28.3%). In addition; it is understood that the purpose of using exercise tools in the seareas is concentrated in the “slimming” option (41.1%). However, when the findings of the answers given to the question of having knowledge about which regions the sedevice soperate, the participants were found to have “moderate knowledge” mostly (30.3%).

**Table 3.** Injury history of participants

<b>Have you injured while using tools before?</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Yes</b>	20	15,5
<b>No</b>	109	84,5
<b>Total</b>	129	100,0
<b>Reason of injury</b>		
<b>Overuse</b>	6	30,0
<b>Unconsciously use of tools</b>	12	60,0
<b>Broken tools</b>	2	10,0
<b>Total</b>	20	100,0
<b>Injured body part</b>		
<b>Arm</b>	4	20,0
<b>Leg</b>	13	65,0
<b>Waist</b>	1	5,0
<b>Shoulder</b>	2	10,0
<b>Back</b>	0	0,0
<b>Total</b>	20	100,0

The findings of the participants' history of injury when using exercise tools in the park gardens are shown in Table 3. When the table is analyzed, it is seen that the ratio of the participants who answered “yes” to the disability question related to the use of the equipment in the exercise are as was 15.5%. Participants who had a low level of disability stated that they had a disability because they used the tool unconsciously (60.0%). In addition; It was understood that they experienced the most injury (65.0%) from the leg area.

#### **4. Discussion and conclusion**

The aim of this study was to examine the purpose of using the setools and disability stories of individuals who came to different park gardens in the central region of Çanakkale and who used exercise tools. Among the reasons for the individuals participating in the study to prefer observed exercise areas; leisure time (27.7%) and then the closeness of the seareas to their homes (24%) were found to be the most mentioned factors. Most of participants (%30,3) have enough information to use tool and %40,4 of participants told that reason to use that tool was losing weight. It was determined that the leg area (65.0%) was the most injured area and 50.0% of these injuries caused unconscious use of the instruments.

A limited number of studies on injuries encountered in physical activities for recreational purposes show that; It has been reported that the age range of individuals coming to the park gardens is mostly 26-40 years old, they mostly come to these areas for resting purposes and these areas are preferred more in the summer season (Kart, 2005).In a similarstudy, it was stated that the age ranges of individuals using the sefields are mostly 65 years old and above. (Statkohostas et al. 2013, Gerspon& Stevens, 2004). In parallel with these findings, it was found that most of the individuals (51.4%) who use the sports fields in the park gardens do not know about the use of the tools here. (Lapaet al. 2012). Although the findings of the study on injuries occurring during recreation activities are quite rare, when the results of similar sports injuries are examined, the

injuries occurring in recreational activities occur most during the walking activity, the knee and ankle area is the most injured area, the injury is caused by the overload of the knee. It was reported that the leg area was the most injured area and healing was between 1-3 weeks (Coşkun & Sert, 2017, Küçük & Bavlı, 2013).

## 5. Conclusion

In the light of these findings, it has been determined that individuals who come to the park gardens use these areas for recreational purposes and that they do not have sufficient information about the use of the tools in these areas and therefore disabilities may occur. It can be said that informative studies to be made for individuals coming to these areas may reduce injuries.

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