

THE LONG-TERM VALUE OF URBAN GREEN SPACES FOR THE SOCIETY: AN ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS.

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INTRODUCTION

Urban green spaces play a vital role in enhancing the resilience and sustainability of cities. As cities around the world face the challenges posed by rapid urbanization and climate change, the multifaceted benefits of urban green spaces are becoming increasingly evident. This thesis analyzes the ecological, social and economic benefits offered by urban green spaces, as well as the best practices for managing them. These spaces contribute to the reduction of the urban heat island effect [1], improve air quality [2], landscape aesthetics and biodiversity [3]. At the same time, they also offer health benefits, such as enhanced mental health, social cohesion, and better access to health services [4]. The World Health Organization (2017) emphasizes their importance for creating sustainable cities and meeting the needs of all social groups. Their existence can also provide economic benefits such as an increase in real estate prices [5] and the economy through tourism [6]. To achieve high-quality urban landscape organization, it is important to design and implement an appropriate management system, community participation, both during the design phase and during their maintenance, to ensure that local needs are covered, as well as collaboration with stakeholders, who can assist in increasing the effectiveness of the proposed interventions [7].

METHODOLOGY

This thesis examines the environmental, social and economic aspects of green spaces and their best management practices, focusing on the city of Ioannina, a medium-sized Greek city that attracts tourists for its cultural and natural beauty. The key research questions concern the benefits of urban green spaces, the implementation of correct directions about policies and strategies for managing these spaces, as well as the attitudes and perceptions of citizens regarding their existence, current status and management policies.

The survey, which was carried out through the distribution of questionnaires to the residents of the city of Ioannina, involved 120 respondents and the analysis of the results was carried out using the SPSS program.

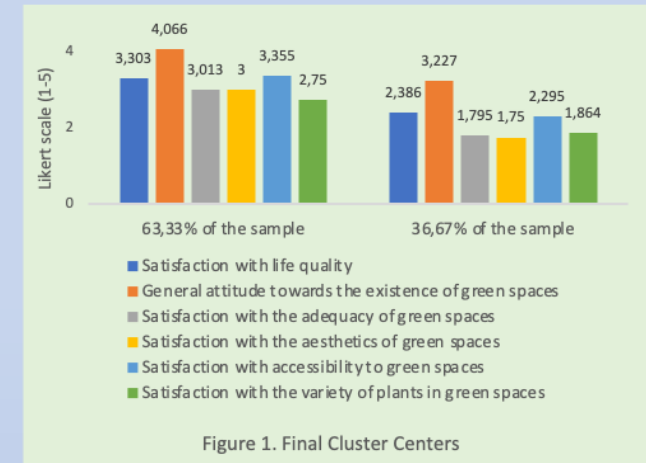
Subsequently, an additional combinational analysis is performed with chi-squared, principal component analysis (PCA) and K-means clustering, aiming to extract clearer results.

CONCLUSIONS

Urban green spaces are a critical factor for the resilience and sustainability of cities, as they contribute to the achievement of sustainable urban development. For this reason, improving green spaces can bring about significant long-term environmental, social and economic changes as well as strengthening political resilience to climate change.

RESULTS

- ✓ The analysis revealed that there is a positive correlation between quality of life and the adequacy of green spaces, with citizens who are satisfied with their quality of life appreciating urban green spaces more.
- ✓ These spaces are recognized for their environmental, mental and physical benefits, as well as the economic benefits they offer. Residents of areas with more green spaces are more willing to invest in their maintenance, considering them a valuable resource for the local economy.
- ✓ There is a dissatisfaction regarding the existing infrastructure, such as (benches, playgrounds), lighting and accessibility in these areas.
- ✓ The largest percentage of the sample (63.33%) concerns citizens who are moderately satisfied with the quality of life in their area, express a positive attitude towards green spaces and parks, and are quite satisfied with their adequacy. However, their satisfaction with the aesthetics and accessibility of the spaces is moderate, while they are less satisfied with the variety of plants in urban green spaces (Figure 1).



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