

Students' Attitudes Toward Outdoor Recreation in Helwan and King Abdul-Aziz Universities (A Comparative Study)

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the differences of attitudes toward outdoor recreation between Helwan University students in Egypt and King Abdul-Aziz University students in Saudi Arabia. A sample of (515) male students has been chosen randomly, it included (288) students from Helwan University and (227) students from King Abdul-Aziz University. The researcher used the qualitative method (survey) and depended on the following tools to collect research data, attitudes toward outdoor recreation scale – constructed by the researcher which comprises (36) items distributed on (4) dimensions, plus the list of outdoor activities participation. The results of this study have shown significant differences in attitudes toward outdoor recreation between Helwan University students and King Abdul-Aziz University students for only the first dimension "Concept" and second dimension "Importance" of the scale. The results have also shown significant differences in attitudes toward outdoor recreation between the Participants and Non-Participants of outdoor recreational activities. The most common outdoor recreational activities for Helwan University students were: Trips, Scouting and Nature observation, while Hunting, Umrah trip and Outdoor gathering were the top ranked activities for King Abdul-Aziz University students.

Key words: leisure – Attitudes – University Students

Introduction

The popularity of outdoor recreation in parks and other protected areas in Egypt has increased in the last decade following the economic, political and social changes in Egyptian society that resulted in the evolution in lifestyles and leisure habits.

While in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the outdoor recreation has a special importance since very long time because it is a part of their heritage and a way to change the artificial indoor lifestyles.

Outdoor recreation allows participants to focus and interact with the natural environment through a wide range of activities. For some people outdoor activities provide experience that are emotionally and spiritually rewarding; for others the attractions are adventure, risk, challenge and thrills. (Ibrahim & Cordes 1999) The most popular outdoor recreational activities are: outdoor sports, aquatics, fishing, bicycling, horseback riding, outdoor gathering, walking, international and local camps, outdoor picnics, (El Hamahmy & Abdel Aziz 2009). Outdoor recreation has a special position in education sector's vision for its great role of developing students' leisure skills or recreational education that affects individual's attitudes to be positive toward recreation and leisure (Mohamed, Tahany 2001)

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Attitudes have a great importance in the field of social psychology because the relation between attitudes and individual's behaviors in daily life situations (Abdel Rahman, Saad 2004). Attitudes can be considered as kind of social motives toward behaviors, i.e. positive attitudes toward physical activities play a vital role in developing people as they push individuals to regularly participate in those physical activities (Bahy, et al. 2005).

Individuals differ in their attitudes and differ in the degree of this attitude, because degrees range from full positive feeling to full negative feeling (Galal 2001) also, attitudes toward recreation direct individuals to positively participate in recreational activities (El Quosy 1982).

The researcher sees that university education represents a major source to prepare the required manpower very well in all cognitive, psychological, social and physical aspects through different activities that play a major role in shaping the attitudes of students.

The role of outdoor recreation programming in a campus recreation department has grown over the years. Trips and equipment rental has been a staple of outdoor recreation program for decades. The purpose of any campus outdoor recreation program can be varied as opportunities they provide. Students often participate in outdoor activities to increase their knowledge or skill in a certain area or they are seeking a particular experience. Faculties and universities often desire and value outdoor programs as part of comprehensive campus recreational sport department because they add an additional avenue for the pursuit of well-rounded and healthy lifestyles, and this generally supports the mission and vision of such organizations (NISRA 2008).

Statement of the Problem

Understanding attitudes is one of the most important treated issues by sociology and social psychology as they are considered as a pattern of human behavior, therefore attitudes play a key role in guiding the individual's behavior and positive attitudes have an important role in leisure investment and activity participation that leads to good development of the personality (Allawy 1991)

Today, the outdoor recreation profession is varied and encompasses many facets. A contemporary definition of outdoor recreation is "organized free-time activities that are participated in for their own sake and where there is an interaction between the participant and an element of nature" (Ibrahim & Cordes 2002).

Based on the literature review there are many studies aimed to investigate attitudes toward recreation and leisure (Mohamed Said 2011, Mohamed Amin 2006 and Taymour Ragheb, 1999), for different samples, but there is only two studies – to the knowledge of the researcher – aimed to explore the attitudes of university students and officials toward outdoor recreation (Ahmed Koura, 2013 and Ebtisam Abdel Aal et al. 2008). The importance of this study appears by comparing attitudes toward outdoor recreation between two different societies in Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

The research problem is about the need of exploring the attitudes toward outdoor recreation for university students in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, as attitudes are formed at this age and because of the role played by the university in the preparation of young generation for the future by providing opportunities for practicing various recreational activities.

The purpose of this study is to compare university the attitudes toward outdoor recreation, between Helwan University students in Egypt and King Abdul-Aziz University students in Saudi Arabia, and to explore the outdoor recreational activities those students participate in both Helwan University Students and King Abdul-Aziz University.

Due to the Purpose of the Study, the Hypotheses of the Study were

- a) There are no significant differences in attitudes toward outdoor recreation between Helwan University students in Egypt and King Abdul-Aziz University students in Saudi Arabia.
- b) There are no significant differences in attitudes toward outdoor recreation between the Participants and Non-Participants of outdoor recreational activities among Helwan University students.
- c) There are no significant differences in attitudes toward outdoor recreation between the Participants and Non-Participants of outdoor recreational activities among King Abdul-Aziz University students.

Method

Participants

Research Sample included a total of (515) male university students have been chosen randomly, (288) students from (7) faculties in Helwan university in Cairo, Egypt (55.92%); and (227) students from (7) faculties in King Abdul-Aziz University in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (44.08%). after excluding invalid or incomplete responses to the data collection tools. (Table 1).

Table 1 Research Sample (N = 515)

Serial	Helwan University (288)			King Abdul-Aziz University (227)		
	Faculty	Students	%	Faculty	Students	%
1	Education	26	9.0%	Arts & Humanities	52	22.9%
2	Law	55	19.1%	Economics and Administration	14	6.2%
3	Physical Education	70	24.3%	Engineering	16	7.0%
4	Arts	32	11.1%	Environmental Designs	41	18.1%
5	Social	24	8.3%	Law	47	20.7%
6	Science	19	6.6%	Educational Graduate Studies	36	15.9%
7	Commerce & BA	62	21.5%	Sciences	21	9.3%
Total	7	288	100	7	227	100

Measures

The researcher used the following tools to collect research data:

- a) The scale of university students' attitudes toward outdoor recreation (Ahmed KOURA, 2013); which comprises (36) items distributed on (4) dimensions: Attitudes toward concept of outdoor recreation (9 items) - Attitudes toward importance of outdoor recreation (9 items) - Attitudes toward outdoor recreational activities (8 items) - Attitudes toward the role of campus toward

outdoor recreation (10 items). The researcher has used three-point scale (Agree-Neutral-Disagree) for participants' responses (Appendix 1).

- b) The list of outdoor recreational activities: it asked respondents to check the box next to any of (21) activities in which they had participated. Those activities are selected to match the most popular activities in the Egyptian and Saudi societies. There was a space to add other activities are not included on the list (Appendix 2).

Procedure

To develop the main scale of this research, a pilot study of (60) participants (30 students from each University) has been made to investigate reliability and validity of attitudes toward outdoor recreation scale. Then the application on the whole sample of (515) participants was made to collect the main data and answer the questions of the research. The data collection was made during the period from 7/3/2015 to 28/5/2015.

Analysis

The data from each survey were entered into an Excel spreadsheet and transferred to SPSS v. 15.0 for analysis. Descriptive statistics, frequencies, correlations and t-test were used. An alpha level of .05 is the standard.

Scale Validity:

Scale validity has been verified by the following techniques:

- a) Logical validity (Content validity): based on the reviewed literature and analysis of previous attitudes scales to guarantee that items belong to their dimensions.
- b) Construct Validity: based on comparing the higher and lower quarter scores of the students' attitudes toward the outdoor recreation for the (4) dimensions of the scale (Table 2).

Table 2 Differences' Significance between Higher and Lower Scores on the Scale Dimensions (T-test) (N=60)

Serial	Scale Dimensions	Higher scores (17)		Lower scores (17)		t value	Sig.
		M	SD	M	SD		
1	Attitudes toward concept of outdoor recreation	23.00	1.54	17.00	1.06	13.22	.000
2	Attitudes toward importance of outdoor recreation	26.41	0.51	20.41	1.54	15.23	.000
3	Attitudes toward outdoor recreational activities	21.94	3.70	14.82	2.04	6.95	.000
4	Attitudes toward the role of campus toward outdoor recreation	29.24	0.75	23.53	1.66	12.89	.000

T value < .05. = 1.966

As shown in (Table 2), all differences were significant which means that the scale is valid and able to differentiate between students attitudes.

- c) Internal consistency validity: by calculating Pearson correlation coefficient between the value of each item and the total value of its dimension (Table 3). Correlations were significant.

Table 3 Correlations between the Value of Each Item and the Total value of its Dimension (N=60)

First Dimension		Second Dimension		Third Dimension		Fourth Dimension	
Items	R	Items	R	Items	R	Items	R
2	0.390**	3	0.429**	4	0.321*	1	0.469**
6	0.455**	7	0.596**	8	0.427**	5	0.399**
10	0.327*	11	0.588**	12	0.329*	9	0.489**
14	0.430**	15	0.642**	16	0.722**	13	0.383**
18	0.721**	19	0.372**	20	0.305*	17	0.561**
22	0.654**	23	0.743**	24	0.294*	21	0.469**
26	0.720**	27	0.662*	28	0.461**	25	0.410**
30	0.699**	31	0.576**	32	0.555**	29	0.476**
34	0.393**	35	0.491**			33	0.648**
						36	0.542**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

As shown in (Table 3) all items correlations were significant. This means that the scale is valid for both communities in Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Scale Reliability

Scale reliability has been verified by the following techniques:

- Test-Retest Method: the scale was tested on 36 students and retested after 2 weeks, Correlations varied between 0.752 and 0.934 which shows that the scale of university students' attitudes toward outdoor recreation is considered reliable.
- Split-halves Method: using Cronbach's reliability coefficient (α), results has shown that (α) values are high for all scale dimensions as varied between 0.612 and 0.730, which shows high level of scale reliability. A Cronbach's reliability coefficient (α) of 0.60 or higher was required for a scale to be considered reliable (Tabachnick and Fidell 1996).

Results

Differences in attitudes toward outdoor recreation

To test the first hypothesis of the study: There are no significant differences in attitudes toward outdoor recreation between Helwan University Students and King Abdul-Aziz University students. (Table 4).

Table 4 Differences between Helwan University Students and King Abdul-Aziz University Students (t-test)

Serial	Scale Dimensions	Helwan Univ. (288)		King Abdul-Aziz Univ. (227)		t value	Sig.
		M	SD	M	SD		
1	Attitudes toward concept of outdoor recreation	22.285	3.331	19.088	2.147	12.547	.000
2	Attitudes toward importance of outdoor recreation	22.969	3.099	24.097	2.512	4.452	.000
3	Attitudes toward outdoor recreational activities	18.736	3.760	18.260	1.904	1.740	.082
4	Attitudes toward the role of campus toward outdoor recreation	26.611	2.525	26.568	2.159	0.204	.839

T value < .05. = 1.966

As shown in Table 4, there are significant differences in attitudes towards outdoor recreation between Helwan University and King Abdul-Aziz University students in the favor of Helwan University students for the first dimension (Attitudes toward concept of outdoor recreation) of the attitudes scale toward outdoor recreation, and there are significant differences in attitudes towards outdoor recreation between Helwan University and King Abdul-Aziz University students in the favor of King Abdul-Aziz University students for the second dimension (Attitudes toward importance of outdoor recreation) of the attitudes scale toward outdoor recreation.

But for the third (Attitudes toward outdoor recreational activities) and fourth (Attitudes toward the role of campus toward outdoor recreation) dimensions, no significant differences have been revealed between Helwan University and King Abdul-Aziz University students in attitudes toward outdoor recreation.

Participation differences in attitudes toward outdoor recreation

To test the Second hypothesis of the study: There are no significant differences in attitudes toward outdoor recreation between the Participants and Non-Participants of outdoor recreational activities among Helwan University students (Table 5)

Table 5 Differences between Participants and Non-Participants In Outdoor Recreational Activities Among Helwan University Students (T-Test)

Serial	Scale Dimensions	Participants (224)		Non-Participants (64)		T value	Sig.
		M	SD	M	SD		
1	Attitudes toward concept of outdoor recreation	22.731	3.378	20.719	2.640	4.399	.000
2	Attitudes toward importance of outdoor recreation	23.759	2.454	20.203	3.528	9.199	.000
3	Attitudes toward outdoor recreational activities	19.661	3.446	15.500	2.949	8.781	.000
4	Attitudes toward the role of campus toward outdoor recreation	26.683	2.265	26.359	3.287	0.904	.367

T Value < .05. = 1.966

As shown in Table 5, there are significant differences in attitudes towards outdoor recreation between participants and non-participants students in outdoor recreational activities in the favor of participants for the first, second and third dimensions of the attitudes scale toward outdoor recreation among Helwan University Students.

But for the fourth dimension, no significant differences have been revealed between participants and non-participants students in outdoor recreational activities among Helwan University Students.

To test the third hypothesis of the study there are no significant differences in attitudes toward outdoor recreation between the Participants and Non-Participants of outdoor recreational activities among King Abdul-Aziz University students (Table 6)

Table 6 Differences between Participants and Non-Participants in Outdoor Recreational Activities among King Abdul-Aziz University Students (T-Test)

Serial	Scale Dimensions	Participants (214)		Non- Participants (13)		t value	Sig.
		M	SD	M	SD		
1	Attitudes toward concept of outdoor recreation	19.150	2.187	18.077	0.862	1.757	.080
2	Attitudes toward importance of outdoor recreation	24.435	2.090	18.539	2.402	9.792	.000
3	Attitudes toward outdoor recreational activities	18.290	1.872	17.769	2.421	0.957	.340
4	Attitudes toward the role of campus toward outdoor recreation	26.780	1.956	23.077	2.431	6.535	.000

T value < .05. = 1.966

As shown in Table 6, there are significant differences in attitudes towards outdoor recreation between participants and non-participants students in outdoor recreational activities in the favor of participants for the second and fourth dimensions of the attitudes scale toward outdoor recreation among King Abdul-Aziz University Students.

But for the first and third dimensions, no significant differences have been revealed between participants and non-participants students in outdoor recreational activities among King Abdul-Aziz University Students.

Participation in Outdoor Recreational Activities

To explore the outdoor recreational activities that students participate in both Helwan University Students and King Abdul-Aziz University, (Table 7 and Figure 1)

Table 7 Participation Rates of Outdoor Recreational Activities for Helwan University Students and King Abdul-Aziz University Students

Serial	Outdoor Recreational Activity	Helwan University			King Abdul-Aziz University		
		Frequency	%	Rank	Frequency	%	Rank
1	Trips	207	18.67%	1	98	10.58%	4
2	Local camps	79	7.12%	6	44	4.75%	9
3	International camps	13	1.17%	16	9	0.97%	17
4	Gardening	0	0.00%	21	0	0.00%	19
5	Fishing	25	2.25%	14	36	3.89%	11
6	Visiting a beach	55	4.96%	10	60	6.48%	6
7	Car Drifting	5	0.45%	19	48	5.18%	7
8	Hunting	4	0.36%	20	125	13.50%	1
9	Aquatics	10	0.90%	18	28	3.02%	14
10	Horseback riding	31	2.80%	12	43	4.64%	10
11	Cycling	25	2.25%	13	31	3.35%	12
12	Umrah trip	12	1.08%	17	111	11.99%	2
13	Nature observation	98	8.84%	3	47	5.08%	8
14	Scouting	112	10.10%	2	12	1.30%	16
15	Walking	75	6.76%	8	72	7.78%	5
16	Visiting historic sites	81	7.30%	5	4	0.43%	18
17	Outdoor picnics	90	8.12%	4	30	3.24%	13
18	Outdoor gathering	77	6.94%	7	100	10.80%	3
19	Outdoor sports	62	5.59%	9	28	3.02%	15
20	Nature handcrafts	15	1.35%	15	0	0.00%	20
21	Environmental Services	-33	2.98%	11	0	0.00%	21
	Total	1106	100		926	100	

As shown in Table 7 and Figure 1, the type of outdoor recreational activities is different between Helwan University students and King Abdul-Aziz University students. The most common outdoor recreational activities for Helwan University students were: Trips, Scouting and Nature observation, while Hunting, Umrah trip and Outdoor gathering were the top ranked activities for King Abdul-Aziz University students. The lowest ranked activities for Helwan University students were: Gardening, Hunting and Car Drifting, while the lowest ranked activities for King Abdul-Aziz University students were: Gardening, Nature handcrafts and Environmental Services with no participation.

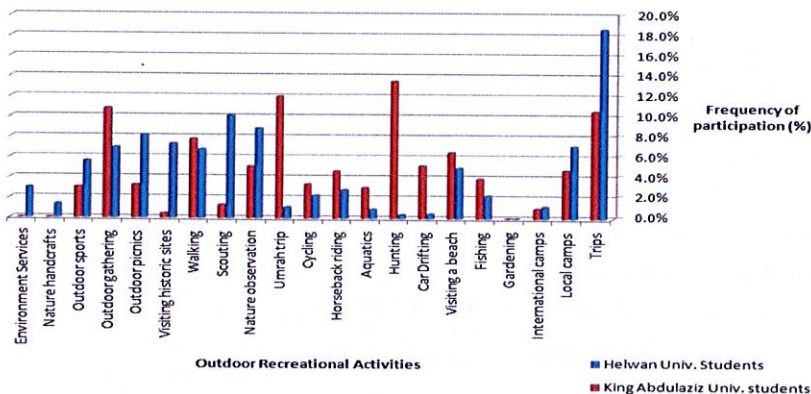


Figure 1 participation rates of outdoor recreational activities for helwan university students and King Abdul-Aziz university students

Discussion

There were significant differences in attitudes towards the **concept** of outdoor recreation between Helwan University and King Abdul-Aziz University students in the favor of Helwan University students. This could be due to the clear and famous concept of recreation in the Egyptian society in the last few years, as "recreation" became a main subject in all faculties of physical educations in Egyptian Universities.

The results have shown significant differences in attitudes towards the **importance** of outdoor recreation between Helwan University and King Abdul-Aziz University students in the favor of King Abdul-Aziz University students, this may probably due to nature of the Saudi community, as outdoor recreation is considered as a part of their heritage and a way to change the artificial indoor lifestyles

But for the third (Attitudes toward outdoor recreational activities) and fourth (Attitudes toward the role of campus toward outdoor recreation) dimensions, no significant differences have been revealed between Helwan University and King Abdul-Aziz University students in attitudes toward outdoor recreation. This is consistent with the study of (Abdel Aal et al. 2008).

There were significant differences in attitudes towards outdoor recreation between participants and non-participants students in outdoor recreational activities in the favor of participants among Helwan University Students. These differences were for the dimensions: **concept, importance** and **activities** of the attitudes scale toward outdoor recreation.

But for the fourth dimension: **the role of campus**, no significant differences have been revealed between participants and non-participants students in outdoor recreational activities among Helwan University Students.

There were also significant differences in attitudes towards outdoor recreation between participants and non-participants students in outdoor recreational activities in the favor of participants among King Abdul-Aziz University Students. These differences were for the dimensions: **importance** and **the role of campus** of the attitudes scale toward outdoor recreation.

But for the first and third dimensions: **concept and activities**, no significant differences have been revealed between participants and non-participants students in outdoor recreational activities among King Abdul-Aziz University Students.

These results are logical because the participants have more positive attitudes toward Outdoor recreation than non-participants students, and that supports the fact of attitudes have a great importance in the field of social psychology because the relation between attitudes and individual's behaviors in daily life situations (Abdel Rahman, Saad 2004). Also, therefore attitudes play a key role in guiding the individual's behavior and positive attitudes have an important role in leisure investment and activity participation that leads to good development of the personality (Allawy 1991)

The type of outdoor recreational activities is different between Helwan University students and King Abdul-Aziz University students. The most common outdoor recreational activities for Helwan University students were: Trips, Scouting and Nature observation. This could be due to the good promotion for outdoor activities inside campus or the big number of organized trips by the campus plus the special scouting activities in Helwan University and Egyptian Universities as well, for the nature

observation, the researcher suggests that it is the right way for the relaxation and almost cheap type of outdoor recreational activities.

While Hunting, Umrah trip and Outdoor gathering were the top ranked activities for King Abdul-Aziz University students, and this is logical too, due to geographical nature of Saudi Arabia and the various opportunities for hunting and outdoor gathering, for Umrah trips, it has a religious and spiritual background.

The lowest ranked activities for Helwan University students were: Gardening, Hunting and Car Drifting. This is almost due to the economic level of Helwan University students as these activities cost a lot.

While the lowest ranked activities for King Abdul-Aziz University students were: Gardening, Nature handcrafts and Environmental Services with zero participation. This could be due to geographical nature of Saudi Arabia and the lack of the green life as well.

The researcher recommends that campus in both Egypt and Saudi Arabia should provide more opportunities for outdoor recreational activities to the students with financial support, and should encourage students to participate in nature handcrafts activities and environment services.

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