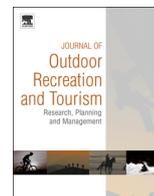




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'Nature lovers', 'Social animals', 'Quiet seekers' and 'Activity lovers': Participation of young adult immigrants and non-immigrants in outdoor recreation in the Netherlands



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ABSTRACT

Immigrants are often described as 'under-participating' in non-urban outdoor recreation. Our quantitative study among 1057 young adults of Chinese, Turkish and non-immigrant descent in the Netherlands, however, showed strong differences in outdoor recreational behaviour between and within ethnic groups. Participation frequency, participation rate, group size and motivations strongly varied between ethnic groups. In our study, a similar share of Turkish immigrants and non-immigrants recreated in non-urban greenspace, while half as many Chinese immigrants did so. Respondents of Turkish descent mainly participated in group-based activities and respondents of Chinese descent in individual-based activities. Respondents subjectively perceived their ethnicity but also personal identities, age and, to a lesser extent, gender and religion to influence their outdoor recreational behaviour. Cluster analysis of participants in non-urban outdoor recreation resulted in five recreational types: 'Nature lovers', 'Social animals', 'Activity lovers', 'Group-based quiet seekers' and 'Individual quiet seekers'. These recreational types were correlated with ethnicity, but also with various other socio-demographic variables. We therefore argue that 'under-participation' is a misleading term to typify non-urban outdoor recreational behaviour of immigrants, and that multiple identities should be taken into account to understand this behaviour.

MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- The ambition of forest and nature management should be to involve ethnic groups in planning and decision making for outdoor recreation and nature conservation and to enable various cultural uses of greenspace, instead of fighting presumed under-participation.
- Differentiating between ethnic groups is crucial for understanding diverging outdoor recreational patterns. Forest and nature managers who wish to reach out to immigrants should therefore adapt their strategies depending on the ethnic group(s) concerned.
- Other identities besides their ethnicity also influence immigrants' outdoor recreational behaviour, such as age and gender. This provides opportunities to stimulate immigrants' participation.
- A clear relation between outdoor recreational participation and support for nature conservation was not found among the immigrants in our study. This suggests that stimulating outdoor recreation among immigrants does not lead to more public support for nature conservation.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

A growing number of scientific studies argue that immigrants or ethnic minorities in Western countries, compared to non-immigrants, are under-participating in outdoor recreational activities

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(see e.g. Countryside Agency, 2005; Jay & Schraml, 2009; Jókövi, 2001; Krymkowski, Manning & Valliere, 2014). Outside academia, governments and nature conservation organisations in various Western countries have also noted that immigrants do not visit greenspace as often as non-immigrants do (e.g. Curry, Joseph, & Slee, 2001; Somers, van der Kroon, & Overbeek, 2005). As various positive effects are attributed to outdoor recreation, such as on health and well-being (e.g. Thompson Coon et al., 2011), social integration (Dines, Cattell, Gesler, & Curtis, 2006; Peters, 2010) and public support for nature conservation (Balmford, Clegg, Coulson, & Taylor, 2002; Kareiva, 2008; Pergams & Zaradic, 2008), under-participation is seen as a problem. A problem that becomes more pressing as the number of immigrants continues to increase, which indeed seems to be the case. For example, in the Netherlands, 17% of the Dutch citizens had an immigrant background in the year 2000. In 2014, this percentage was 21% and it is predicted to grow to 28% in 2050 (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2015).

Evidence supporting the idea that immigrants are under-participating in outdoor recreation particularly comes from quantitative studies published in North America (e.g. Carr & Williams, 1993; Floyd, Gramann & Saenz, 1993; Krymkowski et al., 2014; Washburne, 1978). Few European baseline data exist on immigrants' participation, as most European studies on immigrants' recreational behaviour are qualitative studies (Kloek, Buijs, Boersma, & Schouten, 2013a). This research therefore aims to quantify (under-)participation and outdoor recreational behaviour of immigrants, in specific immigrants with Turkish and Chinese backgrounds, in comparison to non-immigrants in a European country, namely the Netherlands. Furthermore, we aim to study heterogeneity between and within these ethnic groups, as current studies often treat immigrants as one group and differences between and within ethnic groups have not been studied well.

In this paper we distinguish between recreation in urban and in non-urban greenspace, with urban greenspace being urban parks and other urban green areas; and non-urban greenspace ranging from fields, pastures and other agricultural areas to forest, heathland and other non-urban green areas. Our main focus in this paper is on non-urban outdoor recreation, as under-participation is most prominent in this type of recreation. Non-urban outdoor recreation is also more relevant to nature conservation management and policy. However, we did also study urban outdoor recreation and we will give a concise report of those results.¹

1.2. Immigrants' outdoor recreational patterns, motivations and constraints: a literature review

Studies on differences between immigrants and non-immigrants in outdoor recreational behaviour often focus on recreational patterns, motivations or constraints. Recreational patterns include aspects of recreation that can be objectively measured, such as participation rate, activity type and group size. Motivations are subjective explanations of why people engage in recreation and help to understand what people want from recreation (Manfredo & Driver, 1996). Motivations for outdoor recreation can be categorised based on whether greenspace is foregrounded or backgrounded (e.g. Bang, Medin, & Atran, 2007; Jensen & Guthrie, 2006). When greenspace is foregrounded, the experience of greenspace or the natural world forms the main motivation, while greenspace serves only as a décor for recreational activities when it is backgrounded. Constraints can be defined as factors that inhibit participation in outdoor recreation or

dampen the joy people experience outdoors (Jackson, Crawford, & Goodbye, 1993). These may lead to non-participation; however, people can also negotiate constraints. Below, we will describe the most salient differences in outdoor recreational patterns, motivations and constraints between immigrants and non-immigrants found in studies conducted in Europe. It should be noted that most European studies on immigrants' outdoor recreational patterns, motivations and/or constraints either incorporate people of diverse (mostly non-western) ethnic backgrounds and then treat these as a homogenous group or focus only on one specific group of immigrants (Kloek et al., 2013a).

Studies on recreational patterns first and foremost tend to argue that immigrants do not visit greenspace, and especially non-urban green areas, as often as non-immigrants do (e.g. Countryside Agency, 2005; Jay & Schraml, 2009; Jókövi, 2000). Immigrants are said to mostly visit urban outdoor recreational areas or areas close to home. Another recreational pattern consistently found is that picking fruits and other activities related to food, such as picnicking and barbecuing, are popular among immigrants (see for example Edwards & Weldon, 2006; Jay & Schraml, 2009; Jókövi, 2000). Furthermore, it is regularly argued that immigrants tend to visit outdoor areas in large groups, as opposed to the solitary visits or visits in small groups non-immigrants tend to make (Askins, 2008; Edwards & Weldon, 2006).

Immigrants' motivations for outdoor recreation did not receive much attention in European research. Some authors suggested that non-immigrants go outdoors specifically to experience nature more often than immigrants. In studies conducted in Britain, for example, visiting nature for the solitude and contemplative possibilities that it offers, to enjoy and learn from nature, has been described as a typically British activity (Askins, 2008; Countryside Agency, 2005). Authors also argue that the main motivation for immigrants to visit greenspace is to interact socially with friends or family or to meet new people (e.g. Countryside Agency, 2005; Peters, 2010; Rishbeth & Finney, 2006).

Immigrants may perceive various constraints to outdoor recreation, such as fear of nature; fear of crime; lack of information, time or transport; poor weather; discrimination; and a lack of appropriate facilities (see for example Edwards and Weldon (2006), Kloek, Peters, and Sijtsma (2013b), OPENSpace Research Centre (2006) and Rishbeth and Finney (2006)). The extent to which these constraints are specific for immigrants has not been studied well. However, in a recent study conducted in the United States, Covelli Metcalf, Burns, and Graefe (2013) showed that people across ethnic groups perceive many of the same constraints, with only a few distinctions.

1.3. Explanations for differences in outdoor recreation

Scholars have various hypotheses explaining differences in outdoor recreational behaviour between immigrants and non-immigrants. The best-known hypotheses, formulated by Washburne (1978), are the marginality and ethnicity hypotheses. The marginality hypothesis posits that immigrants' outdoor recreation is constrained due to social inequality, such as low income or educational level. The ethnicity hypothesis states that immigrants' recreational behaviour is influenced by a distinct set of cultural norms and values. A third, more recent, hypothesis considers perceived discrimination as an important factor explaining differences in recreational behaviour (Stodolska, 2005). Studies conducted in the United States found evidence supporting all three hypotheses (see Krymkowski et al. (2014)).

Recent publications argue that recreational behaviour is complex, and differences in outdoor recreation between immigrants and non-immigrants can be understood only when multiple and possibly interrelated influences are taken into consideration

¹ For purposes of simplification, we sometimes use the terms urban recreation and non-urban recreation. It should be noted that in this study these terms refer only to outdoor recreation in (urban or non-urban) greenspace.

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