

Conservation of parks and gardens in the district of Baños del Inca, Cajamarca

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Abstract

The purpose of the research was to know the influence of public policies on the conservation of parks and gardens of the district municipality of Baños del Inca. The research corresponds to the basic type, with a qualitative approach and phenomenological design. The semi-structured interview was used through the use of an interview guide, five participants were interviewed; parks, gardens and ornamentation unit, deputy manager of environment and urban development, head of the citizen participation unit, cleaning staff and a citizen. For the analysis of the results obtained from the interviews, data triangulation was used. Obtaining as a result that public policies on the conservation of parks and gardens are not implemented efficiently, so the knowledge of the population about environmental public policies and their benefits is scarce. Concluding that public policies for the conservation of green spaces are deficient due to the lack of human capacity in officials and lack of awareness about the care of the environment by the population, considering that there is no good intervention by the governments on duty, generating that the population has little knowledge on environmental issues.

Keywords: Public policies, conservation, environmental awareness, humanity, parks and gardens, changes.

1. Introduction

Policy strategies on the environmental management of urban areas have received a great deal of attention in countries around the world, and this issue is considered one of most important and is currently the subject of much research, and it is essential that governments improve their strategies for the conservation of these areas. Several world organizations mention need to strengthen urban-rural linkages as a way to face external impacts such as climate change, as well as the effects produced by the rapid growth of large cities, including health hazards, a potential recognized not only at the scientific level, but also politically (European Environment Agency [EEA], 2022; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO], 2020). European Union countries have developed strategies that allow them to somehow guarantee sustainability and even face possible climate changes in the future (Hermoso et al., 2020). Likewise, Latin

American countries, some changes have been noted within national and/or regional policies regarding the planning of urban areas, however, it is still evident lack of commitment of municipalities, state institutions, private organizations, of the citizens themselves, lack of awareness for the care of the environment (Rodríguez et al., 2021; Edelman et al., 2017). Some studies carried out in the area point out that, although some minimal changes have been noted, there are still no legal norms can support the importance of these spaces, and this is due to the scarce legal framework due to problems in the sectorial and spatial division in their urban design, this together with the poor coordination of municipalities, limit the realization of good planning and design of green areas. In Peru, there are a series of problems related to inadequate use and occupation of the territory, as well as the misappropriation of natural resources, together with the lack and/or deficiencies in public policies and incipient planning processes that are implemented without considering or safeguarding the basic conditions of sustainability (Ministry of the Environment [MINAM], 2021). While it is true that in recent years initiatives linked to environmental management have been created, cities or urban areas are not the priority in these national plans, due to the fact urban approach in the actions that allow the creation of sustainable and environmentally safe cities is not explicit (Zucchetti et al., 2020). In the local context, population growth is not alien to the Baños del Inca district, because of its rapid and excessive urban growth it is considered the district city with the most inhabitants in the province after the city of Cajamarca, however, this does not go hand in hand with the design of public policies focused on the conservation of green areas and planning of green infrastructure, this because the importance given to environmental management planning is minimal (Gobierno Regional de Cajamarca-GRC, 2016). The municipality has created the EDUCCA plan (Municipal Program of Education, Culture and Environmental Citizenship) that has been carried out since 2018, however, this does not reach the entire population since it is just being implemented, on the other hand, said municipality does not have the necessary capacities that allow it to provide greater coverage of training and technical assistance, in addition it is necessary to promote the creation and implementation of environmental policies and projects that involve the student community, public institutions, private companies and the people in general (Municipalidad Distrital de los Baños del Inca-MDBI, 2020). The general objective was to. To analyze the influence of public policies on the conservation of parks and gardens in the district municipality of Baños del Inca, 2022.

2. Methodology

The basic type, which is referred to as pure or theoretical, is characterized by the framing of theoretical foundations and is oriented toward the discovery of basic principles and/or the deepening of concepts. This serves as a basis for future studies of facts or phenomena. It is also defined as the analysis of a particular issue or doubt in order to seek understanding about it, from which existing knowledge and/or theoretical principles can be formulated. Similarly, this type of research is primarily concerned with the advancement of scientific knowledge and is conducted with the objective of expanding comprehension and uncovering novel insights that are of interest to the scientific community. Additionally, it is driven by a fundamental curiosity (Baena, 2014; Escudero and Cortez, 2017; Guthrie, 2010). In this regard, the research was conducted using a phenomenological approach, with the aim of gaining insight into the experiences and

understanding of individuals in their surrounding environment (Mendieta-Izquierdo et al., 2015). Furthermore, it is a qualitative approach, whereby reality is perceived differently by each individual. This requires the researcher to adopt a neutral stance and to understand the motivations and perspectives of the group under study (Trujillo et al., 2019). This approach is based on the constructivist paradigm, whereby reality is understood through research.

3. Results

The analysis of the influence of public policies on the conservation of parks and gardens in the district municipality of Los Baños del Inca (2022) reveals a deficiency in the formulation of public policies that prioritize the conservation of parks and gardens. This is attributed to a range of factors, including limited communication between the government and the public, the absence of environmental policies that are accorded priority by authorities, and the lack of capacity within the municipality itself. Additionally, the lack of commitment from the public to the stewardship of these areas represents a significant challenge.

Similarly, environmental policies prioritize environmental quality, emphasizing four core principles: improvement, prevention, control, and compliance with environmental standards. However, these policies do not explicitly address the creation of environmental awareness. This responsibility is largely delegated to the population, who are expected to play a pivotal role in the conservation of parks and gardens. In light of this, citizens cite a lack of communication on the part of the local government. Specifically, they indicate that they are unaware of any activities or plans on the part of the authorities that facilitate the creation of awareness among the population regarding its responsibility to improve environmental education. Furthermore, deficiencies in coordination and supervision on the part of the central government and the relevant authorities have also been identified.

Conversely, the formulation of public policies has been inadequate since the previous administrations, resulting in the transfer of challenges to the current administrations. There is a dearth of monitoring the implementation of projects that require adaptation in response to changes in public managers.

The objective of this study is to analyze the influence of public policies on environmental awareness in the district municipality of Los Baños del Inca in 2022. It has been demonstrated that the public policies enacted by the local government in the district of Los Baños del Inca exert no discernible influence on environmental awareness. This is evidenced by the lack of care exhibited by the population and the government itself towards parks, gardens, and green areas in general, which highlights significant deficiencies in environmental culture.

With regard to the objective of analyzing the influence of public policies on the design and planning of green spaces in the district municipality of Los Baños del Inca in 2022, However, there is a deficiency in the correct application of the standards established by primary entities such as the Ministry of the Environment, possibly due to a lack of supervision and monitoring. Furthermore, the low priority given to these areas in terms of their design and planning is notable at both the local and central government levels. With regard to the design and planning of these areas, municipal authorities appear to lack coordination with the population. There is a notable absence of communication that would facilitate joint decision-making.

Moreover, the district of Baños del Inca is a region where numerous plots of land have been subdivided from originally cultivated areas. Consequently, the owners of these plots lack awareness of the requisite space for the development of parks and gardens. This has resulted in a lack of communication between the government and the population, as the latter is unaware of the importance of reserving space for green areas. In light of these observations, citizens have proposed the implementation of awareness-raising activities conducted by the authorities. These activities would seek to inform the population about public policies, norms, and regulations that indicate the limits that must be met when dividing a certain area into lots. This information is crucial for the design and planning of green areas in cities.

With regard to the objective analysis of the influence of public policies on the leisure and recreation of the inhabitants of the District of Los Baños de Inca in 2022, it can be stated that for the population of the aforementioned district, parks and gardens are intended to serve as a space for leisure and recreation for the surrounding citizens. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that these areas are situated in locations that are convenient for the community and that they are easily accessible. However, it must be noted that in the district of Los Baños del Inca, there is a lack of accessibility to these areas, in addition to the fact that they are not particularly large. Furthermore, the expansion of the population is a cause for concern. The creation of additional green spaces should be a priority, as it would not only benefit the environment but also the district's economy, which relies heavily on tourism. Currently, there are limited green spaces designated for leisure and recreation, and those that exist are concentrated in the city center or within tourist establishments, which require payment and are primarily utilized by tourists. Consequently, these green spaces are often underutilized.

4. Discussion

In this regard, Brenner (2018) notes that suboptimal practices in matters of public conservation policies have consequences that extend from government to government due to inadequate management or government plans that do not prioritize these policies. This may be related to issues of economic resources and deficiencies in human capital, resulting in inadequate management at the regional or local levels. Additionally, these shortcomings are associated with the lack of coordination between central, regional, and local governments and the corresponding organizations responsible for implementing the norms and monitoring their compliance. Similarly, there is considerable divergence of opinion among municipal authorities responsible for green areas, parks and gardens as to their objectives and mission. Furthermore, there is a lack of consensus on what constitutes an attractive or beneficial feature of the city. As a result, there is a failure to comply with the standards set by the central government (Connolly et al., 2013).

It is of vital importance and interesting to take the opinions of the inhabitants, as well as of private entities or companies, into account. This is because environmental public policies have a multi-level nature that involves a series of social classes and business sectors, which have different forms and statuses but must be involved in the maintenance and construction of policies applied to nature (Blanc et al., 2021). Conversely, the conservation of green spaces is inextricably linked to environmental awareness. The latter is defined as a process associated with an individual's behaviour in reducing the environmental impact of human activity. In this context, Saifullah (2017) emphasises that environmental awareness encompasses perceptions and

knowledge about the environment, underscoring the vital role of environmental education. In this regard, the formulation of environmental public policies must encompass initiatives that engage the general public and private enterprises to foster enhanced awareness of the importance of green space conservation at the local level. Moreover, for effective policy implementation aimed at enhancing park and garden conservation, it is essential to ascertain the underlying causes of neglect and their potential long-term consequences. One significant contributing factor is the perceived lack of trust between local governments and the general public. The lack of action to foster awareness among citizens is evident. Environmental talks and activities involving children and adults are not being conducted, and the opinions of the population are not being considered, even though it is assumed that these individuals benefit the most from these recreational areas and are therefore the primary conservators of parks and gardens.

In this sense, some researchers indicate that an individual's behavior regarding the environmental aspect is determined by factors such as motivation, which is influenced by attitude and social norms, and by competence, which is defined in terms of personal capacity, self-efficacy, and contextual opportunities (Gomera, 2008). In other words, governments must create public policies based on these factors and in coordination with the population. This is in accordance with Gupta (2014), who indicates that policies or legislation that have to do with environmental protection or conservation have no meaning if the community does not participate in their implementation process, as they are one of the main victims of pollution.

It is also important to note that the lack of dissemination of information related to environmental care by governments hinders the development of citizen capacities that would otherwise facilitate their participation in addressing environmental management problems. This is in accordance with the argument put forth by Du et al. (2018), who posit that environmental awareness is influenced not only by the formal education received within educational institutions, but also by informal education. Consequently, it is necessary to strengthen environmental capacities in the population from outside, either through awareness talks, campaigns, and/or programs that include the participation of citizens from all cities.

In relation to the aforementioned idea, other research indicates that a line of action can be established by the municipalities, which would be based on the acquisition of land for investment and the continued design of an effective system of green areas in a city that is undergoing constant growth. In order to implement this plan, it is essential to consider the establishment of the necessary resources that would allow for its successful completion (Kwartnik-Pruc & Trembecka, 2021). Likewise, Lennon (2021) posits that a crucial step in improving green space design is to reframe the underlying concepts and assumptions. This should be done with consideration of the intended use of these spaces. To achieve this, it is essential to gain a more nuanced understanding of the needs and preferences of the users. This necessitates enhanced communication and collaboration to create environments that align with the diverse and evolving demands of the public. In a different vein, Pauleit et al. (2019) contend that public policies pertaining to green spaces are constrained in scope and largely confined to land use policies. Consequently, there is a need to expand the definition to encompass the functions of green spaces within sustainability solutions for nature-based cities. This would enable public policies to acknowledge the contributions of green areas and their impact on climate change.

Consequently, the effective design and planning of parks and gardens can be achieved concurrently with the incorporation of certain elements that guarantee their sustainability and fulfill their intended purpose. First, these areas must be designed based on an understanding of the objective and the impact that is desired to have at the time of creation. Márquez (2009) argues that it is crucial that the creation of public policies should consider an impact study, which would encompass the social and cultural dynamics of the district. Likewise, it is also important to consider a risk assessment so that the area to be designed or built is not located in areas prone to flooding. Secondly, it would be equally important to promote equitable. It is essential to implement fair and integrated public policies during the planning process for parks and gardens. This approach should prioritize the central city as a focal point for these types of spaces, while also addressing the lack of attention to the extremes, which are often deficient in terms of walkable areas and green spaces. This imbalance in urban development has implications for accessibility, as these areas are concentrated in select central locations, making it challenging for low-income populations residing in the periphery to access them. An integrated perspective is crucial to address these inequities (Victor and Castillo, 2021). (Wijesinghe and Thorn, 2021).

Similarly, there is a noticeable underestimation of the power of population intervention in both the formulation of public policies and the design and organization of green spaces, despite the fact that the acceptance of the local community is crucial for planning habitable cities. In this sense, it would be important to have the support and initiatives that come from citizens, this in some way encourages active cooperation of the population in the processes of conservation and maintenance of parks and gardens. On the other hand, another important factor is definitely the economic resources, it is known that budgets are limited in the districts, which would be making it difficult in some way to prioritize designs of sustainable green spaces, given this and under the premise of the Baños del Inca district being a recognized tourist place, it is important to consider some methods of financing for green spaces that come from tourist income (Keping, 2018).

In this context, the urban area of Baños del Inca is undergoing significant expansion, with a concomitant reduction in green spaces. The majority of the limited green spaces that can be observed are subdivided areas that are available for sale with the intention of constructing furniture. Among the few green areas that can be identified are the district's main square and the municipal stadium. Additionally, tourist areas exist, yet they are not publicly accessible, thus not benefiting the entire community (Valente et al., 2020). It is evident that the so-called public nature or municipal vegetation represents an invaluable asset that must be accessible to the general public. It is the property of a municipal unit and its designation as a common area is clearly reflected in the planning documents (Kwartnik-Pruc and Trembecka, 2021). The design of these spaces is driven by the objective of creating an environment that provides recreation and leisure opportunities for the citizens of a particular locality. It is well-established that green spaces play an important role in supporting mental and physical well-being. However, public policies designed to achieve healthy objectives often encounter a series of difficulties. Researchers in this field argue that local government officials should consider the creation of multifunctional green areas as a means of promoting community well-being. This underscores the need for a deeper understanding of the ways in which green spaces influence human well-being (Dobson, 2018). This suggests that public opinion should be taken into account when

formulating public policies that affect recreation, leisure, and the physical and mental health of the population.

In relation to the previous idea, the benefits of green spaces such as parks and gardens should be available to anyone, in a suitable place and at their disposal where they can interact with nature, exercising or interacting with each other, all of this together is related to a society with low levels of stress among its citizens, in this same sense, Wood et al. (2017) found that having adequate access to these areas is associated with low levels of anxiety and a general decrease in visits to the doctor for mood problems. In another study carried out by Nutsford et al., (2013) they observed that people with low incomes are the most sensitive to the effects of having a green space near their home. On the other hand, in another investigation it was observed that these environments are not only for recreation but can have healing and restorative effects for children who have some difficulties and due to this they present forms of stress (Tidball and Krasny, 2014).

In light of these considerations, the discussion of green spaces inevitably entails an examination of quality. The neglect of urban green spaces can give rise to a range of adverse consequences, including the accumulation of waste, an increase in crime and vandalism, and a decline in the utilization of these spaces for recreational purposes. This, in turn, can result in the avoidance of these areas by the general population, potentially leading to the emergence of social conflict rather than the creation of spaces for leisure and recreation (Pope et al., 2018). In light of these considerations, Pemberton (2017) underscores the critical importance of a comprehensive analysis of the social, local, and urban context. Similarly, while it is true that parks and gardens are beneficial for urban populations in terms of promoting health and wellbeing, it is also important to recognise that not all individuals utilise green spaces in the same way. Consequently, not all green spaces are equally beneficial for everyone (Dobson, 2018). This implies that the value of a green space is contingent upon the manner in which it is utilized by the individuals who frequent it.

Similarly, it is crucial to underscore the significance of parks and gardens as green spaces within urban areas. These spaces have been linked to a reduction in violence, an increase in life expectancy, and the opportunity to engage in healthier forms of exercise. Research has indicated that exercising in green areas offers more benefits than doing so in asphalt areas (Nutsford et al., 2013). Another crucial rationale for urban planners to prioritize the incorporation of green spaces is their capacity to enhance social cohesion and integration within communities. This is a pivotal consideration, as empirical evidence suggests that such social integration and neighborly interaction can mitigate suicide rates and mortality levels, ultimately promoting the physical and mental well-being of the population (Wijesinghe & Thorn, 2021). Furthermore, green areas contribute to the development of ecological awareness, which is defined as the connection with nature. This connection is an essential factor in fostering human beings' care and conservation of nature.

5. Conclusions

The establishment of public policies in favor of the conservation of parks and gardens is hindered by a lack of interest and concern, particularly at the local government level. This is due to a

combination of factors, including a lack of administrative capacity and environmental management. The aforementioned areas are frequently disregarded and their value is often undervalued by the local community. This is partly due to a lack of environmental education. Consequently, the current public policies do not effectively promote the conservation of green spaces, such as the parks and gardens in the Baños del Inca district.

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