

Abstract

Urban green spaces are important as they provide multiple ecosystem services. In developing countries, they are not prioritized over urbanization due to multiple reasons. Anarkali bazaar is a historical commercial hub in the city of Lahore, it fulfills the commercial and enjoyment needs of Lahorites. This questionnaire-based study is planned to evaluate the motives of the stakeholders of the Bazar to create urban green spaces and willingness to pay for greening the Bazar. Two types of questionnaires were formulated, one for the local visitors and the second for the shopkeepers. The questionnaire was divided into 4 parts. i.e. demographic profile, perceptions about the Anarkali bazaar, willingness to pay for green spaces, health impacts and protective measures in the Bazar. The results revealed that the respondents (53%) felt happy and attached to visit the bazaar but were not satisfied (80%) with the current deteriorated situation of the Bazar. They demand the change in the bazaar in the form of less traffic, separate pedestrian path, separate parking in the plaza, no motorbikes stand outside the shops, and more greenery in the form of trees or pots. Visitors believe that these problems must be addressed by the current Government and the Anarkali Traders Union. Both shopkeepers and respondents show less knowledge about health impacts and protective measure due to less awareness. Respondents agreed on the stance that the area must be improved in terms of greenery and parking (61.9%). However, the willingness to pay by visitors is low for greening the bazar. The main reason for unwillingness to pay is that people are unaware of the non-use value of green spaces. The chi square test revealed the significance among variable like age, gender and shop size. The results of this study reveal that the shopkeepers with small businesses showed good response in terms of greening the congested area of Anarkali bazar and are willing to pay for the improvement of the bazar. Involving all stakeholders in policy making is the need of hour to make governance better. These results will help the government departments in shaping the policies and mechanisms to combat growing problem of haphazard urbanization.