

The Planning and Utilisation of Green Spaces in South Africa: Potchefstroom as a Case Study

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1 ABSTRACT

Public green spaces, commonly known as parks, play an important socio-psychological, physical and ecological role within cities. They support active lifestyles, promote citizenships, reduce air pollution, decrease heat island effects and support environmental sustainability. However, previous studies have found that the quality of parks within settlements fluctuates depending on their location relative to the Central Business District (CBD) and wealth of residents. This variation in quality (supply of park area or facilities) affects the utilization (potential demand) of parks, which in turn reduces the benefits, derived from these spaces. This paper sought to investigate the quality and utilization of parks in Potchefstroom, South Africa. It explored 3 different parks in 3 suburbs on the basis of the wealth and racial history of the suburb. Qualitative data was collected at each park through semi-structured interviews to determine its utilization, and an observation study was used to determine the park quality. The analysis indicated that there are marked discrepancies in the quality of neighborhood parks between suburbs previously designated for different racial groups. However, the utilization was not determined by the quality of the neighborhood parks, with poor quality parks in previously disadvantaged areas being used more frequently. The study's findings shed light on the green inequality of South African cities and calls for further intervention to bring in green equality.

Keywords: Green Inequality, Green spaces, Distributional Justice, Sustainability, South Africa

2 INTRODUCTION

Academically, public green spaces are defined as open areas, which are primarily covered by vegetation and which are provided and maintained by the local authorities. These open green spaces come in various sizes and are commonly known as parks. From a planning perspective, parks serve multiple functions and offer citizens social, psychological and environmental benefits (Rojas- Rueda et al., 2019). As a result, the World Health Organization considers green open spaces to be essential for the physical and emotional wellbeing of citizens.

However, research conducted in Australia, South Africa, Spain and America have all found that lower income residential areas or minority racial group suburbs within cities have less access to green spaces or street trees than more affluent areas (Astell-Burt & Feng, 2019). In the case of South Africa, the planning and design of public green spaces has been more complex due to its political history as well as the unique ways in which parks are used in the country. Neighborhood parks in South Africa are planned to provide recreational and cultural services (Shackleton et al., 2018). However, these public open spaces are also utilized by the public to address their individual needs which come from high poverty levels and African identity or spirituality (Khumalo & Sibanda, 2019). These aspects are culturally opposing at times and deter the traditional utilization of parks. Consequently, research conducted in South Africa found that although there are many parks in the cities, only the well maintained parks close to the CBD and affluent areas are utilized, while the others were simply ignored. However, Das and Honiball (2021) add that the underutilization of South African low-income neighborhood parks is attributed to the lack of amenities, inappropriate location, lack of attractiveness, lack of accessibility, no interest, and crime. This generates a vicious cycle in the level of green spaces and infrastructure provided (supply) by the government and the low demand of green spaces in these suburbs.

This paper seeks to engage the first dimension of environmental justice - that of distributive justice, which addresses fairness in provision of public spaces and related resources within the South African context (Low, 2013). In light of this, the paper examines the quality of parks and their utilization in three different suburbs located in Potchefstroom South Africa (Harnik, 2009:6). The paper starts by providing a brief backdrop of South African cities and their relationship with public green space planning. It then describes the methodology, discusses findings and draw conclusions. The next section provides a background to the study.

3 BACKGROUND

The South African apartheid city stands out as an extreme example of urban social engineering (Seekings, 2011:532; Venter et al., 2020:106). Its spatial morphology was based on racial segregation and hierarchy that systematically disadvantaged those who were classified as „Coloured“, „Indian/Asian“ or „Black“. During this period people of color were forcibly removed from urban areas and moved to „group areas“ s located far from urban amenities. Within the apartheid city, White“s lived in high-income urban neighborhoods with good quality infrastructure and urban amenities, whilst South Africans classified as Coloured or Indian lived in lower class rural neighborhoods with poor services and no urban amenities. African“s or Blacks lived in townships that had minimal infrastructure and services (Seekings, 2011:540). Each of these group areas were then treated as separate local administrations, and infrastructures such as highways, industrial zones, and buffer zones were used to create physical divisions along the lines of race. Furthermore, regulations were put in place to control social interaction between racial groups in public spaces (Seekings, 2011:538). This created exclusion, spatial fragmentation and high levels of inequality in the country (Lehohla & Shabalala, 2014:501). In an analogous fashion, the environmental policy of apartheid South Africa was as cruel and perverse as the spatial one.

Under the colonial and apartheid governments, thousands of Black South Africans were forcibly removed from their ancestral lands to make way for game parks, and billions of Rands were spent on preserving wildlife and protecting wild flowers, while people in “townships” and “homelands” lived without adequate food, shelter, and clean water. The Whites-only policies in national parks meant that black South Africans could not enjoy the country“s rich natural heritage, and draconian poaching laws kept the rural poor from desperately needed resources (Kuruneri-Chitepo & Shackleton, 2011). A study conducted by McConnachie and Shackleton (2010) found that there was less public urban green infrastructure and fewer parks in the poorer neighbourhoods (African, Indian and Coloured residents) than the more affluent ones (White residents). The same was found with respect to the provision of street trees, with many areas in poorer neighborhoods having no street trees at all (Gwedla & Shackleton, 2017). Consequently, Black South Africans (and anti-apartheid activists in general) paid little attention to environmental debates during the apartheid era since the environment was seen to be a white, suburban issue of little relevance to the anti-apartheid struggle.

However, the liberalization of South African politics in the late 1980s created a discursive and institutional space for the rethinking of environmental issues, and a vibrant debate began on the meaning, causes, and effects of environmental decay. The most fundamental outcome of these developments was the broadening of the definition “environment” in legislation to include the working and living space of Black South Africans. Subsequently, a wide range of trade unions, non-governmental organizations, civic associations, and academics adopted the new environmental discourse. Within a few short years these bodies began to challenge the environmental practices and policies of the past, with the hope of bringing in environmental equality and distributional justice (Ramphela and McDowell 1991).

In 1994, the African National Congress (ANC) came into power and realized that social, economic, and political relations were also part of the environmental equation. As a result, the ANC pledged that environmental inequalities and injustices would be addressed as an integral part of the party“s post-apartheid reconstruction and development mandate (ANC, 1994: 38). Accordingly, in 1996 the South African Constitution granted all South Africans the right to human dignity, equality and freedom. In terms of the right to equality: it stated that everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. In order, to promote equality, the Constitution put in place a number of legislative measures that could be adopted to protect the rights of people who were disadvantaged by unfair discrimination. In section 24 the Constitution further adds that all citizens have a right to an “environment that is not harmful to their health and well-being” and that development should be “ecologically sustainable”. When these rights are read together it becomes clear that environmental justice is part of a larger social justice paradigm, which seeks to transform the lives of people for the better.

Consequently, over the past 29 years (1994-2023), numerous policies and legislation were passed in post-apartheid South Africa, including the Reconstruction and Development program (RDP), Spatial Development Frameworks (SDF), Development Facilitation Act (Act 76 of 1995), Habitat and Local Agenda 21 initiatives, the Green Paper on Development Planning (1999), the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) and National Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA, Act 16 of

2013). All of these made provision for equitable green space planning. However, before any decisions could be made on the implementation by the local authority, a broad framework of stakeholders was engaged. This included public participation and several objectives were met to ensure that what was required was implemented. This often resulted in the approval of green spaces having to continuously be balanced against other urban land-uses such as housing, infrastructure, economic and business development (Cilliers, Diemont, Stobbelaar & Timmermans, 2011: 695-698). As a result, parks were not prioritized practically and this is deeply felt in everyday life for South Africans (Makakavhule & Landman, 2020). This is especially, true in government-built social housing areas, where environmental justice, sustainability and quality of life aspects have been neglected (Chishaleshale et al., 2015).

However, to provide a perspective on the scale of the neglect, a study conducted by Venter et al. (2020) found that there is environmental inequality and distribution injustice in 49 out of the 52 district municipalities. With white urban households living within 700 m of a public park, whilst African households have to walk, on average, 1.7 km (Venter et al., 2020). Furthermore, Lategan and Cilliers (2016:13) found that the more affluent suburbs, which are primarily populated by whites, have the lowest housing density but more green space per capita. This can be compared with the new low-income housing suburbs, which are primarily populated by poor Black South Africans, having the highest housing density but the least green space per capita. Despite this, little empirical research has been conducted to examine the physical attributes of neighborhood park contexts and the correlation with utilization. This additional insight could assist in understanding the differences in quality and utilisation as well as provide insight into the level of inequality on a neighbourhood level. The next section provides brief descriptions of the methodology followed to determine the quality (supply) and utilization (demand) of neighborhood parks in Potchefstroom by analyzing the parks in three different suburbs within the city.

4 METHODOLOGY

Over the last decade there have been several urban ecological studies in Potchefstroom which have focused on urban biodiversity, ecosystem services, green spaces and green economy (Cilliers, 2010a; Cilliers et al., 2013). However, these projects were focused on parks within high- and middle-income areas, and they did not provide insight into the quality distribution of parks within the city. Consequently, this research sought to address the shortcoming by investigating the correlation between the quality of neighborhood parks and the utilization of these parks in Potchefstroom, South Africa (Brasington & Hite, 2005:4).

The study area was comprised of: Area A- Botanical Gardens in the Built area (High Income), Area B- Hospital Park in Baillie Park (middle income) and Area C- Ikageng park in Ikageng (Low Income) (see map below).

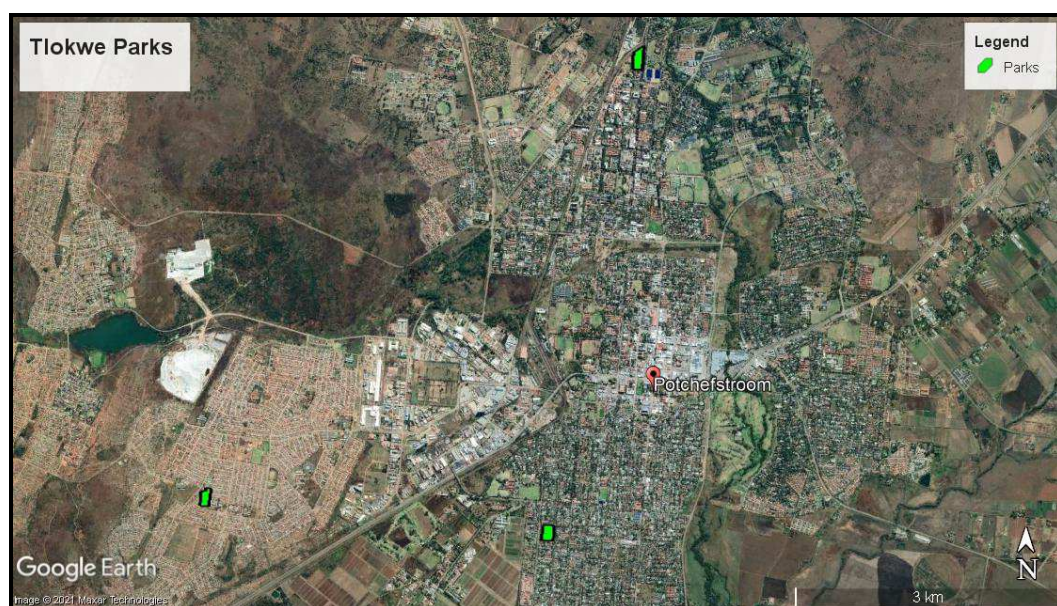


Fig. 1: Location of the three parks in Tlokwe local municipality (Source: Own composition)

These parks were chosen due to their location in the different suburbs and distance from the CBD. The researcher sought to determine if quality and utilization is affected by distance from the CBD. At each of these parks the researcher conducted semi-structured face to face interviews with randomly chosen participants from different ages, genders and races. In total 30 Interviews were conducted between 19/07/2021-22/07/2021. Responses were documented and analyzed. The next section discusses the key findings from the empirical study on the utilization and quality of parks in Potchefstroom.

5 RESULTS

There are 79 Parks in the Tlokwe Local Municipality (Potchefstroom) according to the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). Of these, 44 are considered developed, 6 semi-developed and 27 underdeveloped (JB Marks Local Municipality, 2018:246). The local municipality classifies developed parks as having green infrastructures which are regularly maintained, whilst underdeveloped parks are seen as not having adequate green infrastructure. The figure below illustrates all the open green areas around Potchefstroom.

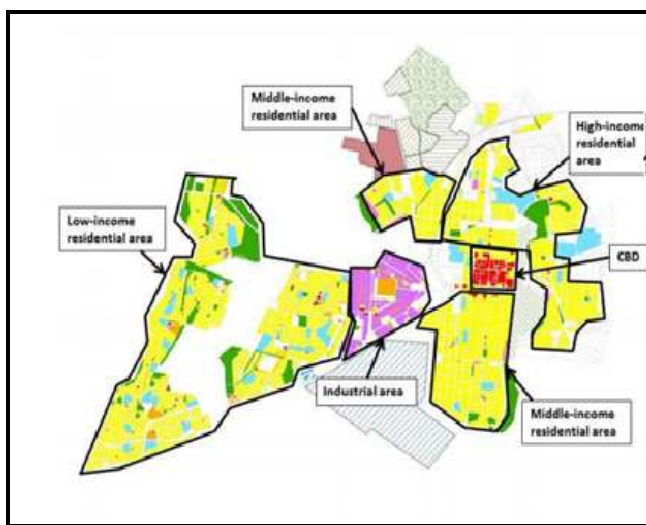


Fig. 2: Green spaces in Potchefstroom (Source: Authors Own)



Fig. 3: Location of Case study relative to CBD (Authors own)

Morphologically the map illustrates a typical Apartheid city model, and the green markings illustrate the neighborhood parks. High income localities are located in the North of the city and the lower-income residents in the South, close to the industrial area. Analysis of the map reveals that green spaces across Potchefstroom are unequally distributed, with more green spaces in the low-income residential areas than the high-income residential area.

This finding was confirmed by the local IDP which also added that most of the “underdeveloped parks” are predominately located in the low-income residential and middle-income residential areas, while larger more well-developed parks are located in the higher income areas (JB Marks Local Municipality, 2018:246). According to the IDP the two of the three randomly chosen parks for this study that were categorized as “developed parks” (i.e Botanical Garden and Petersen park) and one of the parks was an “underdeveloped park” (i.e Ikageng Park). The next section captures the key findings on the quality of these parks (supply).

5.1 The quality of the parks

According to Urban Land Institute (2021), high quality parks have five key characteristics: 1. Are in excellent condition and are well maintained, 2. Accessible to all potential users, 3. Provide positive experiences for park users, 4. Are relevant to the communities they serve, and 5. Are flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances. In order to evaluate the quality of parks in Potchefstroom and to capture the quality of the parks, each park will be discussed under separate headings according to the above criteria and findings are motivated with images. The map below provides perspective on distance of the parks from the CBD.

A. The Botanical Gardens

The NWU Botanical Garden which is situated in the high income area was opened to the public in 1982. It is situated 4.1 KM North from the Potchefstroom CBD and covers 3ha. It has more than a 1500 plant species and provides a habitat for a variety of animals and insects. There is a variety of vast open spaces where people can come for recreational purposes and the paved footpath can be used for physical exercise (see Images below). The park also has lights, trash cans, restrooms and benches all along the paved footpaths. The park is maintained by the University but open to the public at no cost.



Fig. 4: Pictures of the Botanical Gardens (Source: Own Compositions)

This park is located in the former white suburbs and is considered to be a developed park by the Integrated Development Plan.

B. Hospital Park

This park is centrally located opposite the public hospital and is 2.7 km from the CBD. The researcher’s first observation of the park was that there is no parking available on the property and there was no fence around the park to ensure safety. The park also looked run-down, with the paving being uneven and the paint fading on buildings. The tennis court is also dilapidated and converted into a skateboard park. The restrooms are also neglected with several broken windows and no doors. While the park has various trees, many branches were cut (for fire wood) and the grass was over grown (see figure below). One of the participants also rightly pointed out that there are no benches, street lights and trash cans on the property, and as a result litter is scattered everywhere (see images below).



Fig. 5: Pictures of Petersen Park (Authors Own)

This park is considered to be developed by the Potchefstroom IDP.

C. Ikageng Park

Ikageng Park is located 7km away from the CBD in a suburb that was the former African township. At this park the researcher found that there is no parking and it could only be accessed by foot. The park has no grass and no infrastructure such as restrooms or play facilities (Swings, see-saws or jungle-gyms) lights, trash cans, benches and footpaths. The only infrastructure this park has is a set of goal posts. There is no maintenance in the park and the people of the neighbourhood use the open land to dump their trash (see figures below). Whilst the researcher was at the park there was not a lot of activity going on in the park, but those who were there stated that young boys use the park to play soccer in the afternoon and older people come to watch them play.



Fig. 6: Pictures of Ikageng Park (Source: Own Compositions)

This park is considered to be under developed by the IDP.

In light of the above findings, one could conclude that the Botanical garden situated in a built area which is 4km from the Potchefstroom CBD offers the best quality green spaces, since it adheres to all 5 of the quality criteria (see table below). Both the hospital park and the Ikageng park are not considered to be high quality parks since they adhere to 0 of the five quality criteria (see table below).

| Quality | Ikageng | Hospital | Botanical Garden |
|-----------------------------|---------|----------|------------------|
| Distance from CBD | 7km | 2.7 Km | 4.1 KM |
| Well Maintained | No | No | Yes |
| Accessible | No | No | Yes |
| Positive experience | No | No | Yes |
| Relevant to local community | No | No | Yes |
| Flexible and adaptable | No | No | No |

Furthermore, the study found that the quality of parks did not depend on the distance from the CBD but rather the wealth of residents. With the hospital park, this is closer to the CBD but is of a poorer quality compared with the Botanical garden. However, parks located in the poorer area and former black townships are still found to be the least developed. The next section unpacks how each of these parks are used.

5.2 Utilization of the Parks

Utilisation can be defined as the manner in which the public use a particular space. The study found that the Botanical Garden which is located adjacent to the University had a lower utilization rate than the Hospital Park which is located opposite the hospital and the Ikageng Park in the low income area. The respondents (10) claim that they visit the botanical garden once a month, while those interviewed at the Hospital park (13) and Ikageng Park (7) claim to visit the parks daily.

The motivation for the frequent visits to the Parks (Hospital and Ikageng) was that they were easily accessible and that they offered space for recreation and exercise. However, the Botanical garden was not as frequently used due to time access restrains (8am to 4pm) and the distance from home. Additionally, many (6) respondents from the botanical garden stated that they have large gardens of their own and do not find the need to visit a park as often. Respondents from Ikageng (7) and Hospital Park (6) state that they have small gardens or no gardens and are dependent on parks for recreational space. The table below captures main findings.

| Criteria | Botanical Gardens | Hospital Park | Ikageng Park |
|--------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Income Group | High Income | Middle Income | Low Income |
| Frequency of usage | Once a month | Every day | Every day |
| Purpose of usage | Recreation | Recreation | Recreation |
| Like about park | Accessible and clean | Quiet, spacious and near home | Meeting place and soccer field |
| Dislike about Park | Lack of maintenance | No maintenance and insufficient infrastructure | No grass, litter everywhere, no facilities and no lights |

Table 2: Findings on the utilization of Parks in Potchefstroom (Authors own)

Analyzing the responses, one finds that the botanical garden was found in the high income area and people liked it because it was accessible and clean, however, some respondents still did not like it because it was not “well maintained”. However, Hospital Park which was located in the middle income area and closer to the CBD was favored since it was “ Quiet, spacious and near their home”. However, they also pointed out that the park was not well maintained and did not offer sufficient infrastructure such as parking, toilets, and playing facilities. On the other hand, people who used the Ikageng park claimed that they liked it because it offered them a common meeting place to play and watch soccer.

One of the main findings from the semi-structured interviews was the manner in which recreation was defined. Respondents, who were white and young (20-30 years), from the botanical garden stated that they used the park to walk, run and picnic. However, respondents who were mostly Black and middle aged (30-40years) from the hospital park used the park for recreation, but defined recreation as “sitting in the sun”, “children skating” and “socializing”. Some (2) stated that they use the park to sort out recycling material, since they have nowhere else to sort it. On a Sunday, if one was to drive past, one could also notice a group of people in white clothes who use part of the park, for “worshipping” purposes. On the other-hand the Park in Ikageng was used to play soccer, and the community uses it to socialize during these matches.

The main finding for the researcher was that parks offer a “sense of place”, and the likes and dislikes are subjective. The researcher further asked each of the respondents if they visited any of the alternate parks in

Potchefstroom, to which they all stated that they don't ever use other parks since they are not as accessible, and some just simply never thought of visiting parks in other suburbs.

The next section discusses the key finds to determine if there is equality of green spaces and if quality effects utilization.

6 DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

In 1996, a one-city one tax base principle was implemented, which meant that all citizens in the city should be treated equally. This also meant that all suburbs within the city should have equal access to amenities, services and facilities- green spaces included. However, access in this case was not just about facilities being open for everyone to use, but it also meant that the quality of facilities within the city should also be the same throughout the settlement. Unfairness of distribution would foster conflict and undermine cooperation, furthermore the inequality of services would mean that some citizens would have greater benefits and a better quality of life in comparison to the rest. The section below discusses the key findings of the paper.

6.1 Inequality in green spaces

Not all impacts or benefits can be measured in monetary terms. Neither can all types of neglect and inequality be expressed in words, but some things have to be experienced first-hand, therefore the researcher attempted to capture images to provide undeniable insight into the reasons for inequality.

The study found that even though there are no restrictions on movement, the apartheid city model still has an effect on how cities look and are utilized today. The research revealed that many respondents live on city perimeters which are either due to self-limitation or economic barriers. Many low-income residents cannot access facilities within the city solely due to transportation costs, even though these facilities are free. High-income residents on the other hand have self-limitations due to "fear of others" or lack of interest, and this restricts them from exploring the poorer end of the city. Regardless, of which barrier is analyzed, we find that there are two different realities for people living within a 10 km radius in the same city. So, even though there are facilities and amenities in the city, they are only accessed by a few who live close by.

The study further found that, although GIS maps within policy documents claim that there are 79 Parks within the city, most parks are located in the former non-white areas (Ikageng, Promosa and Mohadin). However, when the researcher drove around in the vicinity to determine the utilization and quality of these parks, most of them were non-existent to an extent. "Parks" in these locations were merely open plots with no infrastructure, and were similar to the Ikageng Park. According to the inhabitants these open spaces have always been there and they were unaware that it was actually earmarked to be a park.

On paper, in 2013 the Ikageng park was supposed to be developed and its purpose was to provide the local low income residents of the community with much needed recreation facilities. It was also supposed to include multi-functional courts, a children's play area, picnic and braai facilities and a large outdoor amphitheater. It was to have essential infrastructure such as lights, dustbins, grass patches and paving (See figure below).

However, nine years later in 2021, one can see the disparities between what was sold to the public and what was actually provided. Upon interviewing the persons within the municipality, no one could say why the project was not seen through and what happened to the money. This also brings into question the distributional injustice that children experience in the city. Children in the North (High-income) are exposed to 1500 different plants and species in the Botanical garden, while children in the South (low-income) have dirt patches, rubbish dumps and broken goal posts. The core notion of distributional justice in South Africa could therefore be questioned 30 years later.

However, the inequalities are not just spatial but they are environmental, socio and psychological. This is demonstrated through the parks in the south being poorly maintained, lacking infrastructure and not providing even grass for citizens to relax on. These green spaces which are supposed to be used for psychosocial and ecological benefits are instead being used to dump rubbish, accommodate homeless people and graze animals. It is clear that the benefits that green spaces ought to provide are not being provided in the low-income areas.

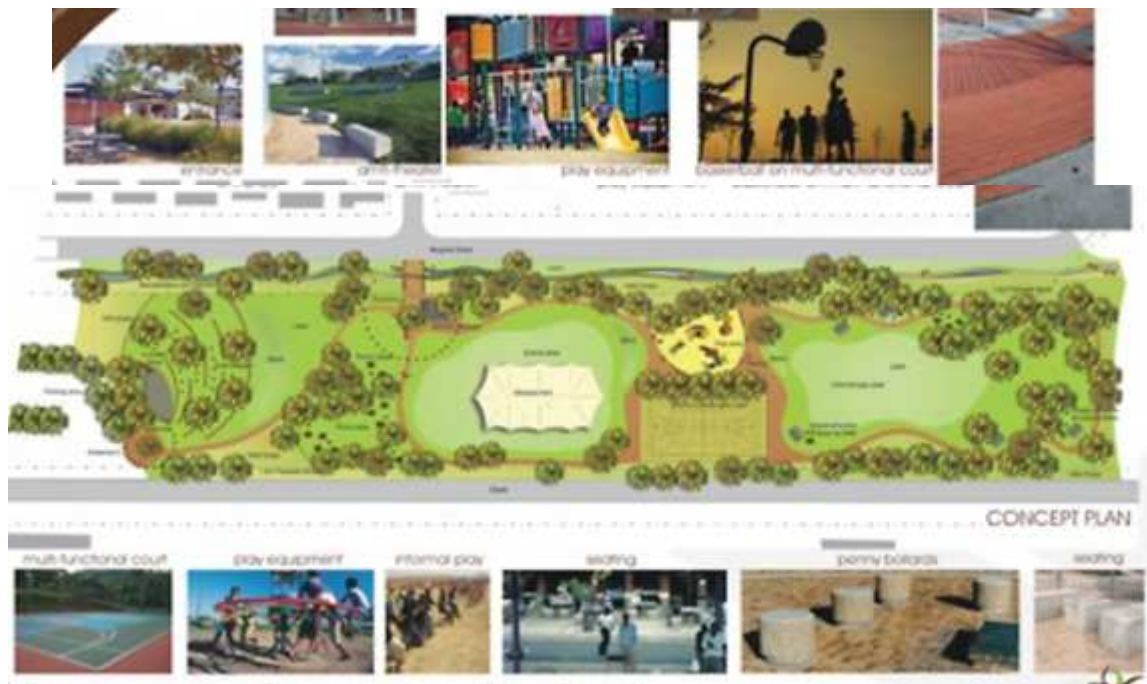


Figure 7: Ikageng Community park concept plan (Outlining landscape architecture, 2013)

6.2 Does Quality affect utilization of Green Spaces?

Parks are recognized as key public spaces that offer social value to adjacent neighborhoods. In these spaces, safety, infrastructure and maintenance are important measures of ensuring utilisation. However, the study found that these factors are not the only ones affecting the utilization of parks. The study found that the participants from low-income areas (Ikageng Park) use parks more often than the middle-income (Hospital park) and high-income participants (Botanical garden) (McConnachie & Shackleton, 2010:248). However, the question of who was utilizing the parks and for what purpose provides valuable insight into the social dynamic experience in the city.

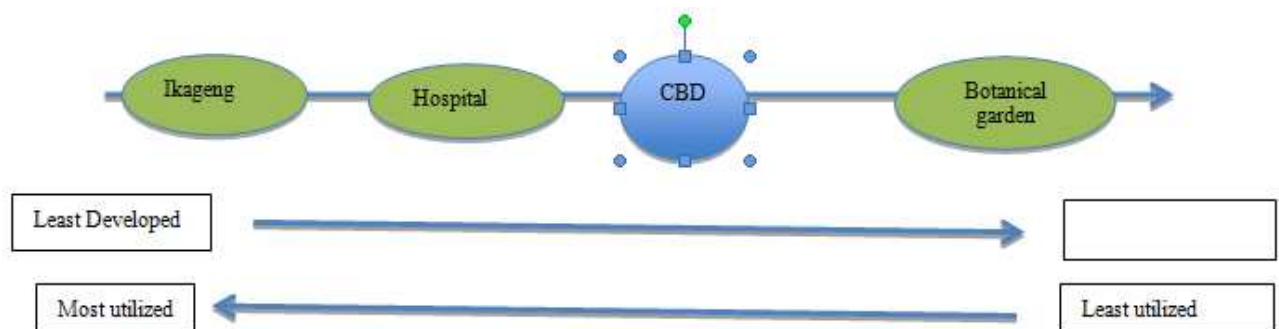


Figure 8 : The Quality vs Utilisation of Parks in Potchefstroom (Authors own)

In light of this, an article published in the local newspaper “The Herald” in August 2021, reported that homeless people live in the Hospital parks’ bathrooms, and thieves, drug addicts and prostitutes loiter in the park during the day. Furthermore, the study also found that local recyclers also use the parking lot to collect and sort recyclables outside the park. As a result, local residents claim that the park is more of a stress to the local community than a recreational area. Consequently, the public has requested the municipality to demolished the park and replace it with an indoor gymnasium.

However, for the purposes of this study, it was revealed that the Hospital park and Ikageng Parks both do not have the best quality infrastructure or could be considered to be a high quality park. Nevertheless, they are still being utilized in an alternate fashion and they still offer unconventional benefits to the public. This shows that there is a difference of opinion about acceptable usages and there is still a fear of others.

In conclusion, the study found that the quality of the parks does not affect utilization; however utilization could influence the quality of the park and the neighborhood. It further revealed that the unconventional utilization of Parks deters investment, and the vicious cycle of inequality continues.

7 CONCLUSION

The study found the Apartheid city model still impacts how cities look in South Africa today. This was verified with the unequal distribution of green spaces and green infrastructure across Potchefstroom. It also found that high-income residential areas have fewer parks which are better maintained but rarely used, whereas low-income residential areas have more underdeveloped parks with almost no green infrastructure and maintenance but are used the most often. However, the less developed parks are utilized in an unconventional manner but still provide benefits to the public which include an area to socialize, graze animals, sort out recycling material, accommodation for the homeless and garbage disposal. It could be agreed that this inequality does not allow inhabitants to have the full benefit from green spaces and questions the provision of these spaces. The paper recommends that further research be conducted on the socio-psychological inequalities created by the lack of adequate facilities in the poorer neighborhoods.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Public awareness

There are various policies in place to support environmental equity, and the local municipality does have funds allocated to develop the underdeveloped and semi-developed parks. Nevertheless, the practical aspect is not that easy because funds are allocated according to need and officials indicate that the patching of potholes and provision of houses with water and electricity is more important than parks. That could be true and reiterates the lack of interest in green spaces. However, if the benefits of green spaces could be realized and the importance inculcated, the significance of these spaces might be realized. In light of this more public awareness and environmental knowledge is required to really bring in change.

8.2 Avoid Blue Print

Parks throughout the world have similar plans, structures and infrastructure. This structure paints the idea of high-quality parks which are implemented regardless of culture. The study has alluded to the idea that South African parks are not really considered a big deal in the higher income areas since building density is much lower and most houses have private gardens. However, parks are more valued in the lower income areas since houses and gardens are small and the needs of lower income individuals differ from high income individuals. As a result, it is important to conduct participative planning in order to understand the needs to the community. For one, the community needs space to “worship” on a Sunday and to gather and socialize in the sun. Another need identified is for people to have space to organize their material recycling activities, and to skate. Although all these needs might not easily be accommodated within a traditional green open space, it is the requirement of the public. Therefore, planners should be innovative and willing to break from conventional blue-print development.

8.3 Access to Justice

On paper at least, South Africa’s constitutional provisions on equality, justice and freedom rank among the most progressive in the world. However, at a more practical level, many people in South Africa do not have the financial means to actively pursue costly court proceedings; especially those including environmental inequality and distributional injustices. The study has revealed the initial plan and the reality of the Ikageng park, however, the citizens of the community do not have the financial muscle or the funds to open a court case against the municipality to ensure justice.

As a consequence, public interest law firms and civil societies are required to look at cases such as Ikageng, and seek justice and equality for those who cannot achieve it themselves. If local government is not held accountable for empty promises, the vicious cycle of inequality will continue.

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