URBAN DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CREATION OF LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT PARKS IN NIGERIA

Briggs, Dateme Cromwell
Rivers State University, Port Harcourt

ABSTRACT

The design of urban Public Park is an important factor which influences urban community leisure. The objective of this study is to investigate the community perceptions on leisure and entertainment activities in urban Public Park as a means of urban development. The questionnaire survey is done in Rivers state using random stratifies technique. There are four types of variable studies related to leisure parks in an urban public park namely comfort, conveniences, safety and family leisure. The findings from this study are expected to show a positive perception of leisure in urban Public Park towards urban community development.

INTRODUCTION

If leisure and entertainment parks can evolve from their current, primarily recreational role, into a new role as a catalyst for community development and enhancement, parks will be an essential component in transforming and enriching our cities. A park and its surrounding area can be not only a place to understand and relate to nature, but it can also be a place for social and cultural exchange. A park can be alive and teeming with entrepreneurial activities such as markets; physical activities such as children playing or people skating, walking or jogging; for cultural activities, such as art and community

events; or for simply socializing with friends.

For many years and in many cities throughout the world, parks have played a pivotal role in shaping the success of cities. The first formal "parks," such as Central Park in New York City, were created in the 19th century, to be passive and beautiful, in contrast to the dense and dirty reality of urban life. However, they were, in the long run, a collection of important destinations and places. The Sailboat Pond in Central Park is a good example of such a "place," and remains both a destination in the park and a place to enjoy nature.

"We have not even scratched the surface of the impact parks could have on the revitalization of communities."

Later, parks were planned as part of a broader, inter-connected "open space system," which also included town squares, plazas, greenways and a variety of other types of spaces: just about everything in a city that is not a building or a road. This suggests that the full range of benefits that open space can provide to cities was understood. However, the quality of public spaces and public life in most cities suggests that we do not fully understand this benefit. In fact, we have not even scratched the surface of the impact parks could have on the revitalization of communities. Many of today's urban parks have few activities outside of recreational opportunities, and do not attract people such as seniors or teens, or people who are just looking for a place to sit or walk on a daily basis. Often, there is not even a sidewalk, a place in the shade, or an opportunity to buy a sandwich or cup of coffee. The danger in all of this is that when there are few reasons for people to go to a park, fewer people use them and they will cease to be valued.

Concept of Leisure

Leisure is defined as free time that does not involve work or performing other life sustaining functions. Edginton and Chen (2008) define leisure as a non-work activity. In contrast, Michael and Sara (2012) argue that leisure as the activity engaged in during free time. Neulinger (1981) used the concept of intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation to divide the types of leisure activities. Intrinsic motivation refers to internal motivation (wanting to participate in the activity for its own sake). In contrast, extrinsic motivation refers to external motivation (wanting to do an activity for the external rewards associated with the activity). Some activities are intrinsically motivated, others are extrinsically motivated, and perhaps the largest number of activities is caused by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

This Leisure Can Be Classified Into The Following:

Active leisure: Activities involve the exertion of physical or mental energy. Low physical activities include walking and yoga, which expend little energy and have little contact or competition. High-impact activities such as kick-boxing and football consume much energy. Some active leisure activities involve almost no physical activity, but do require a substantial mental effort, such as playing chess or painting a picture.

Passive leisure: Activities are those in which a person does not exert any significant physical or mental energy, such as going to the cinema, reading, watching gambling on slot machines. Some leisure experts discourage these types of leisure activities, on the grounds that they do not provide the benefits offered by

active leisure activities. For example, acting in a community drama (an active leisure activity) could build a person's skills or self-confidence.

Urban community lifestyle

The high temperature during the day due to the effect of global warming discouraged community activities in an urban public park (Ewer, 1991). Moreover, Shaharudin et al. (2010) argued that Urban Heat Island impact of urban pollution significantly reduced livability and human comfort where it is extremely hot to conduct outdoor leisure and recreation activities during daytime. Besides, the busy lifestyle of urban community also affects the lack of time for leisure and recreation activities in public outdoor spaces (Oguz and Cakci, 2010).

Leisure and works are competitors for time. If one increases, the other decreases. This is the same for individual and for society as a whole (Gold, 1980). These constraints have changed the behavioral patterns of the urban communities where people prefer to carry out their leisure activities in outdoor public-park after the sun has set (Ngesan and Karim, 2012). This offers a cooler temperature with different leisure experience at night. It also encourages the urban community socializing with their family members and friends within their community after working hours. Meanwhile, the current planning designed and guidelines of urban public parks are not accommodative for community nighttime leisure and recreation (Ngesan and Karim 2012).

Currently, most of the leisure activities during nighttime only

takes place indoors; in cinema, restaurants, shopping complexes, etc (Erkip, 2003). The use of indoor rather than open and green outdoor spaces in leisure time activities has led to more passive urban community lifestyle. People in urban areas neglect the fact that physically active lifestyle with outdoor green environment are important in term of physical and mental health to enhance the urban quality of life (Oguz and Cakci, 2010). There are also nightlife activities such as pubs, bars and night clubs, but it gives a negative impact related with alcohol drinking and other monoculture-use of city centres by the younger generations (Ngesan and Karim 2011).

Moore et. al. (1992) highlights that parks facilitate social interactions are critical in maintaining community cohesion and pride. Park plays a role in increasing social capital by providing a meeting place where people can develop social ties. Moreover, Smith et. al. (2004) pointed that leisure at the park is able to improve moods, reducing stress and enhancing a sense of wellness.

Definition of Leisure and Entertainment Park

Leisure and Entertainment Park can be defined in so many terminology and they are;

•	A Leisure Park has often been known as a place where people spend their quality time after the close of work or weekend, holiday etc. (Wikipedia).

•	A centre as a social expression, community need, concentrates activities, meaningful spaces, a neighborhood focus and urban excitement.

- A centre that provides a platform for interaction, relaxation and amusement.

It offers a junction for tourism, sports and cultural development.

A Leisure park also provide a range of complementary facilities which could include a fitness centre, child minding amenities, multi-use rooms, squash courts, youth space, dance studio, sauna and/or café. Parks and open space vary in size, form and the functions that they perform. A strategic approach is needed in assessing the needs of a community and planning an open space network. Public open space is usually categorized into a hierarchy of neighborhood, district and regional open space and can be used for either passive or active recreation (Thompson, 2008).

How Leisure Parks Changed the City Of Shenzhen In China
Shenzhen is growing at a spectacular rate, and leisure is at the heart of many of its new developments. Shenzhen is the most exciting city in the world right now. Home to an estimated 18 million people, Shenzhen is China's richest city, with a per capita GDP of US$23,749 – higher than a number of European countries, including Portugal and the Czech Republic. And it's as close as a city can get to being a blank slate. When it was founded as a Special Economic Zone in 1980, it was a rural backwater. Hong Kong investors and state owned enterprises opened factories and migrants from across China soon flooded in to work. The seeds of China's modern-day industrial revolution were planted in Shenzhen. Leisure is front and centre in many of

the new developments. After such huge growth they now realized they had to improve it by focusing more on quality of life. With little money but lots of creative freedom, the architects focused most of their energy on the public spaces, replacing concrete with brick, planting trees and building steel canopies to provide shelter and a coherent visual identity. Each project makes an effort to break up their structures into different volumes with plenty of public space in between. Reinsch says it's a way to avoid creating yet another one of the overwhelming **mega structures** that are so common in Shenzhen. "For us, as architects, it's not just about space, but about creating an environment for social interaction," says Reinsch. "The scale in China can be a problem, because you don't have human-scaled spaces. The challenge is to create spaces that make you feel comfortable, not lost."

Some Examples Of Existing Leisure Parks In Nigeria
1. Transworld Amusement Park, Bodija, Ibadan, Nigeria
The facility is built on an old airport, a 27 hectare of land of which, only a third has so far been developed. The park is easily accessible by road from all parts of the city

Figure   Amusement Ride: Chair-O- Plane at Transworld

Figure 2   Amusement Ride: Dragon Mini- Roller Coaster

2. Pleasure Park, Port-Harcourt

The Port Harcourt Pleasure Park, is a public recreation park in Rumuola, Port Harcourt, and Rivers State, Nigeria. It is located along Aba road, near second Amphibious Brigade barracks, also known as Bori Camp Rumuola town on an expansive open land.

Water Step of Pleasure Park

3. Tinapa Business And Leisure Resort Center.

Tinapa is a business and leisure resort just at the north of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. It is associated with the Calabar free trade zone. Tinapa was initiated by the Governor Donald Duke, so as to boost business and tourism in the, and also generate revenue in the State. The cost of the project was over $ 350 million was spent for the initial development. The first phase of Tinapa Business Resort and free zone, the project was commissioned on 2th April, 2007. February 2008 a report by *This Day* newspaper said the Federal Government has not yet approach the operating procedures and guideline. A CNN reporter in 2010 showed, that the complex was still largely empty, while interest payments on the construction cost of the complex were rising. Mr. Liyel Imoke told CNN reporter that the state government was not looking for private sector investor who could run the projects.

4. Wonderland Amusement Park & Resort

Wonderland Amusement Park & Resort is a world class recreation centre, situated opposite the National Stadium Abuja. It offers games and rides for various age categories, a leisure garden for relaxing, several restaurants and shops.

5. Obudu Cattle Ranch, Calabar

Obudu Ranch Resort is a water park with water slide and a swimming pool, a golf course, night-time bonfires and horseback riding. Enables bonding with families and nature as you hike through forests and mountains while watching birds. .

The Benefits of Leisure

Physical Benefits

- Improves posture, flexibility, muscular endurance, strength and balance.

- Stimulates circulation.

- Creates muscle tone.

- Rehabilitates under-used or healing muscles (aquatic therapy).

- Improves one's ability to control and maintain a healthy weight.

- Helps to combat the aging process.

- Great cardiovascular workout (swimming has a calorie-burning potential of 350-420   calories per hour).

- Uses almost all the major muscle groups, and places a vigorous demand on your heart and lungs. (Okebioru T. 1980)

Social Benefits

- Lots of laughs and fun while getting a great workout.

- Establishes good friendships.

- Enjoyable even when working hard.

Psychological Benefits

- Encourages a positive attitude, since one notices oneself feeling so good after workouts.

- Heightened sense of well-being.

- Increased energy level.

- Stress reducer.

- Soothes the mind and body.

Economical Benefits

- Revenue generation.

- Revive local economy.

- Tourism booster.

- Boost property values.

- Attracts businesses and their employees.

- Brings families together

The Need for Sustainability in Leisure and Entertainment Park

According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), Sustainable development is development which "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs."

The definition is based on two concepts:

The concept of needs, comprising of the conditions for maintaining an acceptable life standard for all people, while the concept of limits of the capacity of the environment to fulfill the needs of the present and the future, determined by the state of technology and social organization.

A practical approach is the UK Government's strategy which is centered on ensuring "A Better Quality of Life" for everyone, now and for future generations to come. It has four key

objectives:-
• Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment;
• Effective protection of the environment;
• Prudent use of natural resources;
• Social progress, which recognizes the needs of everyone.

The aim of sustainable architecture is to make use of natural resources in a manner that does not eliminate, degrade or diminish their usefulness during the design, pre-construction, construction and post construction stages of a building. It aims at achieving this with minimum cost while also positively influencing its immediate environment and community through improving the occupants' health, education and promoting social integration. It can be broken down into three categories, environmental, social and economic sustainability. Sustainable design is the thoughtful integration of architecture with electrical, mechanical, and structural engineering. In addition to concern for the traditional aesthetics of massing, proportion, scale, texture, shadow, and light, the facility design team needs to be concerned with long term costs: environmental, economic, and human.

Statement of the Problem
This research work aim to address the necessity of leisure and entertainment park as a means of development in the urban communities, with the introduction of up-to-date technology and facilities which encourage activities for all age groups, giving people somewhere to go to meet and make friends and developing community

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The overall strategy employed for this research involved analysis and observation of specific environments both foreign and local with direct reference to their respective responses to leisure, entertainment, recreation park development and its associated affecting factors, influences and possible outcomes. The deductive method of research involved in the collection of data from both primary and secondary sources. Questionnaire were sent out by the members of the Nigerian urban Development to 800 people randomly selected from 10 states out of the 36 states in Nigeria including the federal capital territory(FCT). SPSS PC + Ver14 was used to compute the frequency and percentage on each question. The result of the inquiry is represented below in bar charts.

Table: Demographic profile of respondents

Demography profile	Attribute items	Percentge (%)
Gender	Male	35.2
	Female	64.8
Income	< #100,000/month	52.1
	#100,000 #500,000/month	34.6
	> #500,000/month	13.2
Married status	Married	48.2
	Single	51.8
Group of leisure	Alone	1.2
	Families	45.8
	Friends	35.5

	Friends and familie	17.5
Length of leisur	Less than 1 hour	10.5
	1-2 hours	69.3
	3-4 hours	18.4
	More than 5 hours	1.8

Question items in detail by subject for reliability analysis applicable to subject survey on parks

1. How frequently do you visit parks?
2. What is the main purpose of using parks?
3. What type of parks do you frequently visit?
4. Why do you visit parks often?
5. What are the problems of parks in downtown?
6. If various parks are created for citizens, what kind of park would it be?
7. What is the most needed facility in neighborhood parks? 8. What is the best way to expand leisure parks?
9. If you participate in the expansion project of parks and green spaces, in what way would you join?
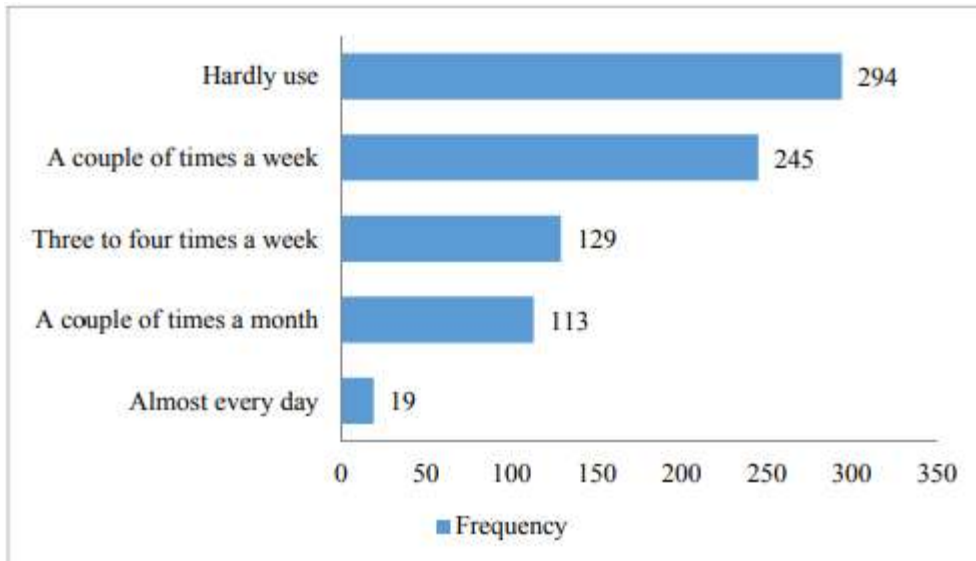10. how does leisure parks improve urban development?

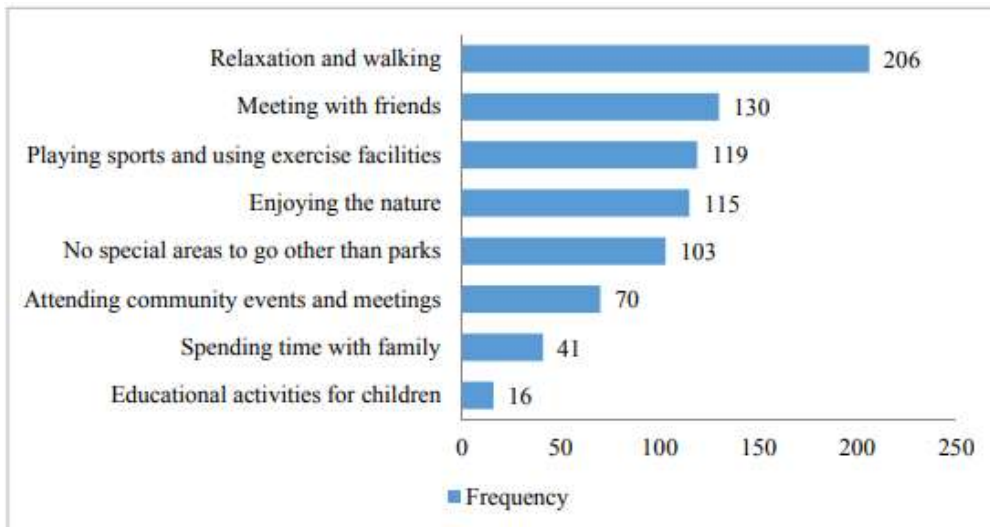Fig: frequency of leisure park visit
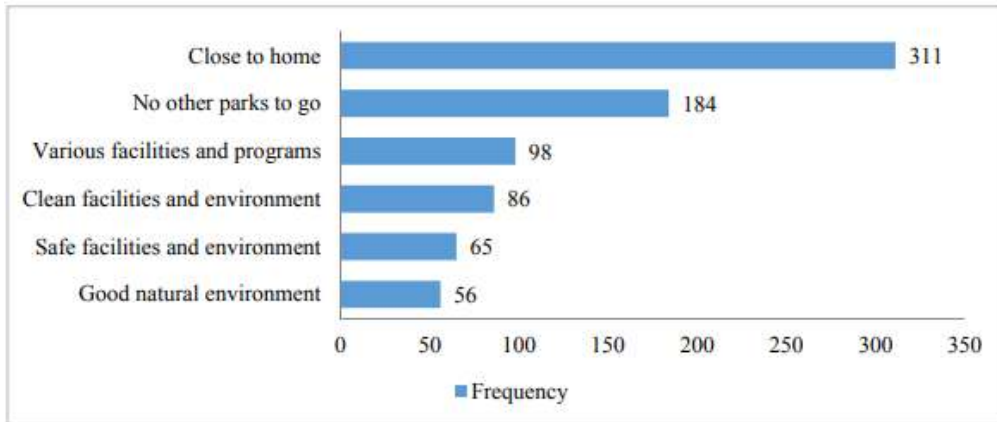

Fig: Main purpose of park visit.

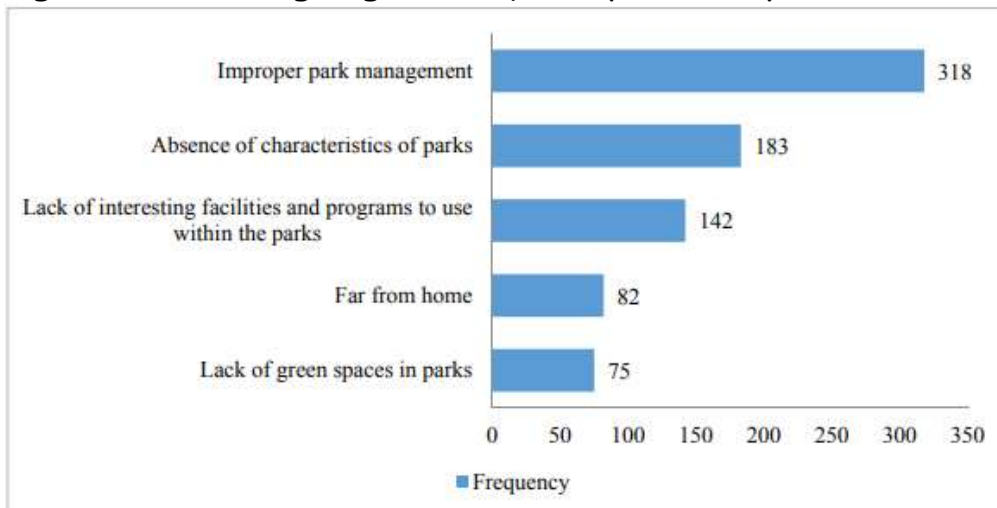Fig: Reasons for going to frequently visited parks.
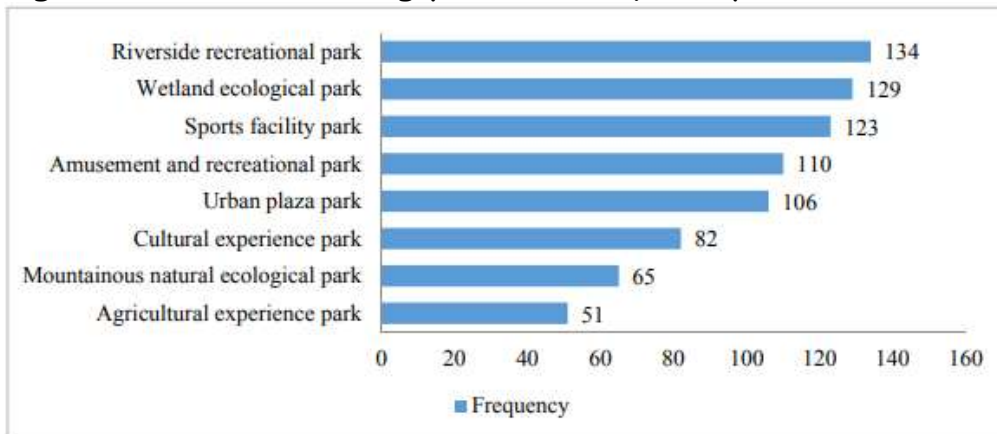

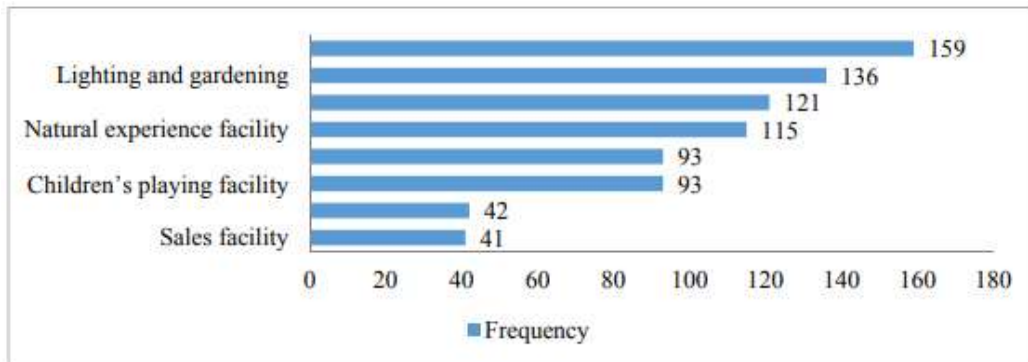Fig: Reasons for visiting parks infrequently.

Fig: Type of urban parks desired by respondents.

DISCUSSION

This study identified the citizens' social demands for and attitudes towards leisure parks in order to provide relevant information for setting the future strategies of urban development to improve quality of life. The study results are as follows.

First, more than a third of the respondents frequently visited pocket parks around home and the most common reason (37.7%) for going to the frequently visited parks was "close to home". These results indicated that citizens are more likely to visit pocket parks with easier access from their home. Providing parks for citizens is increasingly challenged by the limited amount of available park space in urban areas where land is very expensive. Pocket parks are the only option for creating new public spaces in cities in this urban condition. Although pocket parks might be too small for physical activities, they meet a variety of social needs and functions, including small event space, children's playground, and spaces for relaxing. To improve quality of life in cities, local park agencies should find vacant building lots, small and irregular pieces of land, unused areas, abandoned spaces, and rooftops for conversion into pocket parks.

Second, the study indicated that the most common purpose (25.8%) of visiting leisure parks was fun, relaxation and walking. This result demonstrates some difference in citizens' attitudes towards urban parks and green spaces between Nigeria and other countries. For example, the main reasons for visiting urban green space in the UK are enjoying the environment, social activities, walking activities, passive and active enjoyment (including dog walking), and attending events. Dunnett, et al. (2002). In the USA, Americans use the parks for stationary activities, sports activities, social and relaxing benefits, walking and jogging. Loukaitou-Sideris, A. (1995), Hutchinson, R. (1987). Walking, relaxing, children, and sports activities are the main reasons in using urban parks and green spaces in Budapest. Nagy, K. (1996). To experience greenery, nature, peace and quiet, and to participate in stationary activities are the main reasons in Denmark. Holm, S. (2000). Unlike other countries in the world, the citizens of Nigeria wanted to use the leisure parks for multiple purposes including active and passive outdoor activities such as relaxation, fun, walking, exercise and socializing.

Third, the types of leisure parks desired are relaxation parks close to natural rivers, recreation parks close to residential areas and experience parks, which suggest the necessity of creating a grand green park that may satisfy the various demands of citizens. It is very difficult to create various park types to meet the needs of citizens in small and medium cities due to financial constraints. Most of the urban parks and green spaces were mainly located in new housing development sites in Nigeria. To solve the shortage of leisure and entertainment parks, caused by the imbalanced

arrangement of urban parks, feasible target areas need to be selected to expand leisure parks through systematic and prioritized analysis. The conversion of linear shaped, unused lands of roadside, riversides and railway areas into green spaces is also expected to provide pleasant urban spaces for citizens and improve quality of life Lee & Kim, (2011). For creating large areas of parks, large-scale sites should be used, such as relocated factories or facilities. In addition, the creation of grand parks in the different states by the federal government and its management by relevant state and local governments is the best method for meeting a variety of citizen demands.

Fourth, this study indicated that citizens want to participate in the expansion projects of parks and green areas through non-profit civic organizations or volunteer activities. While leisure parks have been entirely created and managed by the government so far, an increasing incidence of autonomous participation of independent organizations or citizens in creating and managing leisure parks can be expected. Methods involving civil participation in parks and green spaces started to be proposed in the late 1990s and specific activities were undertaken in the early 2000s. Various programs have been developed and a variety of non-profit independent organizations have been established to participate in the creation and management of parks and green spaces through domestic and international best case studies Chiesura, A. (2004), Kang, S.J. (2011), Shimomura et al, (2001). For effective and continuous creation and management of leisure parks via the participation of many such non-profit organizations, the awareness of policy makers on leisure parks needs to be changed and legal and institutional assistance is required. The demands of the citizens to participate

in expanding parks and green spaces suggest that urban parks and green spaces are not just a physical environment to increase people's quality of life but also an avenue to make a huge contribution to improving people's psychological lifestyle and sense of citizenship which are two of the objectives in urban development.

CONCLUSION

This study have synthesized considerable factors inferred from the research for a successful urban development through the introduction of facilities that provide activities for everyone with no barriers to age or ability and where everyone can mix together in the pursuit of their chosen activity and providing fun and enjoyment in a safe environment. This is combined with accessibility, providing a variety of local low cost activities and opportunities for learning and development. The social aspect was also seen as a benefit of facilities of all types, giving people somewhere to go to meet and make friends. Developing community spirit was also seen as a benefit and that wasn't just about the local community. There is also an economic benefit coming from these facilities to both the local community and Moray as a whole.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Architecture requires that a proffered solution is subjected to practical test to ascertain its `certainty and to know as a matter of fact whether a proposal would stand the test of time I however recommend that some of the findings that have been made can be extracted and further implemented in development of the country.

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