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THE USE OF RECREATIONAL URBAN PARKS IN JOHANNESBURG: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF PLACE ATTACHMENT IN THOKOZA PARK IN MOROKA, SOWETO

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A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE.

NOVEMBER 2015, JOHANNESBURG

DECLARATION

I declare that this Research Report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Science at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

_____

(Signature of candidate)

_____day of_____20_____in_____

ABSTRACT

Urban recreational parks are an essential component of cities as they contribute to sustainable cities, people's lifestyle and well-being in general. It is therefore important to understand their level of use and how place attachment can be enhanced in order to increase utilization. This study evaluates the relationship between place attachment and level of use of Thokoza Park in Moroka, Soweto. Phenomenological research design was used where direct observation of use was complimented with interviews, survey questionnaires and photographs were used as tools to collect data. The study indicates that various aspects of Thokoza Park contribute to increased level of use and increased level of place attachment. These include the amenities provided for users, the level of safety, maintenance and accessibility. The key finding is that there is a circular relationship between level of use and place attachment. Key recommendation is that it is important to understand the social dynamics of the adjoining communities as this would also influence the use or non-use of urban recreational parks.

DEDICATION

To my mom, my brother, niece Thembelihle and the rest of my family

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This MSc has been made possible by so many people and I am truly grateful for the assistance and constant support that I received from everyone.

- Firstly, thank you to the Might God for the strength He gave me every day to achieve this degree.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYM

CABE	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
JCPZ	Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo
JMOSS	Johannesburg Metropolitan Open Space System
SA	South Africa
SAPA	South African Police Service

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and motivation for the study

Globally, there have been high rates of urbanisation in search of better opportunities in diverse socio-economic needs such as education, employment, health and other basic services (Haq, 2011). This rapid urbanization has resulted in escalation of negative impacts on urban environments and has put natural systems under pressure due to resulting production and consumption lifestyle (De Ridder *et al.*, 2004; Haq, 2011; Lafortezza *et al.*, 2009). The problem with more people moving to urban areas is that the competition between the natural environment and people's needs is intensified within a limited geographic space as often delimited by city administrative boundaries (Sutton, 2008). Contemporary knowledge field quantifying socio-economic and environmental benefits in relation to natural resources within cities is termed as green infrastructure and services (CABE SPACE, 2005).

Literature on the benefits of open spaces for urban residents is immense and increasing. Such studies show that open spaces are an important part of the city as they offer social-cultural, economic and environmental benefits to people and cities (Haq, 2011; Konijnendijk *et al.*, 2013). The benefits include outdoor recreational services, clean air, enhancement of city image, improved mental and physical health, reduced noise levels, increased property value and moderation of urban microclimates (Chiesura, 2004; Sutton, 2008). Furthermore, open spaces provide urban residents with passive recreation spaces (Barbosa *et al.* 2007; Konijnendijk *et al.*, 2013). In her book. Pim (1971) shows the meaning of open spaces to mine towns in making them attractive and livable towns for the people. In the book, Pim brought to the attention of a much wider audience, an understanding of the role played by the landscape architect in planning and design and further emphasized the valuable role of the landscape architect by advocating the application of sound environmental planning principles.

According to De Ridder *et al.*, (2004), the valuing of urban environments has increased recently, especially with regard to the benefits (utility) of such environments to the residents. Increased attention has been invested in available open spaces in cities as they play an important role in improving people's quality of life thus making cities livable and sustainable (Chiesura, 2004; Konijnendijk *et al.*, 2013; Sutton, 2008). The Department for Planning (2010, pp.9) provides a

general definition of open spaces as "*publicly owned land that accommodates recreation facilities and provides spaces for recreational activities*." However, a different but more specific definition that gives distinction between different types of open spaces is provided by the Johannesburg Metropolitan Open Space System Report "*Any undeveloped vegetated land within and beyond the urban edge, belonging to any of the following six open space categories: ecological, social, institutional, heritage, agricultural and prospective (degraded land*)" (City of Johannesburg, and Strategic Environmental Focus, 2002, pp.6). This definition to describe open spaces in the City of Johannesburg. Hayward and Weitzer (1984, pp. 244) argue that open spaces were originally created to provide tranquility and outdoor leisure environments for urban residents. Godbey (2009) adds that designers of outdoor spaces were concerned about people's increased indoor lifestyle that minimised physical activity and undermined well-being. Urban parks were thus created to encourage urban residents to spend more time outdoors and encourage active lifestyles.

Hayward and Weitzer (1984, pp.257) and Chiesura (2004, pp.130), further mention that over the years open spaces have attracted a decreasing proportion of users even as urbanization intensifies. This decreased association with open spaces has been attributed to an increase in negative perceptions of these spaces which leads to detachment. Furthermore, studies have shown that some residents feel exposed and vulnerable to crime and human scrutiny in urban parks (Chiesura, 2004; Hayward and Weitzer, 1984). Additionally, people are changing their recreational needs and habits such that in most instances open spaces no longer cater to people' recreational needs (Hayward and Weitzer, 1984). Instead, those who can afford membership have shifted to indoor sports/activities such in membership-based gyms rather than open public parks.

The study focuses on urban recreation parks which serve as small scale open spaces situated close to where people live and work (Chiesura, 2004; De Ridder *et al*., 2004; Inglis *et al*., 2008). Urban recreational in the JMOSS report fall under social open spaces under the subcategory of recreational facilities (City of Johannesburg, and Strategic Environmental Focus, 2002). Konijnendijk *et al*. (2013, pp.2) defines urban parks as *"…delineated open space areas, mostly dominated by vegetation and water, and generally reserved for public use. Urban parks are*

mostly larger, but can also have the shape of smaller 'pockets parks'. Urban parks are usually locally defined (by authorities) as 'parks'".

1.2 Urban park design

According to Pasaogullari and Doratli (2004), basic principles of urban park design at the international level have been set to ensure that they provide urban residents with spaces that can meet their basic outdoor recreational needs. They further state that in order for urban residents to enjoy the urban park space, they need to be accessible. Accessibility has been defined as the physical reach to a space or place as well as socio-political right and freedom to use or inhabit that space (Lotfi and Koohsari, 2009; Pasaogullari and Doratli, 2004). Two criteria have been universally adopted to ensure accessibility and utilization of urban parks. These are urban park distance and the physical design elements (Pasaogullari and Doratli, 2004). An accessible urban park needs to be within a walkable distance in order for urban residents to be able to walk from their homes to the park as the primary mode of access. In Austin, USA the city has set the walkable distance to a quarter of a mile (City of Austin Urban Parks Workgroup, 2011). This distance encourages more urban residents to become increasingly physically active which improves people's health and additionally assist in fighting against obesity. According to Luymes and Tamminga (1995, pp. 399), urban parks should have several entrance points to avoid congestion which also reduces chances of users being targets of crime (Pasaogullari and Doratli, 2004). Furthermore, urban parks must accommodate different user access modes such as pedestrians, the handicapped and cyclists (Pasaogullari and Doratli, 2004). Additionally, parking should be provided for users who access urban parks by private cars (Ikram, 2013).

The visual quality of urban parks also needs to be desirable and attractive in order to increase usability of the park. The diversity of people making use of urban parks needs to be considered in the designing process. This spans from different cultural backgrounds, to gender and age groups. Hence the design of a park needs to respond to most of the users' needs. The physical layout of parks needs to meet basic standards. For example each urban park needs to have visible and clear signage and maps that will guide the urban park users (Ikram, 2013; Luymes and Tamminga, 1995). Luymes and Tamminga (1995, pp. 397), further clarify that the signage should cater to different languages and should be readable from 20m with children and people in wheelchairs also being able to read. As Luymes and Tamminga (1995) have highlighted, this will promote easy flow and circulation around the urban park for everyone. In addition, it is vital that

urban parks have sufficient lighting during the day and night especially if it is open for 24 hours. According to Ikram (2013), this provides urban park users a sense of safety and security. For users to further enjoy their visit urban parks should also include the additional facilities such as public toilets, seats, barbecue facilities, drinking fountains, taps, rubbish bins, walking paths and play furniture e.g. play equipment for children (Crawford *et al.*, 2008; Ikram, 2013). Most importantly, studies emphasize the importance of urban parks being more people centered, especially through increasing the diversity of activities provided for users.

To encourage a sense of place and ownership within urban parks, management and maintenance of the park is crucial. According to international recommendations, the most important aspect of accessibility and design includes the management of the site as this ensures constant use of urban parks and minimises crime and sense of disempowerment (Pasaogullari and Doratli, 2004). Several studies support the view that a well-managed urban park with a good design of facilities/features improves the quality of the park and its image thus enhancing utilization by people of diverse social and cultural groups. Consequently, this increases a sense of emotional attachment to the place and its outdoor recreational experience among the users.

1.3 Place attachment

With the diminishing amount of open spaces in urban areas, people are increasingly starting to appreciate open spaces (Scannell and Gifford, 2010; Sutton, 2008). Studies such as Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001) and Scannell and Gifford (2010) investigated on the bonds that people develop towards open spaces and how such bonds influence the usage of such spaces. The attachment that people develop is not limited to open spaces but also includes their homes, shopping areas or neighborhoods (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001, pp. 274). This emotional connection is termed as place attachment. Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001) define place attachment as the emotional link people have or develop over time towards a certain place. The emotion is formed when people spend valuable amounts of their time in a place and are involved in the physical activities provided for within the place (Inglis *et al*., 2008). Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001) further add that place attachment can entail a positive or a negative emotion depending on the interaction with the place. Positive place attachment influences people to be more and strongly drawn and protective towards the place (Inglis *et al.*, 2008; Ramkissoon *et al*., 2012).

Place attachment has been consistently used to study people's perceptions towards the environment and related "pro-environmental behaviour" (Ramkissoon *et al*., 2012; Scannell and Gifford, 2010). It can be influenced by different factors such as people's socio-economic characteristics, ecological features, people's life experiences, ethos, emotional factors and the attributes of the place (Inglis *et al*., 2008; Ramkissoon *et al.*, 2012). It is therefore argued that place attachment incorporates dimensions of people, process and place (Scannell and Gifford, 2010). Inglis *et al*., (2008) breaks down place attachment into two components which are place dependence and place identity. Place dependence refers to the physical/utilitarian attachment people have with a place while place identity refers to the emotional attachment that people develop towards a place (Inglis *et al*., 2008; Ramkissoon *et al*., 2012). Place attachment, and especially place dependence and place identity, can be used as a tool by researchers to assist urban park developers and managers in development and management of urban parks that cater to people's needs and increase park use and activity (Inglis *et al.*, 2008; Scannell and Gifford, 2010, pp. 1). It can also be used to study the levels of utilization of existing parks as demostrated in this study.

1.4 Case study: Thokoza Park in the City of Johannesburg

There are 22,278 hectares of open spaces managed by Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo (JCPZ). The open space constitutes 2,343 urban parks, 22 nature reserves and 15 bird sanctuaries (JCPZ, 2013b). According to Pim (1971) there were about 96 parks in the City of Johannesburg, indicating Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo has increased the number of parks for people to share. Some of the key challenges faced by JCPZ with the regards to open spaces include large numbers of urban residents sharing limited public open spaces in various areas especially close to and in the township. Therefore JCPZ has prioritised the need to create more urban parks in settlements where previously disadvantaged households were located (commonly referred to as townships). The organisation started a programme called "Xtreme Parks Makeover" in 2007 where previously neglected land in such settlements is renovated and turned into functional green urban parks for communities (JCPZ, 2013c). This is an annual event that takes place in different townships in the City of Johannesburg and the aim is to build an urban park in 24 hours (JCPZ, 2013c).

On the other hand, a number of urban parks in the city are underutilized and over time, they show signs of neglect and abuse, as maintenance gets neglected. In contrast Maitse Moloi a

Thokoza Park user (JCPZ, 2014b), observes that for Thokoza Park, it is "…*a buzz with a large number of magnificently vibrant youths who come from all over Soweto and beyond; one could swear that there's a huge event taking place. There's a convoy of vehicles that stretches along the length of the park up to the main road such that they even call it "Long Street" after the famous Long Street in Cape Town. Tshepo and his two friends have decided to open a convenience kiosk, which according to Tshepo, is doing better than his projections.*

Tshepo says that people come here to celebrate weddings, birthdays and just weekend chilling after a long week, most especially the two last weekends of the month. Tshepo says these people come here to socialise, and some even explore sports like skate boarding, and music and dance interests."



Figure 1.1: Residents of Soweto using urban parks in the City of Johannesburg townships (Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo, 2014b)

Thokoza Park is utilized by people of all ages, children, youth and adults. The park has a good variety of public amenities that provide children with play equipment thus allowing the children to be imaginative and explorative (see Chapter 3 for more detail on Thokoza Park; aerial context of the park in the greater Soweto precinct and Johannesburg). Young people and the elderly come to relax and enjoy the outdoor environment. There seems to be a strong sense of attachment observed between the users and the park as one observes the large number of users of the various facilities that cater for their needs. Furthermore, one experiences a sense of security and safety around the park. Overall, it was hypothesized that the park serves an important role in

providing a recreation place for the community of Moroka and possibly for Soweto residents in general.

1.5 Research methodology: a phenomenological approach

"The purpose of the phenomenological approach is to illuminate the specific, to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in a situation. In the human sphere this normally translates into gathering 'deep' information and perceptions through inductive, qualitative methods…. Phenomenology is concerned with the study of experience from the perspective of the individual, 'bracketing' taken-for-granted assumptions and usual ways of perceiving." (Lester, 1999, pp.1)

To understand how urban recreational parks are utilized in Soweto and the City of Johannesburg, the study prioritised the phenomenological research approach so as to explore and describe a clearer understanding of the relationship between place attachment and the level-of-use of urban parks. Phenomenological research methodology describes lived experience of a certain phenomenon (Lester, 1999). The experience is particular to a specific phenomenon and for this study; it is the lived experiences of Thokoza Park the phenomenon. In phenomenology, places have meaning to people. According to Creswell (2009, pp.13) for the researcher to understand lived experience, the study requires the use of multiple data sources from both primary (e.g. interviews and observations) and secondary (e.g. academic articles and photographs) sources to be able to fully comprehend the phenomenon. This is essential for this study, as the study aims to understand current lived experiences and perspectives of people who use Thokoza Park. The study further wants to contribute to enhancement of lived experience of people who use urban recreational parks in Johannesburg through enhancement of place attachment in other parks. Thus, to understand the phenomena the study used secondary sources, interviews, questionnaires, maps, photographs and direct observation to collect data needed for the study in various settings in Thokoza Park.

1.6 Research purpose

The phenomenon of urban parks and place attachment has been extensively researched and well understood especially with regards to the benefits offered by urban parks to urban residents, as well as how urban parks contribute to sustainable cities. However, this concept has not been well studied in the context of South African urban parks.

Given the literature available a substantive portion of studies appraises the degree of place attachment of urban residents towards urban parks based on place dependence and place identity. Following on that approach this study applies place attachment framework to Thokoza Park as a case study towards an understanding the parks unique level of user-attraction. The study also aims at evolving key principles for Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo on how to improve user-attraction in other urban parks so as attract new urban park users in other parks where usage is weak. Furthermore, the study could assist Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo as well as policy makers to raise awareness of the key benefits of urban parks as essential contributors to sustainable cities, people's lifestyle and well-being in general.

1.6.1 Aim and Objectives of the research

1.6.1.1 Aim of the research

The overall aim of the study is to evolve a clearer understanding of the relationship between place attachment and the level-of-use of urban parks in Johannesburg in order to assess the potential of optimising levels-of-use of the city's urban parks through enhancement of place attachment interventions.

1.6.1.2 Objectives of the research

In order to guide the study the following research objectives were identified to allow investigation on the link between place attachment and level-of-use of urban parks:

1. To assess Thokoza Park as an urban park in its both physical attributes and phenomenological dimensions of its users.
2. To assess the nature of use of Thokoza Park by residents of Soweto and the City of Johannesburg.
3. To assess place dependency and place identity in Thokoza Park.
4. To assess the inter-relationship between level-of-use and place attachment at Thokoza Park.
5. To draw conclusions and recommendations on principles that can be extracted for application to similar urban parks in Johannesburg.

1.6.2 Research questions

In order achieve the objectives of this study; the following research questions have been applied to guide the study:

1. What is Thokoza Park as an urban park in both its physical and psychological dimensions of its users?
2. How is Thokoza Park used by residents of Soweto and the City of Johannesburg?
3. What levels of place dependency and place identity do Thokoza Park users demonstrate towards the park?
4. How does use-intensity relate to place attachment among Thokoza Park users?
5. What principles can be extracted for application to similar parks in Johannesburg?

In answering the research question, this study aims to contribute towards assisting Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo on improving urban parks to meet people's outdoor recreation demands and desires as a key component of a sustainable City of Johannesburg.

1.6.3 Working hypothesis

A better understanding of the unique level of user-attraction in Thokoza Park could yield significant principles and guidelines on improving user-attraction in other parks of the City of Johannesburg.

1.7. Definition of terms

Definitions of the key terms applied in the study are as follows:

Urban recreational park is land that has been earmarked for public use to facilitate outdoor recreational activities (Henderson, 2013; Solecki and Welch, 1995). The activities can be passive or active while catering to a broad range of user groups. Urban recreational parks provide its users with multiple benefits which fall into socioeconomic, environmental and psychological categories (Solecki and Welch, 1995). The size of an urban recreational park varies depending on the purpose of the park and such parks can be distinguished by the features/amenities (natural and manmade) they provide to the users. Throughout the study the general term 'park' will be used interchangeably with the more specific urban recreational park for purposes of brevity in expression.

Active recreational activities involve activities that are often done in teams and would require structured facilities such as sports fields to enable the activity to take place. Individual activities such as leisure walk and physical exercise similar to those in gyms would also fall under this term.

Passive recreational activities refer to activities that can either be done individually or in groups. These activities do not require structured facilities outdoor activities such as resting, seating, napping or even chatting would fall under this term.

Aesthetically appealing refers to an attractive appearance.

Place attachment describes the bond that people have with places. The bond can either be positive or negative.

Place identity refers to the emotional attachment that people develop towards a place.

Place dependency refers to the physical/utilitarian attachment people have with a place.

Phenomenology is the study of people's experiences at first person point of view.

1.8. Delimitations to the research

The focus and scope of the study will be limited to exploring urban recreational parks and the role of place attachment in enhancing their use intensity. This study will focus on the multiple recreational activities provided by urban parks and further explore the significance of urban design as a key component of urban recreational parks not only for design purposes but with the specific goal of attracting users through enhancing their place attachment. Thokoza Park will be used as the case study to understand how residents of Johannesburg use urban recreational parks. Place attachment theory will be used to investigate its adequacy in guiding understanding on how residents of Johannesburg use urban recreational parks based on the understanding and insights from Thokoza Park as a case study. Although it would have been ideal to include a counter case study where level of utilization is weak, the complexity involved made it impossible to accommodate that within the scope of the study. For example this would have required interviews with households in adjoining properties and precincts to understand why they experience negative place attachment (place detachment).

1.9. Organisation of the study report

The study is structured into five chapters as follows. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the research background. It outlines research aims and objectives as well as the guiding research questions and the related working hypothesis. The chapter also motivates on the delimitation of the study. Chapter 2 appraises key theoretical concepts of the study based on literature appraisal. Chapter 3 gives overview on the research methodology used to conduct the study. Chapter 4

provides the data analysis on data captured under various tools. Chapter 5 discusses the results from the analysis and draws conclusions through cross-referencing to the initial theoretical framework. Emerging principles and guidelines are then summarized under the recommendations section of chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE APPRAISAL BASED ON KEY THEMES OF THE STUDY

2.1. Literature appraisal

This chapter provides literature appraisal under the key themes of the study. It substantiates on the key themes based on previous studies which were highlighted in chapter 1.

2.1.1 The role of urban parks for city residents

Rabare *et al.* (2009) conducted a research in Kenya to examine the role of urban parks in socio-economic development as well the factors that influence the use and accessibility of urban parks in Kenya. The research consisted of an evaluation of the benefits that urban parks provide to urban park users and city residents. Using descriptive, cross-section research design, the study covered issues such accessibility to the urban parks, benefits gained by urban park users as well as how the parks were used. Finally, the study concluded the level of use of urban parks was influenced by maintenance of the park, accessibility as well as the number of facilities provided in the park.

The key message from the study was to point out that urban parks have various benefits for urban park users and city residents. These include social, economic, environmental and psychological benefits. However, the research highlighted that there were factors that could prohibit people from enjoying these benefits. Rabare *et al.* (2009, pp. 35) therefore recommended more involvement of different parties to increase the level of use of urban parks by providing more and better facilities as well as better maintenance for urban parks that are under used.

One of the research tools used by Rabare *et al.* (2009) was observation to investigate how the urban parks were used daily. This research tool is important in providing direct understanding for the researcher in the park on how the urban parks are utilized. This research tool (direct observation) was also adopted for use in this study. The study investigated the use of urban parks in Kenya by using seven urban parks as case studies. Unlike other research papers that usually use responses from urban park users, the study used responses from households around the parks and observations inside the parks in periods of use. The study is particularly important in investigating factors that influence the underutilization of urban parks by city residents.

2.1.2 The concept of place attachment

Najafi and Kamal (2012) conducted research on studies and publications about place attachment. The paper firstly described the meaning of place attachment based on different authors that have written about the concept. Based on people- place relationships, the study appraised factors that would influence place attachment. The research further examined place dependency and place identity as key dimensions of place attachment. Finally, the study appraised methods that can be used to study place attachment.

The main conclusion from the study is that people form bonds with places through direct contact with the place. This bond can either be functional or emotional. People form bonds with the place because the place is able to satisfy their goals or has a symbolic meaning. The study points out that people with strong place attachment tend to relate better and thus more likely to preserve the place that has meaning to them.

The study provides important insight into the approaches towards research on place attachment. The two key methods appraised are phenomenological and positivistic method. Phenomenological approach is a qualitative methodology that focuses on describing people's experiences and perceptions. The positivistic method is a quantitative approach which could be based on a set of questions to investigate place attachment. In this study the two methodologies have been adapted towards the understanding of place attachment in urban recreational parks for Johannesburg. The phenomenological approach is the key methodology for the study complemented with research tools from the positivistic approach such as semi-structured interviews.

2.1.3 Phenomenology research methodology

A study conducted by Seamon (1982) appraised research on phenomenology with the key focus on how phenomenology has contributed to environmental psychology. Phenomenology is based on first person experiences. The study compared traditional scientific methodology with phenomenological approach. The scientific methodology referred to as positivist methodology is based on objectivity where the researcher aiming to measure and prove the findings to an argument using mathematical/statistical procedure. In contrast phenomenology is based on describing people-environment relationships by investigating people's experiences and meanings in a qualitative way. Positivistic research encourages separation between researcher and the

subject whereas phenomenological research values the relationship the researcher has with the subject/phenomenon and their perspective. Thus the main difference between positivistic and phenomenological research is that positivistic research is about being able to explain the phenomenon while phenomenological research is about understanding how the phenomenon is experienced and understood subjectively. The research then outlines phenomenology of human experience, geographical world and person-environment relationship.

Thus the main insight from Seamon (1982) is that phenomenology is important in researching environmental psychology. As it investigates people-environment interactions and understands that people are part of the world and have formed meaning and symbolic interaction with the world. This highlights the importance of understanding situations in a personal perspective in order to examine the relation people have with their environment. Phenomenological research is therefore an essential approach where the researcher wants to understand uniqueness and direct experiences of people as thy sense and act on their environments.

2.2. The key theoretical themes

The key themes applied in the study have been identified through the review of related studies on urban parks and place attachment. The themes assist in appraising existing understanding of the relationship between place attachment and the level-of-use of urban recreational parks. The themes include the benefits gained when using urban recreational parks, urban park design and the influence of place attachment on the level of use of urban recreational parks. This will be discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

2.2.1 Conceptual Framework

The key concepts for this research study are shown in Figure 2.1. The diagram illustrates the relationship and influence of place attachment on the use of recreational urban parks. The framework outlines key concepts that will assist in understanding the relationship between the level of use of urban recreational parks and place attachment of park users and urban residents in general. These are place identity, place dependence as well as design of the park and the facilities provided. The arrows represent interactions between the key concepts. It shows that urban park design enhances qualities of urban parks while qualities of urban parks, phenomenology as well as place identity and place dependence contribute in enhancing place attachment. The conceptual

framework diagram further shows that there is interrelationship between place attachment and use of urban recreational parks.

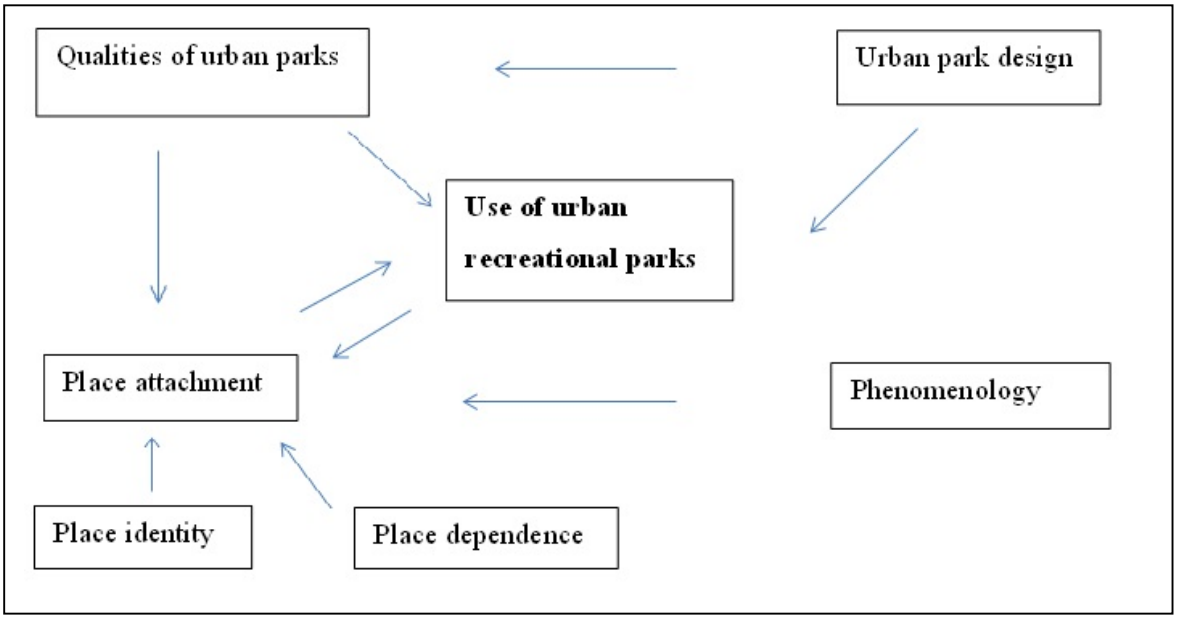

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework of the study indicating the key concepts that influence the use of urban recreational park

2.2.2 Urban parks

Urban recreational parks form part of the open space system that are freely provided by the local government as a mandatory public facility for urban residents (Sanesi and Chiarello, 2006). They constitute an integral part for modern urban active and passive recreation. Although urban recreational parks have always been a part of cities they now compete with other places of leisure such as malls and playgrounds.

Figure 2.2 demonstrates the elements that assist in the level of use of urban parks. They include demographic characteristics of users, economic, social, environmental and physical factors.

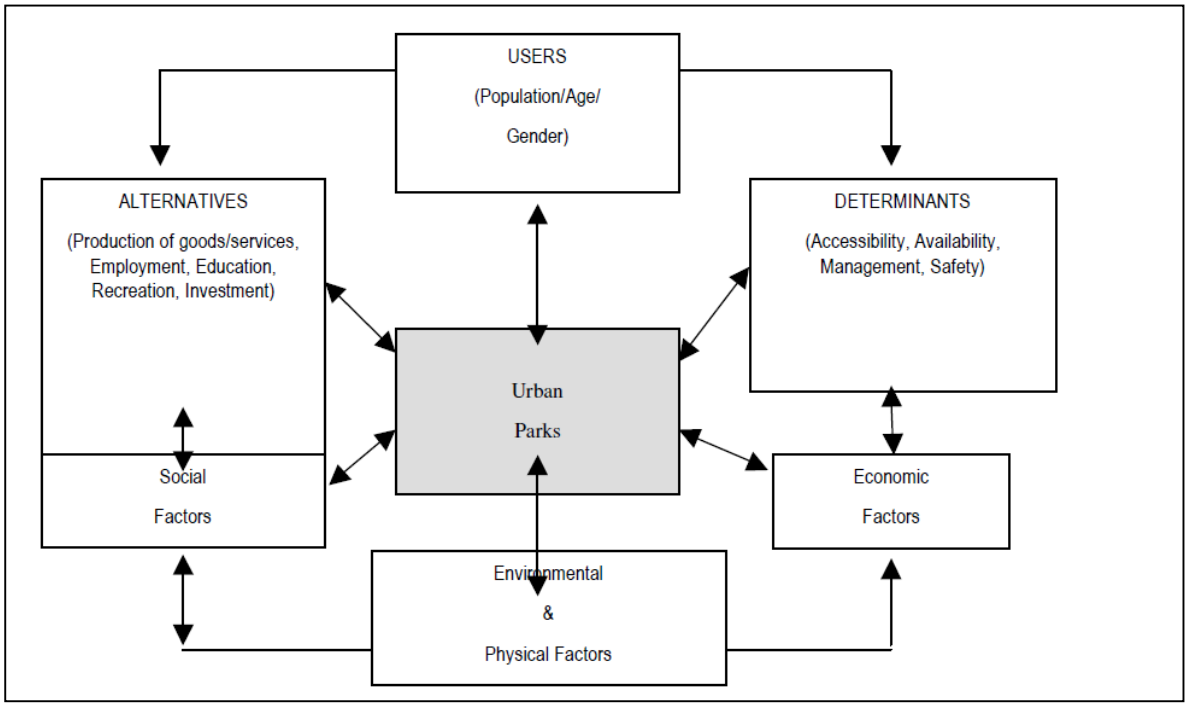

Figure 2.2: Conceptual model of urban recreation park (Rabare *et al*., 2009, pp. 24)

Urban parks provide open spaces that are easily accessible and in close proximity to places of work residents and residential environments. However, studies indicate that facilities and services provided by a park, influence the number and types of users it is likely to attract or repel (Ozguner, 2011). For example, an urban park with more sports facilities attracts a younger generation compared to an urban park with more playgrounds for children which attracts children and as a result attract their parents or guardians. Some studies have argued that demographic characteristics such as gender, educational level and social-economic status also influence the utilization of urban parks (Kemperman and Timmermans, 2011; Figure 2.2). Tisma and Jókövi (2007) notes that people who have families tend to use parks differently from people who do not have children and are younger, for example young people often visit urban parks to meet friends and family while people with children utilize urban parks to play with their children.

As valuable assets of any neighborhood, neighborhood parks influence residents' experiences and memories of their interaction in the park. Such experiences and memories can be positive or negative. Chiesura (2004) argues that when residents have positive feelings towards a place they develop a strong sense of place and ownership towards the place. This is a distinctive feature that

allows people to identify with the place and make it part of their life. Such a park becomes a central point of the community which intensifies its use and contribution to the history and heritage of the area. Furthermore, this encourages the park users to be protective of the area and their neighborhood in general.

Open spaces such as urban parks provide city residents with outdoor areas that allow for personal space to relax and to spend time alone, with family or a partner (Loures and Costa, 2012). Others use the space to spend time with their children on the playgrounds, while others bring family and friends to deepen their relationships. Apart from spending time with familiar faces, parks allow for urban park users to engage with other users (Chiesura, 2004). This helps to build societies as parks make available opportunities for park users to have dialogues with each other and also create or enhance social networks. Community activities and engagements are sometimes held in parks because they provide areas that are open and easily accessible to everyone. This indirectly improves social skills of the urban park users and they act as areas that bridge the gap between different cultures, religions, gender, ages and ethnicities simultaneously (Chiesura, 2004). Research shows that when people form local networks at neighborhood and city-scale, more people are likely to feel safe and this further improves attractiveness of the urban park (Chiesura, 2004).

Urban parks have also been found to play a critical role in increasing physical activity and improving well-being among urban residents (Lafortezza *et al.,* 2009; Figure, 2.3). More recently, an increasing number of countries have noted an increase in obesity among urban residents due to their highly sedentary lifestyle coupled with excessive, unhealthy food consumption as well as dependence on motorized transportation (Cadwell, 2010; Doyle *et al.*, 2006). Doyle *et al.* (2006) further supports this statement and indicates that urban sprawl can exacerbate a sedentary lifestyle. The study shows that urban residents who make use of spaces that encourage outdoor walking such as in urban parks are more likely to be physically active than non-users. An active lifestyle is important as it reduces the chances of heart related diseases and diabetes and thus contributes to better health (Figure 2.3). As a consequence, urban park users tend to be more physically active through using the facilities, particularly if the urban park is in close proximity and easily accessible to the users (Henderson, 2014).

Other studies show that urban parks have psychological health benefits for both users and non-users. Visual sensing of natural areas reduces stress, aids in more rapid recovery from illnesses

and increases spiritual well-being for both users of urban parks and those who have visual link with such amenities from their homes or workplace (Lafortezza *et al.*, 2009). Sanesi and Chiarello (2006) refer to this as "green therapy".

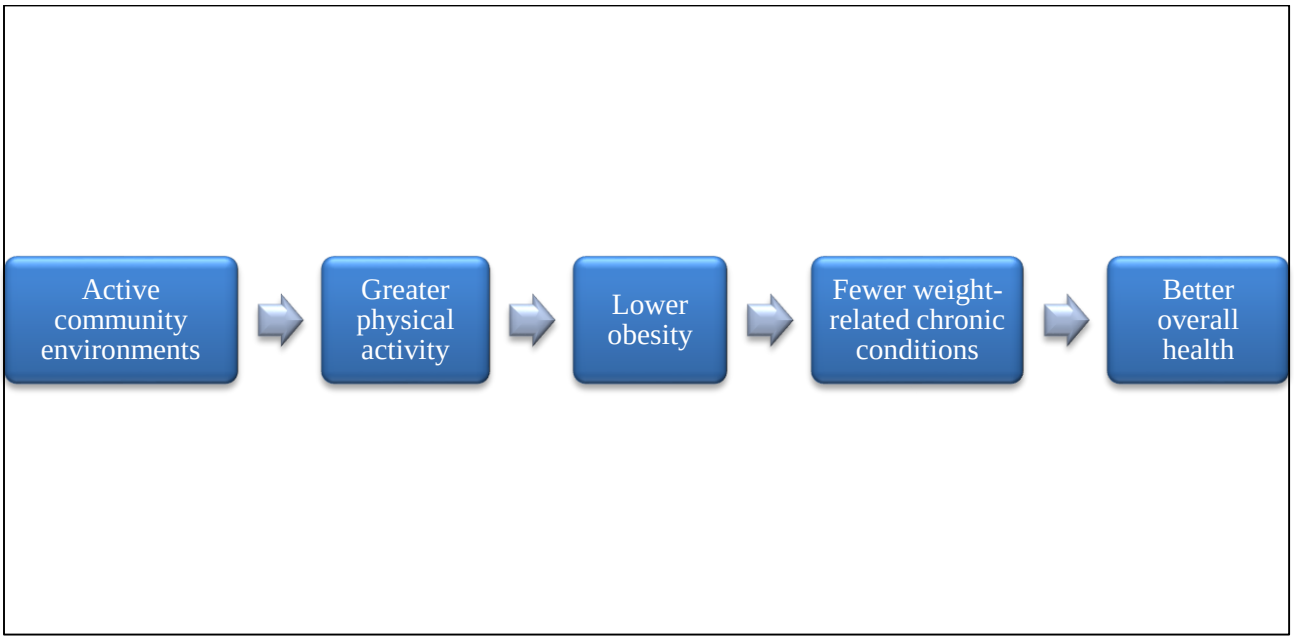

Figure 2.3: The hypothesized active community environments model (Doyle et al., 2006, pp.20)

More recently, urban planners have introduced outdoor green gyms to encourage more people to exercise and thus attract new people to make use of urban parks. Caldwell (2010, pp. 29) defines outdoor green gyms as "*An outdoor gym is made up of components which resemble gym equipment, generally within the public domain. It is made up of components which resemble gym equipment similar to that found in an indoor gym. Similar to sports fields, children's play equipment, pathways, cycleways, landscaping and community facilities, outdoor gyms are typically provided as a facility within a local park.*"

This definition, however fails to highlight that outdoor gyms are able to tolerate outdoor weather conditions and are freely accessible to the public. These amenities have been introduced recently to encourage more people to become physically active while enjoying the pleasant surroundings. In the long term, outdoor green gyms are aimed at enhancing the lifestyles of urban residents by providing them with a healthy environment. According to Doyle *et al*. (2006) there is a positive relationship between level of physical activity and people's health (Figure 2.3). However, it is to be noted that there are some challenges for urban planners and urban park managers to address in order to achieve and sustain high levels of use. These include safety, stigma against women or

the elderly, distance as a factor in access and regular maintenance (and associated costs) of the facilities (Doyle *et al.*, 2006).

For children, the use of outdoor areas encourages more creativity and faster learning (Weber and Anderson, 2010). Outdoor areas such as urban parks provide children with outdoor recreational spaces which they can use to explore and learn about nature. Play equipment must allow children to have both self-directed and directed play. This serves as positive stimuli for children and is fundamental to their growth as it enhances individual thinking. These areas also allow children to learn social skills as playgrounds provided by urban parks encourage children to socialize with other children in the park.

Louv (2008) discusses the importance of children interacting with nature for their mental, emotional and physical growth and health. He states that there are consequences for children not being in nature and calls this "nature-deficit disorder" that he describes as *"…the human costs of alienation from nature, among them: diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, and higher rates of physical and emotional illness. The disorder can be detected in individuals, families, and communities.*" (Louv, 2008, pp.36).

The important point to note about this definition is that it describes symptoms that people experience due to the lack of contact with nature. Factors that Louv (2008) has identified as key contributors in nature-deficit disorder include the decreased amount of time spent outdoors and excessive time spent indoors doing sedentary activities such as watching TV and playing computer games. Kemperman and Timmermans (2011) further add that nature-deficit disorder is exacerbated by discouragement from a parent to use outdoor spaces as well as lack of awareness about the benefits of outdoor recreational spaces. Both Louv (2008) and Kemperman and Timmermans (2011) agree that to treat nature-deficit disorder children, they should spend more time outdoors thus increasing their interaction with nature through activities such as bike riding, walking and climbing trees in order to enhance an active lifestyle. Both studies argue that such a lifestyle is most likely to increase the child's attention span with a high chance of being continued into adulthood.

Research recommends that to promote urban park use and conservation, urban parks should be used as facilities by institutions of learning and community members (Louv, 2008). Urban parks should be used as opportunities for environmental education and for research purposes, particularly for the higher learning institutions (Loures and Costa, 2012). Outdoor education

plays a significant role in environmental campaign awareness and thus reinforces the significance and benefits of outdoor recreational activities. Pim (1971) goes further to suggest that urban parks should form part of the community that residents do not feel the need to travel long distances to escape and find spaces that are attractive and they can fulfill their recreational needs.

For non-users of urban park users, even though non-users do not directly benefit from multiple benefits they still enjoy indirect benefits. Areas close to green spaces tend to be more expensive and preferred by urban residents and tourists compared to dusty and grey areas. For instance, neighborhoods with safe and well maintained urban parks tend to be more desirable and attractive thus enhancing economic value of the property increased which further contributes to a positive property tax (Loures and Costa, 2012; Figure, 2.2). This is because urban parks improve the image of the neighborhood, allowing neighborhoods to appear serene and calm. More economic benefits that are not evident to urban residents from utilizing urban parks include reduced healthcare expenditure for improved mental health as well as increased work productivity (Haq, 2011).

Although small in size compared to national parks, urban recreational parks provide urban residents with ecosystem services such as habitats for wildlife and plants, air purification, biodiversity conservation and noise mitigation (Loures and Costa, 2012). In places like South Africa, where summers are hot, and people can possibly suffer from heat stress urban parks act as areas that allow urban residents to spend time outdoors in a more comfortable and cool setting under shade (Lafortezza *et al.*, 2009; Haq 2011). According to Lafortezza *et al.* (2009) and Haq (2011), urban parks with plant life help to moderate microclimate as trees offer shaded areas, fresh air and cooling effects through evapotranspiration. This contributes towards mitigation of the 'urban heat island' effect of cities. As part of green spaces within urban areas, urban parks are often viewed as the "green lungs" of the city. Furthermore, plant life provided by green spaces such as urban parks mitigate air pollution and dust in the air by trapping pollutants (Haq, 2011; Louv, 2008; Chiesura, 2004). These ecosystem services from urban parks have been recognized and studied under the theme of green infrastructure of the city (Loures and Costa 2012).

2.2.2.1 Factors contributing to the disuse of urban parks

People's perceptions play a significant role in the utilization of urban parks. For instance, Erkip (1997) notes that when urban park users feel insecure or sense that their personal space is threatened they develop negative feelings towards an urban park and its facilities thus discouraging them from accessing and using the park. This makes such parks to be associated with negative emotions thus creating subconscious barriers. In addition physical distance was also one of the major reasons urban residents failed to access and utilize urban parks (Erkip, 1997). In contrast to older parks that were restricted and gated, modern parks are more open and easily accessible which is one way of increasing use by addressing security concerns. Another issue that discourages urban park users from utilizing urban parks is the lack of regular maintenance of an urban park and its facilities (Rabare *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, the types of facilities or services provided for urban park users may additionally discourage users especially if they do not accommodate the needs of the immediate community (Erkip, 1997). In a study conducted by Oguz (2000) in Ankara, participants of the study reported that they were discouraged from using urban parks because of the lack of facilities that accommodate disabled people. In another study conducted by Ozguner (2011) in Isparta, Turkey users were discouraged by unpleasant smells from barbeques as well as car parking problems. Although urban parks are created for leisure/recreational activities and include spaces where people can meet, inappropriate behaviour has also been noted as a reason why users might feel their values and norms are not adequately accommodated (Oguz, 2000 and Rabare *et al.*, 2009). This suggests that direct or indirect factors which influence the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction contribute to urban park users recommending or inviting family, friends and associates into using the park. This ultimately influences the level of use of such parks.

2.2.3 Urban park design

The benefits that urban residents gain from utilizing urban park facilities are dependent on the design of the park. According to Kemperman and Timmermans (2011) urban park design should consider physical and emotional accessibility as one of the critical characteristics of the park. Physical access includes users being able to reach the park either on foot or using private cars, buses and taxis. Barriers such as fencing around the park, unattractive facilities or the feeling of being insecure can compromise accessibility. Other factors that need to be considered in park design include park properties. Rabare *et al.* (2009) argues that the design, location and amenities played an essential role in attracting urban park users. Furthermore the study

emphasizes that urban parks must be appealing and must engender enjoyable experience and sustain positive emotions. The facilities must respond to the complexities of social, cultural and physical needs of people from different cultures, age and gender. Although planners and designers of urban parks are knowledgeable about design and the importance of such spaces, they do not always know or understand people's needs especially where such needs keep shifting. Residents should therefore be consulted during the design process of the urban parks. According to CABE SPACE (2005) such consultation enhances residents' sense of ownership as it will reflect their identity and valued culture and thus enhance the potential of utilization. However, this should not compromise on the overall principles of good park design and subsequent management.

Urban park facilities should therefore provide for both active and passive activities for the users of all groups (age, gender and ethnicity). Some of the common facilities that need to be considered are lighting, signage, facilities that encourage an active lifestyle for both the young and the old; seating, trees, barbeque facilities, visible policing and parking space (CABE SPACE, 2005). The facilities should be regularly serviced and maintained to sustain their attractiveness and durability. A park advisory board and park management staff are essential institutional resources in sustaining attractiveness and utilization levels of urban parks.

2.2.4 Place attachment

The concept of place attachment introduces the emotional relationship that people develop in the process of their interaction with their physical landscapes and geographical area. The relationship is often positive and often results in people feeling safe thus giving people a sense of identity and belonging. Morgan (2010) notes that people develop strong associations with geographic areas over a long time through their intentional interactions with the related landscapes. The study further argues that a stronger relationship between people and a geographic area develops if people have interacted with a place over a long time of their history. Livingston, *et al*. (2008) further expands on the notion that strong place attachment develops when a given geographical area satisfies the needs of the people and offers a unique experience which the people can identify with. For example, adults who grow up in one geographical area are most likely to have a stronger place attachment compared to someone who has recently migrated to the place. A strong place attachment indicates that the individual has found meaning in and through the place. This can develop at an individual level or group level. At the individual

level, personal connections are formed with the place and this promotes self-identity, while at group levels such places enhance shared values, cultures and religion thus promoting a sense of commonality and community (Scannell and Gifford, 2010; Livingston *et al*., 2008).

The concept of place attachment is relevant to this study as the concept is hypothesized to play an important role in influencing the level of use of urban recreational parks. Urban park users with strong place attachment tend to invest a lot of their time and emotions (mainly positive) at the park. A study by Ramkissoon, *et al.* (2012) highlights that place attachment has been investigated over the years with regard to environmental psychology but very few links have been made between place attachment and pro-environmental behaviour. Ramkissoon, *et al.* (2012) examines how a stronger place attachment to places such as national parks influences the national park users to be more protective of the place and further allows managers of the park to be more aware of the needs of the users and cater more effectively to such needs. Findings in Ramkissoon, *et al*. (2012) are important not only for pro-environmental behavior but also for outdoor recreational spaces as the ones covered in this study.

Studies have also highlighted that the relationship between place and people can be disrupted causing people to have negative connotations with the place and thus result in a negative place attachment (detachment).

Place attachment is often analysed under two dimensions which are place identity and place dependence. Place identity represents people's emotional bond with place while place dependence reflects a practical bond (utilitarian/usage dimension). Place attachment develops over time and contributes to a strong sense of place and self-identity that is built up through life experiences in the course of interaction with the place (Livingston *et al*., 2008; Budruk *et al.*, 2009). Ramkissoon, *et al*. (2012) explains that when an individual develops a practical bond with a place, the individual becomes loyal to the place and is therefore more likely to be committed to the well-being of the place in return. This would be in contrast to experiences of indifference which would contribute to detachment and neglect of place.

2.3. Conclusion

According to studies reviewed, appropriately designed and well maintained urban parks promote physical well-being, socializing, and social networks and also increases real estate values of the neighboring communities. As a result, the way the park is designed, the type of

amenities it has and its maintenance regime influences potential positive or negative experiences by the park users which would in turn influence their overall place attachment. Despite the common challenges that threaten their use, urban recreational parks are an important asset for urban communities. The utilization of the park facilities provides many benefits that urban residents require and cannot be substituted with other places of leisure or amenities such as malls or gyms. However, for urban recreational parks to continue being utilized and to attract more people, planners and designers will need regularly reflect and appraise human needs and their lifestyles in order to continue being responsive and adaptable to the changing needs of urban residents in relation to outdoor recreational places. An example by Tisma and Jókövi (2007) argues urban parks should start considering services such as outdoor cafeterias for the older generation while for the younger generation sports activities such as skate boarding and horse riding could be incorporated into the modern urban parks. In simple terms, a well-designed park should satisfy user preferences and needs of outdoor recreational goals and thus positively enhance the quality of life of users and overall sustainability of our cities.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The study applied a qualitative case study research approach which allowed the researcher to explore the relationship between people's interactions with their environment. Within a specific case study scenario, the relationship focused on residents of Moroka and Thokoza Park in Soweto. This allowed for an understanding of why the park (Thokoza Park) is highly utilized compared to other urban parks in the City of Johannesburg based on appraisal guided by place dependence and place identity. The study used a combination of primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected using a qualitative research tools, while secondary data was collected from academic journals/articles and technical reports. The secondary data includes the maps and plans of Thokoza Park within its context of Moroka, Soweto and City of Johannesburg. The maps were used to understand the geographic and spatial aspects of the park in order to show the broad overview as well as the key facilities and services included in the park. These data helped with the understanding of the theoretical background involved in the topics as well as other case studies reported in the literature. Secondary data also provided multidimensional background on the topics describing the key themes and principles of the proposed study. Secondary data sources included journals articles and reports, policy documents, books, and organizational websites, especially regarding City of Johannesburg. Both secondary and primary data were analysed based on an integrative approach towards answering the key research questions of the study. The overall research design and process of the study is shown in Figure 3.1.

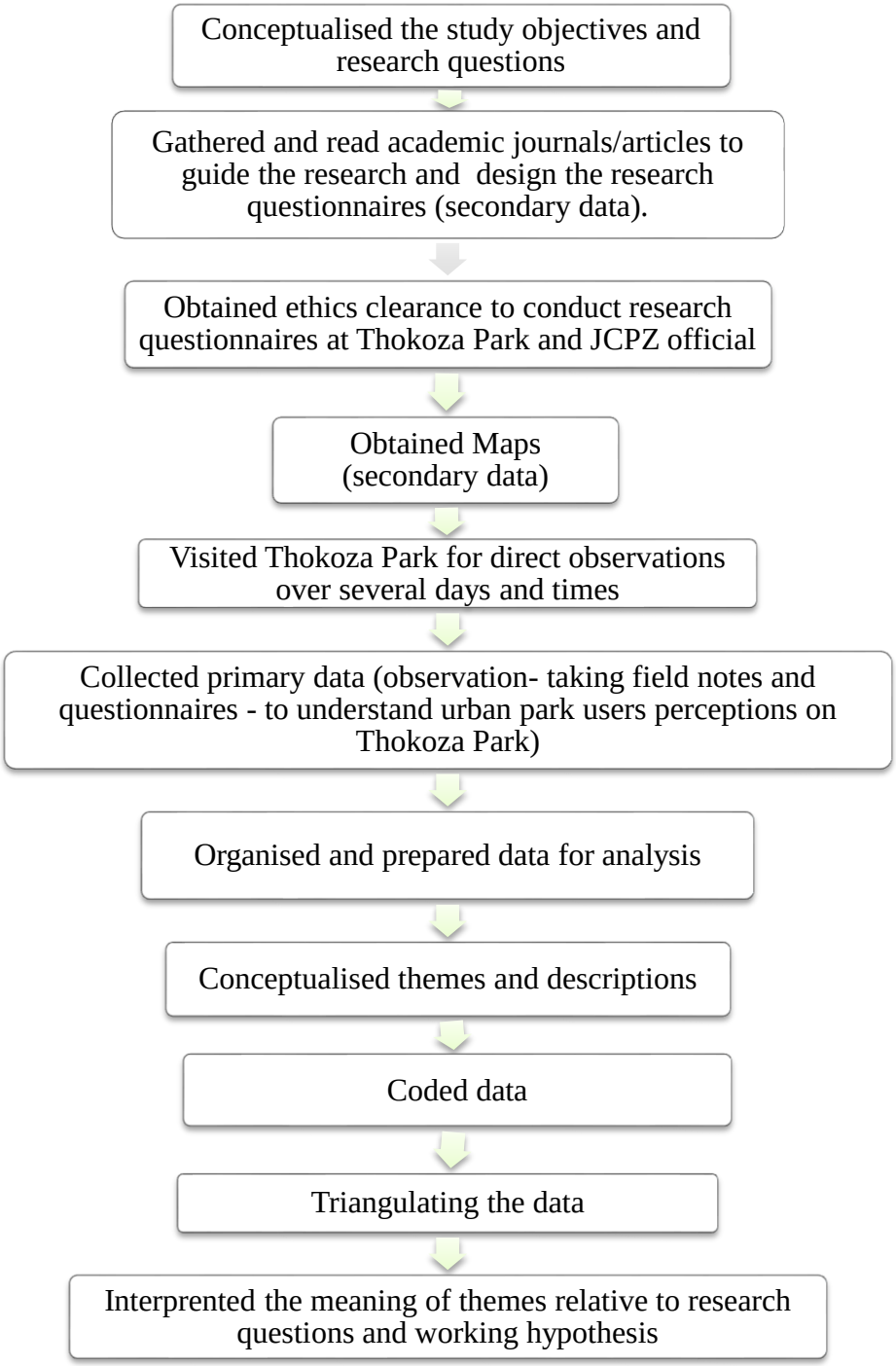

Figure 3.1: A summary and overview of study process and method

3.2. Study area

The research study was conducted in Moroka, Soweto park within the township of Johannesburg. Johannesburg is the capital of the Gauteng province and constitutes of seven Administrative Regions A to G (Figure 3.2). Soweto Township is situated to the south west of the city and falls

under region D which has 36 wards including Moroka which falls under Zone 3 (City of Johannesburg, 2010; Figure 3.3). Primary data for the study was collected from Thokoza Park which is located along Chris Hani Road and Ntuli Street in Moroka and covers 4.5 hectares of land (JCPZ, 2014a). Urban park users of Thokoza Park have access to the following services: "*Parking, toilets, seating, picnic spots, play equipment, walkways, concerts, weddings, fountains, waterways, dam, big screen television, heritage site/protected areas, birdlife, shaded areas*" (JCPZ, 2014a). The park was developed and is managed by Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo.

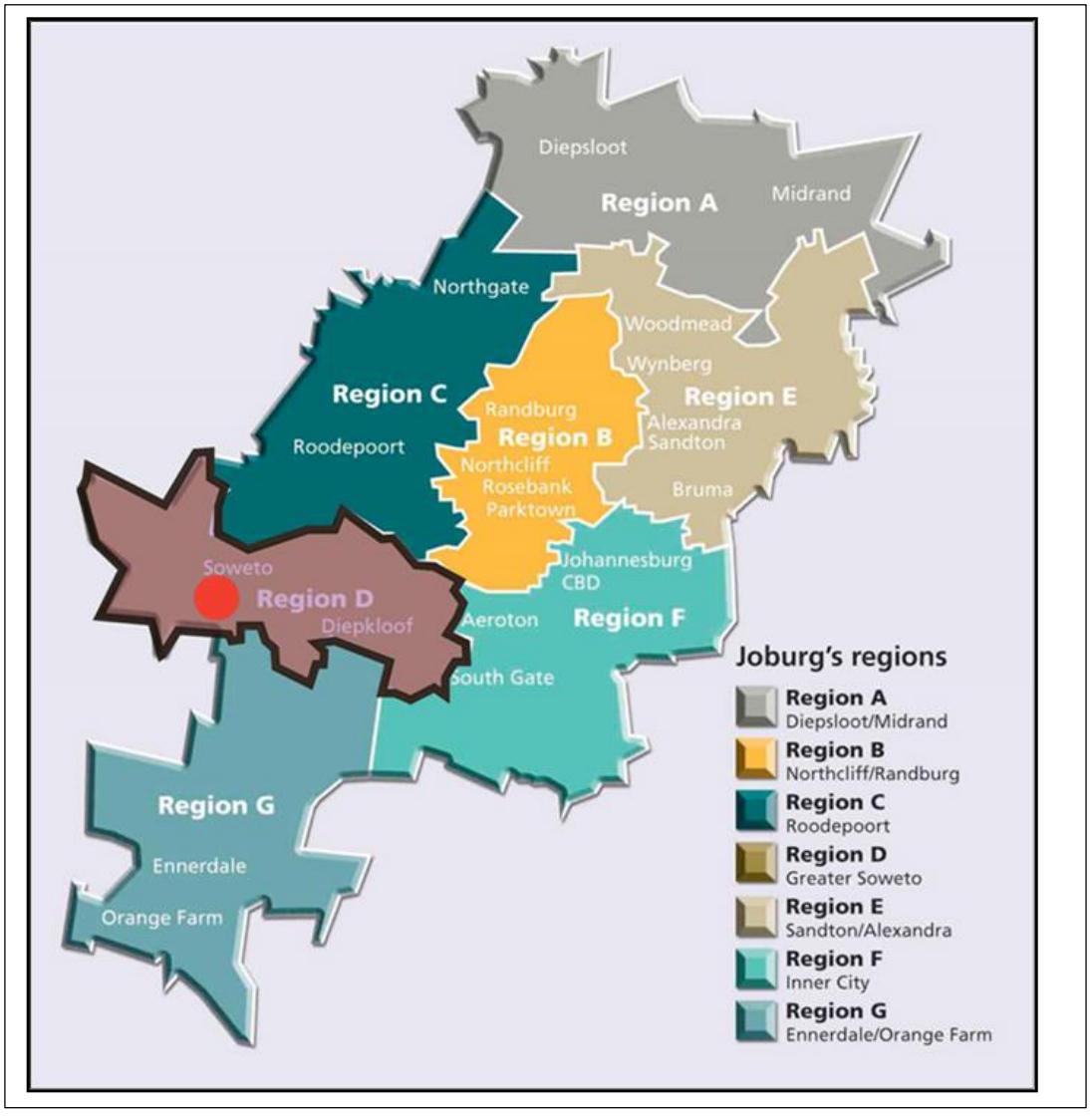

Figure 3.2: The City of Johannesburg map showing the seven regions of the city (Mathabatha, 2015)

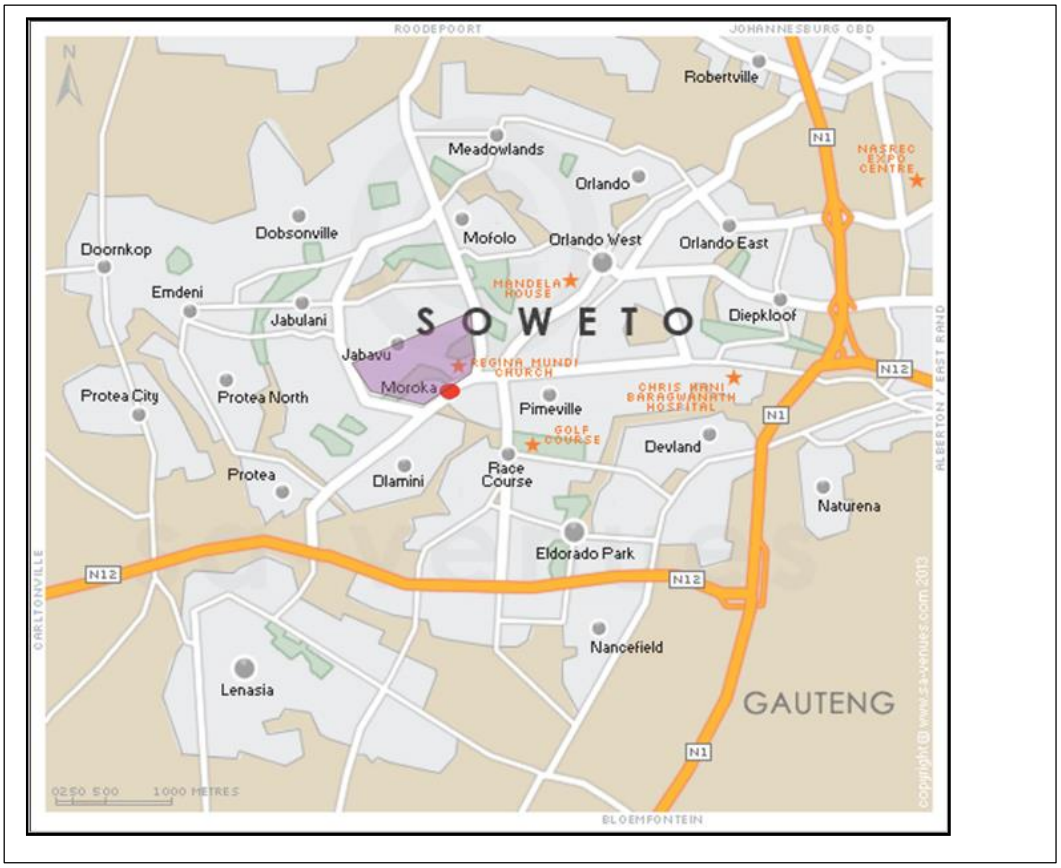

Figure 3.3: Thokoza Park in the Moroka section of Soweto (Mathabatha, 2015)



Figure 3.4: Extent and contextual aspects of Thokoza Park in Moroka (Mathabatha, 2015)



Figure 3.5: Thokoza Park landscape design and key vehicular routes (Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo, 2015)

3.3. Research design

Five research questions were formulated in order to guide the study on the relationship between place attachment and the level-of-use of urban parks in Johannesburg.

3.3.1 Research question one: What is Thokoza Park as an urban park in both physical and psychological dimensions?

This research question was designed to understand the kind of an urban park Thokoza Park is and the amenities it offers to users. In order to answer the question, literature review, maps, interviews and direct observations were used to collect data. The maps indicate where Thokoza Park is situated in Soweto as well as showing the layout and design of the park. JCPZ official interview informed the study on the type of an urban park Thokoza Park is and what role it was designed to play as an outdoor recreational place for the residents of Soweto and the broader Johannesburg residents. In additionally, direct observations inform how the park is used based on its layout, design and facilities/amenities. Thus, the objective of this research question is to understand different elements that attract people into using urban parks (specifically Thokoza Park) therefore resulting in increased level of use and thus deepening place attachment.

3.3.2 Research question two: How is Thokoza Park used by residents of Soweto and the City of Johannesburg?

This research question two seeks to understand the usage of Thokoza Park by the residents of Soweto and City of Johannesburg. To be able to answer the research question a semi-structured interview with JCPZ official was conducted; direct observations and survey questionnaires were conducted in the park. Interviews with JCPZ were used to inform what type of urban park Thokoza is and how it was intended to be utilized. Direct Observations informed the study on patterns of usage of the park at different times and days. The questionnaires informed the study how the users of Thokoza Park utilize the park. The way the park is used by local users, if it is positive, attracts other residents to use Thokoza Park therefore leading to increased level of use and place attachment. Hence understanding how the park is used by its residents is essential towards understanding nature and level of attachment.

3.3.3 Research question three: What levels of place dependency and place identity does Thokoza Park demonstrate?

The aim of this research question was to understand the extent to which Thokoza Park users identify and depend on Thokoza Park as an outdoor recreational facility. Data from the questionnaires informed the study on how users identify and depend on Thokoza Park as an

outdoor recreational area. Stronger place dependency and place identity increase place attachment of an urban park whereas weaker place dependency and place identity inhibits place attachment of a park.

3.3.4 Research question four: Does use-intensity increase place attachment at Thokoza Park?

To understand whether there is a relationship between use intensity and place attachment at Thokoza Park the study utilised literature review and questionnaires. Data from questionnaire responses were essential in evaluating relationship between use intensity and place attachment. Increased use intensity is likely to arise from increased place attachment to the park. Hence research question four was essential in substantiating this relationship.

3.3.5 Research question five: What principles can be distilled for application to similar parks in Johannesburg?

This research question guided the derivation of overall findings and recommendations to city planners and institutions such as JCPZ on improving key principles towards urban parks in a way that would increase their levels of use. Research question one to four were essential to be able achieve the aim of this research question. Overall conclusions and recommendations, based on the direct observations and responses from JCPZ official and Thokoza Park users, would assist in improving urban recreational parks of Johannesburg. The study demonstrated that urban parks that show strong place attachment have increased level of use. This is influenced by several factors such as the design of the park, individual lived experience etc. The recommendations of this study are aligned to such factors as guided by research question five.

3.4. Primary data collection tools

Primary data needed for the study was collected with a number of different data collection tools. They included maps, direct observation, photographs, face to face interviews and survey questionnaires. Data collection was done from the 6th of February to the 17th of February 2015. Primary data were collected in the sequence shown in Figure 3.6. The first stage consisted of obtaining permission from JCPZ to conduct interviews with one of the officials followed by obtaining ethics clearance from the University of the Witwatersrand. The second stage was primarily on conducting the interviews, direct observations and questionnaires. Firstly, the JCPZ official was interviewed (face to face) at Klipspruit view. The venue was prior-arranged between the researcher and JCPZ official. The feedback from the JCPZ official assisted in improving the direct observation criteria and the survey questionnaire. Furthermore, it made the researcher more

aware of different things for scrutiny during direct observations stage. Secondly, direct observations were conducted at Thokoza Park at different days and times. Finally during two of the days the researcher was not observing, questionnaires were conducted with Thokoza Park users. Photos of Thokoza Park facilities were taken on the 17th of February 2015 to help with direct observations. The inclusion of users in the photographs was avoided due to ethics considerations as there was no time to negotiate prior consent.

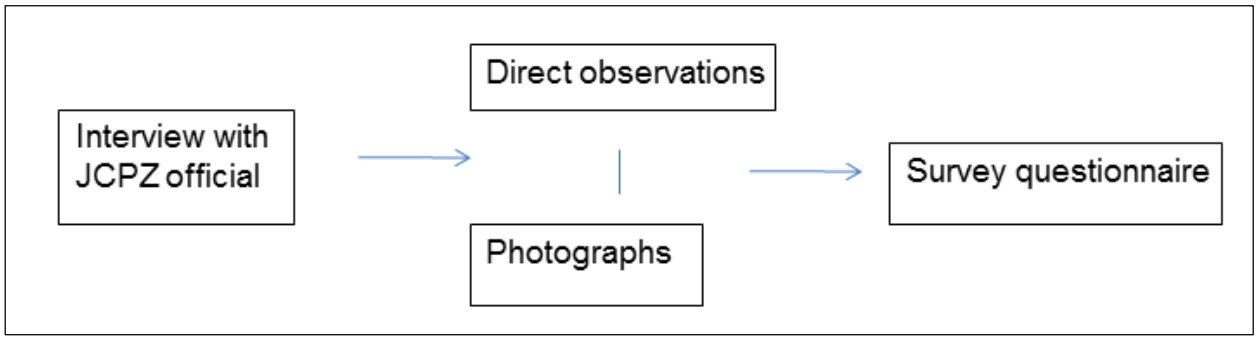

Figure 3.6: Data collection process used in the study

3.4.1 Interviews

A knowledgeable expert staff member from Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo was interviewed using face to face semi-structured interview questions (Appendix 1). The interview was conducted in the staff member's workplace in Klipsruitview. An interview guide was used to provide structure and a point of reference for the researcher. The JCPZ official was interviewed in order to gain more insight about the types of urban parks provided to urban residents of Johannesburg, the type of urban park for Thokoza Park and how it was meant to be used by the users relative to current usage.

3.4.2 Direct observations and photographs

The researcher visited the park and directly observed urban park users' physical behavior and gestures, activities that urban park users engage in and feelings or emotions expressed during use, human traffic - number of men compared to women and the number of children compared to adults and personal space issues while visiting the urban park in order to sense how the park influenced their place attachment (Appendix 3). The observations also included insights on the facilities in the park and assessing the conditions of the physical infrastructure. In order to evaluate the physical design of Thokoza Park (entrance points, the landscape, the status of lighting, signage, parking, seating, public bathrooms, barbecue facilities, drinking fountains, taps, rubbish bins, play

equipment for children and walking paths) the researcher used her own experience and direct observation in the judgment on the conditions/status of the physical facilities of the park. This guided the study to summarize the results using the following categories; poor, adequate, good and excellent. The categories served as an indicator of the positive and negative attributes of the physical condition of Thokoza Park facilities based on the researchers' experience and observation during the physical visits.

Using direct observation, the researcher conducted observations three times during the week and once during the weekend. The observations were conducted for an hour long in the morning (9:00 to 10:00), afternoon (12:00 to 13:00) and late afternoon (15:30 to 16:30). It was important to observe at different times of the day and different days of the week as time is one of the key factors influencing the activities of the park users. The observations began with 5 minutes walking around the park counting the number of users at the park and then followed by observing user-behavior characteristics. The observer noted the following behavioral characteristics by categories such as; which activities, frequency and the number of different activities participants engage in per day. The extent to which these activities were influenced by time, weather, social factors and general functionality of the park was noted. On the first day of observations (7th of February 2015) the researcher could not observe in the late afternoon due to rain. Thus the following Saturday (14th of February 2015) the observer went back to conduct the observations for the late afternoon session. Field notes were used to capture as many of the activities happening as possible. This also included the weather for the day, date and time (start and end) of the observation. In order to minimise biasing the users were not informed that they were under observation and were therefore unaware of the researchers' activity in the park (expect for those requested to serve as respondents to the survey questionnaires).

3.4.3 Survey questionnaires

To allow face to face interaction with the participants, survey questionnaires (Appendix 4) were designed and used to interview participants based on a set of questions aimed at facilitating an understanding of the participants' views and perceptions about Thokoza Park. The survey was based on a semi-structured in-depth questionnaire focusing on selected topics to facilitate the study in answering the research questions. A semi-structured survey questionnaire allowed the researcher gain deeper insights on participants' perceptions and experiences of Thokoza Park.

Responses to the survey questionnaire therefore complemented direct observations by the researcher.

The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter/ participation information sheet (Appendix 5) that explained the study, the rights of the urban park users as well as seeking permission to administer the survey with each participant interviewed in the study. A consent form (Appendix 6) was provided to the participants to sign as an indication that they understood their rights and grant permission to conduct the interview. Participants were requested to answer the survey questionnaire which took approximately 15 to 20 minutes of their time. The responses of the participants were recorded on paper by the researcher as the participant's answered the questions. Participants were informed that the researcher would be taking notes.

The intention of the survey questionnaire was to collect primary data towards answering the main research questions of the study. The survey was divided into five sections. Section one addressed the demographic information of the participant (gender, age, level of education, employment status and where the participants live). The second section addressed participants' need for using Thokoza Park. Under section three users were further asked about their perceptions of the urban park design. Section four and five addressed the participant's place dependence and place identity in relation to Thokoza Park, respectively. Section three to five were structured in line with a five point Likert scale with (1) representing *strongly disagree* to (5) being *strongly agree*. The Likert scale was developed to measure attitudinal responses as discussed in Boone and Boone (2012). In this study the following response alternatives were provided 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-niether agree nor disagree, 4-agree and 5-strongly agree.

The study interviewed 20 park users selected on the basis of user type and willingness to be a respondent. The sample of respondents was therefore not intended to be a random sample and therefore no statistically motivated inferences have been used in the analysis and findings of the study.

3.5. Data analysis

The questionnaires and direct observations techniques collected a lot of rich data, which can be difficult to analyze and make sense from (Lester, 1999; Mays and Pope, 1995). Based on the triangulation approach this study compared the data collected during direct observations with the data collected through questionnaires in order to derive the findings in response to the research

questions. The method is beneficial in qualitative research where replication and validation of the research are not critical (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2008; Creswell, 2014; Hycner, 1985; Malterud, K. 2001). Firstly, the data was organized and processed using a spread-sheet software. Subsequently the study identified themes and patterns in the data that was useful in answering the research questions considerations (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2008; Creswell, 2014; Lester 1999; Mays and Pope, 1995). In order to identify the themes and patterns, the study used both hand coding and the spread-sheet software to analyse the data. These themes were developed during and after data collection to avoid prior assumptions from the researcher biasing the nature of data to be solicited (Creswell, 2014; Hycner, 1985; Malterud, 2001). Some of the themes were initially expected based on the insights from existing literature while several other themes emerged at data coding and analysis stages (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2008). The study was then able to use descriptive analysis by creating tables and figures that helped in substantiation of responses to the research questions.

3.6. Ethics consideration

This study is dependent on research data provided by people both in terms of observations, photographs and response to interviews through a semi-structured questionnaire. Ethics clearance was approved by the Human Research Ethics (Non-Medical) Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand (Appendix 7). The study proceeded in a manner that ensured all participants involved in the study were informed and protected even though it is expected that no harm will arise for participants and their well-being was not considered to be at any risk during or after the study process. In addition the study ensured that everyone involved as a participant in the research was requested for permission to be involved in the research and informed about the study's aims and objectives as well as their rights as a participant for this study. Permission to be involved in the interview for the study was indicated by the participant signing the consent form that highlighted their rights as a participant of the study. One of those rights is that participants have the right to pull out at any stage of the questionnaire if they felt uncomfortable with the questions being asked. For cautionary measures, the study did not include participants' names in data analysis or reporting in order to ensure that anonymity is maintained. The study also avoided leading questions or sensitive questions that may have made participants uncomfortable. The researcher did not tape record any of the responses and all the data collected will be stored in a

password protected work station. All the participants were above the age of 18 and no confidential information or data were collected.

3.7. Limitations to the method

Although qualitative research is able to generate a lot of rich data, there are limitations that need to be acknowledged particularly in a phenomenological research design. Limitations that come with this type of research design have been mentioned by Hycner (1985) and they include absence of random sampling, restricted number of participants, lack of generalizability, weaker accuracy in descriptions and risk of subjective influence by the researcher. However, given the nature of understanding sought in the study, these limitations were not considered to be prohibitive. Equally a study based on this approach anticipates that the researcher would draw deeply from their own experience of sensing and feeling the kind of phenomena being observed and in turn inferring this on the observed participants. Consequently, objectivity was mot prioritised as the key consideration.

Another limitation that the researcher encountered is language barrier. This study was conducted in English; while, some of the users were unable to respond in English. In addressing this issue, the researcher only conducted the questionnaires with users who understood and spoke English. This was another reason why random sampling goal was not pursued.

CHAPTER 4: THOKOZA PARK AS A CASE STUDY

4.1. Thokoza Park

According to the JCPZ official (Senior Horticulturist) interviewed for the study, Thokoza Park is both a flagship and a regional park because of its size and the number of people it attracts, including people living outside Soweto. As an urban park in the City of Johannesburg, JCPZ understands the role of the park in the following manner: used for recreation and family outings, entertainment - birthday parties, weddings and baby showers. The JCPZ official also stated that they were installing TV screen in the park for residents to watch soccer matches. In future they plan to cater to the needs of today's children (smart kids) by providing them with educational programs and installing "wifi" as well as using parks to promote a healthy lifestyle through green gyms. A number of community engagements have been formed at Thokoza Park to ensure safety and continuous use. These community engagements include partnership with the South African Police Service and JCPZ park rangers who form part of the Park Safety Forum to ensure that the park is safe at all times and that no illegal activities are carried out. There are also frequent educational programs held at the park to inform the community about the rules and terms of use of the park. Educational activities cover initiatives such as *My Park, My City Program* and *Friends of the Park*. These individuals not only utilize Thokoza Park but also act as 'eyes' and 'ears' of JCPZ.

Thokoza Park is regularly maintained. According to JCPZ official the maintenance is divided into two categories; horticulture maintenance which is conducted every day of the week and infrastructure maintenance which is done on an adhoc basis. Horticulture maintenance includes tree felling, grass cutting (done once a week), weeding, maintenance of the flower beds, sweeping of hard surfaces and litter picking while infrastructure maintenance includes maintenance and repairs of playground equipment, cleaning and painting of play equipment, repairs and replacement of park furniture, water fountain maintenance, lighting and fence maintenance and cleaning of the water stream feature. The JCPZ official highlighted that there were challenges at Thokoza Park but they are dealing with them. They include criminal activities (especially when lights are not working and park users become targets of criminal activities in the park particularly in winter), use of drugs in the park by young park users, littering and illegal dumping, vandalism of play equipment and toilets facilities, people drinking and drunkenness in

the park, noise pollution, inadequate vehicle parking as well as people washing their vehicles in the park areas.

4.2. Thokoza Park design

Using the Likert scale ranging between 1 to 5, 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree, participants were asked to rank the design of Thokoza Park using three statements; Thokoza Park is well organized, Thokoza Park has a convenient layout and Thokoza Park is well designed. More than 50% of the participants agreed that Thokoza Park was well organized as a park while a few could neither agree nor disagree (Figure 4.1). Furthermore participants agreed that Thokoza Park has a convenient layout and is well designed (see Figure 4.2 for the design features).

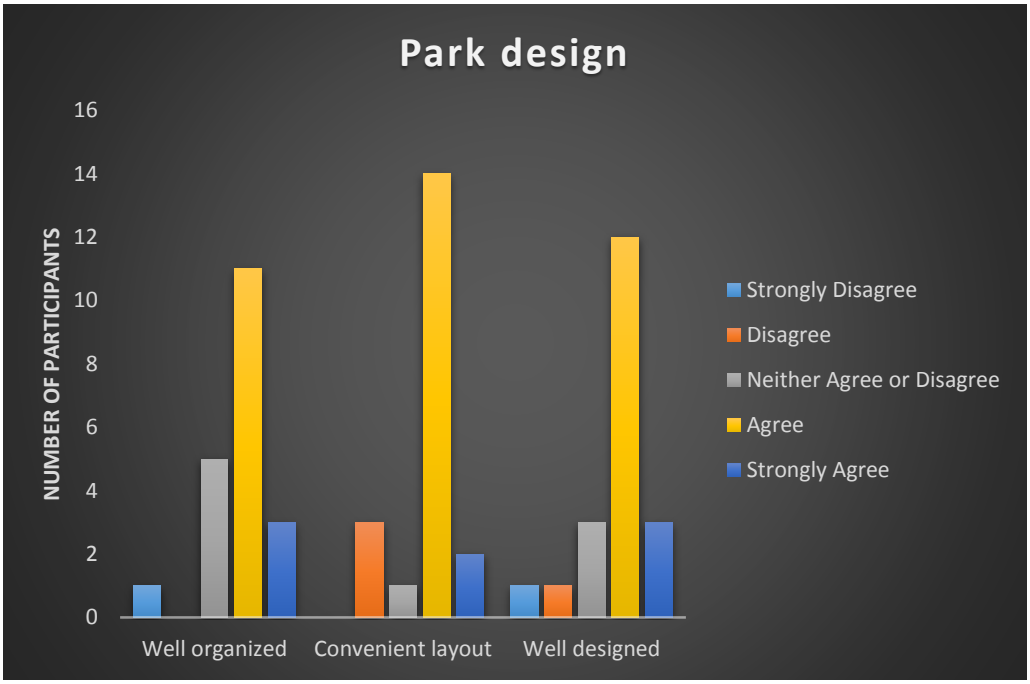

Figure 4.1: Perceptions of Thokoza Park design by Thokoza Parks users

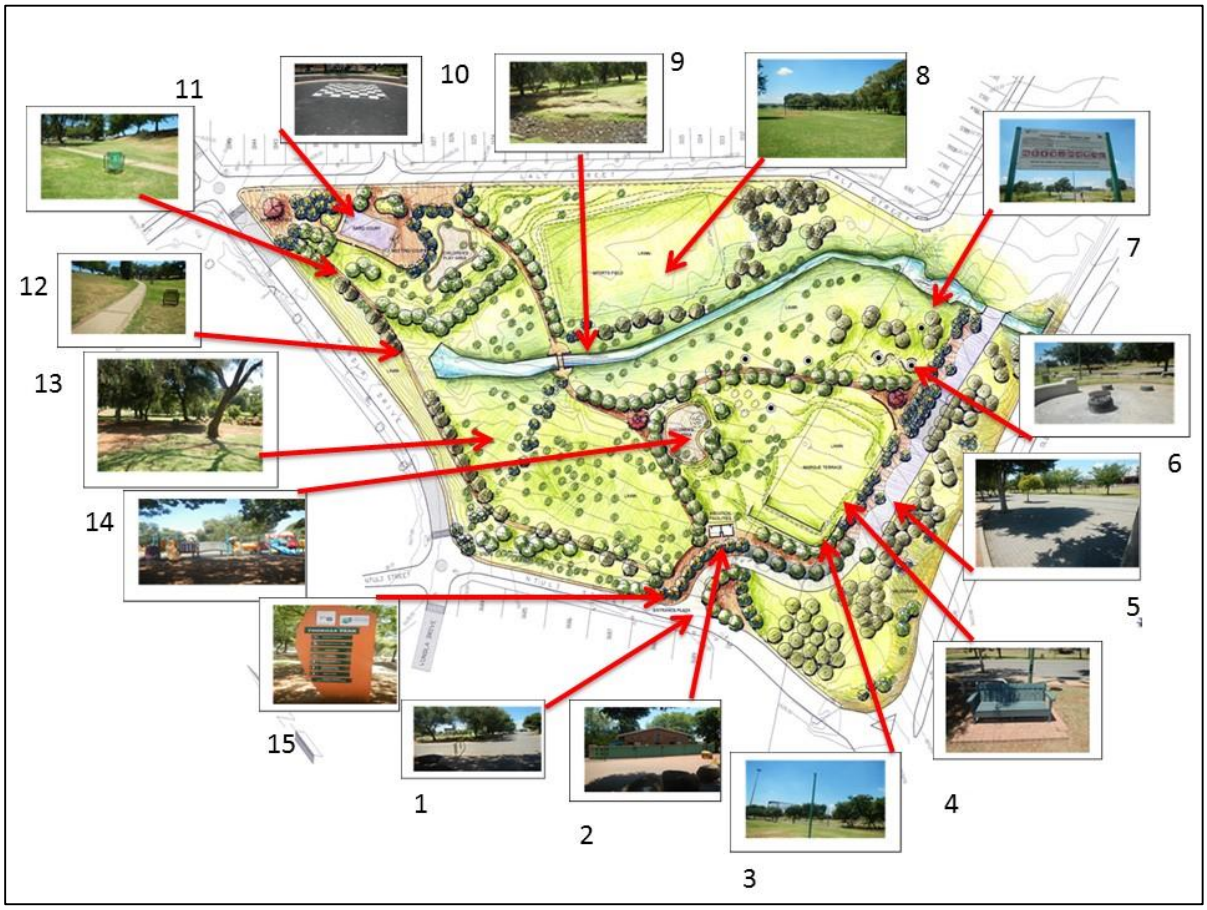

Figure 4.2: Design features of Thokoza Park (enlarged photos are shown in subsequent sections) (Adapted from Johannesburg City Parks, 2015)

Based on secondary data sources (especially park-design handbook and studies), the following criteria were developed to facilitate direct observation on facilities available at Thokoza Park.

Table 4.1: Overview in facilities at Thokoza Park

Urban Park Design – features/facilities at Thokoza Park	**Yes/No**
Presence of seating areas	Yes
Presence of public toilets	Yes
Presence of entrance points (Thokoza Park is not enclosed/fenced, pedestrian access is at any point of the park's perimeter)	Not applicable

Presence of fountain	Yes
Presence of rubbish bins	Yes
Presence of signage and maps (signage regarding dogs, signage restricting other activities, etc.)	Yes
Presence of lighting along paths	Yes
Presence of parking	Yes
Presence of barbeque facilities	Yes
Presence of walking trails	Yes
Presence of play equipment for children	Yes
Presence of recreational facilities (e.g. sports facilities)	Yes
Maintenance of Thokoza Park	Yes
Presence of policing (security)	Yes
Landscape design (trees, grasses)	Yes
Presence of shade or sheltered areas (manmade covers) in case of hostile weather (rains and winds)	No
Presence of a water feature (e.g. river, creek)	Yes

4.2.1 Presence of seating areas

There were about 13 seating areas provided at Thokoza Park. These are areas equipped with benches made of recycled plastic (Figure 4.3). Another form of seating is in benches made of concrete. The benches made of plastic are distributed on the South side of the park while concrete seating is distributed all over the park. Benches made of recycled plastic are not well positioned as most of them were not on shaded areas and were therefore exposed to the sun most of the day. Furthermore, majority of the seats face away from the park thus denying users the benefits of full view of the park. It should be noted this is summer observation and the reverse

might be applicable in winter season (more users seating on the plastic benches than on the concrete ones).Most of the seating made of concrete are located under trees and most park users used this seating facility more than the plastic benches as they are shaded and protected from the direct sun. However, there is no adequate seating area provided for Thokoza Park users and therefore most of them preferred to seat on the lawns (evidence from direct observations).



Figure 4.3: Seating provided for Thokoza Park users: recycled plastic benches (enlarged photo of number 4 in figure 4.2)

4.2.2 Presence of public toilets

There are two public toilet blocks located at the two ends (North and West) of Thokoza Park along Chris Hani and Ntuli Street and Vundla and Lali Street next to the two main entrance points. The toilets are fenced off and according to some of the participants they are locked up during the night. They are guarded by the security and maintenance staff. The toilets are clean most of the times, as they are frequently cleaned by the maintenance staff. However, they are not wheel chair friendly and this constraints access by the physically impaired users. There are advantages and disadvantages of having fenced off toilet facilities in an open access park. The disadvantages include park users not being able to use the facilities when the facilities are locked

especially at night. On the other hand, park users could easily become crime targets when utilizing the facilities when the security guards are not present and vagrants could use the toilets at night as their sleeping area which would also increase the risk of vandalism. The fencing-off may be a critical deterrent measure against any possible criminal activities or vandalism.



Figure 4.4: Toilets at Thokoza Park along Chris Hani and Ntuli Street (enlarged photo of number 2 in figure 4.2)

4.2.3 Presence of entrance points

Thokoza Park is an open park and pedestrian users may enter anywhere they wish. However, there were 6 prioritised and designated entrance points with one main entrance that can be used by both Thokoza Park users on foot and vehicles to park at the parking lot (Figure 4.5). There are only two entrance points with provision for access by handicapped users.



Figure 4.5: Vehicle entrance points at Thokoza Park (enlarged photo of number 1 in figure 4.2)

4.2.4 Presence of fountain

There is a single fountain at Thokoza Park, which is located next to the main entrance. The fountain is fenced and is enhanced with flowers planted around it. However, during the direct observation visits, the fountain was not working (and had not been repaired) but the area was kept clean nevertheless.

4.2.5 Presence of rubbish bins

Rubbish bins are distributed all over the park and approximately 71 dustbins were counted during the direct observation survey. The rubbish bins hardly contained any trash which signified regular emptying and disposal. Rubbish bins were especially empty in the mornings when maintenance staff started cleaning duties. Later in the day some rubbish bins had trash but they were never full. Littering within the park was generally low but during the weekend there was

more litter compared to weekdays. The litter increased during the weekend because of the number of park users and increased food-related activities.



Figure 4.6: Rubbish bins at Thokoza Park (enlarged photo of number 11 in figure 4.2)

4.2.6 Presence of signage and maps

JCPZ installed signage to provide Thokoza Park users guidance when using Thokoza Park. There are 14 sign boards with diverse designs and size types provided for users. These include big sign boards that notify the users of the "do's" and "don'ts" of the park (Figure 4.8). This signage also includes JCP contact details should users at any point need to contact them. Some signage is about safety for children when using the play equipment. Finally, there is signage along the stream (that connects to Moroka Dam) cautioning users about the risk of playing in or near the stream as the water is constantly polluted. The signage at Thokoza Park lacks consistency in terms of design, size and distribution. In addition, some of the signage is old and illegible. One directional board is provided for users at the main entrance to give directions or where the

different facilities are located (see Figure 4.7). Additionally, there was signage about the historical heritage and significance of the park site.



Figure 4.7: Signage and directions at Thokoza Park (enlarged photo of number 7 in figure 4.2)



Figure 4.8: Different types of signage at Thokoza Park ("do's" and "don'ts") (enlarged photo of number 7 in figure 4.2)

4.2.7 Presence of lighting along paths

Thirty four (34) lighting points have been provided across the park, especially along the walkway and also in the parking area. However, although lighting fixtures have been provided the infrastructure is not maintained (Figure 4.9). During direct observation visits most of the lighting poles did not have light bulbs. Furthermore, only one walkway had lighting while other walkways had no lighting provided. It is not clear whether this was due to vandalism or that JCPZ had intentionally removed the lights to prevent vandalism. The key observation is that regular users are unlikely to visit the park for fear of becoming victims of crime in a relatively dark park. The researcher also avoided making night-time visits for direct observations. The study therefore suffers some limitation with regard to night use observation and findings.



Figure 4.9: Dysfunctional lighting at Thokoza Park (foreground) and a functional lighting (background) (enlarged photo of number 3 in figure 4.2)

4.2.8 Presence of parking

A designated area has been assigned for users who access the park using private vehicles (Figure 4.10). The parking lot is paved and shaded by trees. The pavement at the parking lot is not permeable. However, the parking is only used by the police, maintenance staff or JCPZ officials while park users' vehicles are turned away and guided to park outside the park. This was done to prevent unauthorized activities such as taxi drivers using the space for car wash. However, this parking restriction has emerged as one the key points of dissatisfaction among the users (based on survey-questionnaire responses).



Figure 4.10: Parking area at Thokoza Park (enlarged photo of number 5 in figure 4.2)

4.2.9 Presence of barbeque facilities

Barbeque facilities are provided for users and the barbeque stands are all similarly designed (Figure 4.11). The barbeque stands (10 counted) are built with seating area made of concrete. The barbeque facilities are however concentrated South-East of the park.



Figure 4.11: Barbeque facilities at Thokoza Park (enlarged photo of number 6 in figure 4.2)

4.2.10 Presence of walking trails

A number of walkways have been provided for the users around the park (Figure 4.12). The walkways are paved and most of them are sheltered by trees. However, only one walkway has lighting amenity and therefore usable at night.



Figure 4.12: Paved walkways at Thokoza Park (enlarged photo of number 12 in figure 4.2)

4.2.11 Presence of play equipment for children

A children designated playground has been has been provided in the park as shown in Figure 4.2. The playground has 11-piece play equipment designed to offer children of different ages an area where they can explore and be adventurous in safety. The equipment allows the children to play in groups or individually. The play equipment are well maintained and in good condition.



Figure 4.13: Play equipment for children at Thokoza Park (enlarged photo of number 14 in figure 4.2)

4.2.12 Presence of recreational facilities (e.g. sports facilities)

There are two types of sporting facilities provided for the park users. One type allows users to be mentally active (Figure 4.14) and the other type allows users to be physically active (Figure 4.15). During direct observation visits, no users were observed using the mental activity recreational facilities. During the weekend and weekdays users (males) were observed using the soccer field. During the weekend there were two soccer matches, one in the morning between young boys and another one in the afternoon among older adult males. During the weekdays young boys were seen practicing soccer at the soccer field. The sporting facilities are concentrated North-East of the park.



Figure 4.14: Mental activity facility in the park (enlarged photo of number 10 in figure 4.2)



Figure 4.15: Sporting facilities that allow users to be physically active (enlarged photo of number 8 in figure 4.2)

4.2.13 Maintenance of Thokoza Park

The park is cleaned daily picking up litter and the lawns cut once a week. During direct observations, the maintenance staff were observed doing litter picking, sweeping, tree pruning and painting the various equipment of the park during the weekdays.

4.2.14 Presence of policing (security)

An unarmed security guard has been deployed at the park, primarily to provide visible policing. However, the park covers extensive grounds and therefore needs more than one security guard. In addition, during the direct observation visits, it was noted that the guard does not do frequent rounds of the park thus leading many users feeling that there is no adequate security at the park. However, a partnership between JCPZ and the South African Police Services (SAPS) has been established to ensure that the police officers regularly provide additional surveillance at the park in order to mitigate illegal activity and enhance safety in the park.

4.2.15 Landscape design (trees, grasses)

The landscape design includes large and mature trees, small and young trees, shrubs as well as groomed lawns (Figure 4.16). The trees are spread all over the park in clusters and some of the

trees are used as delineators to buffer the park from the streets. This design makes the park attractive and ensures that the users enjoy the benefits of green features. Trees provide shade for users and habitats for birds and insects. Some of the sections in the park are clustered with trees while other sections are left open to the sky.



Figure 4.16: Treescape features of the park (enlarged photo of number 13 in figure 4.2)

4.2.16 Presence of water features (e.g. river, creek)

There is a stream that divides Thokoza Park into two sections North and South (Figure 4.17). The stream forms part of Moroka dam to the east-west. According to the JCPZ official the stream is maintained by the Department of Water Affairs. Along the stream there is signage that cautions users not to swim or drink the water as it is constantly polluted. However, during direct observation visits children were observed playing in the water.



Figure 4.17: Stream at the park which is part of Moroka Dam (extension of enlarged photo of number 9 in figure 4.2)

4.3. Demographic characteristics of Thokoza Park users

Table 4.2 represents the demographic characteristic of the survey questionnaire respondents. A total of 20 Thokoza Park users were interviewed based on the questionnaire. Twenty (20) participants were targeted but 28 users were approached because 8 of the users declined to participate in the survey questionnaire. Of the 20 participants 40% were female users. This number is supported by the data from direct observations, whereby per day, majority of the park users at any given time during both weekends and weekdays were males. At one point approximately 164 male users were counted at Thokoza Park and the lowest number was 20 (Figure 4.18). The highest number of female users was observed on a Saturday was approximately 110 and the lowest number was observed on a Wednesday morning (10 females) (Figure 4.19). However, on Friday the 13th of February, morning and afternoon, more females were observed at the park. This was because on the day a number of preschools spent the day at the park several care-givers female has accompanied the preschool learners. Weekends had more users both females and males compared to weekdays while Mondays had the fewest users during weekdays. Overall, the JCPZ official reported that Thokoza Park user levels have been

increasing steadily since the park was upgraded. According to the results from direct observations, most users were young children, teenagers and people between the ages of 25 to 40 years. Occasionally, people over the age of 50 years were observed during the weekend and they were often accompanied by their families. On the last day of direct observations, a number of young children were observed at the park. The number of children was very high compared to any other day during the observations. From the questionnaire 20% of the respondents were between the ages of 18 to 21 years while 45% were between the ages of 22 to 30 years. Only 25% and 10% of the participants were between the ages of 31-40 and 41-50 years respectively. Unfortunately no participants above the age of 51 were interviewed for the study. The highest education obtained indicated that 40% of the participants had matric and 40% had obtained a higher education certificate (tertiary level). 43% of the participants were employed with 35% employed full time and 10% employed on a part time basis. 35% of the respondents who participated in the questionnaire survey were unemployed and 20% indicated "other" and when asked to specify, they indicated that they were self-employed and thus running their own businesses.

Table 4.2: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Demographic characteristics		Number of respondents (n=25)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	8	40
	Male	12	60
Age (years)	18-21	4	20
	22-30	9	45
	31-40	5	25
	41-50	2	10
	51-60	0	0
	Over 60	0	0
Education (Highest level completed)	No schooling	1	5
	Primary level	1	5
	High school level	2	10
	Matric level	8	40

	Higher Education (certificate, diploma, degree)	8	40
Employment	Employed full time	7	35
	Employed part-time	2	10
	Unemployed	7	35
	Other	4	20

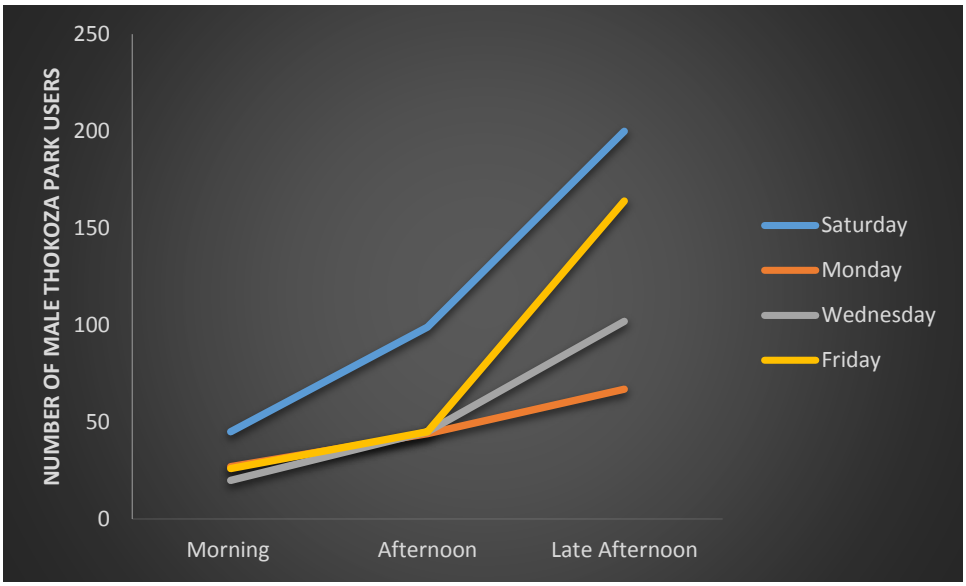

Figure 4.18: The number of male users counted at Thokoza Park during direct observation visits

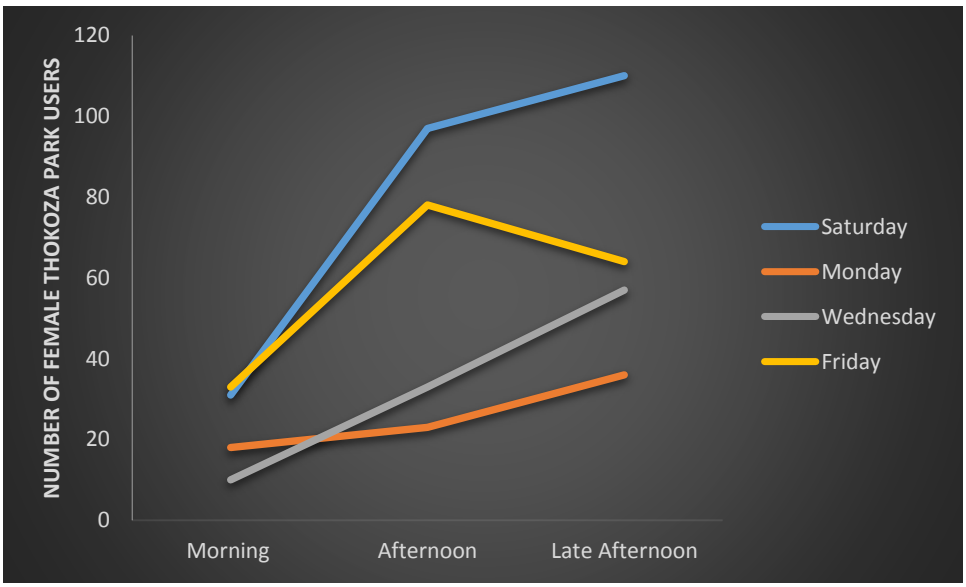

Figure 4.19: The number of female users counted at Thokoza Park during direct observation visits

4.4. Park utilization

Participants indicated that they visit the park mostly once a week with only 5% indicating that they visit more than three times a week. 25% said "other", specifying that they come to the park occasionally; either once every four months, when invited or during holidays. The visits under which the participants indicated 100% were during the weekends with only 10% also indicating that they visit during week days. During weekdays park activity increased late afternoon compared to mornings. Majority (65%) of the park visits lasted between 4 – 6 hours, 15% stayed for more than 6 hours per visit at Thokoza Park. This is also supported by direct observations, as most Thokoza Park users were observed to spend more than two hours at the park. 40% participants indicated that they spend 11 – 20 minutes to reach the park from home, while 30% spent less than 10 minutes and 20% of the participants indicated that they spent 21 – 30 minutes. Only10% spent more than 30 minutes to reach the park from home. The most frequently used mode of transport by participants to reach Thokoza Park from home was by foot (walking 60%). Other transport modes included bus, car and taxi. 90% of the participants indicated that they spent their time at Thokoza with others and these included family (40%), friends (60%) and only 10% visited the park with their partners. During the weekdays and before 12:00pm, most Thokoza Park users were visiting the park by themselves with very few people in pairs or groups. However, this changed in afternoon when the park was mostly occupied by school learners in groups. 50% of the participants have been using the park for 5 years or less while the other 50% have been using the park for more than 6 years (Figure 4.20). Of the participants that have been using the park for more than 6 years, 15% have been using it for more than 20 years, indicating that they used the parks before it was upgraded.

Table 4.3: User-visit characteristics of Thokoza Park

Visit characteristics		Number of participants (n=25)	Percentage (%)
Frequency of visit	Once a week	9	45
	Twice a week	3	15
	Threes a week	1	5
	More than three times	1	5

	Other	5	25
Days most visited	Weekdays	0	0
	Weekends	18	90
	BOTH	2	10
Duration of visits per day	1-3 hours	4	20
	4-6 hour	13	65
	>6 hours	3	15
Time spent to get to Thokoza Park	0-10 minutes	6	30
	11-20 minutes	8	40
	21-30 minutes	4	20
	>30 minutes	2	10
Transportation used	Walk	12	60
	Bike	0	0
	Bus	1	5
	Car	6	30
	Taxi	3	15
	Other	0	0
Visit alone or with others	Self	2	10
	Others	18	90
With others	Family	8	40
	Friends	12	60
	Partner	2	10
	Other	0	0

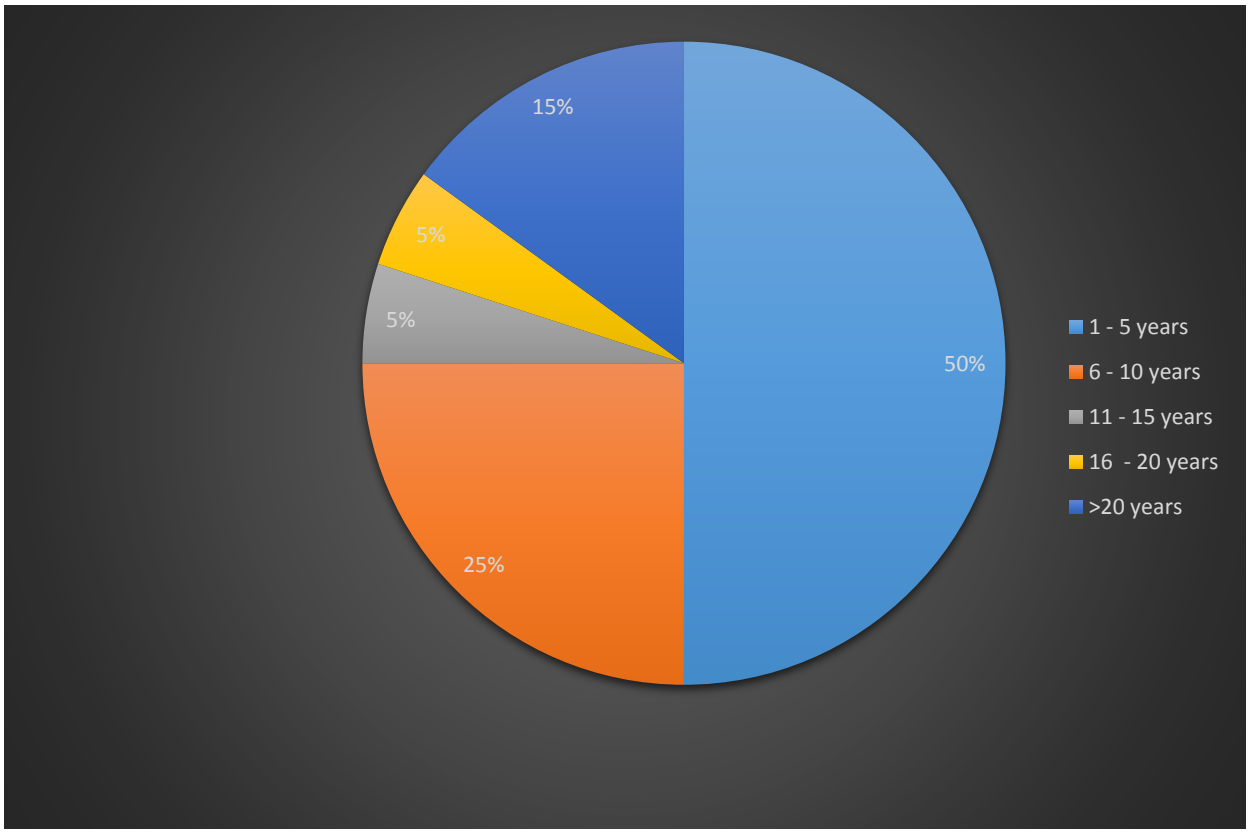

Figure 4.20: The number of years respondents have been visiting Thokoza Park

4.5. Factors influencing the use of Thokoza Park

Thokoza Park respondents indicated that they engage in a number of activities at the park. The results (Figure 4.21) indicate that most participants use Thokoza Park for passive activities such as to meet friends and family, relax, for fresh air and also picnics. Other activities included sport, spending time with children, escaping from the city, to listen and observe nature, to get inspiration and others indicated "other" with most of them responding; "doing to business" or "drinking". The following activities were the activities participants frequently engage in; picnics, spending time with children, relaxing, meeting friends and family and one participant indicated that doing business was the main reason he visited/utilized Thokoza Park. Similar activities were also observed during weekdays and weekends but there was more variety of activities over weekends compared to weekdays (solitary activities, social activities, food related activities, team activities, physical and community activities). During weekends participants were observed participating in the following activities: playing soccer, seated under the tree either sleeping or talking, picnicking, barbeque, children playing and others holding a traditional wedding. On the other hand, on weekdays, there were more solitary and physical activities taking place. In the

morning, most users were observed seated under the tree alone or in pairs and a lot of activity occurred from people passing through the park (walking). In the afternoons during the weekdays there were people, mostly school learners, doing social and food related activities and late afternoon there were team activities such as young boys playing soccer in the mini soccer field. In the afternoon some parents/guardians brought young children to play at the park.

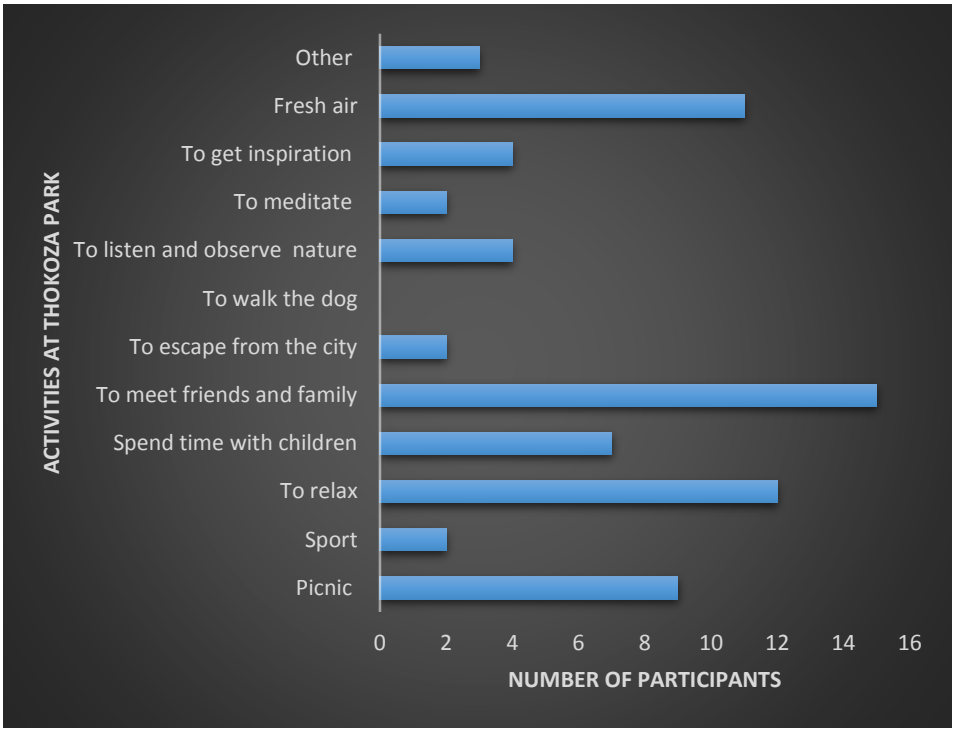

Figure 4.21: Activities undertaken at Thokoza Park

As outlined in chapter 2 urban parks have various benefits which include psychological health and general well-being. Participants were asked about the most prevalent feelings they experience while at Thokoza Park. Figure 4.22 indicates that majority of the participants experience a sense of relaxation and happiness while at the park. The participants reported that the feelings are very important for their daily wellbeing and were therefore a key attributing factor to their frequent visit to the park (Figure 4.23).

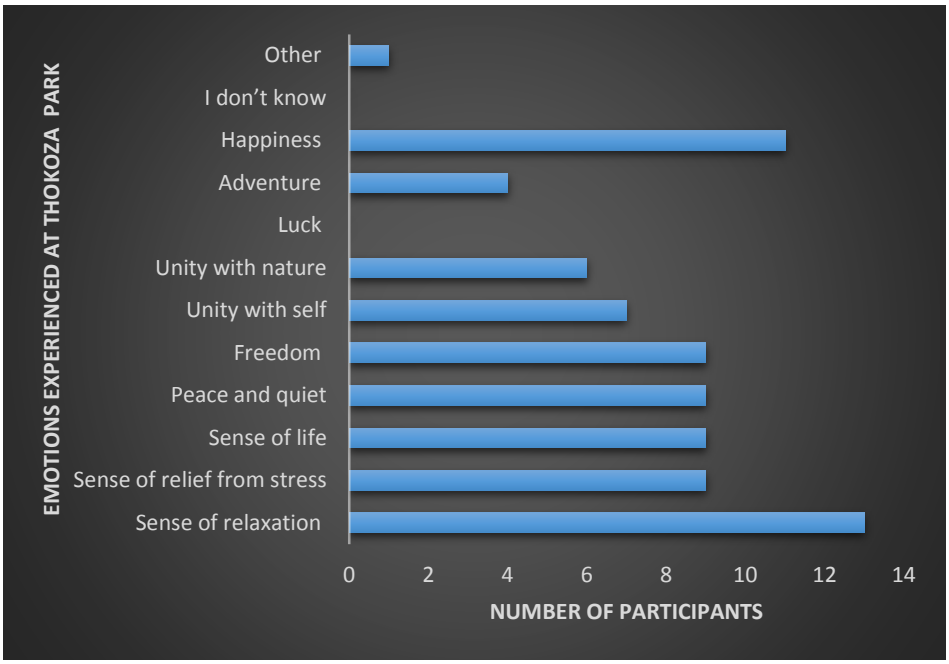

Figure 4.22: Experienced emotions at Thokoza Park

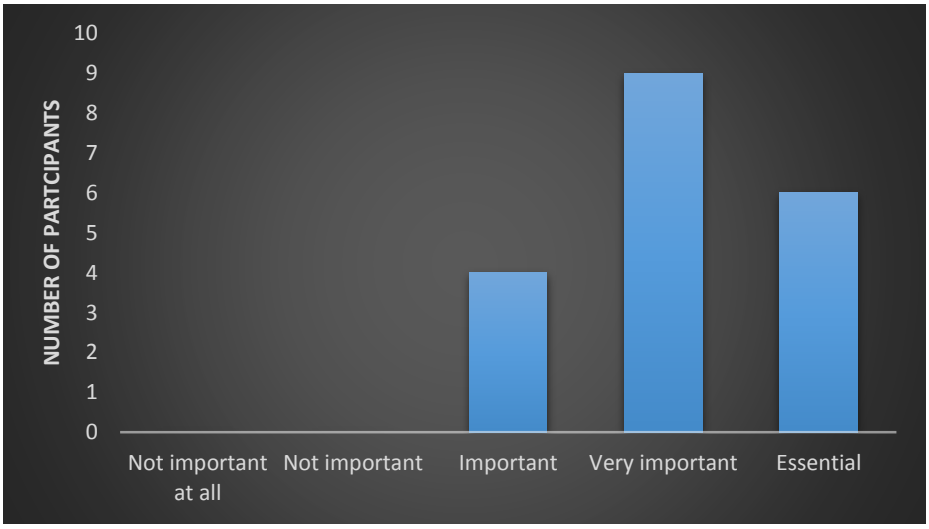

Figure 4.23: The importance of prevalent feelings experienced by Thokoza Park users

4.6. Attitudes towards Thokoza Park

To understand the relationship the participants have with Thokoza Park, participants were asked questions on the facilities they would miss at Thokoza Park should they be removed, what they disliked about the park and finally what they would like added or improved at the park. Figure 4.24 shows that most participants would miss some facilities if they were removed. These facilities included trees, play equipment for children, toilets, big TV screen and one participant said they would miss the park if it ceased to exist at Moroka. Participants added that the facilities

they would miss provided them with fresh air and shade while play equipment kept the children busy and allowed children to play while the parents were relaxing. Most participants had nothing to dislike about Thokoza Park while those who disliked some mentioned safety concerns as one of them, as well as police chasing people away, closing of toilets, theft and preventing people from parking in the designated parking area. Some participants highlighted that police chased people away for drinking in the park even when it was done peacefully. Further, this was disliked, according to one participant, as it resulted in less business and therefore less profit for the day. Others felt unsafe at Thokoza Park as they did not see any security guards at the park. According to the participants, the lights at Thokoza Park did not work which led to hijackings/robberies at nights. Figure 4.24 also indicates that majority of the participants responded that they would like some facilities to be added at the park. Security guards to improve safety, toilets, TV screen to watch sports, swimming pool and more sports field among the recommended additions by the participants (Table 4.4). In addition JCPZ official said they were planning to add a skating board facility, green gyms and upgrade the multipurpose court in the future. Based on the responses from the park users and JCPZ official, it can be observed that there is in congruence between the facilities that JCPZ wants to add compared to those frequently mentioned as preferred by the participants surveyed.

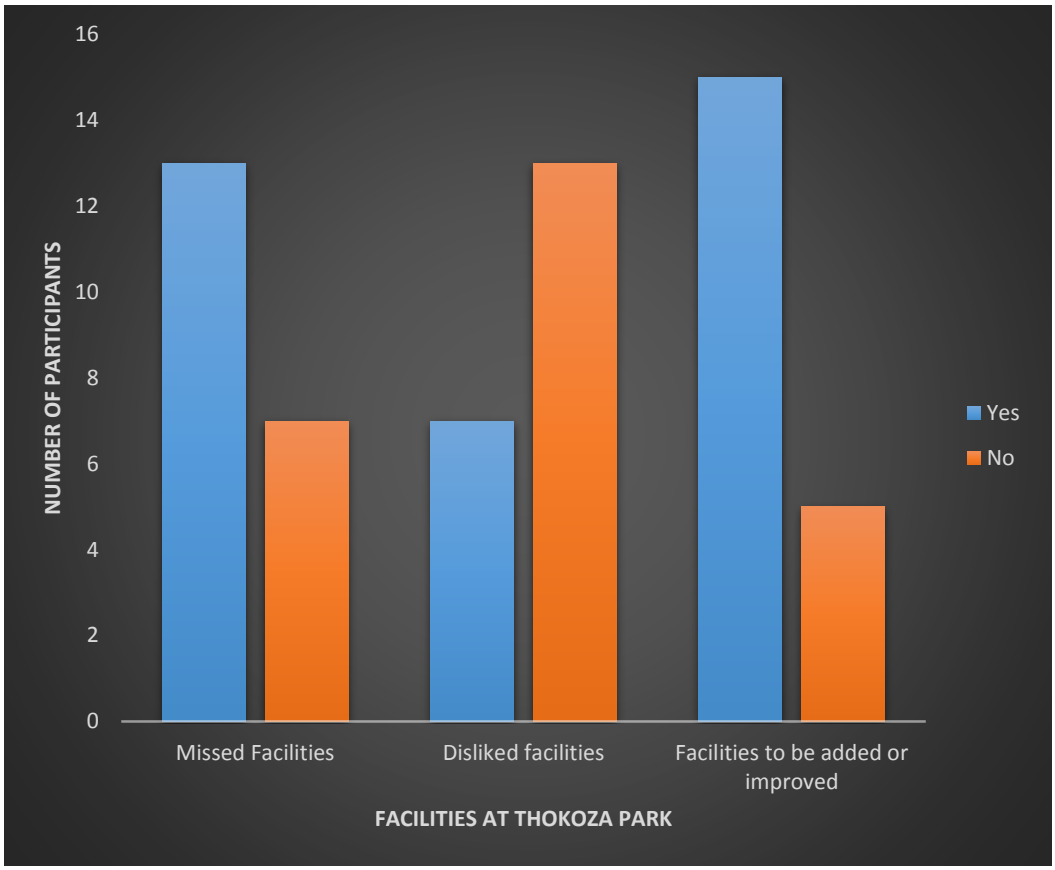

Figure 4.24: Participants that agreed/disagreed they would miss certain facilities if removed, facilities currently disliked and facilities to be added or improved

Table 4.4: Facilities participants revealed they would miss if removed, facilities they currently disliked and facilities they would like added or improved at Thokoza Park

Missed facilities	Disliked facilities	Facilities to be added or improved
Trees Play equipment The park as a whole Toilets Big TV screen	Police stopping drinking Safety shortfalls Closing of toilets Theft incidences Preventing people from parking in the designated parking area	Add more space for parking Functioning lights Swimming pool Big TV screen Security guards More sports field for soccer and chess Plugs for playing music

		More seating area Toilets

To find out about their sense of safety at Thokoza Park, participants were asked if they felt safe at Thokoza Park and to specify why they did not feel safe if they indicated as such. Majority of the respondents said they felt safe at the park while a few said they did not and some said they sometimes feel unsafe (4.25). Participants stated that they felt unsafe at the park due to lack of security guards around the park and absence of lighting for night use. One participant said he felt unsafe due to reports of children who go missing in the park. Participants suggested that there is a need for more security guards at the park and lighting should be improved especially because the park is an open park. One respondent suggested that the park be changed to a closed park to improve security. The park security guard was seen during direct observations although they often stayed in one place. During weekends and last day of observations there were police officers observed at the park. Some were using metro police cars while others were using "City of Joburg" and "Joburg City Parks" branded vehicles. In a manner similar to that of the security guards, the police officers were observed located in one spot rather than walking around the park.

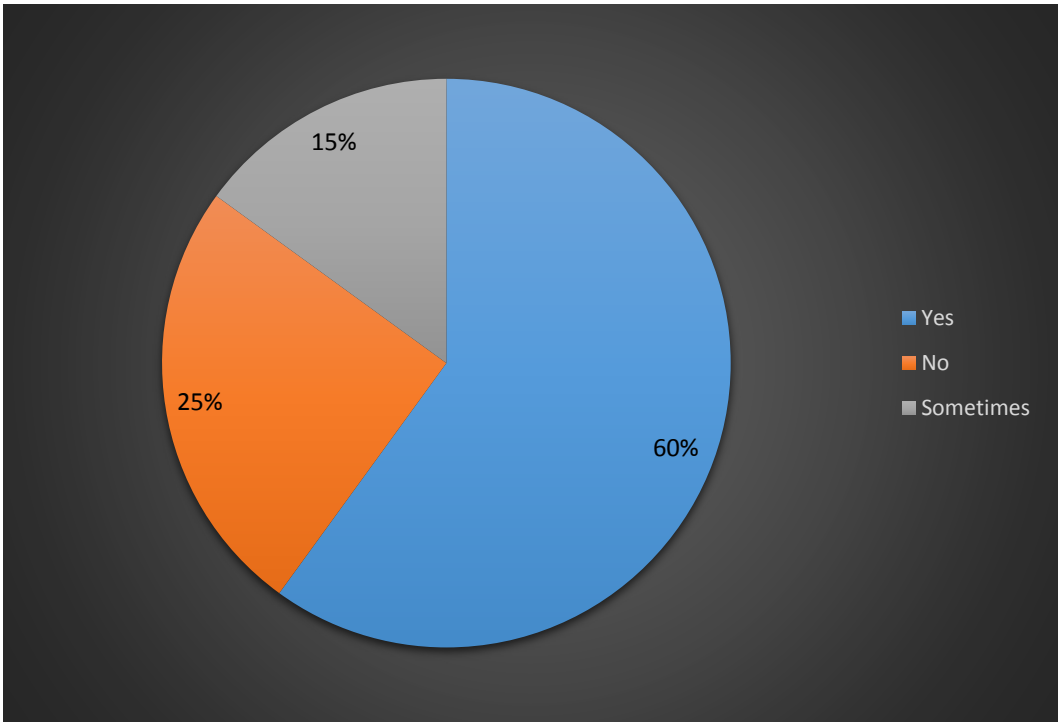

Figure 4.25: Participants who felt feeling safe at Thokoza Park

4.7. Place attachment

Place dependence and place identity were measured based on responses to ten statements. To examine place dependence participants were asked to respond to four statements: Thokoza Park provides me with what I need, Thokoza Park is the best place for me to fulfill my need(s), I am committed to Thokoza Park because it gives me what I need and Thokoza Park is the best alternative for my goals and needs (Figure 4.26). Majority of the participants agreed to the statements indicating the degree to which the participants feel Thokoza Park facilitates their recreational needs and goals. None of the participants strongly disagreed with the statements but a number of participants could neither agree nor disagree with the statements. This was particularly so with regard to the statement about Thokoza Park being the best alternative for their goals and needs.

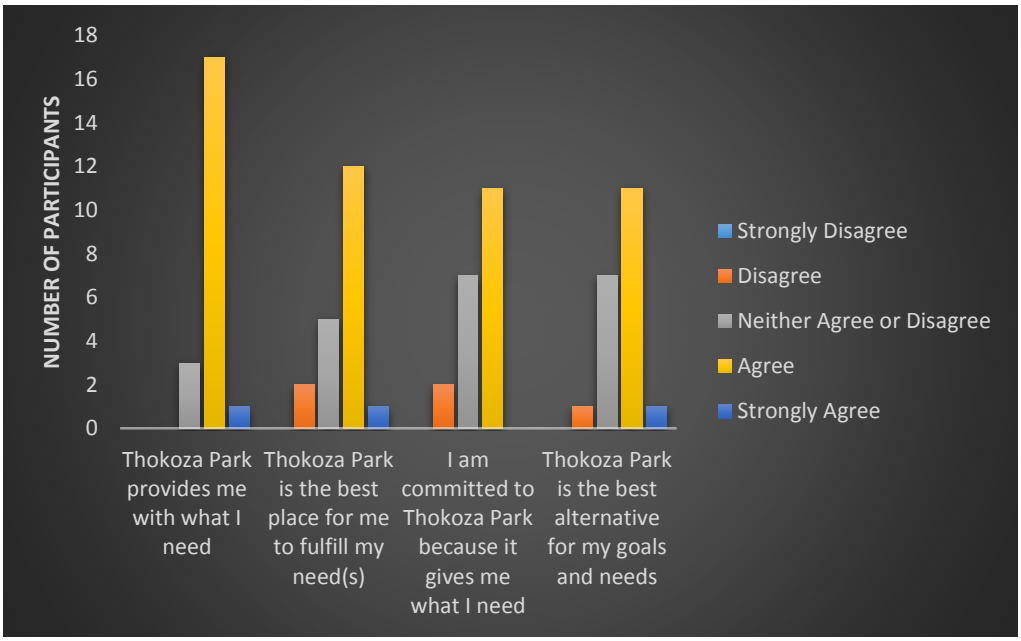

Figure 4.26: The degree to which participants feel Thokoza Park meets their recreational goals and needs

There was a high level of agreement with statements that were used to measure the degree to which the Thokoza Park users are emotionally attached to the park (Figure 4.27). Over 15 participants agreed with the following statements: I feel happy when I am at Thokoza Park and I feel excited when I am at Thokoza Park. Eleven out of the 20 participants disagreed with the statement that they feel scared while at Thokoza Park.

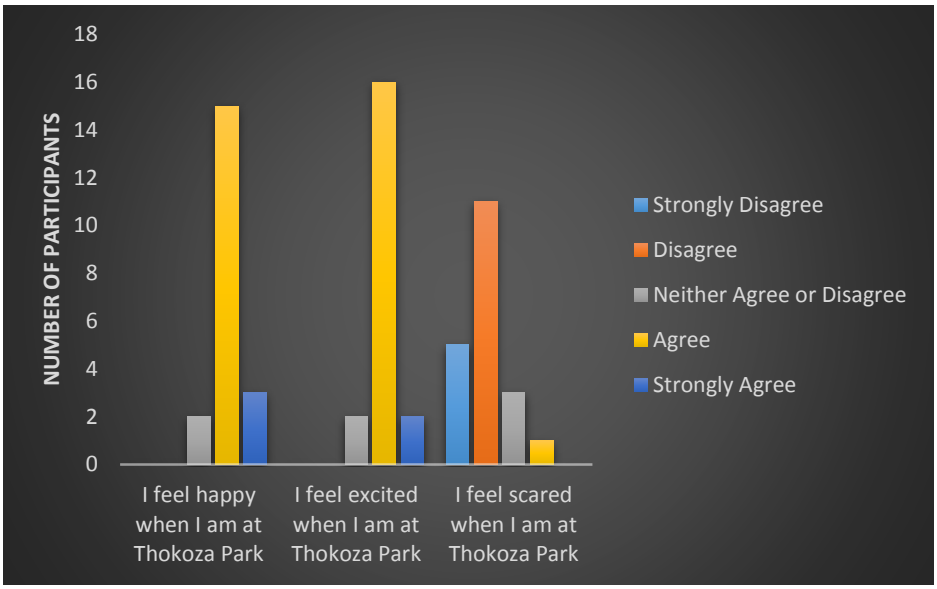

Figure 4.27: The degree to which participants are emotionally attached to Thokoza Park

There was a high level of agreement with the statements provided to the participants to measure place identity at Thokoza Park (Figure 4.28). Fifteen participants agreed that they identify with Thokoza Park while only half of the participants agreed that Thokoza Park is representative of who they are.

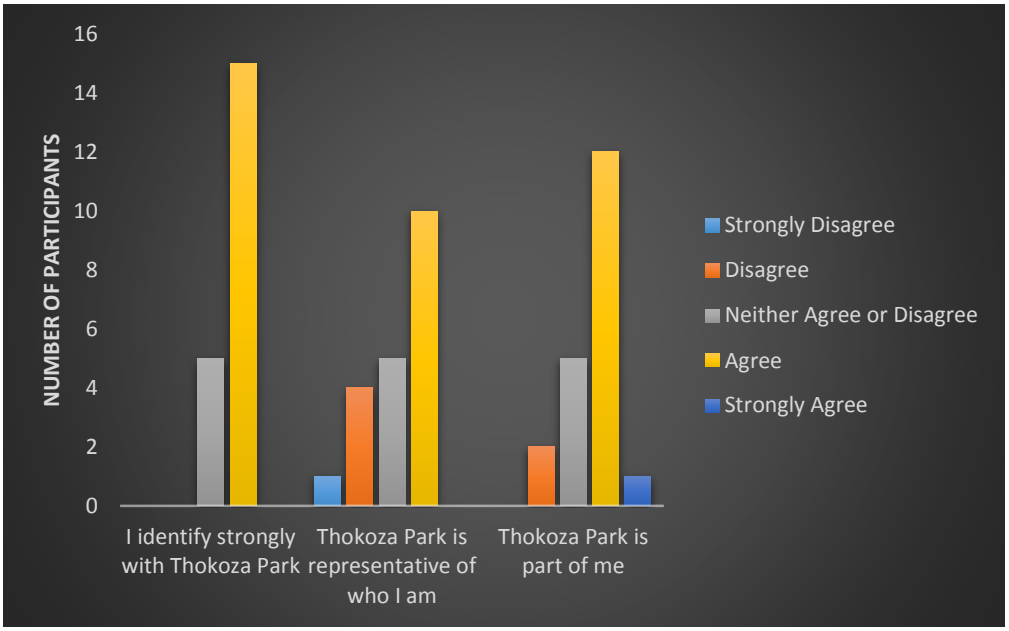

Figure 4.28: The degree to which participants identify with Thokoza Park

Ten statements were used towards assessing the level of place attachment. These incorporated place dependence, emotional attachment and place identity. Based on participant responses,

Thokoza Park users reported higher levels of emotional attachment to Thokoza Park compared to place identity. Place dependence had the lowest average (Table 4.5). Between males and females, males showed a slightly stronger place attachment compared to females, particularly with place dependence that has higher averages for males compared to females. However, results also indicate that more females than males felt vulnerable and unsafe at Thokoza Park given that more females said they felt scared while at Thokoza Park.

Table 4.5: Average scores of the 10 statements used to measure place attachment

	Statements	Average
Place Dependence	Thokoza Park provides me with what I need	3.95
	Thokoza Park is the best place for me to fulfill my need(s)	3.6
	I am committed to Thokoza Park because it gives me what I need	3.45
	Thokoza Park is the best alternative for my goals and needs	3.6
Emotional attachment	I feel happy when I am at Thokoza Park	4.05
	I feel excited when I am at Thokoza Park	4
	I feel scared when I am at Thokoza Park	2
Place Identity	I identify strongly with Thokoza Park	3.75
	Thokoza Park is representative of who I am	3.75
	Thokoza Park is part of me	3.6

The level of agreement was calculated using a 5-point scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree; 4 = Agree; and 5 = Strongly Agree. (refer to chapter 3 for further explanation page 45)

4.8. Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, the results obtained from the JCPZ interview, direct observations, photographs and questionnaire survey indicate that Thokoza Park is a well utilized park. The park has a number of facilities that allow for a diverse range of park users to be able to meet their outdoor recreational needs and goals. As guardians of the park JCPZ ensure that the park meets the standards of the park users in terms of safety and maintenance. Overall, park users were satisfied with the park which contributed to their high level of place attachment. However, there were also negative responses provided by the participant that could potentially decrease the level of use of Thokoza Park and place attachment of its users. In the following chapter (chapter 5), the results are discussed further and conclusions and recommendations are provided with the key focus addressing the main research questions of the study.

CHAPTER 5: PLACE ATTACHMENT AT THOKOZA PARK: KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Overview on core research objective and how it has been pursued

The aim of the study was to evolve a clearer understanding of the relationship between place attachment and levels of urban parks usage Johannesburg. Five key objectives and research questions were identified to guide the study towards a better understanding place attachment and level of use of urban recreational parks. To achieve the objectives of the study various tools were used. Firstly, key literature was reviewed in chapter two in order to understand the key themes of the research this was in chapter two. The study further used interviews, direct observations and questionnaires to identify the relationship between place attachment and level of use of urban recreational parks in chapter three and four. Interviews, direct observations and questionnaires investigated key aspects towards substantiating the level of use and place attachment at Thokoza Park. The key aspects are: the demographics of the users, the attitudes towards the park of the participants, the design of Thokoza Park and the level of place attachment of the participants to Thokoza Park.

Thus the aim of this chapter is to consolidate the results presented in chapter four with theoretical underpinnings and finally draws overall findings and recommendations for the study relative to research objectives and questions. The chapter first answers the research questions by drawing links between research questions and findings in attempt to show the relationship between level of use of urban recreational parks and place attachment. The chapter then draws out overall findings to in relation to the research question and working hypothesis. Finally, key recommendations are derived on how to increase the level of use of urban recreational parks in the City of Johannesburg followed by suggestions for future research.

5.2. Discussion: Drawing links between research question and findings

5.2.1 What is Thokoza Park as an urban park in both its physical terms and psychological dimensions of its users?

Based on the findings in Chapter 3, Thokoza Park has attractive physical attributes in terms of its location and facilities which allows for its psychologically connection with a diverse range of users. The park size accommodates a wide range of amenities for users. The design of the park makes it convenient for park users to utilize it in a variety of activities. Furthermore, the park offers them not only a place where users could be physically active, but also allows them to grow

spiritually and emotionally while utilizing the park. The sense of security at Thokoza Park enhances a positive direct experience and thus intensifies place attachment of the park.

5.2.2 How is Thokoza Park used by residents of Soweto and the City of Johannesburg?

This research question aimed at investigating the use of Thokoza Park by the residents of Soweto and the City of Johannesburg. Evidence suggests that Thokoza Park is extensively used by the residents of Moroka and the City of Johannesburg. This is supported by the number of visitors that were observed at Thokoza Park who are from these places. Furthermore, the time spent at Thokoza Park (duration) as well as the years spent utilizing the park (period of active use), suggests that although the numbers fluctuate between mornings and afternoons, between weekdays and weekends, Thokoza Park is constantly used by people of all socio-economic groups, ages and gender. However, most of the times, the park was used more by men compared to women.

The study further showed that the level of use was encouraged by the number of activities that participants are able to engage in while visiting the park. The park provides several features that are age and/or group specific and some that are for everyone. This design is important because it attracts a diverse range of users. The primary reason Thokoza Park users utilized the park was to meet friends and family, relax and get fresh air. Such activities, both active and passive, provide the participants with social, environmental and psychological benefits. The benefits contribute to the users' physical and mental wellbeing. The study by Chiesura (2004) found that park users were drawn to parks because there were able to relax and to reconnect to nature. Chiesura (2004) further noted that the activities enabled park users to have a sense of happiness and relaxation as well as positive attitude in life. Similarly a percentage of Thokoza Park users expressed a sense of relaxation while using the park, thus confirming that people of different background (culture, age and gender) can experience the same emotions while engaging in different activities in parks.

According to Erkip (1997) and Pasaogullari and Doratli (2004), accessibility and proximity are important features in contributing towards increased park utilization. To emphasize this point the study found that 90% of the participants spent less than 30 minutes to reach the park and 60% accessed the park on foot. This indicate that the park is easily accessible and in close proximity to the residents of Moroka as the man users of the park. It can however be added that as an urban recreational park, Thokoza Park also attracts users who do not live in close to the park with 10%

of the users spending more than 30 minutes to walk to the park while 45% either use a car or taxi to reach the park. This indicates that even though accessibility and proximity may be important they are not the only determining factors in the active utilization of Thokoza Park. Access to public transport connecting to the park is also important in encouraging people to use the park.

Often negativities towards parks utilisation are triggered by some features not being fully functional. This was evident in most responses regarding lighting and lack of visible lighting for Thokoza Park and could potentially result in park users utilizing alternative recreational parks to fulfil their outdoor recreational goals. This is because participants may feel insecure at Thokoza Park. The level-of-use could also decline if the managers do not improve the park and cater to the changing needs of the users. However, the participants did point out that to increase their level-of-use park managers could increase the number of facilities to allow visitors participate in more outdoor recreational activities of their choice.

5.2.3 What levels of place dependency and place identity do Thokoza Park users demonstrate towards the park?

This study assessed the relationship between level-of-use of Thokoza Park and place attachment. Using the two dimensions of place attachment, place dependency and place identity, the study found that the participants both depended on Thokoza Park to achieve their outdoor recreational goals and needs and furthermore they strongly identified with Thokoza Park as it resonated well with who they are. This shows there are strong bonds that Thokoza Park users have formed with the park. In this study, emotional attachment and place identity play an important role in the level of use of Thokoza Park compared to place dependency. However, it is to be noted that the difference is not substantial. This is similar to a study done by Smith *et al.* (2010) that found that place identity plays an important role in the use of recreational spaces. The results therefore indicate that although Thokoza Park users find the park to be able to facilitate their outdoor recreational goals, the users identified more with Thokoza Park which allowed them to enhance self-identity/ sense of belonging which would further increase a sense of community.

5.2.4 How is use-intensity related to place attachment among Thokoza Park users?

Use intensity appears to increase as place attachment increases among Thokoza Park users. This study found that there are various elements that are integral in influencing place attachment and use intensity. The study established that the level of use is first influenced by the park itself. This

arises from the park facilities provided, the way people feel about the park as well as how the park is designed. When users feel the park is able to facilitate their outdoor recreational goals in a safe environment, users are attracted to the place and continue to use the park. This is important as it influences the direct experience of park users in a positive way. The more time spent at the park the more people develop personal bonds to the park and further feel that the park is the best place to be able to achieve their outdoor goals compared to the alternatives available to them. The more time spent at Thokoza Park influences the direct experience of the users and thus the more attached the users become and this in return increases use of the park. Thus it can be concluded that both use intensity and place attachment are dependent on each and therefore influence each other almost in a circular feedback manner. The findings therefore suggest that there could be a circular relationship between use intensity and place attachment.

5.3 Overall Findings: Principles extracted for application to similar parks in Johannesburg

In contrast to other studies that have predominately studied the relationship between the role of urban parks to city residents (e.g. Chiesura, 2004; Rabare *et al.,* 2009), this study expanded the knowledge of urban parks by assessing the relationship between place attachment and the level of use of urban parks. Studies that have focused on the level-of-use of urban parks have limited their studies to accessibility and proximity being determinants of levels of park use (Pasaogullari and Doratli, 2004). To understand and appreciate the importance of urban parks in the city, and to its residents, this study investigated the importance of urban parks and how they facilitate the goals and needs, both functional and emotional, of park users thus increasing their level-of-use. The importance of this study was to highlight the issues that make urban parks desirable thus attracting city residents to continue to using the parks. Although other studies have evaluated and investigated the benefits that urban parks provide to city residents, more research is required to evaluate and assess what attracts city residents of all ages, gender and ethnicities to urban parks and what ensures that the parks offered to the public are continuously used.

In alignment with other similar studies, this study finds that place attachment plays an important role towards the use of Thokoza Park. In assessing place identity and place dependency, the study found that park users need to be emotionally attached to the park, be able to identify with it and be dependent on the park to meet their outdoor recreational needs. The study further found that the level of place attachment is influenced by the facilities that are provided at the park, trust

among community members as well as the design and the maintenance of the park. Although Thokoza Park is located in an area with high criminal activity. According to Crime Stats SA and South African Police Service, Moroka is one of the areas in Gauteng with the highest recorded criminal activities (Crime Stats SA 2015 and South African Police Service 2015). The most prevalent cases in the area include sexual offences, attempted murder, assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm, common assault, malicious injury to property, illegal possession of firearms and ammunition, drug-related crime, public violence, neglect and ill-treatment of children and kidnapping. With 1140 and 1571 cases of common assault and drug-related crime respectively, reported from April 2014 to April 2015 (South African Police Service 2015). However, this has not affected the use of the park. Thus, safety, design, maintenance and accessibility are important for park use but are only relevant if community members trust each other. Furthermore, there must be a need in the area for outdoor spaces such as urban recreational parks. In Moroka, households have small yards and as a result residents find it necessary to socialize in public spaces such as urban recreational parks whereas households with private gardens often create individualism and discourages a sense of community (Pim 1971). This results in community residents being able to engage with each other thus resulting in social networks being formed, which further reinforces trust among the residents. The ability of the users to engage with a number of activities at Thokoza Park encourages a diverse range of users to continue using the park as this contributes to an enjoyable experience individually and in groups. This further reinforces positive emotions towards the park. It can be argued that the users' well-being also improved as they further utilized the park. Louv (2008, pp.159) argues as: *"If children do not attach to the land, they will not reap the psychological and spiritual benefits they can glean from nature, nor will they feel a long term commitment to the environment, to the place".*

This emphasizes the significance of place attachment towards gaining the benefits provided by place, in this instance urban recreational park. As noted Chapter 2, urban recreational parks have a broad range of both direct and indirect benefits for the users. However, in order to fully reap the benefits, a strong sense of place attachment is needed particularly if park users want psychological and spiritual benefits arising from interacting with nature (Louv, 2008). Chiesura (2004) highlights that this contributes to the quality of life of the users and further play a critical role in making cities more sustainable.

It can therefore be acknowledged that there is a positive relationship between level-of-use and level of place attachment to urban parks. A strong level of use increases the level of place attachment and in return a strong level of place attachment contributes to an increase in park utilization. It can therefore be concluded that investment in urban recreational parks by park managers and policy makers should focus on increasing both the level-of-use and level of place attachment in order to ensure continuous utilization of urban parks as well as to attract new users to the parks. Furthermore, park managers and policy makers need to take into account the social dynamics such as need for urban recreational parks and levels of trust within communities when designing urban parks in order to ensure that the parks will be adequately utilised.

A conceptual diagram has been created showing the relationship between level-of-use of Thokoza Park and the level of place attachment as shown in Figure 6.1. The diagram shows how certain elements increase users' sense of place attachment and level of use of Thokoza Park. The diagram also suggests that there are certain elements that would contribute to the decline in level of place attachment in urban parks. Green lines represent interactions likely to enhance level-of-use and level-of-place attachment while the red lines represent interactions likely to contribute to a decline in level of use and level of place attachment based on insights for the Thokoza Park study.

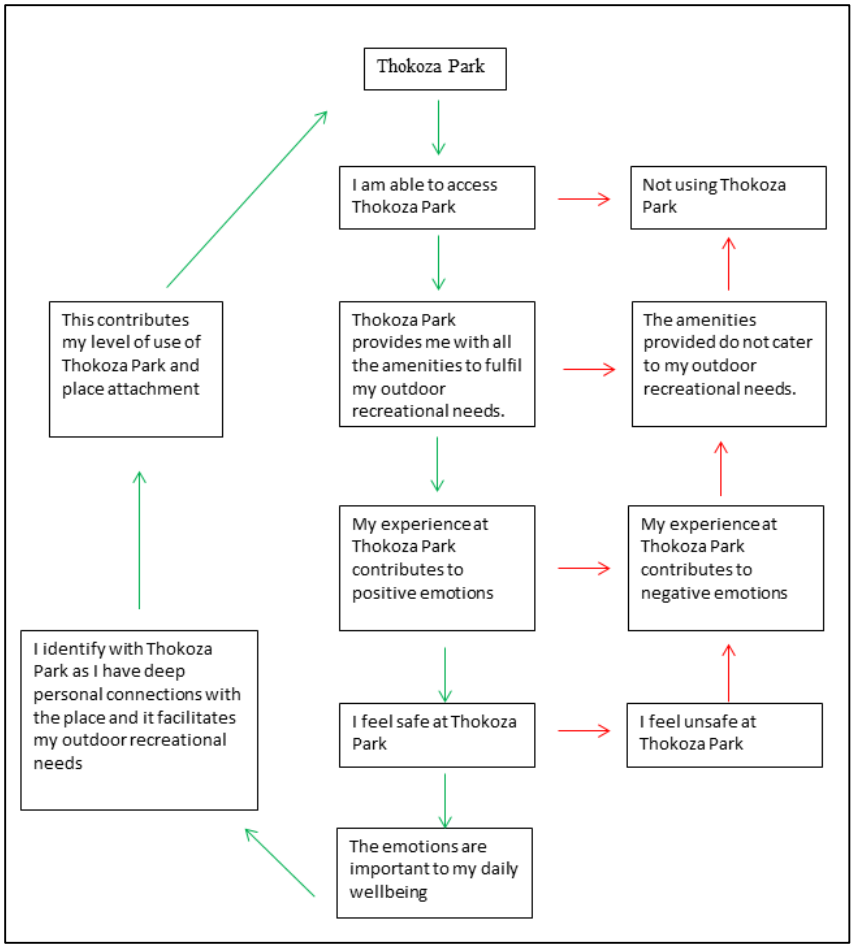

Figure 5.1: Conceptual framework on level of use of Thokoza Park

5.4. Key recommendations

There are several key recommendations that can be made to Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo (JCPZ) based on the literature appraised and the results of the case study. In order for JCPZ to improve user attraction in other parks in the City of Johannesburg, it would have to improve both the safety elements for urban park users and the condition of SA's biggest Metropolitan's parks. For example, JCPZ will need to increase the number of security guards at the parks; particularly for urban parks the size of Thokoza Park (more than one security guard will be needed). Furthermore, visible policing from the local police authorities may assist with park users feeling secure while using the park. With regards to the phenomenological study of urban parks, JCPZ will need to design parks that cater to the needs of the users and as recommended in several studies. This should be done through public participation and consultations with the users. Engaging users in planning and designing of public facilities that form part of their daily lives

results in a full understanding of context, thus facilitating the realization of responsive solutions. Public participation regarding the design of the park is therefore likely to enhance the level-of-use as the users will feel a sense of ownership towards the park.

Furthermore, the study finds that some participants were not happy with the parking rules at Thokoza Park which did not allow users to park in allocated parking area and being directed to park outside the park. This is could alienate a certain group of users who use private vehicles to access the park. It can then be recommended to JCPZ that to increase the level of use, park users should be allowed to use the allocated parking areas in to order to attract a diverse user group that uses different transportation systems to access the park.

Finally, for JCPZ to be able to improve the level of use of urban parks in the city the parks need to be:

- Aesthetically appealing and
- Able to cater to the needs of people of diverse age groups, socioeconomic status, ethnicities and genders.

This JCPZ can achieve by providing amenities that offer both passive and active engagements for adults, structured and unstructured play for children. Such elements will increase the level of place attachment of the users and a strong level of place attachment is formed when park users feel the park facilitates their outdoor recreational goals.

It is also important for JCPZ to understand the social dynamics of the community as this will also determine the use or non-use of urban recreational parks. Communities with weak community ties may not utilize urban recreational parks because of the “fear of the other” compared to communities with strong community networks that have already built strong trust with the residents and feel secure to share public space with their neighbours.

5.4.1 Future research

Future research addressing factors that contribute to increased use of urban recreational parks should investigate not only factors within the park boundaries but should also include external factors such as the socio-economic factors in the neighboring community as these may impact on the use or disuse of urban recreational parks. The study suggests that the phenomenological experience of community residents is important in influencing place attachment and level of use

of urban recreational parks. As pointed out in the delimitation of the study it would be ideal to include a counter case study where the level of use is weak. This will provide understanding of why similar urban recreational parks (size, design and amenities) from different neighborhoods are used differently (one park being more utilized than the other).

"*Unlike television, nature does not steal time; it amplifies it*." (Louv 2008, pp.7)

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE: JCPZ REPRESENTATIVE

Introducing JCP's profession/role

Area	
Time	
Day	
Interviewer	

1. What is your job title?
2. What does your position entail?
3. How long have you been working for JCPZ?

JCPZ and urban parks

1. What kind of urban parks do you offer to park users in Johannesburg?
2. How does JCPZ understand the role of urban parks?
3. Are community members involved in urban park programs?
4. In your opinion, are City of Johannesburg dwellers regular users of urban parks?

Thokoza Park

1. What type of urban park is Thokoza Park?
2. Does JCPZ have community engagements at Thokoza Park?
3. If yes, what kind of community engagements and how long have they been running?
4. What kind of maintenance programs do you have at Thokoza Park and how often is Thokoza Park maintained?
5. Does JCPZ have a system of monitoring the use of Thokoza Park?
    a. If yes, over the past years have you noticed an increase or decrease in the use of Thokoza Park?
6. What are the concerns and challenges currently faced by JCPZ with Thokoza Park in terms of its physical form or people?
7. Are there any future plans to improve or add more facilities to Thokoza Park?

APPENDIX 2: PERMISSION FROM JCPZ

Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo (NPC)

City Parks House
40 De Korte Street
Braamfontein

P O Box 2824
Johannesburg
2000

Tel +27(0) 11 712 6600
Fax +27(0) 11 403 4495
www.jhbcityparks.com

14 NOVEMBER 2014

Ms. Hlengiwe Radebe

Global Change and Sustainability Research Institute

School of Animal, Plant and Environmental Sciences

University of the Witwatersrand

Dear Ms. Radebe

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH JOHANNESBURG CITY PARKS AND ZOO OFFICIALS

Your email dated 10 November 2014 with regard to the above mentioned as reference.

On behalf of Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo it is a pleasure to herewith grant you permission to conduct interviews with Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo officials for purpose of your research for your Masters Project in Thokoza Park in Moroka, Soweto, as per your request.

Should you need any other assistance in this regard, please don't hesitate to contact me.

We wish you success with your research project and will appreciate it if you could kindly keep us informed of your progress and the outcomes of your research in this regard.

Yours sincerely

Ms. Ayanda Roji
General Manager: Corporate Research, Policy and Knowledge Management
Office of the Managing Director

Directors: Adv M Madumise (Chairperson), B Nelana (Managing Director), S R Bogatsu, M Dolamo, V Leketi, T Mashanda, M Makgonye, A Rajah, M Simelane, M Sedite (CFO) A Siongwe (Company Secretary)

Reg No: 2000/028782/08

APPENDIX 3: OBSERVATION GUIDELINES

Area			
Time	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Day			
Data collector			

Participant (Urban park users) Observation

1. Observation of urban park users' activities
    a. Human Traffic
        - Number of men compared to women.
        - Number of children compared to adults.
    b. Physical behavior and gestures
        - Activities that urban park users engage in, this will note:
            - the different ages doing the activity,
            - Different genders doing the activities,
            - the feelings/emotions expressed at the time,
            - will note if the activity is done alone or with others,
            - duration of the activity

Activities	Evaluation and description
Solitary activities (being alone, reading, walking through the park, etc.)	
Social activities (playing with children, talking with friends, etc.)	
Food-related activities (picnicking, eating, etc.)	
Team activities (soccer, basketball, chess, Frisbee, etc.)	
Physical exercises (running/jogging/ walking, bicycling, etc.)	

Experiential activities (aerobics, TaiChi, Qigong, yoga, etc.)	
Community activities (festivals, parties, etc.)	
Educational activities (animal-/birdwatching, nature study, school/community programs etc.)	

Thokoza Park physical design observation

1. Evaluation Criteria of Thokoza Park

Urban Park Design – features	**Yes/No**	**Count**	**Evaluation Criteria and description**
Presence of seating areas			
Presence of public toilets			
Presence of entrance points			
Presence of fountain			
Presence of rubbish bins			
Presence of signage and maps (signage regarding dogs, signage restricting other activities, etc.)			
Presence of lighting along paths			
Presence of parking			
Presence of braai facilities			
Presence of walking trails			
Presence of play equipment for children			
Presence of recreational facilities (e.g. sports facilities)			
Maintenance of Thokoza Park			
Presence of policing (security)			
Landscape design (trees, grasses)			

Presence of shade or sheltered areas (manmade)			
Presence of a water feature (e.g. river, creek)			

Legend:

1. Not at all – not present

2. Poor – present but inadequate and not in good condition

3. Adequate - present; acceptable

4. Good - present; satisfactory

5. Excellent – present, more than enough and well maintained

2. What is the overall image of Thokoza Park?

APPENDIX 4: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION 1: Demographic information

Area			
Time	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Day			
Data collector			

a) Gender (Please tick the appropriate box):

Female		Male	

b) Age (years) (Please tick the appropriate box):

18-21	
22-30	
31-40	
41-50	
51-60	
Over 60	

c) Education (Highest level completed) (Please tick the appropriate box):

No schooling	
Primary level	
High school level	
Matric level	
Higher Education (certificate, diploma, degree)	

d) Employment (Please tick the appropriate box):

Employed full time	
Employed part-time	

Unemployed	
Other (specify)	

e) Where do you live (location/suburb)?

SECTION 2: Motives for using Thokoza Park

1. How long have you been coming to Thokoza Park?

2. How often do you visit Thokoza Park per week? (Please tick the appropriate box)

Once a week	
Twice a week	
Threes a week	
More than three times	

3. Which days of the week, do you often come to Thokoza Park (Please tick the appropriate box)?

Weekdays	
Weekends	

4. How long are your visits to Thokoza Park per day?

5. How long does it take you to get to Thokoza Park from your home?

6. What type of transport do you utilize to get to Thokoza Park? (Please tick all appropriate boxes)

Walk	
Bike	
Bus	
Car	
Taxi	
Other	

7. Do you usually come by yourself or with others?

a. If with others, who? (Please tick all the appropriate boxes)

Family	
Friends	
Partner	
Other (please specify)	

8. Why do you come to Thokoza Park (Please tick all appropriate activities)?

Picnic	
Sport	
To relax	
Spend time with children	
To meet friends and family	
To escape from the city	
To walk the dog	
To listen and observe nature	

To meditate	
To get inspiration	
Fresh air	
Other (please specify)	

9. Which activities, from the list you marked above do you participate in regularly?

10. Do you experience any of the emotions listed below when spending time at Thokoza Park (Please tick all appropriate answers)?

Sense of relaxation	
Sense of relief from stress	
Sense of life	
Peace and quiet	
Freedom	
Unity with self	
Unity with nature	
Luck	
Adventure	
Happiness	
I don't know	
Other (please specify)	

11. How important are these feelings for your daily wellbeing? Using the following scale, please tick a number from 1 to 5 that best reflects your level of agreement.

1. Not important at all	
2. Not important	
3. Important	

4. Very important	
5. Essential	

12. Are there any Thokoza Park facilities that you would miss if they were removed from the park (Please tick the appropriate answer)?

Yes	
No	

a. If yes, what are those Thokoza Park facilities?

b. What is special about these Thokoza Park facilities?

13. Are there facilities right now that make you dislike Thokoza Park? (Please tick the appropriate answer)

Yes	
No	

a. If yes, please elaborate.

14. Do you feel safe when visiting Thokoza Park (Please tick the appropriate answer)?

Yes	
No	

a. If no, what makes you feel unsafe?

b. What do you think can be done to make you feel safe?

15. Are there things/activities/programs you would like added or improved at Thokoza Park? (Please tick the appropriate answer)

Yes	
No	

a. If yes, please elaborate?

SECTION 3: Urban Park Design Perception

16. The following statements refer to your perceptions of how you view how you view Thokoza Park. Using the following statements choose the best statement that reflects your level of agreement with the following statements. Please mark each statement in the space provided.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Thokoza Park is well organized	
Thokoza Park has a convenient layout	
Thokoza Park is well designed	

SECTION 4: Place Dependence

17. The following statements refer to the degree to which you feel that the Thokoza Park facilitates your goals (socializing, etc…). Using the following statements choose the best

statement that reflects your level of agreement with the following statements. Please mark each statement in the space provided.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Thokoza Park provides me with what I need	
Thokoza Park is the best place for me to fulfill my need(s)	
I am committed to Thokoza Park because it gives me what I need	
Thokoza Park is the best alternative for my goals and needs	

18. The following statements refer to the degree to which you are emotionally attached to Thokoza Park. Think about feelings you may have when you at Thokoza Park. Using the following statements choose the best statement that reflects your level of agreement with the following statements. Please mark each statement in the space provided.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

I feel happy when I am at Thokoza Park	
I feel excited when I am at Thokoza Park	
I feel scared when I am at Thokoza Park	

SECTION 5: Place Identity

19. The following statements refer to the degree to which you identify with Thokoza Park. Using the following statements choose the best statement that reflects your level of

agreement with the following statements. Please mark each statement in the space provided.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither Agree or Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

I identify strongly with Thokoza Park	
Thokoza Park is representative of who I am	
Thokoza Park is part of me	

APPENDIX 5: PARTICIPATION INFORMATION SHEET FOR URBAN PARK USERS

Research Report Title: The use of recreational urban parks in Johannesburg: A phenomenological study of place attachment in Thokoza Park in Moroka, Soweto

Good day,

My name is Hlengiwe Radebe and I am currently studying the University of the Witwatersrand doing Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Global Change Studies. In fulfilment of the degree, I am conducting a research study on urban parks and place attachment. The objective of the research study is to "to further explore the concept of place attachment based on urban parks of the City of Johannesburg with Thokoza Park as a case study". To be able to achieve the objective of the research study, I am seeking your participation to complete the questionnaire.

Your participation into the questionnaire will assist me in informing Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo how they can better serve current users of urban parks and attract new urban park users. Furthermore, the study could assist Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo and policy makers to raise awareness of urban parks as essential contributors to sustainable cities and lifestyle.

I therefore wish to invite you to participate in this study. Your participation is entirely voluntary and refusal to participate will not be held against you in any way. If you agree to participate, I shall ask you to respond to the questionnaire which will take 10 - 15 minutes to complete. You may withdraw from the study at any time and you may also refuse to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with answering.

Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report.

Please feel free to pose any questions regarding this research. I shall answer them to the best of my ability. I may be contacted via email (**Hlengiwe.Radebe@students.wits.ac.za**), or via my supervisor, **Dr. Daniel Irurah (Daniel.Irurah@wits.ac.za)**. Should you wish to receive a summary of the results of this research; an abstract will be made available on request. There will be no rewards for participating in this research.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in the research.

Yours sincerely,

Hlengiwe Radebe

APPENDIX 6: CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Research Report Title: The use of recreational urban parks in Johannesburg: A phenomenological study of place attachment in Thokoza Park in Moroka, Soweto

I have been informed of the purpose for this research and I hereby give my consent to be a participant for the research study. The purpose and procedures of the study have been explained to me. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to answer any particular items or withdraw from the study at any time as it is within my rights. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential.

Name of participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

APPENDIX 7: ETHICS CLEARANCE

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Radebe

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER H14/10/13**
PROJECT TITLE	The use of recreational urban parks in Johannesburg: A phenomenological study of place attachment in Thokoza park in Moroka, Soweto
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Ms H Radebe
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Animal, Plant & Environmental Sciences
DATE CONSIDERED	24 October 2014
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved Unconditionally
EXPIRY DATE	03/11/2016

DATE 04/11/2014 **CHAIRPERSON** _____ (Professor T Milani)

cc: Supervisor : Prof D Irurah

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10000, 10th Floor, Senate House, University.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

_____ _____/_____/_____
Signature **Date**

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES