

**USE OF PLAY PARKS IN LUSAKA CITY**

**by**

**Nawa Mushiba**

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Requirements of the Degree of Master of Science in Spatial Planning**

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work. If published work or material from the candidate's work has been incorporated, adequate reference will be provided. It has not previously been submitted for any other degree or examination at the University of Zambia or any other university. It has; therefore, been submitted for the Master of Science in Spatial Planning Degree at the University of Zambia.

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## APPROVAL

This dissertation, by Nawa Mushiba, has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Science in Spatial Planning Degree by the University of Zambia.

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Examiner 1	Signature	Date
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Examiner 2	Signature	Date
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Examiner 3	Signature	Date
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Chairperson Board of Examination	Signature	Date
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Supervisor	Signature	Date

## ABSTRACT

The study examined the use of play parks in Lusaka City. Lusaka incorporated play parks in its city's plan based on Ebenezer Howard's 'Garden City' Concept as a way of beautifying the city and benefiting from a number of attributes relating to people's mental health, social, environmental, physical and economic life. Despite these immense benefits, it is not clear how people use play parks in Lusaka City. Thus, this study sought to find out how people in Lusaka City utilise play parks and establish the factors which influence their use. The study further examined the extent to which people used play parks in the city and whether there were differences in this use across different segments of the urban population, seeing that there is no policy guiding play park services in Zambia. The three play parks which were selected for this study were Joy Park and Gardens, located in Matero, Libala Play Park in Libala Stage II and Havillah Play Park and Gardens in Rhodes Park. A case study approach was followed, using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten key informants who were purposively sampled, while a questionnaire survey was used to collect data from forty-five play park visitors who were conveniently sampled. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic and content analysis, whereas quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics. The study findings indicate that play parks in Lusaka City are used for social, spiritual, economical, physical activity and bio-diversity reasons. The study findings show that people's use of play parks is mainly determined by the quality of a play park (44.1%), availability of facilities (10.1%), accessibility (7.3%) and safety of a play park (11%). Others (27.5%) visit play parks because of the natural and undisturbed environment found at the play park which offers them escape (refugee) from fast paced urban life and an opportunity to reflect. The main users of play parks are families, school-going children and college students, work groups and religious groups. These groups of people utilise play parks based on their levels of education, occupation and income status. The study findings show that people from Medium Density Areas use play parks the most and the majority of play park visitors are in formal employment. Further, most play park visitors have either secondary education (51.1%) or tertiary education (35.1%). Lusaka City Council (LCC) has leased all its play parks to the private sector, but the lack of policy on the use of play parks has adversely affected the efficiency and effectiveness in running these play parks. The study recommends the formulation of policy to clearly set out rules and expectations for the delivery of play park services to the public.

**Key Words:** Play Parks; Use; Havillah; Libala, Joy; Lusaka

## **DEDICATION**

To God the Almighty for the gift of life; I am alive today because you still have a task for me. This dissertation is also dedicated to my father, Mr. Victor Mutangelwa Mwananembo Mushiba (late) and my mother, Mrs Patricia Nawa Mushiba. You instilled the value of education in me, at a very tender age. You always trusted and expected the very best from me. Thank you and let God continue blessing you for the gift of education you gave to me.

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## ACRONYMS

ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics  
ACTPSA A Chance to Play South Africa  
ACRWC African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child  
CSO Central Statistical Office  
DW Dwellings  
ECE Early Childhood Learning Centre  
EEA European Environment Agency  
GRZ Government of the Republic of Zambia  
GPS Global Positioning System  
HA Hectare  
ITCZ Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone  
JICA Japanese International Cooperation Agency  
LCC Lusaka City Council  
LWSC Lusaka Water and Sewerage Company  
PA Physical Activity  
MASL Metres Above Sea Level  
MMD Movement for Multi-Party Democracy  
MLGH Ministry of Local Government and Housing  
LCC Lusaka City Council  
LCMDP Lusaka Comprehensive Master Development Plan  
LCMS Living Conditions Monitoring Survey  
LGSS Local Government Salary Scale  
SAP Structural Adjustment Programme  
SES Socio-economic Status  
SPSS Statistical Package for the Social Sciences  
UK United Kingdom  
UN United Nations  
UNCRC United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child



UNEP United Nations Environment Programme

UNFPA United Nations Fund for Population Activities

URP Urban and Regional Plan

ZMK Zambian Kwacha



# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

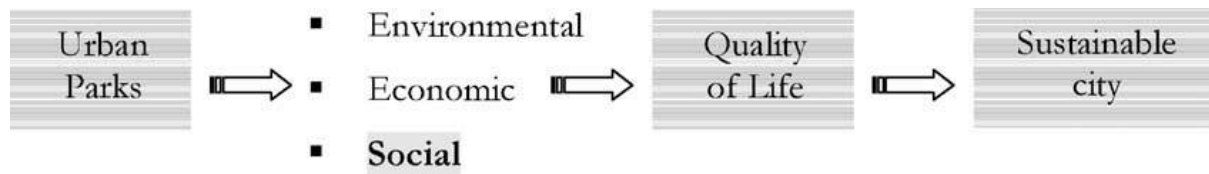
This chapter gives the background information of the study. It also presents the statement of the problem, aim, objectives, research questions and the significance of the study on the use of play parks in Lusaka City.

## 1.1. Background

Ebenezer Howard's town planning ideas at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century sought to create attractive towns through well designed green open spaces (Howard, 1965). One way of having green spaces in a city is by incorporating play parks in the city's plans by leaving sufficient space for these facilities. Lusaka is one of the cities that incorporated play parks in its design based on Ebenezer Howard's 'Garden City' Concept (William, 1986).

Play parks in urban areas, which allow for public use, are some of the most democratic spaces that exist (Worpole and Greenhalgh, 1996). They provide opportunities for a wide range of activities and benefits relating to many different areas of life; social, environmental, physical and mental health and economic (Dunnett *et al.*, 2002). For instance, play parks can be an essential element in creating a sense of place that can be important in nurturing a community spirit. They provide areas for community social mixing, the organisation of social events, community involvement and volunteering (McInroy and MacDonald, 2005). Higher exposure to, or availability of green spaces found in play parks within residential areas has been associated with a lower prevalence of health complications such as coronary heart disease, respiratory diseases, and depression (Wood *et al.*, 2011; Kuh and Cooper, 1992). In addition to promoting good health, play parks are essential elements in the sustainability of cities. They provide ecosystem services, such as the mitigation of urban floods (Wheater *et al.*, 2007). The vegetation found in play parks also plays a bio-diversity role in the natural environment by helping to cool the air and in absorbing atmospheric pollutants (Littlefair *et al.*, 2000). Play Parks also contribute directly to the local and regional economy through tourism, employment (on and off parks) and expenditure on park management and services. Play parks are also an asset that encourage inward investment to the city, raise property values and encourage private and public sector investment in services and facilities. Such benefits clearly enhance the quality of life of the increasing millions of people who live in urban areas. In fact, the availability of green spaces in a city, particularly play parks, is one of

the most important aspects in ascertaining a city's liveability or sustainability (Cilliers *et al.*, 2012; Timmer and Seymoar, 2006) as shown in Figure 1.1.



**Figure 1.1: Play Parks Enhance Quality of Life of Cities**

**Source: Chiesura, 2004: 131**

To realise the full potential of these benefits, people need to be able to access and use play parks when and how they want to. Sadly, not everyone has access to play parks in the global south. The establishment and maintenance of play parks have not been prioritised in the development agenda of some cities in Africa, including Zambia (Mensah, 2014) since they have to compete with other, often higher, policy priorities like education, health care, public pensions and public safety for the available limited funds (Rabare *et al.*, 2009; Gilroy, 2013). Other than this, play parks and other green spaces face pressures of urbanization, insufficient operation of urban planning regulations and socio-economic and political challenges (Mensah, 2014). In addition to this, urban planning regulations operating in some Sub-Saharan African Countries are archaic and were merely adopted from their former colonial masters (Njoh, 2009; Awuah *et al.*, 2010). Zambia also inherited the Town and Country Planning Act Chapter 283 of the Laws of Zambia from England and this was the piece of legislation which guided all urban planning activities in Zambia since independence, in 1964 (Katongo, 2005) until it was repealed in 2015 and replaced by the Urban and Regional Planning Act No. 3 of 2015 (GRZ, 2015). However, both pieces of legislation (statutes) have worked in isolation since they have not been accompanied by any Policy to guide the maintenance and use of play parks in Zambia. There has been; therefore, no plan of action setting out clear rules and expectations for the delivery of play park services and recreational facilities to the public (Vargas-Hernandez *et al.*, 2011).

This bleak background has; consequently, raised concerns regarding how play parks operate in Lusaka City and whether the community benefits from having play parks in their environment. All in all, it is not clear how these important open spaces are maintained and if they have lived up to the initial vision of Ebenezer Howard's 'Garden City' concept in any

way. It is in this regard that this study sought to find out how people in Lusaka City utilise play parks and the factors which influence this use. The study further examines the extent to which different socio-economic groups use play parks in the city and whether there are variations in this use across different segments of the urban population.

### **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Play parks play an important role in people's lives. Landes (2004) observes that recreation and play parks offer a diversion from routine, lifelong learning, self-discovery, cultural growth and life enrichment opportunities to residents of all ages. They offer a unique setting within the urban landscape, providing opportunities for physical activity, enjoyment of nature, social interaction, and escape (Hayward and Weitzer, 1984). Huttenmoser *et al.*, (1995) observe that lack of access to play parks and consequently the inability to engage in play deprives children of experiences that are regarded as developmentally essential and result in those affected being both biologically and socially disabled. Lack of exercise when young can in turn create problems in adulthood, such as diabetes and heart disease and a lack of exercise also threatens the mental wellbeing of most people in the world, given the stressful lives that many now lead (Kuh and Cooper, 1992). Despite these and many other immense benefits that can be derived from people's use of play parks, it is not clear how and to what extent people utilise these important green spaces in Lusaka City. Furthermore, the knowledge on this subject is scanty since much of the studies on green spaces are skewed towards the European sub-region and other parts of the world (Mensah, 2014). Most studies on Africa focus on the use of green spaces in general, without any specific reference to play parks. In addition to this, there seems to be no Urban Planning Policy to guide the management and use of play parks and other recreational facilities in Zambia. This study; therefore, examined how people use play parks in Lusaka City and also established whether there are differences in this use of play parks across different classes of society.

### **1.3. Aim**

- a. To examine how people use play parks in Lusaka City
- b. To ascertain whether there are differences in play park use across different segments of the urban population

### **1.4. Objectives**

- a. To investigate the nature of play park use in Lusaka City
- b. To establish factors that influence the use of play parks in Lusaka City

- c. To assess levels of play park use among different socio-economic groups in the city
- d. To examine how the lack of an Urban Planning Policy affects the use of play parks and recreation facilities

### **1.5. Research Questions**

- a. What is the nature of play park use in Lusaka City?
- b. What factors determine the use of play parks in Lusaka City?
- c. What are the levels of play park use across different socio-economic groups in society?
- d. What implications does the lack of an urban planning policy have on play park use and other recreation facilities?

### **1.6. Significance of the Study**

All over the world, play parks are known for their curative role in people's health and their part in conserving the environment. Play parks enrich the beauty or attractiveness of the city and having play parks or green spaces in a city is one of the ways of ascertaining a city's liveability or sustainability (Timmer and Seymoar, 2006). Play parks' role in social cohesion and their importance in the economic sector can never be over emphasised. For instance, well-designed play parks have a role in reducing crime in the community (McKay, 1998; Sherer, 2006). Play parks also accord children a chance to play, which is cardinal to their physical and cognitive development (Wood *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, the information that has been generated from this research will add to the body of knowledge on the use of play parks in Lusaka City and Zambia at large. The results of this study will help to inform urban planning and policy. In addition to this, the study will act as a basis for further research, considering that there is currently little information available on this subject.

### **1.7. Organisation of the Dissertation**

The dissertation is divided into six chapters. The first chapter presents the background information, statement of the problem, aim, objectives, research questions and the significance of the study. The second chapter reviews relevant literature on play parks, focusing on conceptual and other relevant aspects of the study while the third chapter gives a description of the study area. Chapter Four dwells on the research methods used in the study. Results of the study are discussed in Chapter Five. Chapter Six gives a summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This Chapter presents a review of literature on play parks, focusing on conceptual issues and a number of themes relevant to the study.

### **2.2. The Concept of a ‘Play Park’**

The public open spaces of a city are all those areas open to people’s freely chosen and spontaneous activities (Lynch, 1960). Lynch (1960) notes that the urban open space comprises both green and non-green areas intended to satisfy various needs of both residents and visitors. Play parks are classified under green areas, which also include green covers, ornamental plants, tree-lined streets, and playgrounds, green areas in front of and between residential buildings, gardens, cemeteries, and natural areas with trees. Akin to Lynch (1960), Marmaras (2007) classifies a play park under open spaces such as gardens, reserves, road reserves and other parcels of land owned and or managed by the Council, which are accessible to the public and are designated for open space purposes such as use for passive, active, formal and informal recreation as well as for conservation purposes. Not too far from this definition are Lloyd and Auld (2003) who argue that a play park is usually land that has been reserved for the purpose of formal and informal sport and recreation, preservation of natural environments, provision of green space and/or urban storm water management.

Historically, urban parks emerged from public spaces that were used as grazing land in cities or towns in Western Europe and New England towns in the United States during the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Jellicoe, 1975). Over time, these grazing lands became important spaces in the city as people started to use them for other purposes. The modern concept of the urban park started in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, during the Industrial Revolution when planners recognized that urban parks were important features that could improve the quality of urban life, which declined during the rapid industrialization (Jellicoe, 1975; Solomon, 2005). Play parks thus became places to escape from the stresses of chaotic industrial cities. This idea spread to the United States, England, and mainland Europe. Cities in Sweden, Denmark, and Holland started to develop urban parks to improve the quality of their cities. Apart from rapid industrialization, mass urban migration was another factor that stimulated the growth of urban parks (Jellicoe, 1975; Solomon, 2005). Crowded urban spaces, due to an influx of people, massively degraded the

quality of urban life. Therefore, planners were trying to use play parks as a way to reform the city socially as well as to see how urban parks could increase the tranquility and comfort of urban life by providing a space for citizens to escape from the squalor and stress that characterized much of their daily routine (Hayward and Weitzer, 1984; Cranz, 2008).

Today, urban parks and gardens originate primarily from municipal or state planning and associated zoning laws (Stanley, 2012). Other than this, most cities have been influenced by planning concepts such as the garden city, green belt, green fingers and greenways which highlight the need to preserve the natural environment of urban areas by incorporating many green spaces into the design of cities (Stanley, 2012). The plan of the city of Lusaka, for example, was based on Ebenezer Howard's 'Garden City' Concept.

According to Francis (2009), entrance into a play park should be free of charge and must be open to all the people, regardless of their ethnic group, origin, age or gender. However, Funsho (2015) argues that it is only the services provided by public enterprises which may be offered without charge as such enterprises seldom consider profits from their services. Otherwise, fee payment on recreational facilities is a global phenomenon and privately owned recreational centres are fee-charging ventures (Funsho, 2015). In addition to this, play parks, like many other green spaces, are a potential net revenue earner (Rosenberg, 1996). For example, in Australia's carbon market, local authorities could foreseeably generate revenue from the carbon sequestering capacities of their urban green spaces, thereby providing a revenue stream for green space upkeep and for developing new parks and recreational facilities (Bryne and Sipe, 2010). According to Bryne and Sipe (2010), many parks in France, England, the United States, China and other countries run food concessions, kiosks, cafés, restaurants, beer gardens, equipment rental facilities and other sympathetic commercial uses which provide a revenue stream to municipalities for funding on-going maintenance and upkeep.

Francis (2009), notes that a play park ought to be transparent or visible if it is to guarantee safety. A play park must also provide users with a sense of attachment and identity, both emotionally and physically, because the identity of a place connects it to its users and to the city (Francis, 2009). Bryne and Sipe (2010) observed that no two parks are the same. Parks differ according to their age, levels of maintenance, facilities, and size - partly due to the philosophy that motivated their creation and partly due to land development processes and municipal fiscal constraints. In certain cases, adult designed spaces might be unsuccessful in



meeting children's needs or expectations in relation to outdoor play (Wood and Martin, 2010).

### **2.2.1. Facilities Found at a Play Park**

Most municipalities endeavour to provide play parks that are evenly distributed, safe, accessible, and designed to meet the needs of urban children and their families (Portland Parks and Recreation, 2008). Play parks which provide playgrounds for children, for example, are made up of various components. These may include traditional and contemporary playground equipment, such as slides, swings and climbing frames as well as other ancillary items such as fences, gates, litter bins, bicycle racks, planting and signs (Yearley and Berlinski, 2008). According to Wood and Martin (2010), such play grounds should have natural elements such as sand and water to encourage interaction and socialisation. Furthermore, these play grounds ought to provide risk and challenge, but also be safe and free of hazards. They must have pleasing aesthetics which must stimulate children's imagination and creativity, and include space for active play (Wood and Martin, 2010).

### **2.3. Use of Play Parks**

According to Dougherty (2006), "Use" means different things to different people. Users range from those who want a place for contemplation to those who want to be actively engaged, from children who want something interesting to do, to multi-cultural users who have a tradition of using public spaces in different ways, from those who want the experience of a parochial space to those who want the anonymity of a public space. Zube (1982) observes that 'users' are those who frequent public places and rely on them for passive and active engagement, whereas 'Non-users' are those people who pass by parks, plazas, and triumphs on foot, in buses, and in cars without ever becoming users.

Wood *et al* (2011), in their study done in Merseyside and Manchester in the United Kingdom (UK), discovered that the commonest reasons for visiting play parks were to enjoy nature, exercise, let children play and attend community events. Other than this, people visit play parks to find peace and quietness, relaxation and to enjoy fresh air (Chiesura, 2004; Aziz, 2012). Dunnett *et al* (2002), divided the reasons people visited or used play parks into seven broad categories, namely: enjoying the environment; social activities; getting away from it all; walking activities, including dog walking; passive or informal enjoyment; active enjoyment, including sport and specific activities; and attending events.

Arising from this, this discussion has categorised the use of play parks into the following: use of play parks for physical activities (PA), social use, economic use and biodiversity use.

### **2.3.1. Use of Play Parks for Physical Activities (PA)**

Play Parks provide a variety of opportunities for physical activities such as walking, exercising, jogging and other sports activities (Dunnett *et al.*, 2002). For example, when people use a play park, they are encouraged to engage in walking which is a positive attribute as there is a substantial body of evidence demonstrating that increased walking improves physical and mental health (Manson, 2002).

In addition to this, access to play parks increases the frequency of exercise, which in turn plays a curative role in people's lives (Sherer, 2003). Evidence shows that adult patterns of exercise are set early on in life and inactivity breeds inactivity, so a lack of exercise when young can in turn create problems in adulthood such as diabetes and heart disease. According to Kuh and Cooper (1992), the lack of exercise also threatens the mental wellbeing of most people in the world, given the stressful lives that many of them now lead. As a result, many economies in the world lose millions of working days through stress-related employee absence each year due to the lack of exercise (Kuh and Cooper, 1992).

In other words, our play parks are a powerful weapon in the fight against obesity and ill-health. Based on a study conducted in Japan, Takano *et al.*, (2002) observed that tree-lined streets, parks and other green spaces play an important role in people's lives by helping them to live longer. For instance, out of the 3100 people born between the year 1903 to 1918 in Tokyo, 2211 were still alive by 1992 and their probability of living for a further five years was linked to their ability to take a stroll in local parks and tree-lined streets.

### **2.3.2. Social Use of Play Parks**

In a study of the 'Use and Perception of Urban Green Spaces in Barcelona', Martinez (2014) identified social contact as a central driver for the use of urban green spaces. Like other studies on the subject, Strath *et al.*, (2007) also identified interaction with other people as a motivator for open space use. This is because play parks provide opportunities for social interaction, social mixing and social inclusion and can facilitate the development of community ties. Play Parks contribute to people's attachment to their locality and opportunities for mixing with others and to people's memory of places (Dines and Cattell *et al.*, 2006).

In addition to this, play parks are used as playgrounds for children. Good-quality play parks offer children the opportunity to play freely outdoors and experience the natural environment, which is crucial for many aspects of their development, from the acquisition of social skills, experimentation and the confrontation and resolution of emotional crises, to moral understanding, cognitive skills such as language and comprehension, and of course physical skills as well as boosting children's self-confidence (Wood *et al.*, 2011). Playing helps children to develop muscle strength and coordination, language, cognitive thinking and reasoning abilities (Petrie *et al.*, 2000). Moreover, Article 31 of the 'United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child' states that children have the right to relax, play and join in a wide range of leisure activities (UN, 2009). Play parks; therefore, offer children the opportunity to exercise their right to play (UN, 2009). Play Parks also have a role in reducing crime in a society by keeping youths off the street, since children are provided with a safe environment to interact with their peers and fill up time during which they could otherwise get into trouble (Sherer, 2006).

Lack of access to play parks, and consequently the inability to engage in play, deprives children of experiences that are regarded as developmentally essential and result in those affected being both biologically and socially disabled (Brown, 1998). Other studies done across the globe indicate that when children are deprived of normal play experiences throughout their lives, they are more likely to become highly violent and anti-social regardless of demography (Huttenmoser *et al.*, 1995). In addition to this, when children are kept in doors and not allowed out to play, they experience play deprivation and are likely to manifest symptoms ranging from aggression and repressed emotions and social skills, to an increased risk of obesity (Huttenmoser *et al.*, 1995). Brown (1998) indicated that play is also essential for brain development and; therefore, play deprivation has the potential to adversely affect brain growth.

### **2.3.3. Economic Use of Play Parks**

Play Parks are used as business entities which generate money to supplement efforts of Local authorities in their endeavour to provide recreation services to the general public. According to Byrne and Sipe (2010), many parks in France, England, the United States, China and other countries have food concessions, kiosks, cafés, restaurants, beer gardens, equipment rental facilities and other sympathetic commercial uses that provide a revenue stream to municipalities for funding ongoing maintenance and upkeep.

In addition to this, play parks have an economic influence on their surrounding environment which acts as an impetus of the country's economic development. For example, a well-

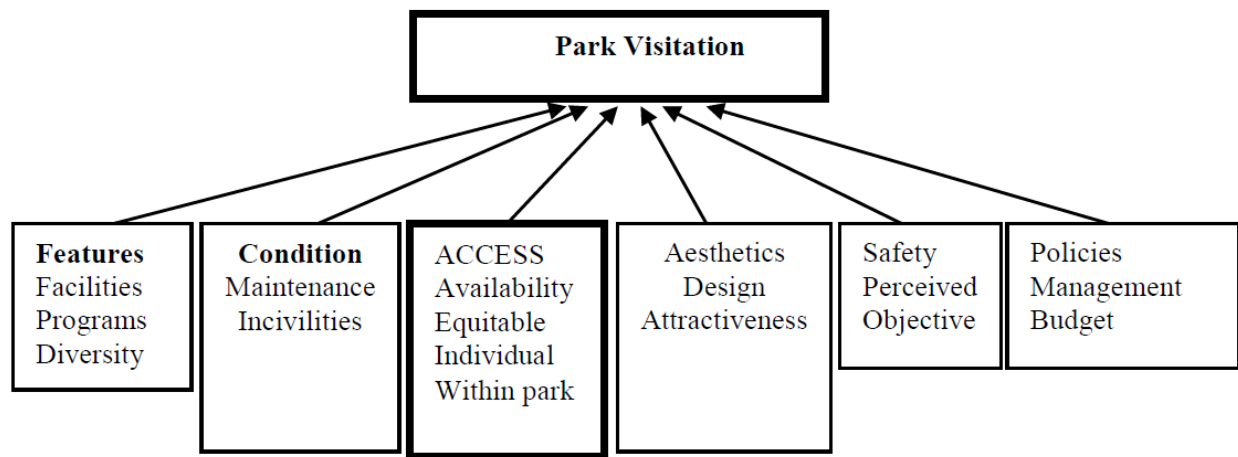
planned, well-managed play park has a positive impact on the price of nearby domestic properties such as houses (Bolitzer and Netusil, 2000). Bolitzer and Netusil (2000) observe that public parks and other green spaces can have a statistically significant effect on the sale price of houses in close proximity to those resources. Actually, play parks attract business investment because companies are attracted to locations that offer well-designed, well-managed public places and these in turn attract customers, employees and services (Luttik, 2000; Bolitzer and Netusil, 2000). As a matter of fact, the real estate market consistently shows that many people are willing to pay a larger amount of money for a property located close to a play park (Sherer, 2006).

#### **2.3.4. Biodiversity Use of Play Parks**

Play Parks are usually included in a city's plan to preserve biodiversity. Bolitzer and Netusil (2000) observe that play parks contribute to the environmental value of biodiversity and improved air quality. This is because the significant increase in hard surfacing and the reduction in green spaces lead to higher temperatures in towns and cities than in the surrounding countryside leading to a condition known as the 'heat island effect' (Bolitzer and Netusil, 2000). Vegetation found in play parks helps to redress this imbalance by the cooling of air and the absorption of atmospheric pollutants (Bolitzer and Netusil, 2000). Further, the trees found in play parks have a good carbon storage capacity and they help to lower the level of surface water running off into drains thereby reducing floods. The vegetation found in play parks also draws people close to 'nature', because of its benefits on the people's mental health. In addition to this, when people visit play parks, they have a pleasure of experiencing trees, birds, squirrels, ladybirds and other wildlife in an urban situation (Littlefair, 2000).

#### **2.4. Factors that determine Use of Play Parks**

According to Bedino-Rung *et al.*, (2005)'s socio-ecological model, the use of urban play parks can be influenced by environmental factors (Giles Corti, 2006). These environmental factors are physical, social, cultural, and policy in nature. They are further categorised into the following: features, condition of the play park, accessibility, aesthetics, safety, and policies as shown in Figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1: Park Characteristics that Influence Use**

**Source: Adapted from Bedimo-Rung *et al.*, 2005:163**

#### **2.4.1. Features**

According to the socio-ecological model, features include the number, size, and type of facilities and programmes offered at parks, as well as the diversity of users and uses found within them (Bedimo-Rung *et al.*, 2005). Play Parks contain a wide variety of features that lend themselves to different types of usage. For example, the presence of sports fields can lead to use by sports teams, whereas the presence of natural areas may lead to more passive contemplation of nature (Francis, 2009).

The size of a play park is also another motivating factor of using a play park. Having good access to larger urban green spaces or play park is associated with higher levels of use for some specific activities such as walking (Bedimo-Rung *et al.*, 2005). Further, larger urban green spaces generally have more attributes that make them more attractive to users. Natural elements such as trees and green vegetation are known as spatial elements that work as stimulators of people frequenting play parks (Corti *et al.*, 2005; Cohen *et al.*, 2006).

#### **2.4.2. Condition**

People choose to visit or not visit play parks not only because of what features are located there, but also because of the condition of those features. Condition covers the routine upkeep, maintenance, and repair of park facilities, as well as incivilities, or cues in the environment, that provide signals about how to behave (Bedimo-Rung *et al.*, 2005). According to Evans *et al.* (2012) and Wood *et al.* (2010), play park users are more likely to visit a park where facilities are in good condition and are maintained on a regular basis as opposed to play parks

which contain elements that are in disrepair with the presence of litter, graffiti, vandalism as well as unclean restrooms. Disruptive social behaviours such as drinking and loitering are also identified as deterrents of people visiting play parks. Jurkovič (2013) also identified busy streets and railway traffic, uncontrolled level crossings and crowded parking lots among the deterrents to visiting play parks. In addition to this, play parks with garages and passage ways, where visibility is poor, can also be perceived as dangerous and uncomfortable areas to visit (Jurkovič, 2013).

#### **2.4.3. Access**

Access is defined as the ability of people to get to and navigate within a park (Bedimo-Rung *et al.*, 2005). Bedimo-Rung *et al.* (2005) distinguished four (4) categories of access namely: availability, equitable access, individual access, and within park access. Availability access refers to the amount of park space available in a given city, measured either as park space per capita or per acre. Equitable access refers to the equitable distribution of parks across different types of neighborhoods. Individual access refers to the distance that an individual must travel to get to the closest park from his home while ‘Access within a Park’ refers to the ability of people to move around easily inside the boundaries of a park.

For a park to be well used, it must be accessible (Lynch, 1960). Accessibility influences the use of a play park because of its important pre-requisite to realising many other dimensions of public-space quality. Access is also essential if people are going to be able to attach meaning to a public space (Francis, 2009). For example, teenagers’ access to an open space makes them feel part of the community. The same applies to the elderly people whose access to public spaces provides them with an opportunity to informally socialise and reduce the sense of isolation they experience when housed in social care houses (Francis, 2009).

Play Parks need to be distributed throughout an area and providing equitable access to all residents (Thompson, 2008). Furthermore, they need to be easily accessible by the people through public transport or through walking and cycling network equipped with adequate bicycle parking facilities (Grow *et al.*, 2008). Wolf (2008) observes that users and potential users prefer nearby, attractive, and larger play parks. The distance from play parks is also inversely associated with use and physical activity behaviour; the closer a play park is to each individual home, the more it is used (Grahn and Stigsdotter, 2003; Kaczynski and Henderson, 2007). Thus, proximity is an important motivator for using a play park and a distance of 300 m from home has been mentioned as a ‘threshold’ for the most intensive use by a resident. In

neighbourhood design principle, the ideal distance for any centrally located facility such as recreation centre is a walking distance, which should not exceed two (2) kilometers range (Funsho, 2015). Wolf and Housley (2014), on the other hand, recommended that play park access should be within half a mile (0.8 km) walk of every home and situated entirely within the public road network which is uninterrupted by physical barriers such as highways, rivers, train tracks or fences. However, in a study conducted by Schipperijn (2010) in Denmark, it was found that distance is not a limiting factor on play park use for the majority of people, but that use of play parks depends on factors such as mobility, available alternatives and the quality of green spaces (Aziz, 2012).

#### **2.4.4. Aesthetics**

Perceived play park aesthetics or having attractive environmental features in and around parks is a powerful motivator for physical activity (Cohen *et al.*, 2006; Coen *et al.*, 2006). Research suggests that play parks are more likely to be used for exercise purposes if they are more aesthetically appealing to the public and the users have something beautiful or interesting to look at while exercising or visiting a park (Cohen *et al.*, 2006; Coen *et al.*, 2006). Aesthetics incorporates the perceived attractiveness and appeal of the various design elements of a park as well as how the physical features of parks are laid out such as the park size, layout design, landscaping, balance of sun and shade and ponds (Bedimo-Rung *et al.*, 2006).

#### **2.4.5. Safety**

Safety refers both to the personal security of park users from crime and to the ability of park features to prevent injury. It is regarded as one of the commonest barriers to the frequent use of play parks. Wielermann (1985) noted that people would only use a play park if they felt secure and safe. Anti-social behaviour in the form of bullies, gangs, drug users and vandalism act as deterrents of use of urban play parks (Adams *et al.*, 2008; Francis, 2009). The elderly and women would be scared to use play parks because of a concern for their safety against, for example, attack or being raped. Wheeler (2007) observes that play parks need to be safe and seen as safe while Mc Allister (2008) notes that a safe environment fosters a feeling of security and makes people more willing to engage in outdoor activities.

#### **2.4.6. Policies**

Policies refer to park design policies, management practices, and budget procedures. A policy sets out clear rules and expectations for the delivery of programmes and services to the public (Vargas-Hernandez *et al.*, 2011). It outlines what an organisation hopes to achieve and the

methods and principles it will use to achieve them (<http://www.etu.org.za>). It thus states the organisation's goals and planned activities. A policy document is not a law but it will often identify new laws needed to achieve its goals (<http://www.etu.org.za>). Policies come from legislation or from decisions made by elected officials, such as ministers, public servants and many others. According to Vargas-Hernandez *et al.*, (2011), a policy ought to have a purpose statement, outlining why the organization is issuing the policy, and what its desired effect or outcome should be. Further, it should have an applicability and scope statement describing who the policy affects and which actions are impacted by the policy. A Policy also needs to show an effective date which when the policy comes into force and must bear a responsibilities section, indicating which parties and organizations are responsible for carrying out individual policy statements (Vargas-Hernandez *et al.*, 2011).

According to Bernados (2011), each service needs to have policies and procedures to guide the actions of all individuals involved in the service. When policies and procedures are well thought out and, most importantly, implemented they provide common understanding and agreement on how things should be done at the service (Bernados, 2011). Procedures provide clear instructions and guidelines on what should/must be done in a particular set of circumstances or with regard to a particular issue. Therefore, Play parks and other recreational services need policies to guide the actions of all stakeholders. Without a framework for action, solutions tend to occur in a "patchwork" way. A compelling framework can help to galvanize communities, the private sector and all levels of government, based on a shared vision for affordable play parks and recreation services (Ontario Task Group, 2009).

Most countries in the Global North recognise the importance of play parks and the role that play has on people's lives. Countries such as Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom (UK) and Sweden have given issues of 'play' a priority in their national agendas. Ultimately, these countries have come up with well-developed play policies and facilities which are characterised by national and local political commitment, a highly developed public play infrastructure, a play training framework and a child-friendly environment (Webb and Associates, 1999). In Ireland, for example, there is the National Play Policy whose objective is to plan for an increase in public play facilities and improve the quality of life of children living in Ireland by providing them with more play opportunities. The policy also addresses issues of funding, standards and quality. Before the Irish Government came up with a play policy, play was said to have been seriously neglected at policy level. There was a shortage of safe public play spaces, no ring-fenced Government funding for play, a poorly



developed public awareness of the value of play and no national strategy for play (Webb and Associates, 1999).

The City of London in England also has a Parks and Recreation Policy with a goal of providing play parks and recreation services which meet the general interest and needs of the people of London. The City is thus responsible for providing facilities and services to meet the parks and recreation needs of the citizens of London. The policy also provides direction for the provision of parkland and recreation services as well as the method by which parklands are obtained (Parks and Recreation Policies, 2012)

In Africa, however, the situation is less attractive. According to Mensah (2014), policy makers in most African Countries lack the political will to initiate policies or measures to enhance the development of urban green spaces in their cities. Play parks and other green spaces are not a priority in most of these countries' development agenda as they are preoccupied with matters of poverty reduction and provision of social amenities such as housing, schools, hospitals and pipe-borne (Mensah, 2014). Thus, play parks are in a poor state and lack facilities such as chairs, toilets, notice boards, playing facilities for children and they have poor security for park visitors because the maintenance of play parks has to compete with other, often higher, policy priorities like education, health care, public pensions and public safety for the available limited funds (Rabare *et al.*, 2009; Gilroy, 2013). Despite many African countries ratifying Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), few of them have come up with policies which fulfil their obligations in relation to Children's right to play (Woodhead and Brooker, 2013). Few African Countries, for example, protect and invest in the creation of spaces and opportunities to play. As a result, many children are unable to fully realise their right to play (Woodhead and Brooker, 2013). For many children, living environments pose significant hazards – uncontrolled traffic, pollution, lack of local safe play areas and green spaces, and also high levels of crime and violence (Bartlett *et al.*, 1999). South Africa is one the African countries that came up with a policy on play entitled 'A Child's Right to Play'. The main objective of this policy was the regulation of responsibilities to protect and promote the right to play at national and provincial levels (ACTPSA, 2017). It covers issues of child play through the securing of the necessary space and equipment so that all children enjoy an equal opportunity to participate in age-appropriate play. In Zambia, there is a Youth Policy, Sports Policy and many other types of policies which are not directly concerned with play parks or other types of open spaces.

## **2.5. Play Park Use by Different Social Groups**

Literally, the word 'group' means persons or things belonging or classed together or forming a whole. MacIver and Page (1949) define a group as any collection of human beings who are brought into social relationship with one another. The groups found in human society which exhibit some degree of social cohesion are called social groups. A social group is, therefore, any collection of human beings who are brought into social relationships having some degree of reciprocity and some measure of mutual awareness between those related (Subedi, 2014). Subedi (2014) notes that these groups can be small and close-knit (Primary Groups) while others can be small or large, mostly impersonal, less intimate and usually short-term (Secondary Groups). According to Sherif and Sherif (1964), there could also be groups that people use as a point of comparison to form their own attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours (Reference Groups). Sallis and Owen (1999) observed that people are more likely to visit play parks or participate in social activities if they have the support and encouragement of families, friends and co-workers. In a study done in Malaysia, it was revealed that the majority of the respondents visited the nearby play park during the weekend in the company of their family members (Aziz, 2012). Studies conducted in other countries across the globe also show that there are variations on the time that certain groups of people visit play parks. For example, the studies which were conducted in the cities of Vienna and Guangzhou show that the weekend is typically the most popular time for day visits to the play park compared to weekdays (Arnberger, 2006; Jim and Chen, 2006). However, the play parks located in urban and peri-urban forests of Vienna are used on all days of the week and at most times of the day (Arnberger, 2006). In warmer climates, such as Malaysia, visiting times to public play parks are affected by variations in temperature. Most people in sub-tropical Guangzhou, China and Dhaka, Bangladesh visit play parks during the early morning (Jim and Chen, 2006; Saniya and Faria, 2009).

### **2.5.1. Levels of Play Park Use among Different Socio-economic Groups**

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2011), defines Socioeconomic status as the social and economic position of a given individual, or group of individuals, within the larger society. Examinations of socio-economic status often reveal inequities in access to resources, plus issues related to privilege, power and control. Walker and Kielcolt (1995) note that socio-economic level plays a role in influencing people to go to the play park. This is because members of a class tend to have similar lifestyles, educational background, kinship network, consumption pattern, work habits and beliefs. This is the reason why people seek out people

with similar interests and similar lifestyles in a similar type of place (Walker and Kielcolt, 1995). Studies done in multiple cities across the world indicate that there are socio-economic disparities in the use of play parks amongst different social groups (Wolf and Housley, 2014). These differences in recreational use patterns and preferences are due to factors such as income level, occupational status and education attainment (White, 1975; Lee *et al.*, 2001; Aziz, 2012).

#### **2.5.1.1. Income**

Income is one of the more common measures of socio-economic status (ABS, 2011) because the consumption of goods and services is dependent on the amount of income available to a household at any given time. Households generally depend on income to meet their day-to-day expenditures, such as on food, housing, clothing, education, health and many other expenses (CSO, 2016). Calculations of socioeconomic status (SES) could fall under low, medium or high income categories (McLaughlin *et al.*, 2012). In Zambia, the Central Statistical Office (CSO) conducted its seventh Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS) between April and May, 2015. According to this survey, households in high cost residential areas earned the highest level of average monthly income at K 7,698.50 followed by medium cost at K5, 320.70 (CSO, 2016). Households in low cost earned the lowest average income at K2, 180.50.

Meeker (1991) notes that the poor and minority groups are underrepresented among play park goers because these areas have become “playgrounds” for the middle-class and upper-class. In a study done by Bultena and Field (1978) on national parks in relation to income, education, occupation, socio-economic status, and national park visitation in the Pacific Coastal region of the National Park System, a social class bias was seen to exist among national park visitors. Individuals with higher income levels, high education attainment, and occupational prestige tended to visit national parks more frequently than their counterparts. Lindsay and Ogle (1972) used the opportunity theory to explain that the rate of participation in outdoor recreation would be commensurate with cost and availability of outdoor recreation resources to the public. Thus low income groups would clearly filter out costly recreation participation (Lee *et al.*, 2001) and this consequently entails that low income groups have less recreation opportunities due to the rising costs of providing basic leisure services (Sessoms, 1993). However, income was of lesser importance than education and occupation in determining frequency of national park visitation.

### **2.5.1.2. Employment**

A study, by Walker and Kielcolt (1995), notes that the working class constitutes one of the prime users of play parks. Using the Compensation Hypothesis, they note that work is a dominant force in a person's life, and leisure compensates for the rigors, monotony, and brutality of the job. The working class; therefore, goes to urban play parks because they want freedom that they cannot find in the workplace. Therefore, they feel that their free time should be compensated with activities that can fulfill their needs and desires, which are neglected in their workplace (Walker and Kielcolt, 1995). In addition to this, the working class frequents urban play parks because they do not have opportunities to experience similar environments in other places, such as country cottages and country clubs (Walker and Kielcolt, 1995).

### **2.5.1.3. Education**

According to (ABS, 2011), level of education is the most commonly used socio-economic status measure for an individual. Those who complete additional years of education may experience a range of positive outcomes throughout their lives and there are also likely to be spillover effects to the household and community as a result of the individual's and society's investment in education (CSO, 2015). Further, education is strongly associated with leisure participation (Lucas, 1990; White, 1975). Level of education is the most distinguishing characteristic of recreationists and the most significant predictor of recreationists' use of outdoor recreation areas (Kelly, 1983; Lucas, 1990). Kelly (1980, 1996) suggested that education generally is a better predictor of leisure participation than income or occupation. He noted that while income and occupation influence the kinds of leisure opportunities to which individuals avail themselves, education relates more to leisure socialization and the inculcation of leisure skills and interests (Lee *et al.*, 2001). Education contributes to the development of not only interest in outdoor recreation areas, but also contribute to continuing involvement in outdoor recreation activities (Floyd *et al.*, 2006; Lee *et al.*, 2001).

## **2.6. Urban Planning Legislation in relation to play parks and other recreation facilities**

The City of Lusaka and the rest of the Country use the Urban and Regional Planning (URP) Act no. 3 of 2015 to prepare plans which guide all land developments including play parks (GRZ, 2015). In terms of City plans, there are basically three (3) plans that are responsible for guiding development of Lusaka City and these are; the Doxiadis Plan, 1972, Lusaka Comprehensive Master Development Plan (LCMDP) of 2009 and the Strategic Plan 2010-2015.

### **2.6.1. The Town and Country planning Act Chapter 283 and the Urban and Regional Planning (URP) Act No. 3 of the Laws of Zambia**

The Urban and Regional Planning Act no. 3 of 2015 came into effect in August, 2015 after repealing and replacing the Town and Country Planning Act Chapter 283 of the Laws of Zambia. Both of these laws underlined the importance of recreation and the need to incorporate play parks in the environment (GRZ, 1995; GRZ, 2015). Unfortunately, the Town and Country Planning Act Chapter 283 of the Laws of Zambia, like several other urban planning regulations in some countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, is deemed to have hindered the effective operation of play parks as well as other green spaces because it was drawn up a long time ago, along the lines of the planning regulations of the then colonial masters (Katongo, 2005; Mensah, 2014).

### **2.6.2. Development Plans for the City of Lusaka since Independence**

Most African countries have been relying on master plans to manage urban areas. For example, the physical development of Abuja (Nigeria) was based on a master plan which was prepared in the 1970s and Accra (Ghana) used its 1944 master plan. Equally, the master plan which was used for the City of Lusaka (Zambia) was drawn up by Doxiadis in 1968 (UN Habitat, 2009). According to UN Habitat (2009), the Doxiadis Master Plan guided urban planning for the City of Lusaka up to the year 2010 when the Comprehensive Urban Development Plan took over. The Doxiadis Master Plan suggested Planning Standards and Guidelines for setting up of play parks. The Doxiadis Master Plan recommended that 0.1 hectares of land be reserved for a population of 1000 people (0.1ha/1000 pop) for Play Park use. Also included in the plan was a reservation of 0.05ha/1000 pop for Private Park/Play Area (OVR) and 0.25ha/1000 population for "Gardens" or (UA). Unfortunately, like the other master plans in Africa, the Doxiadis Master Plan failed to deal with new challenges associated with urban developments such as excessive destruction of green spaces because it was outdated, rigid and its preparation did not involve the participation of wider stakeholders including the local people (UN Habitat, 2009). Furthermore, development patterns in Lusaka made it difficult for the master plan to effectively guide the growth of the city resulting in massive encroachment of many green spaces. There have been also delays by planning authorities in giving decisions on development permits because of bureaucratic processes and the planning institutions have also been weak as a result of insufficient resources to work with (Kironde, 2006).

### 2.6.3. The 2010 Comprehensive Urban Development Plan

The 1968 Doxiadis Master Plan for the City of Lusaka was replaced by the Comprehensive Urban Development Plan in 2010. It is noted in the 2010 Comprehensive Urban Development Plan that most play parks are not well maintained and are not ideal for recreational activities and there is a proposal that a hierarchical park system by administrative jurisdiction area be introduced at each level of district, ward and zone (community) (JICA, 2009). Another aspect that is shown in the 2010 Comprehensive Urban Development Plan is the targeted land use requirement for play parks and recreation facilities by 2030 as shown in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1: Land Requirement for Parks and Recreation**

Location	Development	2007	2015	2020	2030
	Target ratio		40%	60%	100%
Lusaka	District Park	-	175	348	580
	Ward Park	-	100	150	250
	Neighbourhood Park	-	200	300	500
	Play Ground	-	100	150	250
	Total	410*	575	948	1580

\* Existing park and recreation area (476ha) includes private golf courses

**Source: JICA (2009)**

According to JICA (2009), the targeted land use requirement for park and recreation by 2030 implies that the current park area of 1.7 m<sup>2</sup> per capita will be improved to 6.4 m<sup>2</sup> per capita in Lusaka City while those in the adjacent areas will achieve their target of 4.8 m<sup>2</sup> per capita.

### 2.6.4. The Strategic Plan 2010-2015

The Lusaka City Council Corporate Strategic Plan for the period 2010 to 2015 served as a guide to the work of the Council and set to enhance the Councilors' quest for improved and efficient service delivery (LCC, 2011). As regards play parks, the Strategic Plan set to provide community recreational facilities such as community halls and playgrounds in all the seven constituencies of Lusaka. It also called for the need to maintain the plant nursery and raise at least 8,000 plant seedlings every year. The Strategic Plan further sought to design and

develop the following play parks: Mumbwa Play Park, Mwatusanga Play Park, Chitimukulu Road Play Park, Independence Park and Chilenje Central Park (LCC, 2011).

## **2.6.5. Other Pieces of Legislation on Play Parks and Recreation Facilities**

### **2.6.5.1. The Local Government Act No. 22, 1991 and the 2016 Amended Constitution of Zambia No. 2 of 2016**

The Local Government Act No. 22 of 1991 provided for the creation of a Local Authority. According to Section 61 and Sub-section 33 and 37 Chapter 281 of the Local Government Act, it is the duty of the Council to establish and maintain play parks in Lusaka City (GRZ, 1991). The 1991 Act was amended by Act 19 of 1992, Act 13 of 1994 and Acts 30 of 1993 and 1995.

The amended Constitution of Zambia No. 2 of 2016 also recognizes the role of local authorities in the running of play parks in Zambia and clearly outlines that local parks, recreation, gardens, landscaping and amenities as some of the exclusive functions of Local Authorities (GRZ, 2016).

## **2.7. Conclusion**

The review shows that play parks have a number of positive attributes pertaining to people's lives and how most countries in the Global North have taken advantage of these benefits by coming up with policies which provide direction for the provision of parkland and recreation services. The review indicates that in most African countries, the establishment and maintenance of play parks have not been prioritised in their development agendas since play parks have to compete with other, often higher, policy priorities like education, health care, public pensions and public safety for the available limited funds. The review suggests a knowledge gap on how play parks and other open green spaces are utilized by the people in most of the African Countries. There also seems to be no policies in place in most of the African Countries to guide the maintenance and delivery of play park services to the public. This study; therefore, hopes to fill the afore-mentioned knowledge gap and help inform urban planning and policy as well as improve the delivery of play park services to the public.

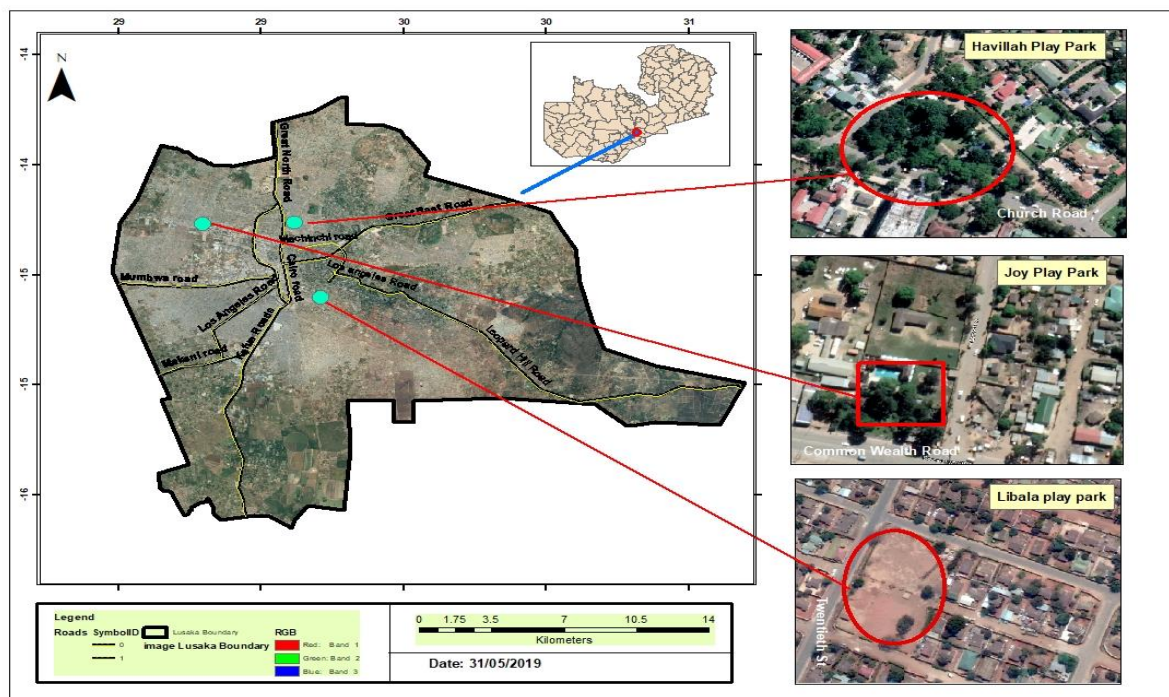
## CHAPTER 3: DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter gives the location of the study area, administrative dynamics of the study area, the population, economic status, physical description as well as the justification for selecting the play parks used in the study.

### 3.2. Location and Size

The study was conducted in three (3) residential areas of Lusaka District, namely: Matero, Libala Stage II, and Rhodes Park. Lusaka is the capital city of the Republic of Zambia which is built on a plateau standing at an altitude of 1,300 metres above sea level to the North and gently dropping to 1,200 metres above sea level towards the East, the South and the West. It is located between latitudes 15°10' and 15° 50' South and longitudes 27°45' and 28°30' East (Waele and Follesa, 2003). The City covers an area of 375 km<sup>2</sup> of mostly flat relief (Pasteur, 1979). It shares district boundaries with Chongwe in the east, Mumbwa in the west, Chisamba and Chibombo in the north and Chilanga District in the south (JICA, 2009; <https://www.lcc.gov.zm/about-lusaka/>). Figure 3.1 shows the location of the study sites.



*Figure 3.1: Location of Study Sites*

*(Field Data, 2015)*



### **3.3. Administration**

Lusaka has a City Council type of local government which consists of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Seven (7) Members of Parliament in the District (1 from each constituency) and thirty-three (33) Councillors (1 from each ward). Councillors are elected every five years to run the affairs of the city through the Lusaka City Council (LCC), on behalf of the residents of the city (GRZ, 2016). The LCC also serves as the planning authority for the city. The town clerk, who is the principal officer, heads the executive structure. The executive structure of the LCC consists of seven departments: City Planning, Public Health and Social Services, Legal Services, Administration, Finance, Engineering, and Valuation and Real Estate Management (UN-Habitat, 2007). The Play Park and Gardens Department, which oversees play park activities, falls under the Engineering Faculty.

### **3.4. Population**

Lusaka has a population of 1,747,152 (CSO, 2012) consisting of people from all the ethnic groups found in Zambia, as well as a small proportion of people of European and Asian origin. The city has an urban population density of 2,560 pop/km<sup>2</sup> (JICA, 2009) accounting for 31.7 percent of the total urban population in the country. Most of the city's population (over 70 percent) lives in unplanned or informal settlements (UN Habitat, 2004). Matero Township where Joy Play Park is located is found in the high density or low cost area with an approximate Gross Density Greater than 45 dw/ha and minimum plot sizes of 288m<sup>2</sup>. Libala Play Park is located in the medium density or medium cost area while Havillah Play Park is located in the low density or high cost area. Medium Density Areas have an approximate Gross Density of 23-45 dwellings per hectare (dw/ha) and minimum plot sizes of 540m<sup>2</sup> while Low Density Areas have an approximate Gross Density of 11-22 dw/ha and minimum plot sizes of 1,350 m<sup>2</sup> (Doxiadis Consulting Engineers, 1978; <https://www.saveivanhoe.com>).

### **3.5. Economy**

Lusaka's central location, in addition to its capital city status, gives it strategic importance as it is easily accessible from all parts of the country (UN Habitat, 2007). The city is notable for its substantial diversification in the production of goods and services. It boasts of a viable manufacturing industry with the production of goods such as; food products and beverages, tobacco products, textiles, tanning and dressing of leather, luggage, handbags and paper and paper products (MoT and CSO, 2014). The services mainly offered in the city include wholesale/retail trade, finance, insurance and real estate, transport and communication and construction (Mulenga, 2003). It is estimated that only nine percent of the city's population is

engaged in formal employment while wholesale and retail trade are the largest formal employers in Lusaka after the government (UN-Habitat, 2007). The informal sector provides approximately 90 percent of employment in the Lusaka economy and this sector represents a livelihood for the majority of the local population (UN-Habitat, 2007).

### **3.6. Physical Description**

The physical description of Lusaka will dwell on climate, geology and vegetation of the area.

#### **3.6.1. Climate**

Lusaka experiences a sub-tropical climate with three (3) distinct seasons, namely cool dry season, hot dry season and warm wet season. The cool dry season is from mid-April to mid-August with mean day temperatures varying between 15°C and 23°C. Minimum temperatures may sometimes fall below 10°C in June and July. The hot dry season is from mid-August to mid-November. During this period, day temperatures may vary between 27°C and 38°C. The warm wet season runs from mid-November to mid-April during which time 95 percent of the annual rainfall is received. The rainfall is mainly due to the movement of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ). The annual rainfall averages about 857mm /a (GRZ, 2011).

#### **3.6.2. Geology**

The geology of Lusaka comprises an ancient basement complex overlaid with limestone and dolomite (UN-Habitat, 2007; JICA, 2009). The basement complex consists of granites, gneisses and quartzites outcrops in the northern and eastern parts of the City. They form hills and escarpments in the northern and eastern parts of the City, in contrast to an otherwise flat city terrain. They also form an aquifer from which the City draws about 60 percent of its water. This formation also outcrops in the south, west and central parts of the city where it provides rare marbles and other construction materials. Several rivers and a few streams such as *Chunga*, *Chalimbana* and *Ngwerere* flow through the city. As a result of inadequate water bodies, 40 percent of the city's water budget is supported by the Kafue River (LCC, 2010).

#### **3.6.3. Vegetation**

Vegetation types generally show a marked correspondence to the geological formations. The main vegetation type in Lusaka is the deciduous woodland known locally as "*Miombo*" which accounts for about 80 percent of the forested area. It is found in the northern and eastern parts of the City. In the southern and western parts of the City, the "*Munga*", a Savanna Woodland type of vegetation (Waele and Follesa, 2003).

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODS**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the research design and data collection methods used in the study. It also outlines the sampling and data analysis methods used in the study. The ethical considerations of the study are also highlighted at the end of the chapter.

### **4.2. Research Design**

A case study approach was used in this study in order to ensure that an intensive and in-depth research was conducted. Young (1960) describes a case study as a comprehensive study of a social unit be that unit a person, a group, a social institution, a district or a community. Merriam (1998) noted that a case study can be a single-site study or a multi-site study. A multi-site case study of Joy Play Park in Matero, Libala Play Park in Libala Stage II and Havillah Play Park in Rhodes Park residential area, was undertaken in this study. Kothari (2004) observes that the case study also allows a researcher to use one or more of the several research methods.

### **4.3. Data Collection Methods**

This study used both qualitative and quantitative methods of research.

#### **4.3.1. Qualitative Methods**

In terms of qualitative methods, the study conducted semi-structured interviews with key informants, observation of activities at the play park and documentary review of relevant materials on play parks.

##### **4.3.1.1. Semi-Structured Interviews**

Interviews were conducted with two key informants from the Department of Parks and Gardens at Lusaka City Council (LCC), one key informant from the Physical and Planning Department at LCC and another key informant from the Ministry of Local Government and Housing (MLGH)'s Headquarters' Office. The other six key informants were drawn from the three play parks in this study. A total of ten key informants were interviewed. The officers from LCC and MLGH helped to answer questions focusing on urban planning policy issues and the history on play parks in question, whereas the key informants from the three play parks helped to give data on how play parks operate. Due to the different roles of the afore-

mentioned key informants in relation to play parks, two different interview schedules containing a different set of questions were administered on each of the categories of key informants who were interviewed in this study (Appendix 3 and 4) and tape recorder was used to capture the respondents' responses. The interviews also allowed the researcher to observe the participants' non-verbal communication such as their use of gestures. All the key informants, in this study, were purposively sampled. Purposive sampling allows the selection of respondents based on who the investigator considers important for the research and believes would be typical and representative of the population (Kothari, 2004).

#### **4.3.1.2. Observation Method**

The researcher also directly observed people's use of play parks as a non-participant observer. Non-participant observation is, "when the observer observes as a detached emissary without any attempt on his part to experience through participation what others feel" (Kothari, 2004:96). During field work, the researcher took time to observe the type of people that visited the play parks, the kind of activities in which the people who visited play parks were involved, the vegetation found at the play parks, facilities available at the play parks, the state of the facilities and also how the people who visited play parks used the facilities found at the play parks. This data collection method gave the researcher an opportunity to analyse non-verbal communication since it offered insights that interviews alone might not have yielded. During observation, the researcher used a note book and pen to jot down relevant data. A digital camera was also used to effectively capture permanent visual records of incidents at the play parks.

#### **4.3.1.3. Documentary Review**

This method of data collection was based on documentary evidence such as policies, minutes of meetings and other written sources on play parks and open spaces in general. These sources of information gave the researcher the background and context of the subject to establish what has been researched about and also that which can be researched and to compare what was claimed and what happened in practice.

### **4.3.2. Quantitative Methods**

#### **4.3.2.1. Questionnaire Survey**

A Questionnaire was administered on a sample of 45 play park visitors. The breakdown of the play park visitors was as follows: 15 from Joy Play Park and Gardens, 15 from Libala Play Park and the other 15 from Havillah Play Park. The respondents were chosen using convenience sampling method. The main or principal determiner of convenience sampling was the accessibility of respondents (Kumar, 2006). Therefore, a face-to-face Survey was used in this study because all the respondents were sampled based on who were available or accessible at the time of the research. The researcher orally administered the questionnaires and wrote down the responses on behalf of the respondents so as not to disadvantage those who were not able to read and write. Each of the play parks in this study was visited more than five times on selected days of the week and weekends, by the researcher, during the study. The researcher also visited the play parks on different times of the day both in the morning and afternoon.

#### **4.4. Sample Size**

This study used a sample size of 55 research participants comprising ten key informants for the Semi-structured interviews and 45 play park visitors for the questionnaire survey. The research objectives, research questions, and the research design of this study guided the researcher to come up with a sample size (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007). Sample sizes in qualitative research should not be too small that it is difficult to achieve saturation neither should they be too large that it is difficult to undertake a deep, case-oriented analysis (Sandelowski, 1995). An adequate sample size in qualitative research is one that permits the deep, case-oriented analysis and results in a new and richly textured understanding of experience (Sandelowski, 1995). Morse (1995) suggests that qualitative researchers use at least six participants in investigations where the goal is to understand the essence of experience while Rubinstein (1994) recommends experiential cell sample sizes of 10 to 100. Therefore, the sample size of ten key informants was considered adequate enough to generate sufficient data pertaining to the study and allow thick and rich description (Miles and Huberman, 1994). For the questionnaire survey, the study used a convenience sample size of 45 play park visitors who were picked based on their availability at the time of the study and were willing to answer questions on how they used play parks. In addition to this, the imitation of sample sizes of similar studies (Kasiulevičius *et al.*, 2006) such as the one by Mwanza (2017) was also another factor. Kumar (2006) recommends a sample size of between 25–70 cases to be used in a questionnaire survey.

## **4.5. Data Analysis**

### **4.5.1. Qualitative Data Analysis**

#### **4.5.1.1. Thematic Analysis**

For easy thematic analysis, the qualitative data which was gathered from face-to-face interviews with officers at Lusaka City Council, Ministry of Local Government and the key informants at the three play parks was first transcribed from audio into text. The information was then coded by organising it meaningfully and systematically according to the study's research questions before themes were devised from it.

#### **4.5.1.2. Content Analysis**

According to Weber (1990) and Burnard (1996), the key feature of content analysis is to classify the many words of the text into much smaller content categories. In this study, the data which was collected in the field during direct observation of play park activities as well as the review of documents such as reports, legislations, policies and minutes of meetings was read through several times before assigning it with labels (codes). The coding of data made it easy for the researcher to analyse meanings of content within texts by drawing inferences (conclusions) on the basis of themes and patterns which were generated.

### **4.5.2. Quantitative Data Analysis**

#### **4.5.2.1. Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive Statistics was used to analyse the quantitative data which was generated from the questionnaire survey on the 45 play park users. In this study, Measures of Frequency namely; counts, percent and frequency were used for the analysis of quantitative data using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 21 (IBM, 2011) Software. Many questions in the questionnaire Survey allowed for multiple responses (the free-response questions); therefore, these do not necessarily add up to 45.

## **4.6. Ethical Considerations**

During field work, data was collected from key informants and play park users whose identities have been withheld. Therefore, the data which was provided by the research participants would remain confidential and used only for academic purposes. Furthermore, all research participants took part in the research on their own accord and the researcher first sought each research participant's permission before using a camera, voice recorder, questionnaire and any other data collection tool.

## CHAPTER 5: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1. Introduction

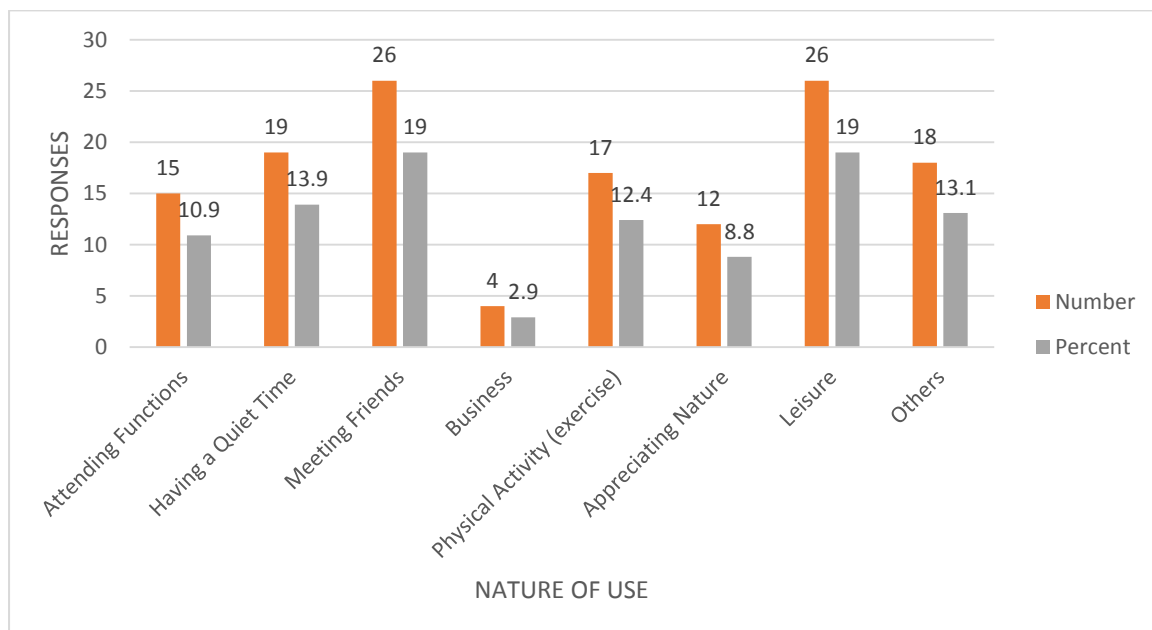
This chapter presents the results and discussion of the study that set to examine people's use of play parks in Lusaka City. To achieve this, the results are presented based on the nature of play park use in Lusaka City, followed by results on the factors that influence the use of play parks in Lusaka City. The discussion thereafter turns to results showing the levels of play park use among different social groups in the city and how these differ across socio-economic classes. Finally, there is presentation and discussion of results on the urban planning policies in relation to the use of play parks and recreation facilities.

### 5.2. Nature of Play Park Use in Lusaka City

People use play parks in various ways. The nature of use depends on a number of physical, cultural, political and socio-economic factors. In this study, use was categorized in terms of social use, spiritual use, economical use, physical activity (exercise) and biodiversity use.

#### 5.2.1. Social Use of Play Parks

The majority of the respondents visit play parks for social reasons (Figure 5.1).



**Figure 5.1: Use of Play Parks**

*(Field Data, 2015)*

The study findings indicate that most respondents visit play parks because they provide a unique setting in the city's public open space where they can freely mingle and socialise. The respondents said they visited play parks in order to have fun or a nice time, to meet friends, to attend functions and to have a quiet time or moment of reflection or tranquility. According to Strath *et al.*, (2007), play parks provide opportunities for social interaction, social mixing and social inclusion which can facilitate the development of community ties.

#### 5.2.1.1. Meeting Friends and Having Fun

The respondents visit play parks because play parks provide them with an opportunity to have fun and mix or interact with others. Libala Play Park, Joy Play Park and Havillah Play Park have abundant space and facilities that enable both children and adult visitors to play and meet friends, respectively. Some of these facilities include 'see-saws', swings, climbing frames and jumping castles, as shown in Plate 5.1.



(a)



(c)



(b)



(d)

**Plate 5.1: Children Playing at Joy Play Park (a), (b) (c) and Libala Play Park (d)**  
(Source: Field Data, 2015)

The play parks provide an avenue where people meet with their friends, school mates, work-mates, church mates and other people in their community to engage in so many social



activities. They, therefore, meet at play parks to chat, play, sing, laugh and do so many things in a relaxed and jovial environment. According to Sallis and Owen (1999), people are more likely to participate in social activities if they have the support and encouragement of families, friends and co-workers.

#### **5.2.1.2. Play Parks as Play Grounds for Children**

The Play parks in this study are also used as play grounds for children. The children have the right to play (UN, 2009) and playing is crucial for many aspects of children's physical, emotional, moral and cognitive development (Petrie *et al.*, 2000; Wood *et al.*, 2011). For small children, playing is learning and playing has proved to be a critical element in a child's future success (Sherer, 2006). A key Informant at the Play Park and Gardens Department at LCC observed that;

Most residential areas in Lusaka have little playing spaces where children can play. As a consequence, children are confined indoors without any facilities for playing. The only outside place where children can play is a play park since most parents might not afford other forms of entertainment for their children such as taking them to play at facilities found at the shopping malls or buying them toys and 'video games'. Play parks; therefore, provide children with a playing ground where their parents can watch over them as they play safely away from stray dogs and speeding vehicles.

Libala Play Park is run by the Kabwata Baptist Church and one of the key informants of the Church explained that;

One of the reasons the Church adopted Libala Play Park was to see how they could provide a playing ground for the young people in the area and to also keep them away from drugs, crime and other vices in society. At the time of adoption of the park in 2004, the Play Park was not only an abandoned area which was outgrown with vegetation but also a place where 'thugs' would go to conduct their criminal activities or even hide after stealing from the Libala Stage Two Residents. The church; therefore, cleared up the place and renovated the play park.

The view expressed by the afore-mentioned key informant is in line with Sherer (2006) who asserted that play parks play a key role in reducing crime in society by keeping youths off the street by providing them with a safe environment to interact with their peers and fill up time within which they could otherwise get into trouble.

#### **5.2.1.3. Place of Events or Functions**

Play Parks are used for hosting events and the frequency analysis (Figure 5.1) shows that 10.9 % of the respondents visit play parks to attend functions or events. The play park visitors

attend numerous functions or events such as sports, weddings, kitchen parties, birthdays, engagement parties, braais, and many others as seen in Plate 5.2.



(a)



(c)



(b)



(d)

***Plate 5.2: Play Parks as Places of Events at Joy Play Park (a), (b), (c) and (d).***

**(Field Data, 2015)**

Play parks provide areas for community social mixing, the organisation of social events, community involvement and volunteering (Wheater *et al.*, 2007). Holding of events at play parks has a possibility of enhancing people's sense of community and attachment to their neighbourhoods (Takano *et al.*, 2002). During field work, it was discovered that play parks have conference facilities, sports fields, swimming pools and other facilities which necessitate the holding of events. These facilities are available for hire to the general public mainly at a cost. According to one of the key informants at Joy Gardens and Play Park, the hiring of the facilities for a wedding or any other function costs not less than ZMK 2,000.00.

Not all play parks, however, charge for the use of their facilities. Libala Play Park, for example, is run by the Kabwata Baptist Church. Being a Faith Based Organisation, the Church allows the general public to use the play park facilities free of charge. According to one of the Key Informants from Kabwata Baptist Church, Libala Play Park is used as a venue of meetings by the Libala Community and other members of the public at no cost at all. The Church also regularly organises sports activities at the play park where children, the youths and other interested persons are allowed to participate.

### **5.2.2. Spiritual Uses of Play Parks**

Play Parks are also used as venues or places where people from different religious organisations meet to pray or spread the gospel. During field work, a religious organisation known as ‘Praise Christian Centre’ was found having a church service at Havillah Play Park with approximately 200 people, in attendance. According to one of the key informants at the play park, the religious organisation pays about ZMK 850.00 every week to use part of the play park grounds to conduct church services on Sunday Mornings. The key informants at Havillah Play Park revealed that there were also other church groups which visited the play park from time to time to pray and to also utilize other facilities offered by the play park.

Libala Play Park is also used for religious purposes. According to the Key Informant of Lusaka Baptist Church Play Park Committee, the church conducts many religious activities at the park. The church holds bible study sessions for its members at the play park and it also takes advantage of the play park premises to share the gospel (word of God) with the play park visitors. In some cases, the Church organises church crusades, concerts and many other religious activities at the play park.

### **5.2.3. Economical Use of Play Parks**

Play parks also serve many economic roles and 2.9 % of the respondents in this study confirmed that they visited play parks in order to engage in business activities. There are many business activities that take place at play parks and the commodities that are sold at play parks include plants, flowers, food stuffs, drinks and clothes. These businesses operate throughout the week and serve not only the play park visitors, but also other members of the general public. One of the key informants at Havillah Play Park explained that; Many Government and Non-Government workers come to have their meals at our restaurant during lunch time and our flower shop supplies flowers to several organizations including the State House, the official office of Zambia’s Republican President.

Play parks are a source of employment. Guards, landscapers, shop keepers, events managers, cooks and others are employed at play parks. According to the key informants of both Havillah Play Park and Joy Play Park, eight and four people respectively, are employed by the parks. Play parks have an economic influence on their surrounding environment and have the ability to attract investment to an area (Luttik, 2000; Bolitzer and Netusil, 2000; Sherer, 2004).

#### **5.2.4. Use of Play Parks for Physical Activity**

Play parks are also used for physical activity and 12.4 % of the respondents revealed that they go to play parks to take part in physical activities such as swimming, walking, running as well as football (Figure 5.1). Play parks provide opportunities for physical activities (Dunnett *et al.*, 2002) and when people use a play park, they are encouraged to engage in walking, exercising, jogging and other sports activities which help to improve their physical and mental health (Manson, 2002). According to Active Living Research (2010), regular physical activity increases longevity, well-being, helps children and adults to maintain healthy weights, and can help to reduce the risk for obesity and its related health consequences. Access to good quality, well-maintained play parks can help to improve people's physical and mental health by encouraging them to walk more and to play sport (Active Living Research, 2010).

#### **5.2.5. Bio-diversity, Aesthetics and Health Uses of Play Parks**

Play parks have a bio-diversity role to the city of Lusaka. A Key Informant at Lusaka City Council explained that; Play parks were integrated in the plan of Lusaka City in order to give the city a 'breathing space' because of play parks' health and bio-diversity roles. The play parks are lungs through which the city breathes.

The leaves of trees found in a play park naturally filter the air by stabilising dust and absorbing pollutants (Beckett *et al.*, 1998). The vegetation that is found in a play park also helps in curbing run-off water, preventing health problems, increasing worker productivity, lessening infrastructure damage and many other things (Littlefair *et al.*, 2000). These innumerable benefits provided by the play parks probably offer considerable potential cost-savings to local authorities as a whole such as save a lot of money that would otherwise have to be spent on flood barriers, air-conditioning, sick days, stress leave, and the like (Kuh and Cooper, 1992; Byrne and Sipe, 2010).

Further, a proportion of respondents (8.8%) indicated that they visit play parks in order to appreciate nature (Plate 5.3) and as a way of retreating from the ‘hustle and bustle’ of town life. Contact with nature offers a range of medical benefits such as lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels, enhanced survival after a heart attack, a more rapid recovery after surgery, and lower levels of stress and depression (Sherer, 2006). In other words, play parks are a powerful weapon in the fight against obesity and ill-health because people with better access to parks and other green spaces have been shown to live longer, are less stressed, become ill less often and are less likely to be overweight or obese (Bedimo-Rung *et al.*, 2005).



***Plate 5.3: Play Park Visitors Appreciating Nature at Joy Play Park (a) and (b)***

**(Field Data, 2015)**

Play parks in Lusaka City stock a variety of flowers, grasses, shrubs and trees comprising both indigenous and exotic species as shown in Plate 5.4.





(a)



(c)



(b)



(d)

***Plate 5.4: Variety of Vegetation at Havillah Play Park (a) and (b), Joy Play Park (c) and Libala Play Park (d)***

**(Field Data, 2015)**

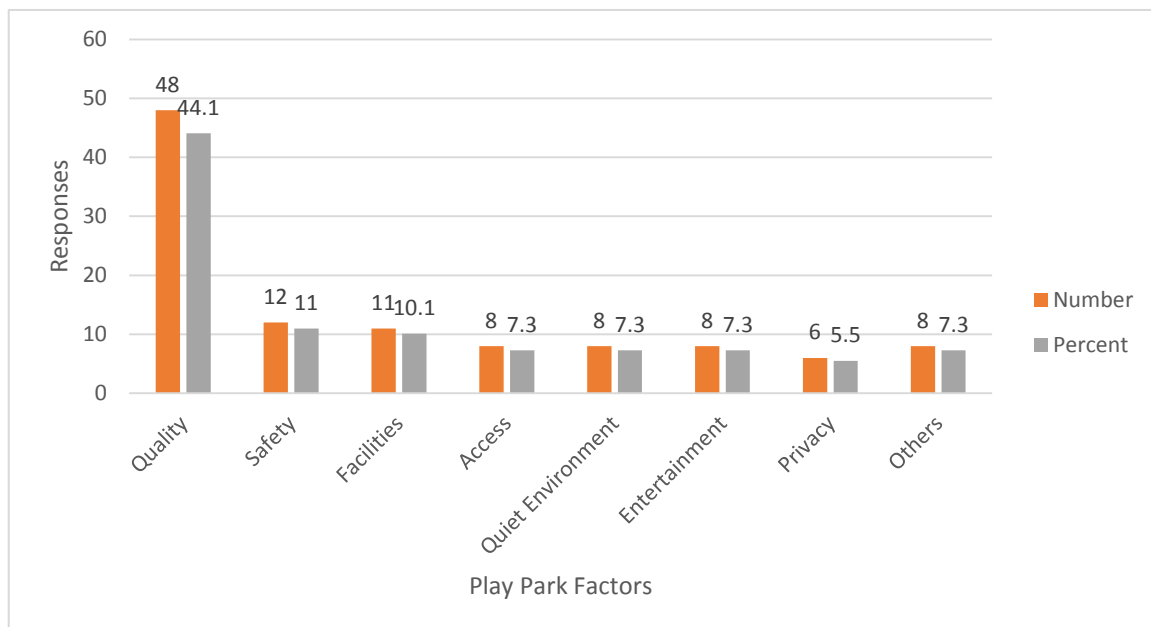
Study findings indicate that Bamboo Plants (*Bambusa vulgaris*), Palm Trees (*Arecaceae*), Eucalyptus Trees (*Eucalyptus globules*) and Umbrella Trees (*Schefflera actinophylla*) are some of the trees that are found at play parks. Some of the flowers which were seen at the play parks during field work include the Violet Flowers (*Viola papilionacea*), Morning Glory Flowers (*Ipomoea purpurea*), Rose Flowers (*Rosa*), September Lilies (*Lilium longiflorum*) and Tulip Flowers (Genus *Tulipa*). In addition to this, Elephant Grass (*Pennisetum purpureum*) and Carpet Grass (*Axonopus fissifolius*) were seen in the lawns at the play parks. The afore-mentioned vegetation which is found at the play parks adds to aesthetic attributes of the play parks and indeed to the play parks' immediate surroundings. They beautify the surrounding environment and raise the property rates of surrounding properties. According to Sherer (2006), people are willing to pay a large amount of money for a property located close to a play park.

### 5.2.6. Other uses

The frequency analysis shows that 13.1% of the respondents visit play parks in order to work and to study. According to one of the key informants, play parks provide a quiet and conducive environment for studying and for doing many other types of work. During field work, for example, an organisation known as ‘Youth for Change’ was found conducting a workshop at Joy Play Park and there were several students that were seen studying or engaged in some form of academic activities.

## 5.3. Factors that Influence the Use of Play Parks in Lusaka City

Out of the numerous factors that influence the use of play parks in Lusaka, quality of the park is the commonest (Figure 5.2).



**Figure 5.2: Factors that Influence the Use of Play Parks in Lusaka City**

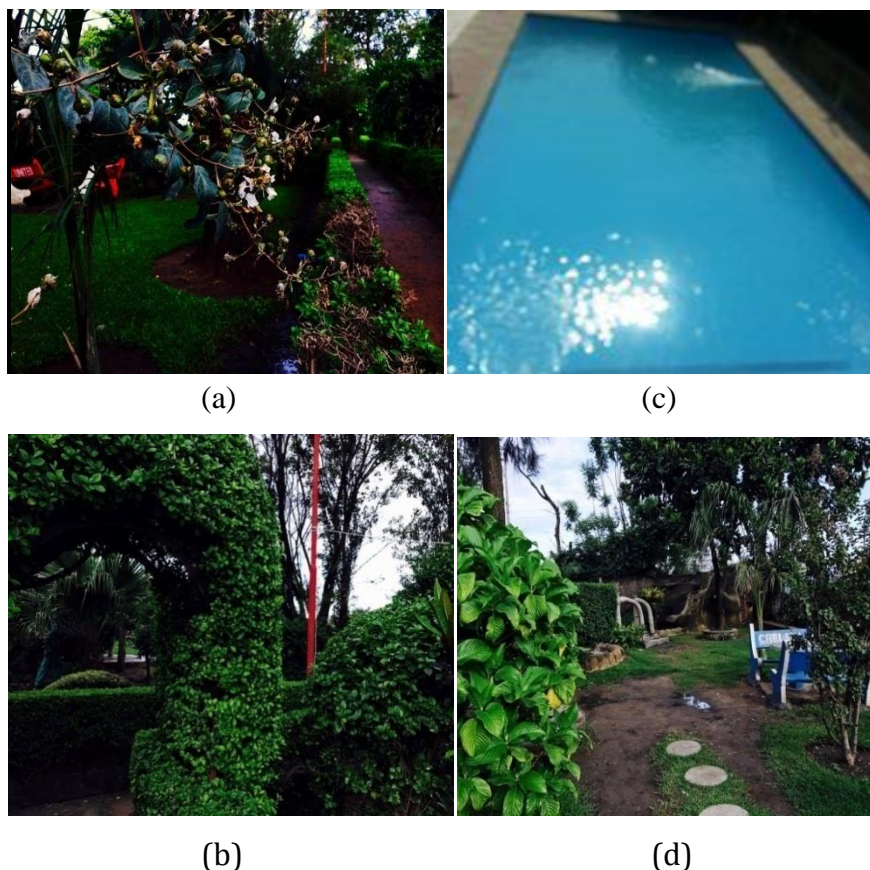
**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

Apart from the quality of the play park, the other factors which influence the use of play parks are availability of facilities, safety, accessibility, quiet environment, entertainment and privacy as discussed in detail below:

### 5.3.1. Quality of a Play Park

The quality of a play park is the predominant factor which influences the use of play parks. Most of the respondents in this study (44.1%) revealed that they visited play parks because of their attractive scenery or beautiful environmental features such as the green lawns as well as

the shade provided by trees and shrubs. The respondents also indicated that they visited play parks because of their large spaces or pieces of land which enable them to be engaged in a number of physical activities (PA) such as walking and running. Play parks are more likely to be visited and even used for physical activities if they are aesthetically pleasing to the public, which is not the case when they are empty open spaces (Corti *et al.*, 2005; Cohen *et al.*, 2006). Bedimo-Rung *et al.*, (2005) argue that when a play park has attractive scenery, people are motivated to use it and engage in physical activity. Evans *et al.*, (2012) and Wood *et al.*, (2011) also observe that good-quality and well-maintained play parks encourage use of play parks. Field observations of the three play parks, in this study, indicate that Joy Play Park has the most attractive scenery comprising well maintained lawns, constantly trimmed hedges, flowers and other greeneries as shown in Plate 5.5. Havilla Play Park is moderately maintained while Libala Play Park has the least attractive scenery. During field work, it was observed that most of the land at Libala Play Park was bare and devoid of the expected green vegetation.



***Plate 5.5: Attractive Scenery at Joy Play Park (a), (b), (c) and (d)***  
**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**



### 5.3.2. Availability of Facilities

Another factor that encourages people to use play parks is the availability of facilities. The study findings indicate that some respondents 10.1% visited play parks because they had facilities which encouraged them to be engaged in a number of physical activities. Some of the facilities that were found at Joy Play Park and Havillah Play Park included public toilets, swings, trampolines, pool tables, climbing frames, swimming pools, toys and jumping castles as shown in Plate 5.6.



(a)



(b)

***Plate 5.6: Availability of Facilities at Joy Play Park (a) and Havillah Play Park (b)***  
**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

However, study findings revealed that certain facilities were not adequate to sufficiently cater for all play park visitors. In addition to this, some of the facilities that were found at these play parks such as toys, swings and seats were damaged or out of use. During field work, some play park visitors complained that there were few seats at the play parks and in some cases they had to wait for long periods of time before they could access or use some facilities. The problem of inadequate play park facilities seems to be more serious at Libala Play Park. The Play Park only has about two climbing frames, a football pitch, a volley ball court and a shed. During field work at Libala Play Park, it was noticed that most of the facilities at the play park were either out of order or vandalised.

According to Bedimo-Rung *et al.*, (2005) and Jurkovič (2013), the availability of play park facilities and the conditions of the facilities normally determine the frequency of play park use and physical activity levels. People are motivated to use play parks that have the

necessary urban equipment and research elsewhere indicates that most people are prepared to travel long distances to visit play parks that offer a wide variety of activities and services (Giles-Corti *et al.*, 2005). The study findings further revealed that Havillah and Joy Play Parks are well maintained and have better play park facilities compared to Libala Play Park. According to the key informants at Havillah and Joy Play Parks, visitors pay for the use facilities found at the play park. The funds which are realised from play park visitors are used for buying and maintaining the necessary play park facilities, as well as for paying play park employees. Libala Play Park does not charge for the use of its play park and the play park lacks the necessary play park facilities to attract many play park users.

Conversely, the study findings further show that none of the three play parks in this study have any provisions for use of facilities for elderly people and people with special needs or physical disabilities. For example, none of the play parks appeared to offer the necessary seating required by the aged, or the appropriate type of entertainment for 'senior citizens' such as bowling and draft (*Insolo*). In addition to this, none of the three play parks have provision for easy movement or use by people who are physically challenged. For example, passages at these play parks are characterised by uneven surfaces and narrow gates, which are not appropriate for visitors who use wheelchairs or who have mobility difficulties, as observed by Dunn *et al.*, (2003). This might explain why elderly persons and persons with physical challenges were not seen at these play parks during field work for this study. Key Informants at all the three play parks in this study also revealed that the old as well as people with physical challenges rarely visited the play parks.

### **5.3.3. Accessibility**

A proportion of respondents 7.30% revealed that accessibility is one of the factors which influences people to visit play parks. Some people do not access some play parks because they are fenced with iron bars and entrance to these play parks is not free of charge. During field work, some people were found outside the play parks because they could not access the play park facilities as shown in Plate 5.7.



(a)



(b)

**Plate 5.7: Some Youths Unable to Access Play Park Facilities at Havillah Play Park (a) and Joy Play Park (b)**  
(Source: Field Data, 2015)

A key informant at the Play Park and Gardens Department of the LCC explained that; A play park should be accessed by all the members of the public and not restricted to any race, age or social group. If fenced it should be surrounded by a palisade fence less than a metre high so that the beauty of the play park is visible to the public and safety of the people visiting the play parks is assured.

Accessibility influences people to use or not use a play park (Lynch, 1960) and it also encourages physical activity amongst diverse populations, particularly the youth (Kaczynski and Henderson, 2007). Despite Libala Play Park being the least developed among the three play parks in this study, it seems to be the most visited play park, as shown in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: Estimated Number of Play Park Visitors per Day**

S/N	Name of Play Park	Approximate Number of Visitors Per Day
1	Libala Play Park	100-250
2	Joy Play Park and Gardens	50-120
3	Havillah Play Park	30-70

(Source: Field Data, 2015)

The high visitor turnout at Libala Play Park might be attributed to the fact that the play park is accessible; it is not fenced and the use of the play park facilities is free of charge. On the

other hand, both Havillah Play Park and Joy Play Park are fenced and they charge visitors for the use of their facilities. For example, visitors are charged ZMK25.00 for use of the swimming pool at Joy Play Park while those who would want to use other park facilities such as toys, swings and the jumping castle are charged ZMK10.00. While it is a well-known fact that the money raised from the play park visitors at Havillah and Joy Play Park is used for buying and maintenance of play park facilities, the study findings show that this practice of charging people for the use of facilities acts as a barrier to a certain section of the population because they cannot afford to pay.

The study findings further show that distance from a play park is another factor which determines the use of play parks. Most of the visitors who were found at the play parks, during field work, were from homes which were located within a kilometer radius of the facilities concerned, as shown in Table 5.2.

***Table 5.2: Distance of Visitors' homes from Play Park***

S/N	DISTANCE	FREQUENCY	
		ABSOLUTE (No.)	RELATIVE (%)
1	Less than 1km	20	44.4%
2	Between 1km- 2km	12	26.7%
3	Between 2km-3km	09	20%
4	More than 3km	04	8.9%

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

The distance from play parks is inversely associated with use and physical activity behaviour (Kaczynski and Henderson, 2007) and it is a well-known fact that when play parks are closer to people's homes, they are more likely to be used (Grahn and Stigsdotter, 2003). In neighbourhood design principle, the ideal distance for any centrally located facility such as a recreation centre is a walking distance, which should not exceed a two kilometer range (Funsho, 2015).

The study findings also show that walking is the most used means of transport to get to play parks as seen in Table 5.3 where 40% of the respondents confirmed that they walked to the play park.

**Table 5.3: Transport Used to get to Play Park**

MEANS OF TRANSPORT	FREQUENCY	
	ABSOLUTE (No.)	RELATIVE (%)
Walking	18	40.0
Driving	10	22.2
Cycling	1	2.2
Public Transport	14	31.1
others	2	4.4
Total	45	99.9

(Source: Field Data, 2015)

Libala Play Park and Joy Play Park are located near people's homes in Libala Stage 2 Residential Area and Matero Residential Area, respectively. Most people in these two areas; therefore, access the play parks easily through walking. In addition to this, both Libala and Joy Play Parks are connected to a good road network and they are located near designated bus stops. Libala Play Park is located near to three established bus stops namely: Libala Stage 2, Arakan Barracks and Hinterland Bus Stops as shown in Figure 5.3.

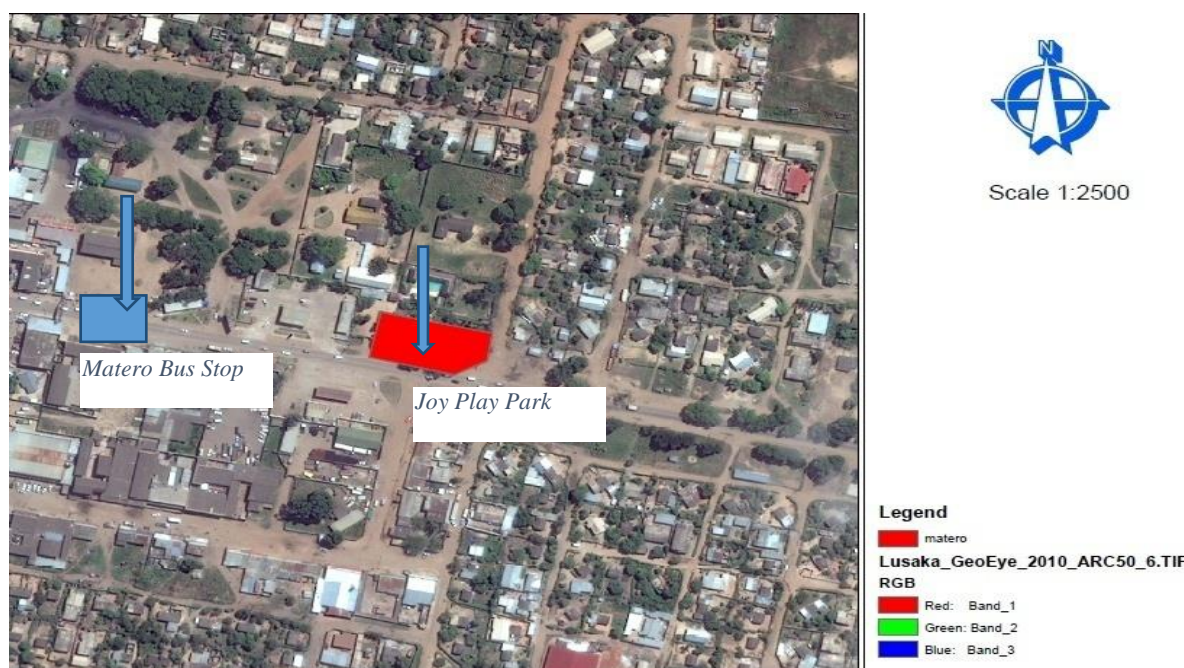


**Figure 5.3: Libala Play Park**

(Source: Field Data, 2015)



Similarly, Joy Play Park is located on Commonwealth Road which is less than 200 Metres from Matero Main Bus Stop, as shown in Figure 5.4.



**Figure 5.4: Joy Play Park**

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

Libala and Joy Play Parks are; therefore, accessible by use of public bus transport and other means of transport. Play parks need to be easily accessible by the people through public transport or through walking and cycling networks equipped with adequate bicycle parking facilities (Grow *et al.*, 2008). Despite Havillah Play Park being located near people's homes in Rhodes Park Residential Area, there appears to be no bus stop near the play park. The nearest bus stop to the play park is Civic Centre Bus Stop, which is about Two Kilometres away from the park. This; therefore, makes accessibility to the play park by public transport difficult. The only people who can easily access the play park are those who live near the play park and those who have their own means of transport such as bicycles or motor vehicles.

#### **5.3.4. Safety of the Play Park**

A proportion of the respondents (11%) noted that safety was one of the factors that influenced them to visit play parks. The respondents said that they preferred visiting play parks which were perceived to be safe. They indicated that good lighting, clear pathways, good signage, safe children's playing areas, well maintained vegetation and clean toilet facilities contributed

to their perception of safety of a play park. According to Wheeler (2007), play parks need to be safe and be seen as safe. People would only use play parks if they felt secure and safe (McAllister, 2008).

According to a key informant at the Play Park and Gardens Department at LCC, one of the ways to make a play park safe is by encircling it with a metre-high fence made out of palisade (wood) materials. The fence ensures that visitors, especially children playing inside the play park, are confined in an enclosed space, safe from the dangers posed by stray dogs or even speeding vehicles. Apart from securing the visitors in a play park, the metre-high palisade fence allows the facilities found in the play parks, along with the often beautiful park scenery associated with these parks, to be visible to the general public. During field work, it was discovered that Havillah Play Park and Joy Play Park were fenced whereas Libala Play Park was not fenced at all. The fencing at Havillah Play Park and Joy Play Park seemed to be higher than the recommended one metre-high and it was not made of palisade materials as seen in Plate 5.8.



***Plate 5.8: Fencing at Joy Play Park***

***(Source: Field Data, 2015)***

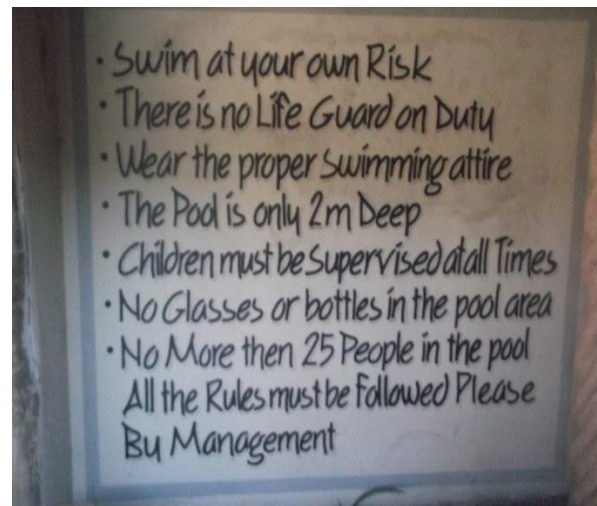
The study findings further revealed that Havillah Play Park and Joy Play Parks are open to the public from 08.00hours to 18.00 hours every day. Some respondents, especially those that are in formal employment, expressed displeasure about these play park working hours because they felt that they had limited time of using play parks when they knock-off from work at

17.00 hours. However, some key respondents who run these play parks explained that they closed the play parks at 18.00 hours because they did not have the capacity to monitor the possible activities of visitors who would want to use the play parks at night. Closing the play parks at 18.00 hours might help to limit chances of the play parks being used at night for inappropriate activities such as prostitution or drug deals as argued by Francis (2009).

The study findings also indicate that play parks do not assign any trained personnel to assist visitors with the use of play park facilities. The visitors, at all the three play parks, use play park facilities without any guidance or help from the employees found at the play parks. During field work, for example, it was evident that swimming pools at both Havillah Play Park and Joy Play Park were operating without any trained life-saving personnel and the visitors were perceived to be swimming in the pool at their own risk, as shown in Plate 5.9.



(a)



(b)

***Plate 5.9: Play Park Visitors Swimming Without Life -Saving Personnel (a) and a Bill Board (b) at Joy Play Park***

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

Operating a swimming pool without a trained life-saver on duty is illegal and it casts doubt on whether the tenants at both Havillah Play Park and Joy Play Park have permits from the Department of City Planning at the LCC to operate swimming pools at their premises. Before one builds a swimming pool, one should apply for permission from the Department of City Planning at the LCC and one of the conditions incorporated in the permit is to open a swimming pool to the public only when there is a trained life-saver on duty. Mack *et al.*,



(1997) and Bedimo-Rung *et al.*, (2005) also observed that people are more likely to visit a park that is consistently well maintained and has facilities which are safe to use. Unsafe play park equipment, for example, is likely to influence parents' decisions in encouraging their children to play in parks that have facilities exhibiting such conditions.

During field work, it was also observed that all the three play parks had not built or provided parking slots for the play park visitors' vehicles and other means of transport such as motor bikes and bicycles as shown in Plate 5.10.



(a)



(b)

**Plate 5.10: Limited Parking Spaces at Havillah Play Park (a) and Joy Play Park (b)**

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

The play park visitors have to improvise where to park their means of transport on the available space around the play parks. Further, even the available land around the three play parks was limited in size thereby creating a challenge for the play park visitors to park. In addition to this, parking of vehicles at all the three play parks was at owner's risk since there were no security officers who were employed to guard the vehicles for the park visitors.

### **5.3.5. Quiet Environment, Privacy and Entertainment**

A certain proportion of respondents (7.3%) indicated that they visited play parks because of their serene or quiet nature. The visitors considered a play park to be a quiet and calm place in comparison to most other places which are found in the City of Lusaka. It is estimated that there are between 152,411 and 294,316 vehicles in the City of Lusaka. Between 2000 and

2007, 10 vehicles per day were added to this motor vehicle population, leading to increased traffic congestion and high levels of noise and air pollution (UN Habitat, 2007; Simoonga, 2009). Research has shown that these factors can easily lead to stress among urban residents. Play Parks; therefore, seem to accord visitors a sense of escape from traffic congestion, pollution and generally fast-paced urban life. According to Ulrich (1981), simply viewing nature such as vegetation found at the play parks can produce significant recovery or restoration from stress within three to five minutes.

Another proportion of respondents (5.5%) visited play parks because they guarantee them with a lot of privacy and undisturbed moments to reflect. They consider play parks as places of refuge or as 'hide outs' where they can secretly enjoy an undisturbed moments by themselves or with their families, friends and spouses. According to Wolch *et al.*, (2002), play parks are places for solitude and contemplation, especially among residents who often have very little private space to themselves

Another proportion of respondents (7.3 %) indicated that they visited play parks because of the various forms of entertainment found at the parks. They observed that some play parks, such as Havilla and Joy Play Parks entertain their visitors with a wide range of music while they relax with their friends, partners or with their children. During field work, posters were seen at Joy Play Park advertising pool parties where dancing, singing and playing of latest tunes of music were scheduled to take place as shown in Plate 5.11.



(a)



(b)

**Plate 5.11: Advertisements of Entertainment Activities at Joy Play Park (a) and (b)**

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

### **5.3.6. Other Factors**

A certain proportion of respondents (7.3%) indicated that they are influenced to visit play parks because play parks offered them the only way of spending their free time. The play park visitors explained that play parks were the only open space available in their area where they could play from because most of the spaces in their residential areas have either been converted into residential plots or they have been turned into dump sites. A key informant at Lusaka City Council explained that because of the challenges urbanization, the city was grappling with a high demand for accommodation to cater for the corresponding high population. Consequently, most land owners in the city, especially in high density and medium density areas, have either extended the sizes of their houses or erected new buildings on the available spaces in their backyards for the purpose raising money by renting out such structures. This has; therefore, deprived most of the children of space where they can play. The play park, therefore, remains to be the only available place where they can go to play. Mensah (2014), observes that the rapid urbanisation in Africa has manifested in the sprung up of many informal settlements (slums) as well as urban sprawl taking place on lands reserved for green spaces such as urban play parks, gardens and outdoor sport areas in order to absorb the high urban population

### **5.4. Use of Park Parks by Different Social Groups in Lusaka City**

The study findings indicate that play parks in Lusaka City are used by people from different social groups and that this use differs depending on a person's socio-economic situation. The social groups which visit play parks are families, friends, school or class mates, church (religious) groups and work groups.

#### **5.4.1. Family Members**

The study findings indicate that families are among the social groups which frequently visit play parks. During field work, some families were found spending time at the play parkas shown in Plate 5.12.



(a)



(b)

***Plate 5.12: Families Visiting Play Parks at Havillah Play Park (a) and (b).***

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

Most parents accompany their children to play at the play park. The parents sit and watch over their children as they play on the swings, trampolines, jumping castles, climbing frames and other facilities that are found at the play parks. In some cases, parents join their children to swim, play football, engage in ‘tug of war’ and in other games. A Key Informant at Joy Play Park said:

This play park caters for all types of people. We have visitors who come from places such as Woodlands, Libala and Rhodespark. For example, we had a family that used to come from Rhodespark. This family would come with their own food and spend almost the whole day at the park.

According to a Key Informant at Havillah Play Park, most families visit the play park over the weekend and especially on Saturdays. Apart from this, some families also visit the play park on public holidays.

#### **5.4.2. School Going Children and Students**

The study findings also show that play parks are used by school-going children and students as seen in Plate 5.13.





(a)



(b)

***Plate 5.13: School Going Children Visiting Play Parks at Joy Play Park (a) and Libala Play Park (b).***

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

The school going children from various Early Childhood Centres (ECE), Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Colleges as well as Universities frequent play parks to play and in some cases to study. These learners visit play parks after knocking-off from school and in some cases during the weekends or school holidays. On one of the days during field work, many pupils were found at Libala Play Park on the day when schools had closed for the holidays. When interviewed, the learners said that they had decided to visit the play park to play before going to their respective homes. Key Informants at both Havillah and Joy Play Parks also revealed that many pupils and students visited their play parks for various reasons such as playing, studying and even learning during organised school excursions/trips or field work. A Key Informant at Kabwata Baptist Church explained as follows:

Pupils at Libala Stage Three Primary School frequent Libala Play Park because their school does not have a sports field. The school; therefore, conducts its sports activities at the play park. Moreover, most houses which are located near the play park such as Libala Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3 and Stage 4 do not have sufficient spaces where the children can play from. The children and the youths in these areas are left with no option but to come and play at the Play Park.

Apart from the pupils from Libala Stage 3 Primary School, research findings indicate that learners from Libala Secondary School, Arakan Girls Secondary School, Arakan Boys Secondary School and other schools in the area also use the Libala Play Park.

### 5.4.3. Church and Work Groups

Play Parks are also used by different religious and work organisations. During Field Work, a certain Church Organisation was found having a church service at Havillah Play Park. According to a Key Informant at Havillah Play Park, some churches also bring their members, especially the young ones, to play at the play park. The study findings also indicate that workers from various organizations frequent play parks. In the company of their workmates, most workers visit play parks during the weekend and on some public holidays to hold functions such as ‘End of the Year Parties’, ‘Christmas Parties’ and ‘Work Seminars’.

During Field Work, some workers from a well-known private business company were found at Havillah Play Park having a ‘braai’ after the official activities of commemorating World International Labour Day on 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2015 as seen in Plate 5.14.



(a)



(b)

***Plate 5.14: Workers Celebrating Labour Day at Havillah Play Park (a) and (b)***

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

## 5.5. Use of Play Parks in relation to Social-Economic Classes

The income level, occupation, as well as the educational level of the respondents was used to compare how use of play parks differs from one socio-economic group to another.

### 5.5.1. Income Level

The study findings indicate that different socio-economic groups visit play parks. These groups are from High Density Areas, Medium Density Areas and Low Density Areas. A Key Informant at Havillah Play Park explained that;

Different types of people come to this play park.....A park is for everyone. We have people who come from Low Density Areas and people who come from High Density Areas. In fact, most of the school going children that visit this play park are from schools that are located in ‘Shanty’ Compounds.

The study findings further show that most people that visit play parks are from Medium Density Areas (46.6%), as shown in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4: Use of Play Parks by Different Income Groups**

AREA OF RESIDENCE	FREQUENCY	
	ABSOLUTE (No.)	RELATIVE (%)
High Density Area	12	26.7
Medium Density Area	21	46.6
Low Density Area	12	26.6
Total	45	100

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

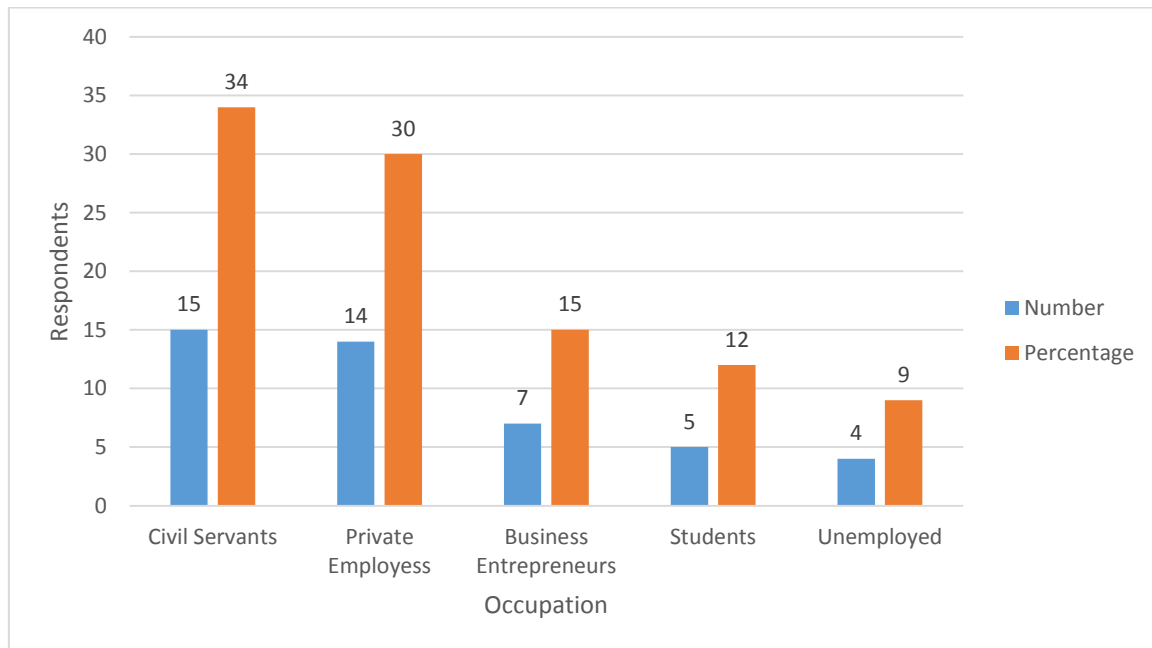
The people from Medium Density Areas frequent play parks the most probably because they can afford to pay the user fees charged at the play parks. On the other hand, people from High Density Areas rarely visit play parks (26.7 %) probably because they cannot afford to pay for play park facilities. According to a key informant at the Department of Play Parks and Gardens, there are thirty-seven play parks in Lusaka City, but only nine of these play parks are developed or have the necessary facilities for use by the public. Out of these nine developed play parks, only Joy Play Park and Gardens is located in High Density Areas. This means that most people in High Density Areas have to travel long distances in order to access the play park. In most cases, such people might not have enough financial and material resources to access play park facilities thereby explaining why few people from such areas seem to visit play parks. Lindsay and Ogle (1972) observed that the rate of participation in outdoor recreation would be commensurate with cost and availability of outdoor recreation resources to the public. Thus low income groups would clearly filter out costly recreation participation (Lee *et al.*, 2001) and this consequently entails that low income groups have less recreation opportunities due to the rising costs of providing basic leisure services (Sessoms, 1993).

The study findings also show that people from Low Density Areas do not frequent play parks (26.7 %). While people from Low Density Areas can afford to pay for the services offered at the play parks, they do not frequent play parks because they might have other alternative forms of recreation which other social groups cannot afford. Walker and Kielcolt (1995) observed

that very few members of the upper class or bourgeoisie (Low Density Areas) use play parks because they have opportunities to socialize in better places.

### 5.5.2. Occupation

The study findings suggest that most of the play park visitors are in formal employment either as civil servants (34%) or as private employees (34%) as shown in Figure 5.5.



**Figure 5.5: Occupations of Respondents**

**(Field Data, 2015)**

Apart from the obvious reason that people in employment can afford to pay for the user charges which go with visiting a play park, people in formal employment are the most frequent visitors of play parks, probably because of the health benefits and other benefits which are associated with play parks. In the famous Whitehall studies, it was shown that, for civil servants in the United Kingdom (UK), those in managerial or administrative positions had significantly better health outcomes than those on lower grades (Marmot and Wilkinson, 2006). Walker and Kielcolt (1995) observe that work is a dominant force in a person's life, and leisure compensates for the rigors, monotony, and brutality of the job. Thus, the working class goes to urban parks because they want the freedom that they cannot find in the workplace (Walker and Kielcolt, 1995). The working class frequents urban play parks because they do not have opportunities to experience similar environments in other places, such as country cottages and country clubs (Walker and Kielcolt, 1995).



### 5.5.3. Education Level

The study findings show that most people that visit play parks have either secondary or tertiary education as shown in Table 5.5.

**Table 5.5: Level of Education of Respondents**

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	FREQUENCY	
	ABSOLUTE (No.)	RELATIVE (%)
Primary	3	6.7
Secondary	23	51.1
Tertiary	16	35.1
No Education	3	35.6
Total	45	100

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

Level of education is; therefore, also a factor which influences people to visit play parks. Level of education is the most distinguishing characteristic of recreationists and the most significant predictor of recreationists' use of outdoor recreation areas (Kelly, 1983; Lucas, 1990). Kelly (1980, 1996) notes that education is a better predictor of leisure participation than income or occupation because while income and occupation influence the kinds of leisure opportunities to which individuals avail themselves, education relates more to leisure socialization as well as the inculcation of leisure skills and interests (Lee *et al.*, 2001). Education contributes to the development of not only interest in outdoor recreation areas, but also to continuing involvement in outdoor recreation activities (Floyd *et al.*, 2006; Lee *et al.*, 2001). This; therefore, might explain why those with secondary and tertiary education were the most frequent users of play parks.

### 5.6. Policy on Play Parks and Recreational Facilities

Zambia's planning activities are centred on the Urban and Regional Planning Act No. 3 of 2015 of the Laws of Zambia which came into effect in August, 2015 after replacing the Town and Country Planning Act Chapter 283. Despite this Urban Planning Legislation underlining the importance of recreation and the need to incorporate play parks in the environment (GRZ, 2015), there is no policy to provide direction for the provision of parkland and recreation services in Lusaka City. Having a policy document in place normally sets out clear rules and expectations for the delivery of play park services and recreational facilities to the public (Vargas-Hernandez *et al.*, 2011). A policy also addresses issues of funding, standards and

quality to meet the parks and recreation needs of the people (Webb and Associates, 1999). In countries such as Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom (UK) and Sweden, which have given issues of 'play' and other recreational services priority in their national agendas, they have come up with well-developed play policies and facilities which are characterised by national and local political commitment (Webb and Associates, 1999).

This lack of policy might have led to Lusaka City Council (LCC) leasing out play parks to the private sector. In addition to this, there are many challenges which have affected the running of play parks such as political interference, poor staffing and funding of the Department of Play Parks and Gardens, as well as the disintegration of play park facilities in the city. These aspects are discussed in detail in the rest of this sub-section.

#### **5.6.1. Leasing of Play Parks to the Private Sector**

With a change of government in the year 1991, Zambia underwent a period of economic policy transition called the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which transformed it from a centrally planned to a free market economy. SAP entailed the privatization of organisations which were not performing well and liberalization of prices for most commodities. JICA (2009) observes that due to many challenges such as staffing and finance, the Council facilitated the adoption of play parks by the private sector under leasehold conditions. A Key Informant at the Parks and Gardens Department at LCC, observed that;

The leasing of play parks was inevitable because LCC was already experiencing financial problems at the time of the Structural Adjustment Programme. The financial burden of the Local Government Authority was exacerbated by among other things the selling of 'LCC Pool Houses' to the general public by the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) Government in the 1990's under the home ownership support scheme at almost nothing, in a suspected move to gain more political support in the country. The 'pool houses' were a big source of income for the council and their sale meant a loss of income to LCC.

Other than this, Lusaka City Council (LCC) surrendered the sole role of the provision of water supply to the city to Lusaka Water and Sewerage Company (LWSC), a newly formed private limited liability company (LWSC, 2014). A Key Informant at the Play Parks and Gardens Department said:

*Before the formation of LWSC, water used to be supplied to play parks at no cost at all since the supply of water was also the responsibility of the same council (LCC) which owned play parks. However, with LWSC in place, the council had to start paying for water supply to its play parks which was not easy going by the number of operational problems it experienced at the time. Consequently, the council started to default on its payments for water supply forcing LWSC to disconnect water services from the play parks. This action greatly affected the quality of the environmental attributes of play parks in Lusaka City since the lawns and other greeneries that add to the beauty of these green spaces deteriorated because of poor water supply.*

The study findings show that all the play parks have been leased to the private sector comprising individuals, business houses and the church. For example, Havillah and Joy Play Parks are run by individuals while Libala Play Park is rented by the Kabwata Baptist Church.

The leasehold conditions demand that the tenant develops the play park through continuous maintenance of the property found at the play park and the monthly payment of rent (lease fees) to the local authority. Section Two (2) of the lease agreement also demands that the tenant pays for electricity and the water that is supplied to the play park. The lease further demands that the tenant refrains from engaging in any commercial activity except that authorized by LCC. Other than this, the tenant needs to keep and maintain the play park in a tidy condition. In addition to this, the people that run these play parks are supposed to allow the local authority or its agents to access the play park at any reasonable time to examine the condition of the premises.

The study findings suggest that as a result of the lack of policy, the Local Authority fails to discipline tenants who fail to run the play parks according to their initial intended purposes. For example, most tenants at these play parks have turned these play spaces into ‘money spinning’ ventures and built structures without the Planning Authority’s permission. A key Informant at the Play Parks and Gardens Department explained that;

Me, I am like a referee in the game of football. In football, the players and the referee are aware of the rules of the game so that when a referee makes a decision, the players will agree with the decision. As it is now, there are no guidelines which have been agreed upon by the Local Authority and the persons that adopted the play parks. So, it is difficult to reinforce the rules or correct wrong things done by the people who are running play parks. Lusaka City since the lawns and other greeneries that add to the beauty of these green spaces deteriorated because of poor water supply.

In addition to this, there seems not to be a standard on the lease fees which are supposed to be paid by the people who rent the play parks. Lease fees vary from one play park to another and there are few tenants who fulfill their lease fee obligations while other tenants have failed to develop the play parks altogether. In certain cases, some tenants have ended up changing the ‘use’ of the pieces of land to their preferred activity or business after adopting the play parks. The study findings further show that the lease period of renting a play park is five years. However, there is no clause in the lease agreement which provides for any disciplinary action by the council when a tenant defaults on the lease fees or fails to develop the play park altogether such as repossessing a play park or even terminating the contract.

The new Urban and Regional Planning Act 3 of 2015 does not also give adequate guidance on the use of play parks. A Key Informant at the Ministry of Local Government and Housing observed the following;

The new Urban and Regional Planning Act 3 of 2015, has no regulations. The regulations are still with the Ministry of Legal Affairs undergoing legal drafting and gazetting. As such, it is difficult to enforce most pronouncements which are stipulated in the Urban and Regional Planning Act 3 of 2015 in relation to play parks and other recreational services. This entails that whenever there is an issue that requires further interpretation it has to be referred to the Director of Physical Planning at the Ministry of Local Government and Housing for guidance.

#### **5.6.2. Funding and Staffing Capacity**

LCC, which is the local authority of Lusaka City, faces many operational challenges due to, among others, financial and staffing challenges. Study findings indicate that the Play Parks and Gardens Department, the department which is mandated to provide play park services and other recreational facilities to the city, has inadequate staffing, as shown in Table 5.6

**Table 5.6: Staff Establishment of the Parks and Gardens Department**

S/N	Established Positions	Salary Scale	Expected	Actual	Deficit
01	Parks Manager	LGSS 07	1	1	0
02	Superintendent	LGSS 12	2	2	0
03	Assistant Superintendent	LGSS 13	2	1	1
04	Parks Supervisor	LGSS 15	1	1	0
05	Foreman	LGSS 14	8	1	7
06	Assistant Foreman	LGSS 17	12	0	12
07	General Worker	G 3	415	83	332
08	Watch man	-	4	0	4
09	Administrative Officer	LGSS 10	1	0	1
10	Registry Supervisor	LGSS 14	1	0	1
11	Clerical Officer	LGSS 18	1	0	1
12	Office Orderly	-	1	1	0

**(Source: Field Data, 2016)**

The staffing problems at LCC make it difficult for the Play Parks and Gardens Department to execute its play park obligations to the public. A key Informant at the Play Parks and Gardens Department at LCC said that; in the year 1988, the department had about 450 employees. However, this reduced to only 28 in the year 2010. By the year 2015, the Play Park Manager and the Parks Supervisor were the only permanent employees in the Department. By the year 2016, the staffing improved to 90 officers against an establishment of 449 Officers.

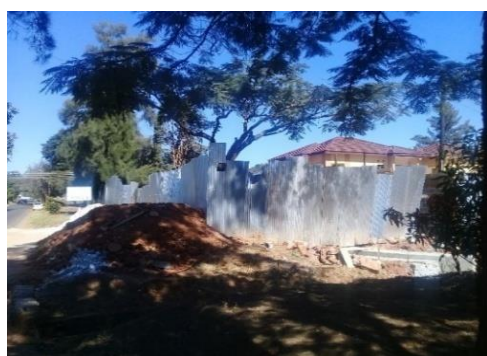
The poor staffing levels entail that there are few people in the Play Parks and Gardens Department to oversee play park activities and enhance play park service delivery. The few staff cannot effectively monitor how the play parks are run or make follow-ups on the maintenance of the play parks by the tenants.

The study findings also show that the LCC has a poor fiscal standing due to poor Government funding and reduced sources of generating income. According to Lolojih (2008), the Government of the Republic of Zambia, in the year 1992, decided to discontinue funding to urban Councils. Although the government erratically continued the funding later, the Councils' claim for support from government had weakened because of the awareness that officially government had stopped funding them. Furthermore, the Government scrapped

the local sales tax share to all local Councils resulting in a reduction in revenue to the Councils. There was also the directive to sell Council houses to sitting tenants (Circular No. 2 of 1996) which also meant that the council lost a guaranteed source of local revenue (Lolojih, 2008). Little money was realised from this exercise as houses were sold at ‘give-away’ prices and in most instances the sale was merely a book transaction to reduce Council debts to their staff. This poor fiscal standing of the Local Authority was so big that to-date, the council cannot fulfill some of its service obligations to the public due to lack of funds. For example, the Play Parks and Gardens Department only has one vehicle to use for its field operations. This has; consequently, reduced its efficiency to monitor play park activities and other recreational services in the city.

### **5.6.3. Political Interference**

The Key Informants from Lusaka City Council explained that there was a lot of political interference in the adoption and running of play parks. The priority has been given to people that have political connections and are either former councilors or former employees of LCC, to run play parks. Other than this, some play parks have been invaded by political cadres who have changed the use of play park land into other “selfish” uses. For example, the Play Parks and Gardens Nursery which is located in Woodlands Residential Area has had part of its land ‘grabbed’ and used to build houses (flats) as seen in Plate 5.15.



(a)



(b)

***Plate 5.15: Houses Constructed on Play Parks and Gardens Nursery Land on Mwatusanga Road (a) Road-side view and (b) side view***

**(Source: Field Data, 2015)**

A Key Informant at the Play Parks and Gardens Department revealed that the Play Parks and Gardens Nursery started its operations before Zambia gained its independence (around 1958)

to grow nursery plants to beautify the city. The nursery; therefore, used to supply plants such as flowers, trees and shrubs for the play parks, roads, streets and other public places in the city of Lusaka. Apart from this, the Play Parks and Gardens Nursery premises was also used as a store room for play park facilities such as swings and climbing frames. Sadly, the Play Parks and Gardens Nursery has 'run-down' and operating below its full potential due to mainly political interference. A key Informant at the Play Parks and Gardens Nursery said;

We were just told by our superiors at work that part of the Play Parks and Gardens Nursery land has been converted into plots for residences. Right now, most of the land has been converted into residential plots as you can see by the new buildings built near this land. We have also heard that this small portion of land where we are operating from is also earmarked for further demarcation and sale. Right now we do not know our fate or where we shall be taken to in the event that this remaining land is sold. Actually, rumour has it that this piece of land has already been sold.

Decisions to take over land meant for play park activities in order to create space for the building houses and other projects shows a lack of political will to support the development of play parks and other green open spaces. Mensah (2014) notes that play parks face many political challenges; the establishment and maintenance of play parks has not been prioritised in the development agenda of some cities in Africa since they have to compete with other, often higher, policy priorities like education, health care, public pensions and public safety for the available limited funds (Rabare *et al.*, 2009; Gilroy, 2013). This lack of priority in handling matters that influence play park activities might explain the poor state of facilities that are at certain play parks in this study.

## **5.7. Conclusion**

The study findings indicate that play parks in Lusaka City are used for social, spiritual, economical, physical activity (exercise) and biodiversity purposes. The quality of a play park, availability of facilities, accessibility and safety, are the main factors that influence people to visit play parks. The main users of play parks are families, school-going children and college students, work groups and religious groups. These groups of people utilize play parks based on their levels of education, occupation and income status. People from medium density areas use play parks the most. All the play parks in Lusaka City have been leased to the private sector and the lack of policy to clearly guide the delivery of play park services to the public has adversely affected the efficiency and effectiveness of running play parks.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter gives a conclusion of the study on the use of play parks in Lusaka City before giving recommendations to the study findings.

### **6.2. Conclusion**

In Lusaka City, people visit play parks in order to have fun with their families and interact with friends. Other people visit play parks in order to take part in a number of physical activities such as swimming, walking and jogging, while others visit play parks to conduct business or buy commodities which are sold at these play parks. Play parks provide play grounds for children and are used for hosting events. In addition to this, the study findings show that play parks in Lusaka City are used for spiritual purposes and many people from different religious organisations meet at the play parks to pray or to spread the gospel. The vegetation found at these play parks has many health and bio-diversity roles which benefit the people of Lusaka.

The study findings indicate that the quality of a play park, availability of facilities, size of play park, accessibility, safety of a play park and distance from home are some of the factors that influence people in Lusaka City to use a particular play park. Play parks are mainly used by families, school-going children and students, work groups and religious groups. Families usually visit play parks over the weekend or on public holidays while other social groups are found at the play parks on any given day of the week. The study findings also show that a person's Social Economic Status is a factor in determining the use of a play park. The socio-economic variables that influence use of play parks are a person's income, occupation and level of education. Most of the users of play parks are from medium density areas, probably because this group of people can afford to pay for play park services, unlike their counterparts in high density areas who are limited probably by their income levels. The social groups from low density areas can afford to pay for play park facilities, but results of this study show that they rarely visit play parks probably because they have opportunities to socialise in better places.

The results of this study also indicate that there is no policy in place to regulate the use and maintenance of these play parks. There also seems to be no political will or national



commitment to coordinate play park activities and the Local Authority leased out all the play parks in the City to the private sector due to, among other factors, financial constraints and staffing problems. The lack of policy on the running of these play parks means that the people who have adopted these play parks are not guided by any standards for the provision of play parks and recreation services which meet the general interest and needs of the public. The play parks do not provide sufficient and quality facilities which meet the expectations of the general public. In addition to this, there is a lot of political interference in the running of play parks. Most of the play parks have thus been adopted by former civic leaders and in some cases the land which was meant for play park activities has been converted into residential plots.

### **6.3. Recommendations**

The study findings indicate that Play Parks in Lusaka City are used by different socio-economic groups and impact positively on the lives of the people they serve. The residents of Lusaka can continue enjoying these benefits even more if the following can be addressed:

#### **1. Formulation of Policy on Play Parks and other Recreational Facilities**

There is need for the Ministry of Local Government and Housing (MLGH) through LCC to come up with a policy on play parks and other recreational facilities backed by national and local political commitment. Such a policy would set out clear rules and expectations for the delivery of play park services and other recreational facilities to the public.

#### **2. Development of Regulations to the Urban and Regional Planning (URP) Act 3 of 2015**

Despite coming into effect in August, 2015 after repealing and replacing the Town and Country Planning Act Chapter 283 of the Laws of Zambia, the new Urban and Regional Planning Act 3 of 2015 has no regulations. The regulations are still undergoing legal drafting and gazetting at the Ministry of Legal Affairs. Therefore, enforcement of certain URP statutes which could improve the status of play parks is a challenge.

#### **3. Revisiting of Criteria for the adoption of Play Parks by the Private Sector**

The criteria for the adoption of play parks by LCC to the private sector needs to be revisited so that all the people who have the interest and potential to run play parks are allowed to apply and their credentials thoroughly scrutinised by an independent body before they are awarded a contract to run play parks. As things stand, a body of councilors presides over applications to award leases to run play parks and the process seems to be marred by suspected corruption.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1: Interviews**

Havillah Play Park, 2015. Manager, Lusaka 22<sup>nd</sup> March

Havillah Play Park, 2015. Tenant, Lusaka 23<sup>rd</sup> March

Joy Play Park and Gardens, 2015. Manager, Lusaka 22<sup>nd</sup> March

Joy Play Park and Gardens, 2015. Tenant. Lusaka 18<sup>th</sup> May

Libala Play Park, 2015. Senior Pastor, Kabwata Baptist Church, Lusaka 16<sup>th</sup> April

Libala Play Park, 2015. Play Park Chairman. Kabwata Baptist Church, Lusaka 23<sup>rd</sup> March

LCC, 2015. Play Park Manager, Play Park and Gardens Department, Tuesday, 14 April

LCC, 2015. Play Park Supervisor, Play Park and Gardens Department, Lusaka 15<sup>th</sup> April

LCC, 2015. Physical Planner, Physical Planning Department, Lusaka 7<sup>th</sup> January

MLGH, 2015. Principal Planning Officer, Lusaka 23<sup>rd</sup> March



## **Appendix 2: Survey Questionnaire**

### **USE OF PLAY PARKS IN LUSAKA CITY PROJECT**

Identification #.....



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

**Questionnaire for Park Users at Joy (Matero), Libala (Libala Stage II) and Havillah Parks (Rhodes Park)**

**TOPIC: USE OF PLAY PARKS IN LUSAKA CITY**

**Dear respondent,**

I am a Master of Science student in the School of Natural Sciences undertaking a research for my dissertation as part of the course requirements. I am carrying out a Mini-Survey research.

Please be well informed that you have been conveniently selected to participate in the study. I would be grateful if you could kindly assist me by responding truthfully to the questions in relevant sections of the questionnaire. Please be assured that your responses will be treated with the highest degree of confidentiality and the information you give would be used purely for academic purposes.

Thanking you in anticipation for your co-operation.

#### **Instructions**

1. Do not write your name on the questionnaire
2. Answer all questions except where it does not apply to you

Tick the answers you are required to do so. (✓)

<b><u>SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION</u></b>		<b><u>FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY</u></b>
1. What was your age at last birthday.....?		
Less than 15 years      Between 36-65 years		[   ]
Between 15-35 years      Above 65 years		
2. What is your Sex?		
1. Male      [   ]      2. Female      [   ]		[   ]
3. What is your marital Status		
1. Single      [   ]      4. Divorced      [   ]		[   ]
2. Married      [   ]      5. Widowed      [   ]		
3. Separated      [   ]		
4. What is your Religious denomination?		
1. Christian      [   ]		[   ]
2. Muslim      [   ]		
3. Other (specify).....		
5. What is the level of education you have attained?		
1. Primary      [   ]      4. No education      [   ]		[   ]
2. Secondary      [   ]		
3. Tertiary      [   ]		
6. What is your occupation .....		[   ]
7. Where do you stay?		
High Density Area (   )      Middle Density Area (   )      Low Density Area (   )		[   ]
<b><u>SECTION B: NATURE OF PARK USE</u></b>		
7. In your own words, what is a play park?		
.....		[   ]
8. Why do you visit play parks?		
	Reason	Tick
	Meet friends	
		[   ]

	Attend function		[   ]
	Have a quiet time		[   ]
	For business transactions		[   ]
	For academic purposes		[   ]
	To exercise		[   ]
	To appreciate nature/vegetation		[   ]
	For leisure/entertainment		[   ]
	Other (specify		[   ]

What benefits do you think you get from visiting the play park?

9.

Benefit	Tick	Explain your answer	
Health			[   ]
Social			[   ]
Economic			[   ]
Academic			[   ]
Religious			[   ]
Other (specify			[   ]

--	--

#### FACTORS THAT DETERMINE PARK USE

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| <p>1. How did you come to know about the existence of this park?</p> <p>Through a friend ( )      Through a work mate ( )</p> <p>Through an advertisement ( )      Through a school mate ( )</p> <p>Other (specify).....</p> | [   ] |
| <p>2. Approximately how far is your home from the play park?</p> <p>Less than 1km( )    Btn 2km- 3km ( )</p> <p>Btn 1km-2km ( )    More than 3km ( )</p>   | [   ] |
| <p>3. Approximately, how long did you take to reach this place from your house?</p> <p>Less than 30 minutes      Between 1hour and 2 hours    Between 30 and 1 hour      More than 2 hours</p>                               | [   ] |
| <p>4. What means of transport did you use to come to the play park?</p> <p>Walking ( )      Bicycle ( )</p> <p>Driving ( )      Public transport ( )    Other (specify).....</p>   | [   ] |
| <p>5. How much do you pay?</p> <p>K5 and Less ( )      Between K11-K20 ( )</p> <p>Between K5-K10 ( )      More than K20 ( )</p>  | [   ] |
| <p>6. What do you think about the charge you pay?</p> <p>Fair ( )      Not fair ( )</p>  | [   ] |

Explain your answer.....

[ ]

7. Which of the following factors made you visit this play park?

Factor	Tick ( )	Give reason for your answer
Beauty of the park		
Safety of the park		
Availability of facilities		
Proximity from home		
Size of the park		
Well maintained green spaces/lawns		
Shade from trees		
Quietness of the place		
Music played at play park		
Secrecy		

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

	Other (Specify)			[ ]
--	-----------------	--	--	-----

8. Are you satisfied with the facilities found at this play park? [ ]  
 Yes ( ) No ( )  
 If answer is No, suggest what you think can be done to improve facilities [ ]  
 .....
9. Do you think the number of play parks is adequate in your area? [ ]  
 Yes ( ) No ( )  
 If answer is No, suggest how many play parks you think should be located in your area.....
10. What do you think about the size of the play park? [ ]  
 Small ( ) Big ( )  
 Too small ( ) Too big ( ) Other (Specify).....
11. What time do you think play parks should be open? [ ]  
 Whole day and night ( ) Afternoon only ( ) Morning only ( )  
 Morning and afternoon ( ) What time do you normally go to visit [ ]
12. the play park? [ ]  
 Morning ( ) Afternoon ( )  
 Mid-morning ( ) Evening ( )  
 Give any reason for your response.....

#### LEVELS OF PARK USE

13. How often do you visit play parks [ ]  
 Weekly ( ) Fortnightly ( )  
 Monthly ( ) Yearly ( ) Other (specify).....

Give a reason for your answer.....

14. Which people do you often see at the play park?

People	Tick
Children	
Women	
Men	
The old	
Other (specify)	

--	--

15. Which people do you think should use play parks often?	[    ]
--	--------

People	Tick	Reason	[   ]
Children			[   ]
Women			[   ]
Men			[   ]
The old			[   ]
Other (specify)			[   ]

16. What do you think makes some people not to use play parks?  
..... [   ]

17. What do you think can be done to increase the use of play parks?  
..... [   ]

18. Who do you visit the play park with?  
Children      (   )      Girlfriend/Boyfriend      (   ) Alone      (   ) [   ]  
Spouse      (   )      Friend      (   ) Other (Specify).....

19. Often, how long do you use the park during your visit?  
Less than an hour      (   )      Between 2hours and 3 hours      (   ) 1 hour [   ]  
to 2hours      (   )      More than 3 hours      (   )

**URBAN PLANNING POLICY ON PARK USE AND RECREATION**

20. Are you consulted or involved in the management of play parks? [   ]  
Yes      (   )      No      (   )



If you are consulted, explain how.....  
.....

21.Suggest any other three (3) services that you need to be found at this play park

- a) .....
- b) .....
- c) .....

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND GOD BLESS YOU!!!!!!**

### **Appendix 3: Interview Guide for LCC and MLGH Staff**



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

**USE OF PLAY PARKS QUESTIONS (FOR KEY INFORMANTS SUCH AS PARK  
SUPERINTENDENTS AND PHYSICAL PLANNERS)**

**Dear respondent,**

I am a Master of Science student in the School of Natural Sciences undertaking a research for my dissertation as part of the course requirements. I am carrying out a Mini-Survey research.

Please be well informed that you have been conveniently selected to participate in the study. I would be grateful if you could kindly assist me by responding truthfully to the questions in relevant sections of the questionnaire. Please be assured that your responses will be treated with the highest degree of confidentiality and the information you give would be used purely for academic purposes.

Thanking you in anticipation for your co-operation.

- How can you define play parks as a local authority?
- How do you distinguish play parks from open spaces?
- How did play parks come about in Lusaka?
- How big should a play park be?
- Where should play parks be located in the city?
- Should play parks be fenced?
- How far should play parks be from a means of public transport of residential area?
- What kind of facilities should a play park provide?
- What are play parks intended to be used for?
- Which people should visit play parks?
- Do you think most people use play parks in Lusaka City?
- What do you think makes some people not to visit play parks in Lusaka City?
- What time should play parks open and close?
- How much should people pay to use a play park?

### **Urban Planning Policy on park use and recreation facilities**

□ Who runs play parks in Lusaka City, currently?

- Who should run play parks in Lusaka City?
- Have play parks been integrated in your plans?
- Which Urban Planning Policy governs use of play parks in Lusaka?
- What is the background of the policy on park use in Lusaka?
- What do you think are the gaps in the Town and Country Planning Act Chapter 283 over recreation facilities?
- How should the people be involved in management of play parks in Lusaka City?

## **Appendix 4: Interview Guide for Play Parks Tenants and Play Park Managers (Staff)**



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

### **USE OF PLAY PARKS IN LUSAKA CITY QUESTIONS FOR PARK OWNERS AND PARK MANAGERS**

**Dear respondent,**

I am a Master of Science student in the School of Natural Sciences undertaking a research for my dissertation as part of the course requirements. I am carrying out a Mini-Survey research.

Please be well informed that you have been conveniently selected to participate in the study. I would be grateful if you could kindly assist me by responding truthfully to the questions in relevant sections of the questionnaire. Please be assured that your responses will be treated with the highest degree of confidentiality and the information you give would be used purely for academic purposes.

Thanking you in anticipation for your co-operation.

## Questions

- What is a play park in your own words?
- What facilities do think should be at a play park?
- When did you start running this play park?
- How did you acquire the park?
- Why did you decide to start running this park?
- Which people normally visit this park?
- How many people come to this park per day?
- What exactly do they come to do?
- What do you think attracts them to this place?
- Which places do your visitors come from?
- What rules or restrictions do you have?
- Is there any age restriction for entrance?
- What time do you open and close the park?
- How much do you charge?
- Why do you charge?
- Do you think your charge is fair?
- Do you advertise this play park to the public?
- Which other people or organisations help you to run this play park?
- Do you collaborate in any way with Lusaka City Council?
- What challenges do you face running this park?
- What are some of the successes that you have scored at this park?