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COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

GENDER AND PUBLIC SPACES: INVESTIGATING ACCESS AND PRACTICE OF

FEMALES IN PUBLIC PARKS IN DOHA

BY

NUSSYBA ABDELGADIR HASSAN ERIBI

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## COMMITTEE PAGE

The members of the Committee approve the Thesis of Nussyba Abdelgadir

Hassan Eribi defended on 29/12/2016.

---

Attilio Petruccioli  
Thesis/Dissertation Supervisor

---

Anna Katharina Grichting Solder  
Committee Member

---

Djamel Ouahrani  
Committee Member

---

Sara Protasoni  
Committee Member

Approved:

---

Khalifa Al-Khalifa, Dean, College of Engineering

## **ABSTRACT**

ERIBI, NUSSYBA, ADBELGADIR., Masters: January: 2017, Masters of Science  
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Title: Gender and Public spaces: Investigating access and practice of females in  
public parks in Doha

Supervisor of Thesis: Attilio, Petruccioli.

### Abstract:

The definition of a public space promotes free access to all citizens. Unlike men, women had many concerns about feeling free to go out at any time in accessing and being in public spaces. This reduces, rather than enhances, women's access to public spaces. Thus, public spaces themselves become gendered. Women may find it difficult to participate in public spaces. Many factors limit women from accessing public spaces.

The significance of this thesis is to investigate and try to answer these questions: how do women use public parks? Do women have full/fair access to public parks? What are consequences of multiculturalism on women's access to public parks? Is there a need for segregated parks for women? Moreover, it is important to understand and identify the factors that limit women's access to public parks, as well as defining the elements that give women comfort in public parks. Therefore, this will help to enhance and improve the public parks environment in Doha, which will promote free access to all citizens. The thesis

will focus on studying public parks in Doha.

The thesis depends on the data collected from both secondary and primary resources. Thus, to reach a conclusion regarding this problem, a detailed literature review was done to help understand the background of the problem and to identify what the variables are that will help in understanding and formulating the thesis framework.

The thesis employs the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods, given its investigative nature. After identifying the variables from the literature review, a questionnaire was formulated. Moreover, the literature review will give certain and clear techniques to be used in observation. Different parks in Doha city are observed to come up with maps that documented the behavior of users in parks. The outcomes of this thesis are behavioral maps, graphs, charts, photos, and recommendations.

## DEDICATION

*I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been dully acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or currently published or submitted for any other degree at Qatar University or any other institutions.*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION .....	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vi
List of Tables .....	ix
List of Figures .....	xi
1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND .....	1
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Problem statement .....	2
1.3 Research Background.....	4
1.3.1 Background .....	4
1.3.2 Research question.....	4
1.3.3 Research objectives and goals .....	5
1.4 Organization of the Thesis .....	6
2 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	7
2.1 Public space.....	7
2.2 Multiculturalism comparison between France, United States, and Qatar .....	9
2.2.1 Multiculturalism in France .....	9
2.2.2 Multiculturalism in the United States.....	11
2.2.3 Multiculturalism in Qatar.....	13
2.3 Women in public spaces .....	18
2.4 Parks.....	25
2.5 Conclusion.....	31
3 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY & METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION .....	34
3.1 Methodological Approach .....	34
3.2 Data Collection Tools .....	37

3.2.1 Literature Review .....	37
3.2.2 Questionnaire .....	37
3.2.3 Structured interviews.....	38
3.2.4 Observations .....	41
3.3 Gathered Data and Maps for the Site Analysis.....	47
3.4 Ethics and Protecting participants .....	48
3.5 Conclusion.....	49
4 CHAPTER FOUR: DATA COLLECTION .....	50
4.1 Data Collection Tools .....	50
4.1.1 Questionnaire .....	50
4.1.2 Interviews.....	59
4.1.3 Observation.....	71
4.2 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION .....	150
4.3 Conclusion.....	153
5 CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION.....	156
5.1 Recommendations and implications.....	156
5.1.1 Conceptual implementation in Dafna (old Sheraton) park.....	161
5.2 Research Limitations and Delimitations .....	165
5.3 Suggestions for Future Research .....	166
5.4 Conclusion.....	167
References .....	171
Appendix A: QUESTIONNAIRE FROM.....	180
Appendix B: QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS .....	190



## **List of Tables**

Table 1: Data collection tools used in this research.....	36
Table 2: List of interviewees, their organizations and discussed topic (A).....	39
Table 3: List of interviewees, their organizations and discussed topic (B).....	40
Table 4: Standards & Guidelines for the provision of Public Parks from MM.....	42
Table 5: Proposed Community Oriented Parks Definition and Basic Contents from MME for town park.....	0...43
Table 6: Proposed Community Oriented Parks Definition and Basic Contents from MME for district park.....	44
Table 7: Proposed Community Oriented Parks Definition and Basic Contents from MME for local park.....	45
Table 8: Proposed Community Oriented Parks Definition and Basic Contents from MME for neighborhood park.....	46
Table 9: Interviewee information.....	59
Table 10: Interviewee information.....	63
Table 11: Interviewee information.....	67
Table 12: Interviewee information.....	69
Table 13: General information from observed parks .....	71
Table 14: Features of the observed parks.....	72
Table 15: Users in the observed parks.....	73
Table 16: Users Activites in the observed parks.....	74

Table 17: Photos with comments from Dafna (old Sheraton) park (A) .....	77
Table 18: Photos with comments from Dafna (old Sheraton) park (B) .....	78
Table 19: Photos with comments from Dafna (old Sheraton) park (C) .....	79
Table 20: Photos with comments from Dafna (old Sheraton) park (D) .....	80
Table 21: Photos with comments from New Sheraton park (A) .....	88
Table 22: Photos with comments from New Sheraton park (B) .....	89
Table 23: Photos with comments from New Sheraton park (C) .....	90
Table 24: Photos with comments from New Sheraton park (D) .....	91
Table 25: Photos with comments from Dahl Alhmam park (A) .....	101
Table 26: Photos with comments from Dahl Alhmam park (B) .....	102
Table 27: Photos with comments from Dahl Alhmam park (C) .....	103
Table 28: Photos with comments from Dahl Alhmam park (D) .....	104
Table 29: Photos with comments from Oniza park.....	112
Table 30: Photos with comments of Rayyan park (A) .....	120
Table 31: Photos with comments of Rayyan park (B) .....	121
Table 32: Photos with comments in Luqta park (A).....	128
Table 33: Photos with comments in Luqta park (B).....	129
Table 34: Photos with comments in Nuaija park .....	136
Table 35: Photos with comments in Al Waab park (A) .....	143
Table 36: Photos with comments in Al Waab park (B) .....	144
Table 37: Positive and negative features in the observed parks (A).....	162
Table 38: Positive and negative features in the observed parks (B).....	163

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Qatar records globally and regionally in the 2016 GLOBAL PEACE INDEX report.....	3
Figure 2: The diagram of research design.....	34
Figure 3: Behavioral map layers.....	36
Figure 4: Charts represent questions 1, 2 & 3 in part 1.....	51
Figure 5: A column chart shows the different age groups participated of participants in the questionnaire.....	52
Figure 6: Charts reflect results of questions 5,6 & 7 in part 1.....	52
Figure 7: Charts for questions 1 & 2 in part 2.....	53
Figure 8: Two column charts compering comparing between women’s presences in public parks if they are alone or versus with family.....	54
Figure 9: Two pie charts shows the results for question 5 & 6 in part 2.....	55
Figure 10: Column chart of participants’ choice of activities done in public parks.....	55
Figure 11: Elements needed to be added to improve women’s access to public parks.....	56
Figure 12: Elements needed to be removed or minimized to improve women’s access to public parks.....	57
Figure 13: Pie chart shows participants’ selections between among A, B & C.....	57

Figure 14: Participants' selections from A, B, & C of where they prefer to sit.....	58
Figure 15: Bar chart shows which activities participants prefer to do in public parks from A, B, C, D, E &F.....	58
Figure 16: Land use map from MME for zone 60; the star icon is the park's location...	75
Figure 17: Behavioral mapping of Dafna park layer 1.....	84
Figure 18: Behavioral mapping of Dafna park layer 2.....	85
Figure 19: Land use of zone 61 from MME; the star icon is the park location.....	86
Figure 20: Behavioral mapping of New Sheraton park layer 1.....	94
Figure 21: Behavioral mapping of New Sheraton layer 2.....	95
Figure 22: The land use plan from MME for zone 32; the star icon is the park location.....	97
Figure 23: The Dahl (ground cave).....	97
Figure 24: Different areas for community events in the park.....	98
Figure 25: Different available benches in the park.....	99
Figure 26: Some of the available facilities that enhance and educate users.....	100
Figure 27: Behavioral mapping of Dahl Alhmam park layer 1.....	107
Figure 28: Behavioral mapping of Dahl Alhmam park layer 2.....	108
Figure 29: Land use of zone 63 from MME; the star icon is the park location.....	109

Figure 30: The two secondary entrances in the park.....	110
Figure 31: Different benches in the park. ....	111
Figure 32: Behavioral mapping of Oniza park layer 1.....	115
Figure 33: Behavioral mapping of Oniza park layer 2.....	116
Figure 34: Fence, children’s playing area, lighting, & signage in local & neighborhood parks.....	118
Figure 35: Land use map of zone 53 from MME; the star icon is the park’s location.....	119
Figure 36: Behavioral mapping of Rayyan park layer 1.....	124
Figure 37: Behavioral mapping of Rayyan park layer 2.....	125
Figure 38: Land use map of zone 52 from MME; the star icon is the park’s location.....	126
Figure 39: Behavioral mapping of Luqta park layer 1.....	132
Figure 40: Behavioral mapping of Luqta park layer 2.....	133
Figure 41: Land use map of zone 44 from MME; the star icon is the park’s location.....	134
Figure 42: Behavioral mapping of Nuaija park layer 1.....	139
Figure 43: Behavioral mapping of Nuaija park layer 2.....	140

Figure 44: Land use of zone 55 from MME; the star icon is the park's location.....141

Figure 45: Behavioral mapping of AL Waab park layer 1.....148

Figure 46: Behavioral mapping of AL Waab park layer 2.....149

Figure 47: conceptual initial proposal for Dafna (old Sheraton) park.....164

# 1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## 1.1 Introduction

The definition of public space centers on the promotion of free access to all citizens. Unlike men, women had felt uncomfortable in accessing and being in public spaces. Women had many concerns about feeling free to go out at any time. This reduces women's access to public spaces. Thus, public spaces themselves become gendered. Women may find it difficult to participate in public spaces. Many factors limit women from accessing public spaces at any given time.

Doha's augmented growth and multicultural population led to diversity in the economic, social and physical characteristics of its public spaces, especially its public parks. Salama and Wiedmann consider the Corniche Boulevard as one of the most accessible and significant urban open spaces in Doha (Salam & Wiedmann, 2013). Also, the waterfront park is recognized as a very well-known park used by different socioeconomic and cultural groups. Mohammed Ali, Director of the public parks department, stated that 2010 was a focal point in the history of public parks. The total amount of parks in Qatar from the 1970s until 2010 was 58. Since 2010, 38 parks have been established. Most of these parks were built within neighborhoods to encourage citizens to use the new parks (Al-khoori, 2016).

## **1.2 Problem statement**

Women have less freedom to be on streets than men, forcing us to understand the ways in which women are restricted from public spaces. The aim of our research is to improve and enhance women's access to public spaces, public parks in particular.

Globally, many national organizations support and formulate rules and laws that ensure and give women the right to access and participate in public spaces. As stated by the United Nations in its Sustainable Development Goals, number five of 17, specifically, is about achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. One of the goal's targets is to guarantee fair chances on all levels of public life. Goal number eleven focused on city characteristics, stressing the need for cities that are sustainable, safe, resilient and inclusive. By 2030, it hopes to give safe access to green and public spaces especially for women, children, people with special need, and older persons.

Locally, Qatar vision 2030 supports this intention. The main purpose of the 2030 vision is to create a clear roadmap for the future. It focuses on four main pillars: economic, human, social, and environmental development. A study done in 2008, in Doha, testing vitamin D level in 340 workers at Hamad Medical Corporation. Only 2% of the women and 5% of men had desirable level of Vitamin D. This is because people spend less time in the sun. Prof. Sherif from Qatar University said "These results are reflective of Qatar's society. Women – particularly covered women – and the elderly are more likely to have less ratio of Vitamin D" (WALKER, 2014) (Salam & Wiedmann, 2013). All of that, confirm the



need to make sure that women in Doha have access to public parks. From another perspective, in the Global Peace Index 2016, Qatar had been ranked number one in the middle east and north Africa countries and 34th in the world (Figure 1) ((IEP), 2016). From all the above, Doha is supporting women’s access and presence in public parks. So, there is a need to study the current situation in Doha to assist and help in improving women’s access to public parks.

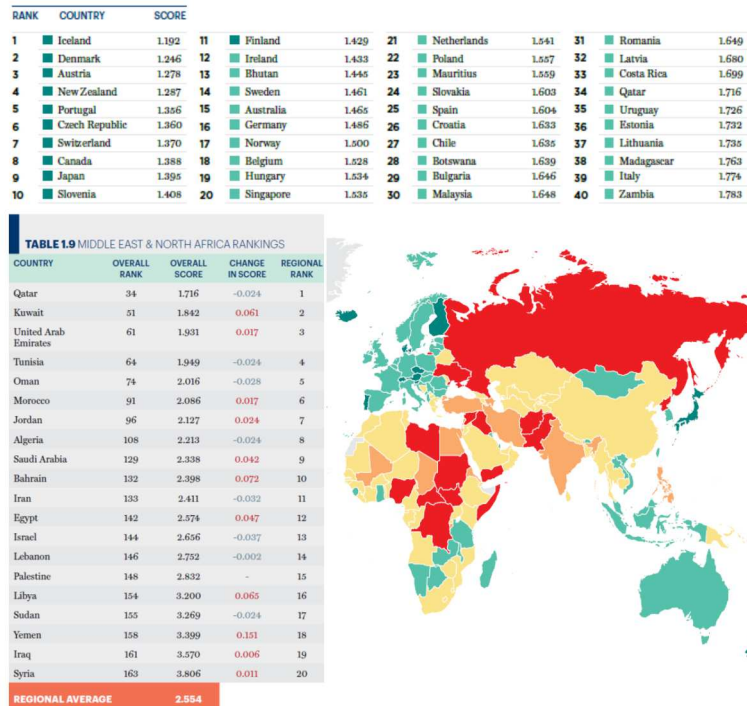


Figure 1: Qatar records globally and regionally in the 2016 GLOBAL PEACE INDEX report

## **1.3 Research Background**

### **1.3.1 Background**

In this research, the target is to focus on women as users. This is because of many aspects. First, health and fitness. Once women are able to access public spaces effectively, this will improve their physical, emotional and mental health. Also, women's access to public spaces will ensure for family members, because mothers mostly are responsible for their children.

Thus, this research is aiming to find and define the factors that affect women's access to public parks in Doha, as well as examining and enhancing public park design. This research is trying to confirm that women's access to public parks in Doha is limited.

### **1.3.2 Research question**

1. Do women in Doha have a full/ fair access to public parks?
  - a. What is the level of access that women have to public parks?
  - b. Do women access public parks?
  - c. For what purposes do women go to public parks?
  - d. How often do women go to public parks?
2. What are the consequences of multiculturalism on women's access to public parks in Doha?
  - a. What factors affect women access to public parks?
  - b. How does multiculturalism affect the design/ use of public parks?
3. How do women use public parks?

- a. What activities do women do in public parks?
  - b. What are the physical elements that contribute to comfort for women in public parks?
  - c. Are the available design elements in the park fitting of women's needs?
  - d. At what time do women access public parks?
  - e. What could be done to improve women's accessibility to public parks?
4. Do women in Doha need segregated parks?
- a. Are there public parks only for women in Doha?
  - b. How many public parks in Doha are for women?
  - c. What activities are available in these parks?

### ***1.3.3 Research objectives and goals***

The target goal of this study is to contribute in creating future successful public parks by:

- Understanding and clarifying issues and factors that affect women's access to public parks from a literature review.
- Concentrating attentively by choosing and investigating eight different settings and scales of public parks in Doha.
- Comparing between the parks to encourage and enhance women use of public parks.

- Developing recommendations for designers and urban planners to enhance the design of public parks.

#### **1.4 Organization of the Thesis**

The research had been divided into five chapters. Chapter One is the introduction that defines the general research issues with the current situation in Doha. Also, it states the problem statement of the research, clarifying the research background, questions, objectives, and goals. The second chapter is a "literature review" which focus on public spaces, multiculturalism comparison between France, United States, and Qatar, women in public spaces, and public parks. Literature review had been done to help understanding the background of the problem and what are the variables that will help in understanding and formulating the research framework. Also, it discusses different methods that helped in formulating the research methodology. Chapter Three discussed in depth the research methodology & methods of data collection used in the research. The data collection used in the research are literature review, questionnaire, structure interviews, and observations. Chapter Four is about "Data Collection and Analysis". In Chapter Four all data collection tools results had been analyzed. Chapter Five states the recommendations that the researcher believe that it will help in improving women access and participation in public parks.

## **2 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Public space**

True public space is recognized as being accessible to all groups, providing freedom of action, temporary claim and ownership (Altman & Zube, 1989; Carr, Francis, Rivlin, & Stone, 1992). Moreover, public spaces have been defined as freely accessible by the public and intended for social interaction, relaxation, or passage. Public spaces can be indoors or outdoors, and may include walkways, parks, and a range of other areas where people may sit, gather, or pass through. Public spaces contain marketplaces (bazaars and malls), modes of public transport (buses, trains, taxis, and rickshaws), streets, public toilets (in neighborhoods, on streets, at railway stations), recreational areas (parks, restaurants, cinema houses), and sites such as bus stops and railway stations (Phadke, 2007).

The need for open spaces is a response to many requirements of human health, for example the need for physical comfort, enjoyment, relaxation, and social interaction. Thus, the design of open spaces must have supreme consideration by urban planners and architects (Salama & Wiedmann, 2013). A focus on varying economic opportunities, physical elements, and mixed social and cultural groups will lead to and promote diverse spaces. The main objective in city planning concepts and design principles is to create a place that encourages diversity and socio-spatial mix. One of the most important considerations for open spaces is improving health and fitness. The benefits that

current literature discussed on the need of open spaces are the health benefits, even if it's only from physical activities in fresh air.

Yet, the provision of public spaces is a link to the right to access public space. Don Mitchell (2003) argues that the right to the city and its public spaces should remain a core objective of social justice movements. From his point of view, the right to participate in the city means continuing work of production, creation, and negotiation and not only for making urban spaces (Phadke, 2007).

Since different age groups, cultural backgrounds, and genders are experiencing and perceiving urban spaces differently, considering a suitable civic design and diverse public space is required. Moreover, this public space should be accessible, inclusive, provide several activities, and offer different types of settings to ensure better interaction. The qualities and characteristics of open space will determine the types of activities. Furthermore, they should consider enhancing the function and quality of urban open spaces (Salama & Wiedmann, 2013).

To describe what users do in these spaces, direct observation and behavioral mapping could be used as systematic methods (Sanoff, 1991). Salama & Wiedmann believe that interviewing a group of inhabitants could give an idea of how they experience the space; however, other techniques as cognitive and behavioral mapping are needed to assess the way inhabitants use the spaces. Activities, people, timing, and space are the four aspects involved in systematic observation. In the questionnaire, the use of questions with images could enhance their understanding. Moreover, for a good understanding of who

is using the space and how, open spaces could be classified into public, semi-public, and private (Newman, 1972).

## **2.2 Multiculturalism comparison between France, United States, and Qatar**

Multiculturalism supports the idea of so-called color blindness, the idea that people are all alike and differences among them should be minimized (Plaut, 2002). Moreover, multiculturalism emphasizes that different social groups could use the same social context similarly, while mainstream institutions could limit them (Markus et al., 2000; Steele et al., 2002).

### **2.2.1 Multiculturalism in France**

Unlike US and Canada, France has been criticized for not being "dual belonging", which has been seen as a detractor in the quality of France's identity (Simon, May 2012). Considering the framework in France regarding its multi-culture, migration is not incorporated into French society. Segregation is a feature for migrants, who were considered a minor social group within the society. They were living separately regarding their own identity and ethnic origin. Yet their social integration was not considered in French society.

In the past three decades, France has improved the cultural diversity among its citizens. Still, half of the immigrants with French citizenship stated that they do not appear to be French. This could be because of differences in language, accent, skin color, surname, or self-presentation. Simon mentioned as a result of his article's conclusions that "The French anti-multiculturalism discourse creates the condition for the rejection of plural belongings by the

mainstream society, and thus a marginalization of visible minorities." (Simon, May 2012, p. 1). French political elites excluded strongly the multiculturalism concept, which depends on the valorization and appreciation of cultural variances in ethnic societies.

From another viewpoint, in 1974 France had witnessed women's immigration. Still women's engagement in French society had been ignored, especially Muslim women. The attention was only to their hijab (headscarf). Muslim women in France are facing many challenges with inequality of rights, specifically their right to be engaged in social life (Wenden, Mar. 1998). The main reasons that forced women to immigrate from their homes were: coming to work, reuniting with families, and seeking to improve their social standing. For sure there are many differences among migrant women's integrations in French society. Migrant women's integration varies in French society according to their nationalities. As an example, as opposed to Maghrebians and black Africans, Turkish women face difficulties integrating with French society. They have problems in language and obtaining jobs.

Wearing the hijab (headscarf) and polygamy are what French public debates focus on, which are not very prevalent in women's lives. The response by the French to these practices is imposing unfair sanctions (Wenden, Mar. 1998). This type of action tends to lead to more segregation rather than improving integration. In October 1989, the scarf issue had been raised, when three Moroccan girls simply wore their hijabs and went to school. They were forced to take off their hijabs by the headmaster, who stated that this behavior is



against French rules. In another recent case in France during the summer of 2016, three police officers with guns surrounded a woman on the beach and forced her to take off her suit, a burkini. The photo and the story were publicized. A burkini is a swimsuit preferred by Muslims since it covers the full body except for face, hands, and feet. This suit had been banned by some French municipalities on public beaches. Their reasons for this banning were secularism, public ethics, and maintaining cleanliness (Chapman, Aug. 2016). Moreover, some French see the burkini as an image of sexist oppression. The Mayor of Cannes describes it as a "symbol of Islamic extremism". Thinking of women only by what they are wearing is wrong. Still, integration and secularism in French society are key elements migrant women fight for that could limit their access to public spaces.

### ***2.2.2 Multiculturalism in the United States***

As recognized by researchers since 1960, the "melting pot" concept in America accommodated immigration groups, who should not have to leave their identities behind them. Immigration groups maintained their cultural attributes and beliefs while at the same time changing and adapting gradually while interacting with others. Different ethnic and cultural groups continue using and sharing their own languages, but still, they are American (Owen, 2005).

A survey shows that 95% of Americans support and encourage the idea of the United States being the greatest melting pot. They see that people from all over the world can come together and be as one nation (Hunter & Bowman,

1996). Also, 67% of the participants in a 2005 study believed that immigrants should adapt American heritage, culture, and language. Also, 83% of United States residents believed that they were uniquely American in terms of their culture and traditions (Fetto, 2003). Still, in Florida and California, Hispanics live in semi-isolated and concentrated communities. This, of course, has led to a reduction in economy and education.

From the nation's founding, the American identity became a challenging notion. A promise that respects principles of shared and core beliefs is linked to American identity, not only the common history. Multiculturalism and immigration are becoming obvious features of American citizenship and character (Owen, 2005). Multiculturalism works as a basis of guiding ideology, policies, and practices and as a set of normative principles about how people should act in various settings (Gerteis & Hartmann, 2007).

Nevertheless, health outcomes, educational attainment, wealth, employment, and home ownership are inequalities faced by African Americans as compared to white Americans (Hochschild, 1995). As an example, African American students could face harmful treatment in school, such as social rejection from a peer who does not welcome him. Negative social events and a feeling of nonbelonging are normal in colleges, as indicated by the survey results.

On the contrary, white students don't typically face those issues (Vaughns & Walton, n.d.). Also, the obesity ratio among white people in the US is lower as compared to black people. The relationship between accessing public parks and

public health is affecting ethnic minority people negatively (Ogden, Carroll, Kit, & Flegal, 2014). The population of white Americans is 160 million more than black Americans according to the most recent census data. White Americans represent 62% of the US population, and African Americans make up 13% of the US population. Since January 2015, 13% of black Americans killed by police were unarmed, compared with 7% of white Americans (Lowery, July 11, 2016). It is clear that the multiculturalism concept in the US is not represented or reflected in these statistics.

### ***2.2.3 Multiculturalism in Qatar***

The Albidaa settlement was founded on the eastern coast of the peninsula in 1847 by Sheikh Mohammed bin Thani. This location was an old fishing village (Adham, 2008, p. 221). Its water source and the shape of the coastline were the two main reasons for selecting the Albidaa settlement. The booming of the pearl trade had increased the population in the settlement to 12,000 inhabitants in the first era of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Yet, the population was reduced from 27,000 to less than 16,000 because of the discovery of cultivated pearls in Japan in the 1930s (Al Buainain, 1999, p. 149). The need to enter the sea, the location of water sources, and the division of land among tribal clans resulted in developing Albidaa to eight zones. The total area was 1.23km to adjust to the shoreline (Hasan, 1994).

The Al Maadhid tribe, Persian immigrants, East-African slaves, and Bedouins were the structural components of the Doha population during the first

half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Persian migrants were mainly working as craftsmen in boat construction. East-African slaves were working as fishermen or in the pearl industry. At that time, Bedouins were mainly an impermanent population in Doha. They only came during certain seasons to sell their products (Adham, 2008, p. 224). Each of these groups lived separately in their own areas. Harbor, markets, and mosques were the primary centers of social interaction among these groups. The Al Maadhid tribe settlement was located separately to the east and west of Albidaa. On the other side, Persians and Arabs lived near the market, which was known as Al Jasrah (Al Buainain, 1999, p. 190). Neighborhoods were known as *ferej*, and houses were built closely to each other, mostly wall-to-wall. This reflected their strong relationships among families.

Until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Doha's traditional urban form was fixed. After that, new urbanism was introduced. In 1937, oil was found in Dukhan, yet its production had started after World War II (Scholz, 1999, p. 188). Doha became the center of modern urbanism because of the governing Al Thani Family. Between the 1950s and 1970s, population increased from 14,000 to over 83,000 citizens. The Qatar population consisted of Qatari and non-Qatari. Qatar had witnessed a huge migration after the oil and gas discovery in the 1970s; 67% were immigrants (Al Buainain, 1999, p. 217). Due to lack of education in 1970, 90% of the working population was non-Qatar. Only 25% of 30,000 Qatari were in the workforce at that time. Most of them were engaged in the newly established public administration in Doha (Al Buainain, 1999, p. 168). Immigrants from South Asia and other Arabic countries were enrolled in the private sector.

Thus, this diversity and regional migration added to Doha's urban mix (Nagy, 2006). According to the Simplified Census of Population, Housing & Establishments 2015, the total population in Qatar in April 2015 was 2,404,776, of which 1,816,981 were male and 587,795 were female. In Doha municipality itself, 706,430 were male and 250,027 females. This shows that the majority lived in Doha. Consequently, it's easy for visitors to recognize the different cultures and ethnic backgrounds in Qatar from their first step into the airport. The baggage handler may be Nepalese, the taxi driver could be from Yemen, and the front desk clerk from India. Moreover, in Doha's public spaces a range of diverse clothing styles is apparent to the spectator. Consequently, the different nationalities, cultures, and diversity is a mark of Qatar residents, which is considered as a large number that could be easily recognized (Nagy, 2006).

Nagy said, "I was repeatedly told how, before all the foreigners came, there was considerably more traffic through and between houses and women felt freer to move in their neighborhoods." (Nagy, 2006, p. 126). Many Qataris said that before the 1960s their neighborhoods were open, safe, and friendly places (Nagy, 2006). As a result of the presence of foreigners within Qatari neighborhoods, this affected Qataris' movement in their own neighborhoods. Qataris argued that they couldn't move freely in their neighborhoods as before. Yet, this affected more women because they did not feel comfortable to move within the presence of strangers from different backgrounds and cultures (Nagy, 2006).

In order to house expatriates and Qataris who moved from other parts of the country to Doha, new housing zones were built in the unplanned system around the city boundaries. Old Qatari neighborhoods had been replaced in the 1970s. Also, the native population had moved to new suburban developments such as Medina Khalifa, Al Gharrafa, or Al Rayyan on the northwest side of the Doha. Doha suburbs become areas for two-story houses accommodated by Qataris and high-income foreign employees. Doha center became an agglomeration of multi-story apartments, office buildings, and low-rise commercial buildings. Al Waab city is a large residential project that had been designed to provide 2,200 houses. This development had been created by Qatari investors in the southwest of Doha (Al Waab city, 2011).

Qataris preferred to live next to people similar to themselves. This is evident in their selection of land, maintaining the family neighborhood, building the family compound, and limited interaction with strangers and neighbors who were unlike themselves (Nagy, 2006). Nagy said “the boundaries between Qataris and non-Qataris are widely expected. Still, Qataris prefer to live next to Arabs who share with them similar traditions and cultures.”

In another point view, the construction of the Al-Corniche was an indicator of the urban development at that time. The first master plan of Doha in 1990 was mainly dependent on the ring concept created by the British consultant Llewelyn Davis in 1974. At the end of the 1970s, 630 hectares were reclaimed in the north side of Doha center to create a circular shape leading to Corniche (Scholz, 1999, p. 202). The development of the coastal Corniche with the north side of the city

was completed by the American planning consultant William L. Pereira. The proposal was to have a big hotel to host conferences, a diplomatic zone and business district surrounded by a large park (Nagy, 2000, p. 137). The first public spaces in Doha were the Corniche and the promenade. Until now, this was considered the only public space that different types of users could access.

However, Nagy noted that foreign women in Doha believed that public spaces were inaccessible and inappropriate, in contrast to their home countries where public spaces were more accessible (Nagy, 1998). Comparing men's and women's mobility within Doha, men had a greater ability to be outside than women. Not only did gender affect the interactions between foreign workers, but also nationality, language, and religion. The interaction between different groups was very limited (Nagy, 1998). Nagy said, "The services, tasks, and behaviors asked of household workers not only facilitated and reproduced social relations within the employing family but also throughout the city" (Nagy, 1998, p. 102).

The historical model fits Doha in terms of the relationship between social and spatial complexity (Bawden, 1990; Kent, 1990). This, of course, also affected the exclusionary spaces with respect to the increase of population and became more complex. The combination of informal practices, formal policy, and cultural attitudes were results of the production and reproduction of the emerging spatial disruption in Doha. Multiple frameworks were important to consider in understanding urban social diversity in Doha as a transnational and global city. The residential isolation and limited interaction between groups were expedited from the program of land and building grant, the specifics of its application,

migration and employment regulations. Nagy concludes in his article that there is a need for combining and integrating the understanding of policy-making and planning with research into the lived experiences of urban residents (Nagy, 2006).

Moreover, the sense of community had been lost because of the gated communities occupied by expatriates and repetitive suburban houses with tall fences. Most of the recent spaces within new development areas are gated and branded. The only remaining traditional spaces are the Corniche and small parks. The smallest densities are located in the new developments along the coast and in the low-rise suburbs. This expands the social segregation. Also, this is especially true in the allocation of urban densities. Doha center density had increased with the increment of Asian immigrants working in lower service sectors.

### **2.3 Women in public spaces**

For many years, women from all over the world have been associated and restricted to private spaces more so than men. Studies of women mainly focused on activities and needs in their homes and surrounding areas, not in their presence and use of public spaces. From early ages, girls were less active physically and were encouraged to participate less in exploring new environments as compared to boys. Girls' activities were mainly conducted at home, as Hart and Saegert explore (1978). Regarding their duties and responsibilities in homes, women traditionally have had less time to use public spaces.



The separation of space and activities between gender is a result of social processes, not biological ones, as Rosaldo (1980) cautions. Women's participation in public spaces was limited in the 19th mid-century, when women were usually at home and men were at work. By the 1840s, the idea of productive women was accepted and desirable. In the Industrialization era, a gender diversity of public spaces gave different people the opportunity for greater access. Women's presence in public spaces was limited compared to men in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This affected the working-class women's ability to live within the separation of the sphere. Women had less freedom to be on the streets than men, and this was very significant. Consequently, understanding the ways that restrict women and reasons that prevented them from being in public spaces was needed to increase women's freedom. During different eras, women have faced a wide range of opportunities to access public spaces. But, women have never had full and fair access to public spaces.

Many studies had been done on urban public spaces, yet there was no attention to gender differences in the use of these spaces. Lofland (1984) concluded that research shouldn't overstate the delights and dangers of the city for both women and men. In the 19th century, the increase of different public activities enhanced women's capability to relate to society freely (DuBois, 1975). Even when women started to participate in public spaces, activities were separated and their movement was restricted. Studies needed to be done to focus on the use of public spaces by women, including their feelings, experience, early socialization, and responsibilities.

Therefore, the moral judgments regarding the behavior of women and men in public spaces necessitated the idea of separate spheres. This was in relation to the discussion of “stranger danger”, which often suggests and supports the concept of reducing access to public spaces for women (Pain, 1991; Valentine, 1992). The idea of separate spheres for women and men has had a powerful effect on urban planning, which generates an environment restricting women's use of space and supporting the relationship between femininity, privacy, and suburban space (Foord & Lewis, 1984; Tivers, 1985; Mackenzie, 1989; Roberts, 1990). Perhaps, its effect is different between women (e.g., Booth et al., 1996). According to the political philosopher Carole Pateman (1989, p. 183), who argued that concerned principally with citizenship rights in relation to the welfare state, “It is true that the private sphere has been seen as women's proper place. Women have never in reality been completely excluded from the public world, but women's day-to-day experience confirms the separation of public and private existence.” This belief is false, in that, since the early 20th century, welfare policies have reached across from public to private and helped to uphold a patriarchal structure of familial life. As an example, using a private car could be considered a solution for free movement.

As Viswanath and Mehrotra stated, “Class, age, occupation, social, and marital status are other characteristics that influence the experience of urban spaces.” Women were able to access public space for various activities that were believed to be socially appropriate for them at each age range. Thus in their late teens and early 20s, women often get access to public spaces via the medium of

education, and married young women get access due to their roles as mothers. Men have more possibilities to access public space, yet older men have lesser access (Paranade, 2007).

Women are not barred from accessing public spaces. When middle-class women have access to cultural and economic capital, education private infrastructure increases their ability to access public spaces (Phadke, 2007). Phadke argued that "for professional, mostly upper middle class, women, confronting 'risk' and 'danger' by negotiating public spaces and transport at night, especially after work, is seen as a sign of their assumption of 'masculine' and therefore desirable work ethics and values" (2005, pp. 46-47).

However, women in some places feel that they are more authorized, as opposed to other places where they feel less "legitimate" or "allowed" (Condon, Lieber, & Maillochon, 2007). Moreover, Phadke said, "I argue that the recognition of the legitimate right to public space as citizens has the capacity to transform women's relationship to public space" (2007, p. 1511). Purpose and respectability are both linked to the production of safety for women and this will legitimize women's presence in public space. Paranade said, "When moving through public space, women (a) walk purposefully from one point to another and (b) when walking, avoid such places as may be considered non-respectable" (Paranade, 2007, p. 1525).

In another point of view, Condon, Lieber, and Maillochon agreed that "feeling unsafe is presented in the public and political sphere as a phenomenon that affects everyone the same way, regardless of social and gender differences"

(p. 101, 2007). Many different factors (media, family, and friends) convince women those spaces are where men commit violence against women (Valentine, 1989). Many studies completed between the 1980s and 1990s aimed to clarify the actual source that creates this feeling of fear among women. As Gardner and Valentine agreed, "Direct experience of violence, or knowing a close friend or family member, co-worker, or neighbor who has been attacked, may increase the feeling of fear about certain situations or public places" (1990, p. 104; 1992a).

Moreover, the safety in public spaces refer to gendered safety. Violence in public spaces mostly involves violence against women (Phadke, 2007).

Viswanath and Mehrotra mention, "women feel uncomfortable in male-dominated spaces" (2007, p. 1546). Regarding the kinds of limits that are forced upon women due to the nature of a space and its usage, this affects their capability and right to access and use public spaces. So, a space with mixed usage is more conducive to free and easy access. Yet spaces that are very strict lead to separation in living, commerce, and leisure. Perhaps this will increase the likelihood of some spaces being closed to women (Viswanath & Mehrotra, 2007).

Phadke noted that, for women, infrastructural or institutional factors do not reflect safety, but it actively produced (Phadke, 2007). The risk of accessing public spaces is a broad concept, yet the risks related to the lack of infrastructure such as roads, street lighting, and adequate public transport are not essentially chosen but still elements (Phadke, 2007). One way to ensure safety is by addressing infrastructure. It's used as concrete to determine safety and unsafety. On the other hand, it is generally acceptable for women to use public spaces only

when they have a purpose to be there. There is a perception that women don't have the right to be outside only for "hanging around" (Viswanath & Mehrotra, 2007). Another factor that affects accessibility to public space is time. For women, there are times where it's fine for them to be outside in public spaces. However, it's not acceptable for them to be outside in the dark.

Men's control of public spaces imposes constraints on women, as many studies by feminist geographers have mentioned (Darke, 1996; Valentine, 1992b). Moreover, culture has had an intensive role in determining the usage of space. Men were generally seen out in most areas and during most times.

As the research has highlighted, women who use public spaces are often seen (and see themselves) as illegitimate users of public space at night (Andrew, 2000; Whitzman, 1995). Moreover, during the daytime, women sometimes had difficulty accessing or navigating certain spaces (Viswanath & Mehrotra, 2007). Women often feel unsafe in public spaces at night, as many sociological studies have stated.

However, when women are in a group, others are more unlikely to attack (Skigan, 1977; Garofalo & Laub, 1979). Women believe that they are weaker and slower on foot compared to men, as Stephaine, Margaret, and Robert (1978) specified. Moreover, women were found in groups, with men or with families (Viswanath & Mehrotra, 2007). In residential areas, women were found with children at lit parks. One of the striking spaces was the park, which had been used differently by men and women.

Studies have shown that women feel comfortable using parks during the day, especially with their children, but these spaces become unsafe after dark [Whitzman, 2002a]. From Whitzman's perspective, women do not use parks after dark and that is related to protecting themselves from attack. Viswanath and Mehrotra found that many green areas and parks pose a peril to the safety of women after dark. The main concern was lighting, where often lights are hidden by trees or were not working at all (Viswanath & Mehrotra, 2007).

A public space can't meet every user's needs at all times. The behavioral, social, and physical features of a space reflect or express its publicness. Agency of control, interest, and access are the three features mainly used to define "public" and "private." The publicness of space can be measured by the diversity of uses and activities allowed within it. Diversity includes class, age, and gender.

There are many reasons to create public space for recreation, commerce, health, and entertainment. Some public spaces have been designed only for one purpose, yet some were modified for temporary activities encouraging women to use public spaces more. Certain physical features could enhance women's use and access to public space, such as a high degree of visual access and indoor and outdoor facilities that support a variety of activities. Poor or less visual access limits women's access to public spaces.

Physical access has a significant impact on women's decisions to occupy space, especially if they have children. Activities associated with children are more likely to be done by women than men. Boys mentions that women face difficulties with their children in strollers (1984). Women's use of public spaces

has a variety of constraints. Improving physical design in public spaces will lead to greater freedom and enjoyment for women.

The observable variety of activities and users in public spaces and desirability of such diversity both relate to publicness. To ensure and increase women's sense of safety in public spaces, visual access should be considered. Monuments and public art could make them more visible.

## **2.4 Parks**

Parks and gardens are defined as landscape and green areas. Their main purpose is recreation, social interaction, and aesthetic demonstration. Parks can be seen as "lungs" of the city or town (Jordan, 1994). The main aim of urban parks is to reflect nature in a way to better promote society (Young, 1995). Parks have large green areas and landscapes for people to relax and enjoy (Schjetnan, 2006). They also give the opportunity for frequent contact with nature and physical activities in urban dense settings. In 1916, landscape architect George Burnap mentioned that parks should be both beautiful and useful. He believed that parks should serve a variety of purposes.

In the eras of the 1840s in Britain and 1850s in Canada and the US, parks were mainly private (Loure, Santos, & Panagopulps, 2007). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, large parks were established to provide refuge, leisure time, and fresh air. Victoria Park in England was considered the first urban park in history. Urban park design had gone through three main movements. The first one was a representation of rural landscape, as in Central Park in New York City. The second one was for ecological functions, as in Amsterdamse Bos Park in the

Netherlands. Finally, there was a more formal design with consideration of sustainability issues, as with Park Andre-Citroen in France (Loure, Santos, & Panagopulps, 2007).

Moreover, the design of parks and gardens can be categorized into three levels: city level, intermediate level, and residence level. Parks and gardens in city level mostly surround central state institutions and range from fully public, sacred spaces to secluded ones. As an example, in Nigeria in the 19th century, the palace of the king was placed in a central urban location with green spaces for public use (Mabogunje, 1968). Parks and gardens in the neighborhood scale surrounded by religious buildings or institutions are considered intermediate level. As a recent phenomenon, government-designed neighborhood parks are spread all over the world in modern cities. The residence level is primarily linked to kitchen gardens, which produce food, medicines, and condiments (Cooper, 1983).

The variety of available national, state, regional, and neighborhood parks minimized the importance of older central city parks after 1920 (Young, 1995). Neighborhood parks give residents a place to spend their leisure time (Gold, 1973). Large parks and gardens were mainly reserved for the royals. In recent years, these parks and gardens have been converted to public parks. Now, municipal or state planning committees organize large parks and gardens.

Parks have been seen as a critical feature in cities because of their strategic importance to quality of life. They have a direct role in enhancing and improving environmental and landscape settings (Nady, 2016). For one thing,



public health will be improved (Chawla, 2015; McCormack et al., 2010; Wolch et al., 2014). Parks are considered sustainable urban landscape. They offer social, economic, and environmental benefits (Chiesura, 2004). Besides, urban parks are seen as a very important element in neighborhood development, not only leisure and recreation facilities, but also providing multi-functional amenities (Nady, 2016). Moreover, urban parks play a big role in creating spaces that gather a variety of people in one place, which improves the sense of community and social communication.

Correspondingly, better mental health, a higher level of physical activities, lower levels of stress, and better overall well-being are all results of direct contact and access to neighborhood parks (Bratman, Hamilton, & Daily, 2012; McCormack et al., 2010; Roe et al., 2013). The environmental benefits of urban parks include protecting natural resources such as water purification, air quality, microclimate stabilization, and wind filtration (Chiesura, 2004).

Furthermore, living next to parks gives people an opportunity to visit them frequently, which will result in better health (Payne, Orsega-Smith, Roy, & Godbey, 2005). Parks provide places for physical activities, increased social interaction, stress reduction, environmental preservation and psychological health for all community residents (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005). Park usage is not only reflected in people's physical health but also in their moral health; park's users will become better citizens.

The quality and features of parks influence the extent to which they are inviting and safe spaces to facilitate health between users, as many studies have

shown (Kaczynski et al., 2008; Bai et al., 2013; Besenyi, Kaczynski, et al., 2016). Consequently, to ensure fair access to parks for all users in terms of gender, race, and age, a variety of activities should be offered. Urban parks must provide and serve all community members fairly (Boone, Buckley, Grove, & Sister, 2009). Moreover, parks are very important for users with low income and ethnic minorities (Boone et al., 2009). Many studies have indicated that access to public parks is different among different ethnic and socioeconomic groups (Bullard, 2003; Powell, Slater, Mirtcheva, Bao, & Chaloupka, 2007; Wolch, Byrne, & Newell, 2014).

Adult males were the primary users of parks in the 1880s (Cranz, 1982). This is because men were considered more important. Women, on the other hand, were generally not seen in public. By this time, women, children, and teenagers were starting to be considered in parks' design (Young, 1995).

Parks are very important for young adults' physical exploration and social development, as emphasized by many child geographers, anthropologists, and urban planners (Loukaitou-Sideris & Stieglitz, 2002). Children were able to experience different activities that not permissible to be done at home or school (Proshanski & Fabian, 1987). In parks, children can interact with other children and improve their motor skills (Loukaitou-Sideris & Stieglitz, 2002).

Parks are considered as the first place where children exposure to nature (Daves, 1989). For teenagers, parks were seen as places for developing social interaction and getting involve in sport activities. Boys use of parks is much higher compared to girls. This finding also works with a study in USA that reflects

female's representation in parks (Loukaitou, 1995; Cooper-Marcus & Francis, 1990; Cranz, 1980). Girls prefer greenery and flowers and boys were seen in active areas (Loukaitou-Sideris & Stieglitz, 2002).

Research indicates that parks differ among communities regarding their facilities (in terms of quality and amenities) (Kamel et al., 2014; Vaughan et al., 2013). Park amenities include recreational facilities as playgrounds, trails, and sports facilities (Rigolon, 2016). It also includes park aesthetics and tree canopy coverage (e.g. Crawford et al., 2008; Vaughan et al., 2013; Zhou & Kim, 2013). Park amenities, park crowding, and park location are factors that affect park visitation (Wolch et al., 2014). Other characteristics that affect park visitation include facilities, size, safety, and accessibility and social factors such as gender, age, and ethnicity of visitors (National Park Service, 2013). Park visitation is influenced by maintenance level, and crime and safety (McCormack et al., 2010).

The perception of safety increases when circulation paths are connected through the park to ensure a constant flow of pedestrians (Hopper, 2007). Moreover, to ensure maximum visibility to the park, tall shrubs, walled areas, and dead-end pathways should be minimized (Nady, 2016). Many parks were defined by being next to the waterfront. The water element had a magnetic sense. Waterfront parks allow for comfortable, safe, and convenient access to water (Hopper, 2007).

On the other hand, studies regarding time budgets show that 5.1 hours is the average of the working adult of free time per day. Only 1.4 hours were spent in outdoor activities. The rest were spent in indoor activities as watching TV,

reading and conservation or other leisure activities. Only 0.1 hours was spent in public parks from the 1.4 hours of free time spent in outdoor (Convere & Robinson, 1996). Yet, most of the people spend time in the regional parks rather than neighborhood parks.

In the US, most people in the 1970s were not using neighborhood parks (Seymour, Feb. 1972). This was because the neighborhood parks were not following the lifestyles at that time (US Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1974). This created an argument regarding the empty park against new or expanding old parks because the neighborhood park was considered the backbone of the local park and recreation systems in terms of pedestrian access, perceptual identity, and potential use. Recreation and park specialists became upset if anyone referred to the neighborhood parks as unloved or unused (Seymour, Feb. 1977).

Also, they attempted to avoid the subject of nonuse. The overuse of some parks was a result of the nonuse and misuse of other parks. To resolve this issue, they needed to change the traditional approach to urban recreation planning, which focused only on measuring park users' opinions (and not of the nonusers) and measuring the quantity (size) versus quality of the park (Seymour, Feb. 1977).

Significant consequence on the existing care levels of public park system could occur if the movement of nonuse is not overturned. Yet, without measuring the level of use and nonuse of existing parks, designing new parks or existing will be unpredictable in the point view of behavioral and economic. Because this will

result in absences of reality and perpetuates. In the neighborhood parks, some successful measurements techniques could be interviews, field observation, and photography.

Furthermore, the use of observation techniques increases the use of neighborhood parks (Seymour, Feb. 1977). From his observations, Seymour invented several methods and techniques that would help enhance the use of neighborhood parks. He believed that directional signs were important, as other studies also indicate. Using directional signs in places within walking distance improve the use of a neighborhood park (Hatry & Dunn, 1972), as will providing food services.

An additional method that could help users respect and understand the park is interpretation, for example the use of simple labels to describe the flora and fauna found within. Public safety is another important aspect that could improve the use of neighborhood parks. This could be addressed by providing police call boxes and sufficient lighting (Seymour, Feb. 1977). Noncompetitive neighborhood activities as night movies and art festivals might be appealing features. Inspiring and creative design in the play area would encourage imagination and adventure for children.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

A public space should allow all users to access and use the space freely and be divided into outdoor and indoor activities. Relaxation, human health, enjoyment, social interaction, and physical comfort are considerations for all public spaces. Behavioral mapping and observation can be used to determine

what users of public spaces do and what activities might be missing. With this information, architects and urban planners can more effectively design public spaces.

Regarding the concept of multiculturalism, in French society, the multi-culture framework process is not merged. As a result, France is largely segregated. On the other hand, the United States is known as a melting pot.

Still, some ethnic groups are not treated fairly. Qatar's population is a combination of Qatari and non-Qatari because of the massive migration related to the discovery of oil. Doha's urban mix is a result of regional and diversity migration. Still, Qatari families prefer to live next to other Qataris in their neighborhood. France, US, and Qatar have witnessed and are still accepting immigration. This creates multicultural societies. However, each country treats migration differently.

In France and US, migrants become citizens, however, some continue to face problems simply because they were originally from a certain ethnic or racial group. In Qatar, the situation is totally different; migrants maintain their culture, languages, and beliefs. Yet, the interaction between them and Qataris is limited. Integrating and understanding the policy making and planning with research is needed in Doha to improve social interaction.

All over the world for many decades, women's appearance was often limited to private spaces, unlike men. This minimized their ability to access public spaces. Thus, by understanding the reasons that limited women's access to public spaces, their accessibility and freedom was increased. Furthermore, there

was less focus on differences in the use of public spaces between the two genders.

Today, women's use of public spaces must be viewed from the side of knowledge, responsibilities, feeling, and early socialization. One of the most important elements that affects women's accessibility to public spaces is physical access, particularly if it is connected with children. Another element that should be considered is visual access. For a woman to be in public spaces, there should be a clear view. A space with mixed activities may improve women's access to public spaces. Adding public art and monuments can also enhance and encourage women's use of public spaces.

Parks and gardens provide green areas within the landscape. Mainly they are used for social interaction and recreation. The first urban park was Victoria Park in England. Parks were originally considered a very important part of city design because of their influence in life quality. Urban parks are spaces where a variety of people can come together in one place, which improves the sense of community.

However, urban parks must offer fair access to all different users. Parks within residential areas are spaces accessed by women and their children easily. Still, this satisfaction is linked to the time of day. After dark, women's use of parks is reduced, especially if there is not enough lighting. Methods to assess parks include observations, interviews, and photographs. Directional signs, water features, food services, public safety, interpretation, and creative children's areas are some methods that could improve the accessibility to parks.

### 3 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY & METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

#### 3.1 Methodological Approach

The research problem is to identify women's accessibility and participation levels in public parks. The research employs the use of quantitative methods, given its investigative nature. The research relies heavily on contextual analysis; accordingly, the research will rely on the use of a standardized questionnaire to generate answers that are as precise as possible. The research also employs the use of more qualitative methods (Figure 2).

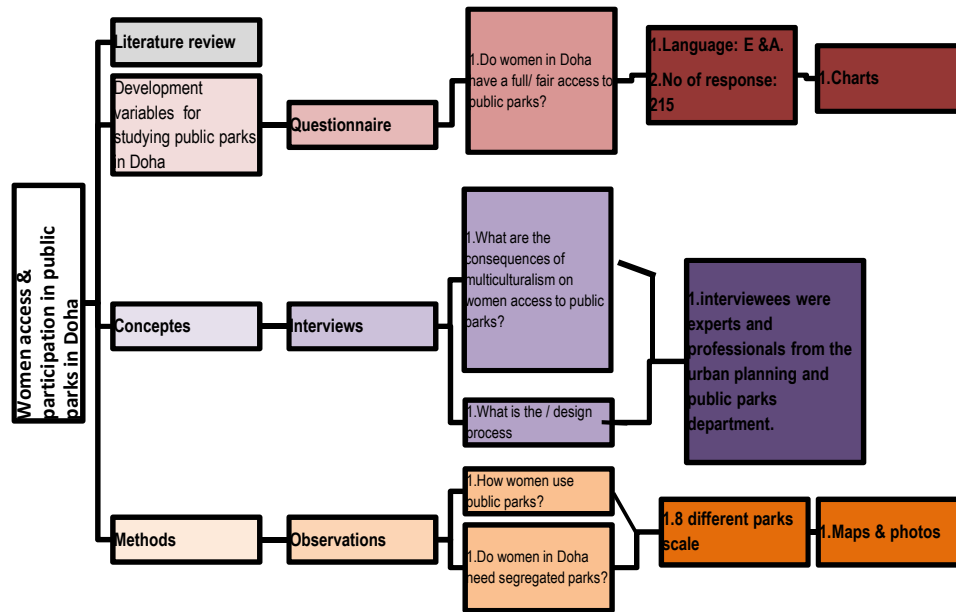


Figure 2: The diagram of research design



Furthermore, these observations will be reflected in bilayer maps. The two map layers will consist of the following:

- The first is an impression of the relatively stable features of the environment such as detailed land use patterns, street furniture, amenities (public toilets, bus-stops, telephone booths, police stations), trees, light-posts, and transportation hubs (taxi, rickshaw stands).
- The second layer involves a mapping of the patterns of inhabitation where the focus is to map as accurately as possible the location of people, rather than their numbers (Figure 3). Two methods are used for this purpose:
  - The first, titled "Putting People in Place", uses a freeze-frame metaphor to locate different entities in the space.
  - The second, called "Tracing Peoples Paths" literally traces the path followed by some people in the space for a specified period - say, 5 minutes.

To have a full understanding of the way people behave, structured interviews with different experts from different organizations will be done (see table 1).

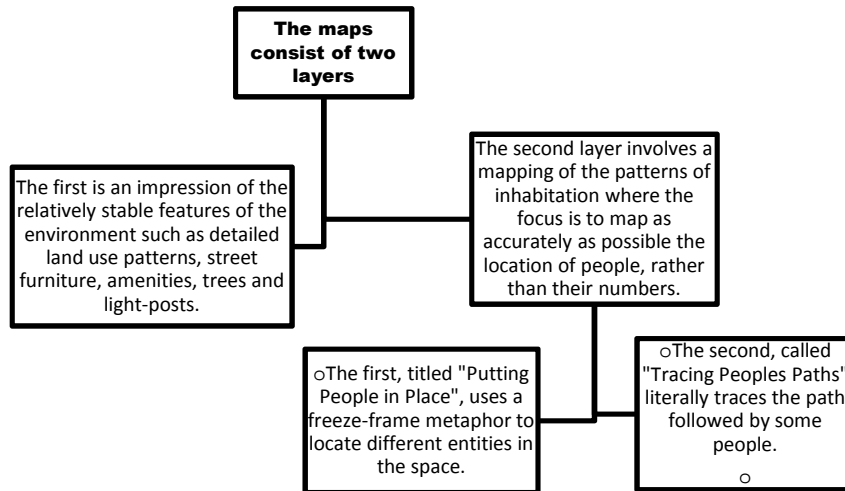


Figure 3: Behavioral map layers

Table 1: Data collection tools used in this research

Method	Intent
Questionnaire	Using variables conducted from the literature review to assess women access/ participation in public parks.
Interviews	Interviewing professionals and experts to help understanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Doha Growth and development.</li> <li>o Public parks planning.</li> <li>o Public parks designing process.</li> </ul>
Observation	Map women participation and activities in public parks to understand their needs.

## **3.2 Data Collection Tools**

This investigative research focuses on two means of data collection: primary and secondary data. The following methods of data collection and data analysis are designed accordingly:

- Literature Review.
- Questionnaire.
- Structure interviews
- Observations.

### **3.2.1 Literature Review**

To reach a conclusion regarding the research problem a detailed literature review will have to be done in order to understand the background of the problem and what variables could help in understanding and formulating the research framework. By identifying the variables, a questionnaire will then be constructed.

### **3.2.2 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire will try to encompass the full understanding of the research questions. The participant selection was done using non-probability sampling. The selection of the sampling size was a function of willing individuals. The questionnaire had been established to measure certain factors regarding women accessibility and participation in public parks.

The questionnaire is divided into three parts. Each part focuses on studying a main aspect discussed in the literature review. Part 1 focuses on the personal facts of the participants to get a clear idea about the participant's

background. Part 2 tries to understand the way women contribute in public parks. Part 3 mainly tests women's opinions on public park design and what they prefer.

The questionnaire structure started by introduction about the research and then the aim of the research. Followed by the three parts. The questionnaire language was in both Arabic and English. This was done with the aim to reach a large population complete with different ages, nationalities and education level. This will give fair data for the varied cultures living in Doha. The questionnaire form is in Appendix (A).

### **3.2.3 Structured interviews**

The interview format was structured interviews. The interviewees were experts and professionals from the urban planning and public parks department. Participations had been asked to participate in the research via email. The research abstract had been attached in the email so as to inform the potential participant regarding the research topic. Most of the interviews had been done within the interviewee's work place. The interviewees names, organization, date/place and discussed topics are shown in table (2) & (3).

Table 2: List of interviewees, their organizations and discussed topic (A).

Interviewee	Organization	Date and Place	Discussed topics
Dr. Ali Abd- Alraouf, Development & Research Coordinator - QNMP. Doha, Qatar.	Ministry of Municipalities and Environment MME	Thursday, 11th August, 2016 at 10:00 AM, MME tower, 17th floor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Importance of public spaces.</li> <li>○ Meaning of public spaces.</li> <li>○ Considering social and culture aspects.</li> <li>○ Methods to be used in the research.</li> <li>○ Comparing Doha to other gulf cities in public spaces.</li> <li>○ Fordable facilities.</li> <li>○ Public park and Qatari women</li> </ul>
Mohammed Ali Al-Khoori, Director of Public park	Ministry of Municipalities and Environment MME	Monday, 18 <sup>th</sup> September 2016. 10:00AM, Public park department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Process of creating neighborhood parks.</li> <li>○ Users of the parks.</li> <li>○ Changes made in parks since the establishment of the public park department.</li> <li>○ Comparing between large parks and neighborhood parks.</li> <li>○ Safety standards.</li> <li>○ Community and institution engagement.</li> <li>○ Women parks.</li> </ul>

Table 3: List of interviewees, their organizations and discussed topic (B).

Interviewee	Organization	Date and Place	Discussed topics
Sameh Moussa, Architect	Ministry of Municipalities and Environment MME	Tuesday, 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2016. 10:00AM, Public park department, designing department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Designing process in the neighborhood parks.</li> <li>○ Differences in designing old and new parks in Doha.</li> <li>○ Design consideration in neighborhood parks.</li> <li>○ Elements in the neighborhood parks design.</li> <li>○ Design elements provided for women.</li> <li>○ Guidelines used in designing.</li> </ul>
Dr. Lizmol Mathew, Assistant Professor	Architecture and Urban Planning, college of Engineering, Qatar University. Doha, Qatar.	Monday, 10 <sup>th</sup> of October, 2016 at 12:30 PM, Qatar University, women college of Engineering, first floor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Elements that affect women's accessibility to parks.</li> <li>○ Reasons for visiting parks.</li> <li>○ Comparison between the situation now and from ten years ago.</li> <li>○ Elements needed to be improved/added.</li> </ul>

### **3.2.4 Observations**

Observing environmental behavior was the main methodology utilized for this research. The quality of the method was dynamic and the observers' vantage points were recognized. The recording devices were notation maps and photographs.

Accordingly, in this research people's attitude toward different parks' levels had been determined. As stated by the ministry of municipalities and environment (MME), there are six different planning levels (see table 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). They are:

- National park level ex. Ongoing Central Doha Park.
- Metropolitan park level ex. Aspire Park.
- Town park level ex. Dahl Al Hamam Park.
- District park level ex. Oniza Park.
- Local park level ex. small parks in local areas.
- Neighborhood park level ex. parks in neighborhoods.

In this research the focus will be on National, Town, District, Local and Neighborhood parks. This is because all of them share the same minimum requirement without any kind of extra attraction factor or different access points. All of them were only public parks that's anyone could access it for free. Also, Dafan (old Sheraton) park and new Sheraton park were observed because they give full access to different types of users, rather than other examples where the

users are only families. The only example of Metropolitan park level is Aspire park in Doha. Aspire park is mainly considered and planned to support sports. Therefore, research was not conducted in this park.

Table 4: Standards & Guidelines for the provision of Public Parks from MME

Catchment level	National	Metropolitan	Town	District	Local	Neighborhood
Facility	National park	Metropolitan park	Town park	District park	Local park	Neighborhood park
Planning Criteria (Pop. Served)	2 million +	100,000-300,000	50,000-100,000	30,000-50,000	3,000 with catchment Radius << 400m	1,200 with catchment Radius < 250m
Site Area Range	N/A	60-200	8-10	2-3	0.4-2	0.1-0.25
Use Purpose	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Multi-purpose	Single-purpose	Amenity Purpose
Public	*	*	*	*	*	Local Use
Family Only	Specific Days	Specific Days	*	*	*	N/A
Women Only	Segregated Area	Segregated Area	Segregated Area	Segregated Area	*	N/A
Children Play Area	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sports Facilities	*	*	*	*	*	N/A



Table 5: Proposed Community Oriented Parks Definition and Basic Contents from MME for town park

Category	Definition	Basic Contents	Special Remarks
Town park	<p>Comprehensive park provides wide range of activities from passive to active.</p> <p>Community center should be included for the wide variety of programmed services by the community.</p> <p>Wide children's play area to be provided within the park boundary.</p>	<p>Community Center, Picnic shelter and picnic area, performance area, Multi-purposes fields, Tennis, Basketball and/or multi-purpose Court, path playground, un-programmed recreational open space, parking, toilet, substantial athletic fields with spectator facilities for organized sports ranging from football to volleyball.</p> <p>Depend on the local demand, Family Use may be considered, but the limitation in park use shall not exceed half of the same category.</p>	<p>Either Mass transport access or the direct access from the secondary major road network.</p> <p>Town Park will accommodate different types of users. Town Parks within a city can have a specific use such a family or sport and/or public use.</p>

Table 6: Proposed Community Oriented Parks Definition and Basic Contents from MME for district park

Category	Definition	Basic Contents	Special Remarks
District parks	<p>District parks provide the additional features that meet expanded recreational needs not provided at the neighborhood park.</p> <p>District park where children may play, families may picnic and individuals may find solitude or neighbors to chat with. Fenced or open park at least 800 radius from residences.</p>	<p>Guardhouse, drinking fountain, shelters and informal multipurpose lawn area for picnic, multi purposed complexes play equipment, outdoor seating and paved area for court game, lighting.</p>	<p>Combination of 2-3 Neighborhoods. District Parks will accommodate several types of uses. District parks can have a specific use such as family or sport and/or public use.</p>

Table 7: Proposed Community Oriented Parks Definition and Basic Contents from MME for local park

Category	Definition	Basic Contents	Special Remarks
Local park	<p>Serve as social and recreational focal point for neighborhoods and are the basic recreational units.</p> <p>Passive or active recreation in response to demographic and cultural characteristics of surrounding with opportunities for interaction with vegetation.</p> <p>Neighborhood parks are largely accessible by foot, bicycle with at least 400m from each residence.</p> <p>Could be designed as Fenced Family Only Park, Ladies Only Park or as General Park.</p>	<p>Guardhouse, drinking fountain, shelters and informal multipurpose lawn area, multi purposed play equipment, outdoor seating, paved area for informal court game, lighting.</p>	<p>Within walking distance of residences of 400m.</p> <p>Local Parks will be co-located with Juma Mosques at local centers.</p> <p>Each park will have a single use and will be strategically distributed through the district according to the demographic character of the area.</p>

Table 8: Proposed Community Oriented Parks Definition and Basic Contents from MME for neighborhood park

Category	Definition	Basic Contents	Special Remarks
Neighborhood parks	<p>Designed to provide both active and passive short-term activities.</p> <p>Add landscape identity to the vicinity.</p> <p>Ornamented garden may be preferred when there are no children in the vicinity.</p>	<p>Distinct play areas for preschool and school age children, shelter structures, open space, multi-use paved for court games, area for court games and lightings.</p> <p>Siting area may be preferred in densely population area.</p>	<p>Located within walking distance of 200-250m from each residence.</p> <p>Neighborhood Parks will be co-located with a daily mosque at neighborhood centers. Since most of the park users will be neighbors and local to the area, there is no requirement to put access restrictions on these parks.</p>

The parks that had been observed are:

- DAFNA (OLD SHERATON) & NEW SHERATON (National park)
- DAHL AL HAMAM (Town park)
- ONIZA (District park)
- RAYYAN & LUQTA (Local Park)
- NUAIIJA FAMILY SOUTH & AL-WAAB (Neighborhood Park)

Each park had been studied in term of facilities, accessibility, settings, activities, park organization and landscape elements before and after the visit. A plan for each park had been used to plot the different setting, activities and movement's patterns. Moreover, photos had been taken to capture people's actions. The observation of people was during week and weekends and during different times; in early morning, afternoon and evening. Before visiting each park, the preparation was to locate the accessibility, significant features and settings.

### **3.3 Gathered Data and Maps for the Site Analysis**

To gather data, a detailed master plan map of the studied parks was needed. Some of them were available in the public park department (design and design section). Others were not available because companies or offices working on the parks still had not submitted the final drawings to the department. However, instead of the master plans, aerial photos from the Google earth were used for hand drawing. AutoCAD and Photoshop were used to generate the

notated maps.

- Aerial photos from Google earth (JPG file).
- Master plans from the MME (AutoCAD file).
- Land use maps, building conditions, heights, and names from the MME (PDF file).
- The Simplified Census of Population, Housing & Establishments, 2015 from the ministry of development planning and statistics (PDF file).

### **3.4 Ethics and Protecting participants**

In qualitative research methods, people are an important aspect of data collection. The Qatar University Institutional Review Board "QU-IRB" had approved the questions for both questionnaire and interviews and the research ethics approval No. is: QU-IRB 614-E/16. People were voluntarily asked to participate in interviews and to answer the questionnaire. People had to consent for their observation to protect their privacy. People were not captured by photoshoots whenever possible. Moreover, Photoshop software was used to blur people's faces. Interviewees were asked during meetings about their approval to mention their names, positions and affiliations in presenting the information in the research. Also, consent forms were signed by interviewees to confirm their full acceptance to participate and records their voices.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

The research used many methods gained from the literature review. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the research. The outcomes from them are charts, noted maps and photos. Data collection tools were literature review, questionnaire, observation and interviews.

Participants in the questionnaire were mainly women of different ages, cultures, nationalities, ages and ethics. The questionnaire language was both Arabic and English to ensure it would reach varied groups. In the interviews, participants were chosen regarding their willingness to participate. In observation, different users were observed. Still, the focus was on women and how other users, elements and objects affect their use of parks.

In the questionnaire and observation, pilot studies had been done. In the questionnaire, the pilot study aided in ensuring that the questions were clear and understandable by participants. The pilot study helped in the observation of difficulties, obstacles and challenges that could be faced in parks.

## **4 CHAPTER FOUR: DATA COLLECTION**

### **4.1 Data Collection Tools**

The main data collection tools used for this research were a questionnaire, interviews, and observations. All of them had been discussed and analyzed by the researcher in this chapter.

#### ***4.1.1 Questionnaire***

There were 266 participants. Uncompleted questionnaires were excluded, so only 215 responses were adopted for solving all the questions. The detailed results are in Appendix (B). 61% of participants were working, 14% were students, 23% were housewives and 2% were others. Moreover, 130 participants had a bachelor's degree and only 15 participants had diploma degrees. The numbers of responses received from participants with graduate and secondary degree were 35 for each. 79% were the percentage of the Arabic women participated in the questionnaire. Qatari women responses percentage made up 19% and 2% of the responses were made up by women of other nationalities (Figure 4).



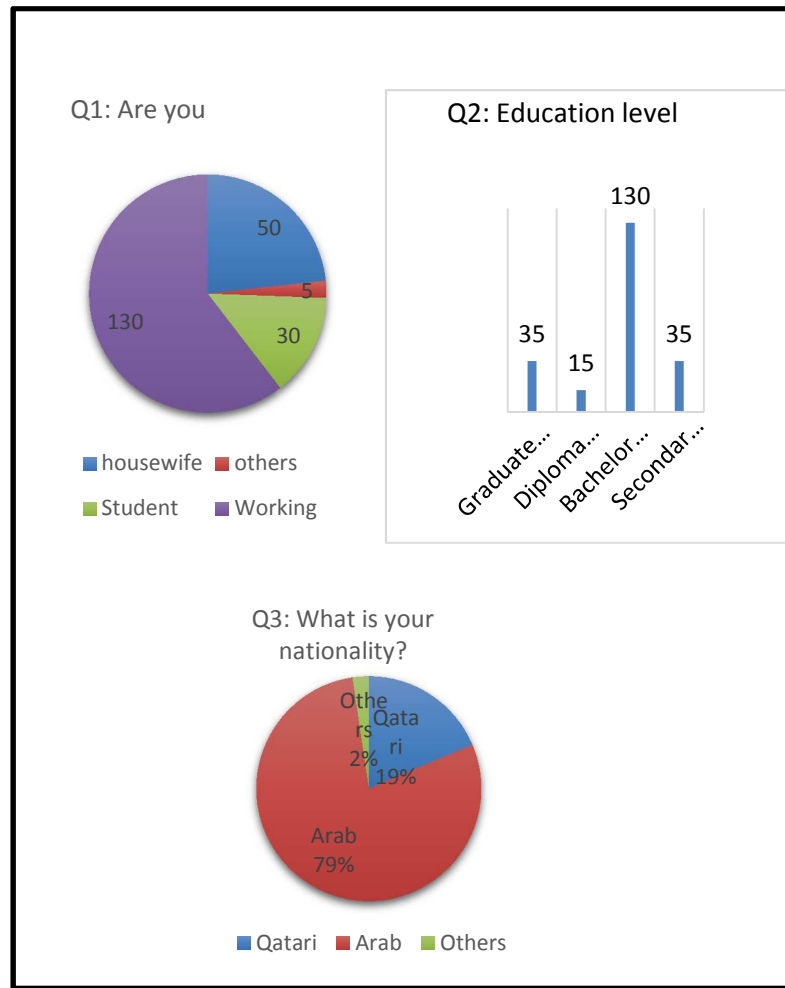


Figure 4: Charts represent questions 1, 2 & 3 in part 1

There were 86 participants within the age range of 25-34 and 56 participants in the age range of 18-24. There were 48 participants within the age range of 35-44. Only 20 participants were in the age range of 45-54, but even fewer were in the 55+ age range, which only had 5 participants (Figure 5).

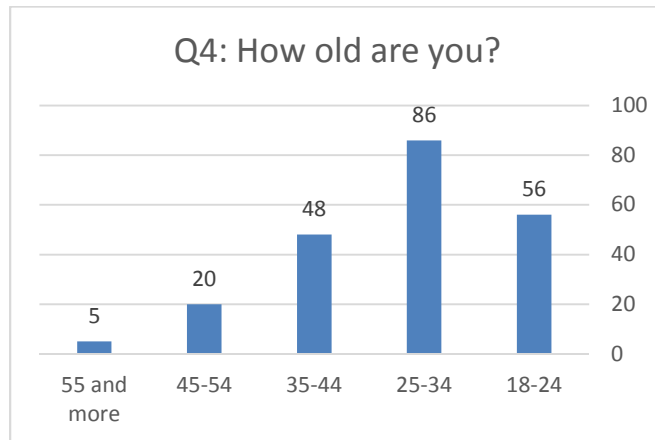


Figure 5: A column chart shows the different age groups participated of participants in the questionnaire.

58% were married and the rest were single. 56% were driving and 44% were not. 51% of the participants answered yes to having children and 49% said no (Figure 6).

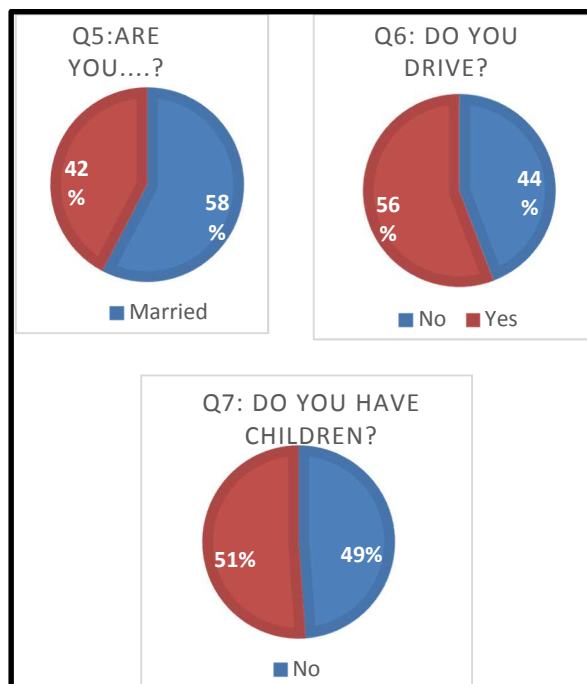


Figure 6: Charts reflect results of questions 5,6 & 7 in part 1

Three-quarters of the questionnaire responders feel safe during the day and one-quarter of them feel safe at night. 130 out of 215 participants go to public spaces weekly. 68 of them go monthly and only 17 daily (Figure 7).

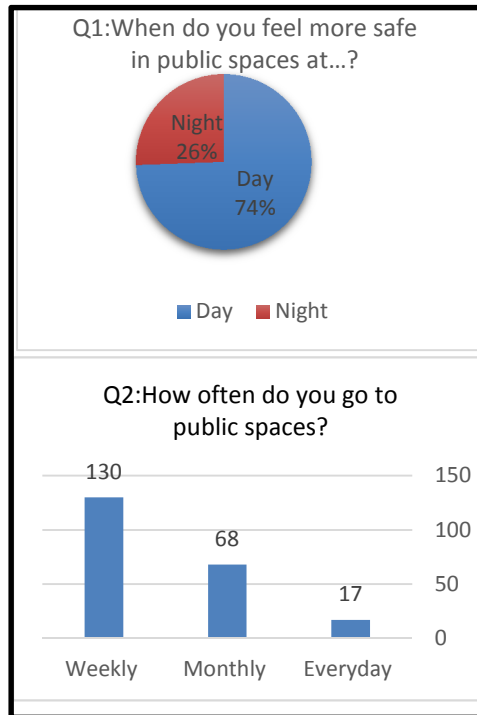


Figure 7: Charts for questions 1 & 2 in part 2

Between 7-9PM, 160 participants stayed in public spaces if they were alone. The time extends to 10-12PM if they were with family (Figure 8).

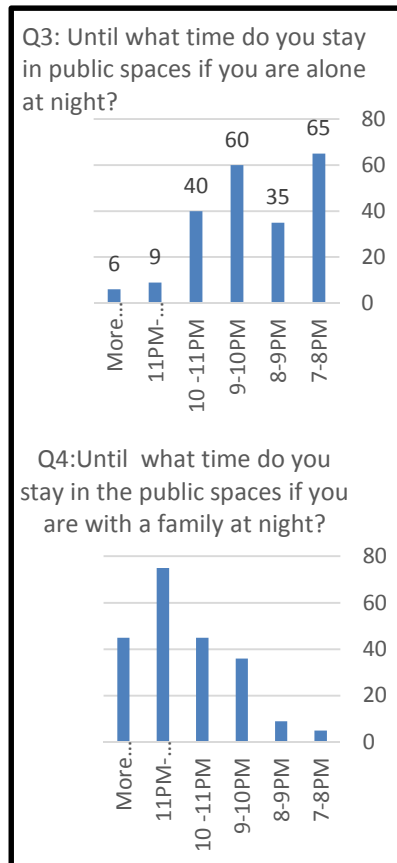


Figure 8: Two column charts comparing women's presences in public parks if they are alone or versus with family

59% of the participants said no when they were asked if they go to public spaces alone and 41% said yes. Participants who had been asked if they go to public spaces only if they have a specific purpose 92% replied yes (Figure 9).

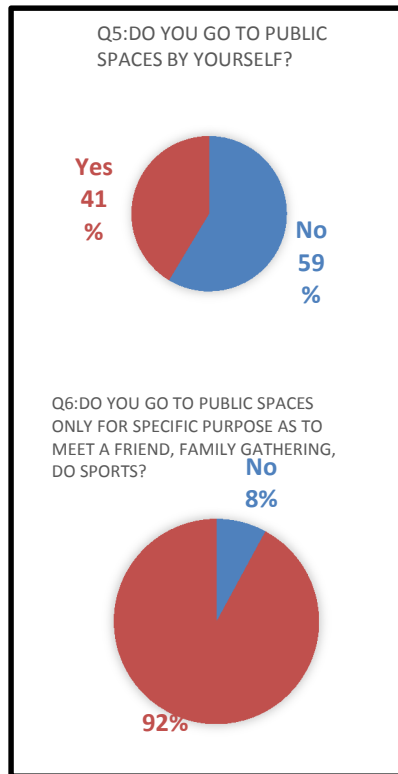


Figure 9: Two pie charts shows the results for question 5 & 6 in part 2

Walking, sitting/hanging out/relaxing, eating/drinking, playing with/watching children, and attending community events are the five top activities done by participants (Figure 10).

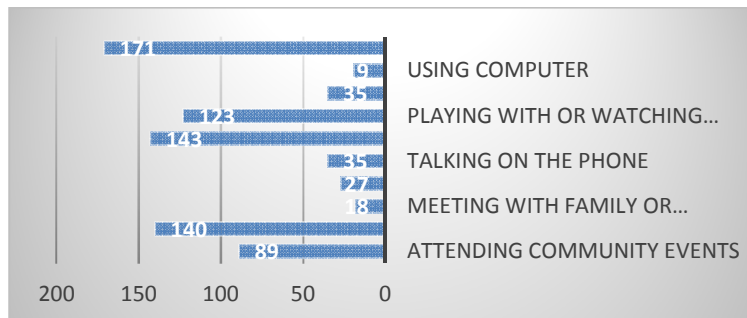


Figure 10: Column chart of participants' chose of activities done in public parks

Participants select chairs, good lighting, presence of a security guard, trees and signage as elements that increase their access to public spaces. Chairs or benches were selected by 186 participants as elements that enhance women’s participation in public parks. 177 of the participants select good lighting as an element that improves women access to public parks. The presence of a security guard in public parks also improves women’s access and participation, as 145 participants select it (Figure 11).

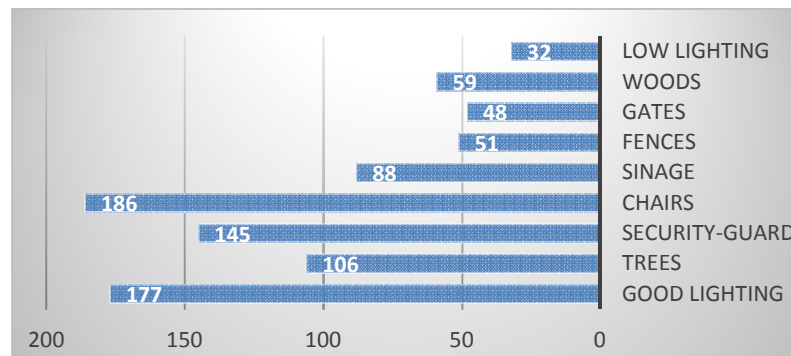


Figure 11: Elements needed to be added to improve women’s access to public parks

149 out of 215 participants select low lighting as an element that needed to be removed from public spaces to increase their access to public parks (Figure 12).

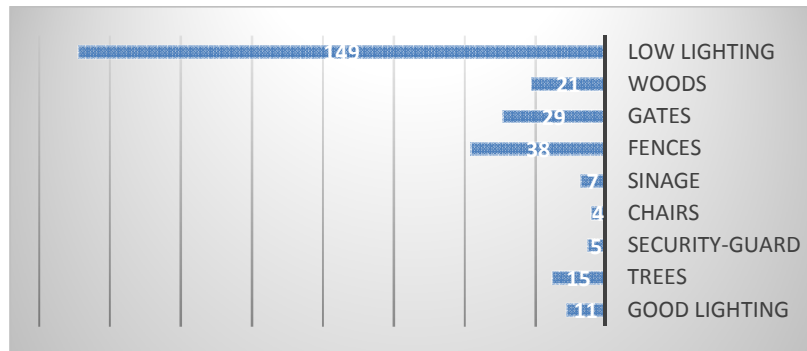


Figure 12: Elements needed to be removed or minimized to improve women's access to public parks

52% select photo B, 26% select C, and 22% select A when they are asked to choose from three photos what make it more accessible park for them (Figure 13).

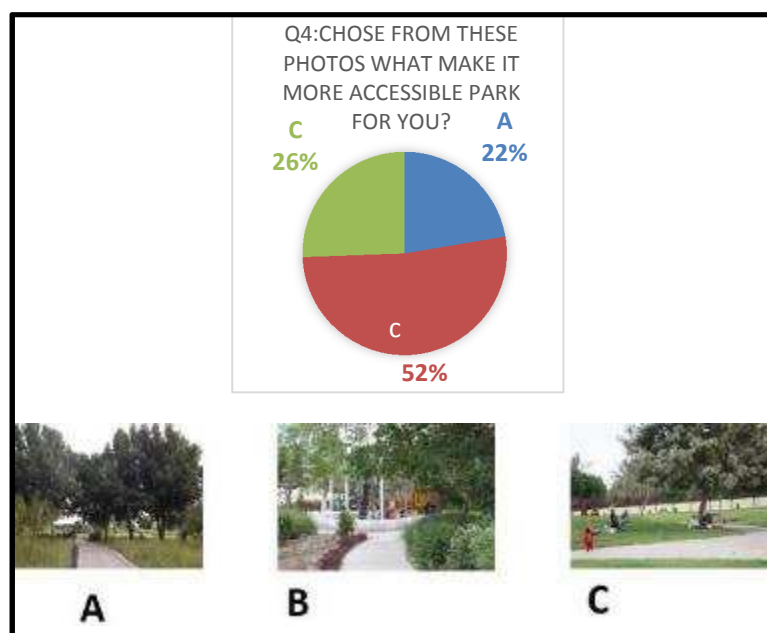


Figure 13: Pie chart shows participants' selections between among A, B & C

Where you prefer to sit was a question that been asked to participants. Regarding this question, 47% chose photo B, 45% chose photo C and 8% chose photo A (Figure 14).

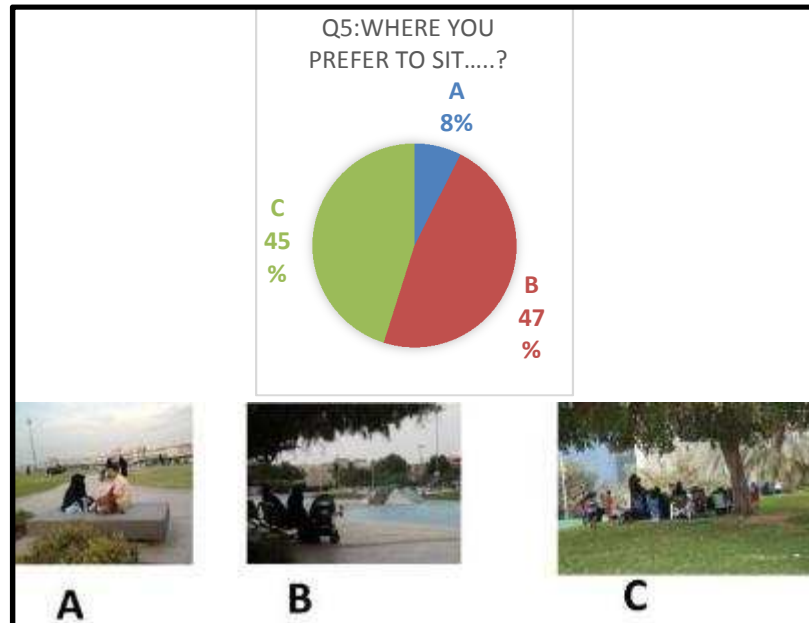


Figure 14: Participants' selections from A,B & C of where they prefer to sit

Participants selected F, D, C, B, E and A respectively as activities that they prefer to do in public spaces (Figure 15).

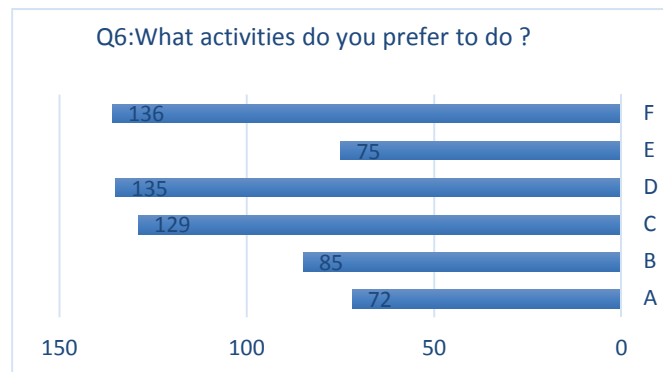


Figure 15: Bar chart shows which activities participants prefer to do in public parks from A, B, C, D, E & F



## 4.1.2 Interviews

### 4.1.2.a Dr. Ali Abd-Alraouf, MME

Table 9: Interviewee information

Interviewee	Organization	Date and Place	Discussed topics
Dr. Ali Abd-Alraouf, Development & Research Coordinator - QNMP. Doha, Qatar.	Ministry of Municipalities and Environment MME	Thursday, 11th August, 2016 at 10:00 AM, MME tower, 17th floor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Importance of public spaces.</li><li>○ Meaning of public spaces.</li><li>○ Considering social and culture aspects in public parks.</li><li>○ Methods to be used in the research.</li><li>○ Comparing Doha to other gulf cities in public spaces.</li><li>○ Affordable facilities.</li><li>○ Public park and Qatari women</li></ul>

#### Discussion:

- As had been confirmed by many psychologists, the public parks are valuable and add to people's health and mentality. They enhance people's health, which increases productivity. A public space should be for everyone: people of different ages, genders, and economic statuses.

- Public spaces, including parks, should not be fragmented. This means not designing a space only for women, teenagers, men or children and naming the space a public space. This could be an offense. Creating colonies inside the park will change the meaning of public spaces. The sentence “customized public spaces” is a funny sentence because it changes the main meaning of public spaces and makes them seem private. People should all be in one space and learn to respect each other and gain knowledge about other cultures, beliefs and traditions. One of the advantages of public spaces is the mixing of many cultures. The feeling of respect and concern could come simply from design elements, like creating semi-private spaces within the public spaces--not with many tall walls, but with design elements. The idea that this design is a public space or a park not a fragmentation should always be kept in mind.
- An urban planner should consider the social and cultural backgrounds of the users. For example, one of the elements that are used in Arab parks are benches. In most of the public parks, there are separate benches arranged around the park. However, Arab families’ movements in the parks are considered as big group movements. Therefore, part of them will sit and the rest will stand. Of course, this situation is not applicable to western countries where the user's movement is in a couple or in a small group.

- One of the biggest mistakes is to ask what design elements need to be used in designing public parks as if there a fixed answer. This question will lead to the use of international guidelines. When asking a traditional question, the answer to the question will be a traditional answer. Thus, designers should not focus on what the public spaces need, but think about what the people need. The best way to a have good understanding of what people need and what activities they are doing is through observing.
- In this type of research, observation is a very important and useful tool. It will enhance and improve the outcomes. By observing people and understanding their movements and how they use the space, we will know their needs and come up with solutions. The questionnaire could give us a general idea, but the observation will give a fuller, clearer, and more comprehensive knowledge about the current situation. Also, understanding the behavior and movement of the women in Qatar will help in understanding how to design the public parks.
- Until 2000 Qatar was a conservative country, even in terms of architecture and the possibility of having open spaces. Then, a huge change and evolution happened. Also, the number of expats increased, especially after the announcement that Qatar would be hosting World Cup 2022. This led to an increment in population: 500,000 expats came to Qatar

between 2010 and 2011. This represents 30 % of Qatar population. This causes new patterns of an attitude of different cultures and traditions.

- In countries like Bahrain & Kuwait, women were given many rights earlier. They received their right to education and to vote at early stages. This led to them being accepted in public more easily. Now, Qatar is in a better state, yet there still is not a fair distribution of parks. One of the biggest challenges now is to create parks for everyone. This is what the master urban planning and public park departments are working on.
- When comparing Doha to other gulf cities like Bahrain, Kuwait, Abu-Dabi, and even Dubai, Doha is on a good path in terms of the public spaces. Still, Dubai is a special case—but in a bad sense. Dubai is a city that ejects its citizens. 90%-92% of the population is made up of expatriates and only 8%-10% is citizens. This is a very difficult ratio. Having a balanced nation is the best.
- Having an expensive café in a public park could reduce rather than enhance users' access to the park, especially the women's. A public park should have an affordable café or kiosk. By this, all users from different economic background could easily access and use the public park.
- Public parks are not too public for women, especially Qatari women. Still, to increase Qatari women's access to public parks, design elements that create semi-private spaces within public parks could be added. On the other hand, some activities need private spaces, like swimming or

exercising. Therefore, a space that provides these activities for women in Qatar needed to be designed only for women to give them the freedom and comfort to participate.

#### **4.1.2.b Mohammed Ali Al-khoori, MME**

Table 10: Interviewee information

Interviewee	Organization	Date and Place	Discussed topics
Mohammed Ali Al-khoori, Director of Public park	Ministry of Municipalities and Environment MME	Monday, 18 <sup>th</sup> September 2016. 10:00AM, Public park department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Process of creating neighborhood parks.</li> <li>○ Users of the parks.</li> <li>○ Changes made in public parks since the establishment of the public park department.</li> <li>○ Comparing large parks and neighborhood parks.</li> <li>○ Safety standards.</li> <li>○ Community and institution engagement.</li> <li>○ Women's parks.</li> </ul>

#### Discussion:

- When creating a neighborhood park, the department receives all the maps and plans from the urban planning department showing the land use and regulations. Then, a study is done that prioritizes areas with high populations and considers the availability of land considered as parks. The

second thing that is considered when designing the park is the general requirements that users need. In general, there should be a children's area and amenities.

- As recognized parks users are maids with children, parents don't often go to the parks. Thus, parents need to be encouraged to come to the parks. As result, some parks are provided with wifi and exercise equipment. Another point is that pathways were made of bricks before; now, they are made of rubber, which allows users to run and walk smoothly in the park. Moreover, parks are now guarded by both male and female security guards.
- Previously, dense trees and plants surrounded the fences, and lighting was low; these elements were minimizing the accessibility to the park. Children were afraid to go to parks. Now that parks have good visual access, anyone can see the parks from outside. This is because fences and trees do not block the view. The lighting now is strong, promoting a safe and friendly environment. This is a brief description of what happened between 2010 and now in Qatar's parks.
- Parks belong to all family members; they are suitable for both men and women. Mother can come with their children. Most of these parks are only for families. Women can enter directly, but men should be with their families if he wants to enter. This is to give the parks some privacy. Users

with special needs are also considered in every aspect, from the entrance of the park to the paths to the amenities.

- Comparing parks of different scales, large parks are a totally different story, in terms of design. They might use the same design standards, but they need more time and collaboration among different institutions and a bigger budget. Alkoor Park and Almutaza Park are considered large parks in Qatar. Alkoor Park is open, while Almutaza park is still in the design process. As a target, the department is trying to promote the use of neighborhood parks. As an example, it is much easier for someone living in a neighborhood with an available neighborhood park than it is for someone who must walk 3km. Only walking 100m to reach the neighborhood park makes doing the same exercises that could be done in Aspire Park easier. Therefore, neighborhood parks give everyone the opportunity to practice in near and reachable places. Aspire Park is a 3000m<sup>2</sup> park was designed with winding paths, which makes them longer than straight paths and its right, the one round could be 800 meters, so 3-4 rounds will be enough for exercising.
- Regarding safety, especially in the children's playing areas, the department is using the highest standards. The floor material in children's playing areas has been changed from sand to rubber. Also, the lighting's column is very safe and environmentally friendly.

- The department is working on bringing different governmental and community institutions as Hamad Hospital or host small festivals to sell traditional food when the weather becomes temperate. This will increase the accessibility to the park. Some people living in the neighborhood have never entered the park, but when they know about these activities they might change their minds. Through this, park visitors from the neighborhood could get to know each other. The social interaction between neighbors would increase. Moreover, this would help add security for their park. They would do their best to keep and protect their park from any kind of sabotage. Also, there could be a movement to work with the schools near the park to do activities there.
- In general in Qatar 20 years ago, the view was only for separation in most sectors and spaces, but now this had been changed. After the evaluation of a women's park, it will be clear if there is a need to add more women's parks within Doha. As an example, Luqta Park is a women's park. It has its own singularity. This is because it has a gym. In the gym, women need privacy and more freedom in their movement. Still, there are some doubts about this experiment. This experiment should be evaluated. At any moment, this park could become a family park instead with a women's gym.



### 4.1.2.c Sameh Moussa, MME

Table 11: Interviewee information

Interviewee	Organization	Date and Place	Discussed topics
Sameh Moussa, Architect	Ministry of Municipalities and Environment MME	Tuesday, 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2016. 10:00AM, Public park department, designing department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Design process for neighborhood parks.</li> <li>○ Differences in designing old and new parks in Doha.</li> <li>○ Design consideration in neighborhood parks.</li> <li>○ Elements in the neighborhood parks design.</li> <li>○ Design elements provided for women.</li> <li>○ Guidelines used in designing.</li> </ul>

#### Discussion:

- In the process to design a neighborhood park, the location of the park is first stated. Then, many studies regarding the surroundings, adjusted land use, and the users who live around the park plot are done. It is very important to understand users' nationalities, cultures, and behaviors because these issues affect the design of the park. A field study also is needed. This will help in determining the entrance location and the necessary facilities.

- There are many differences between the designs of old and new parks in Doha. The fences in older parks were taller. Trees and plants were densely planted and prevented visual access. The floor material in children's areas was sand. Now, the fences are less tall and trees are less densely planted. This allows for good visual access. Rubber is the new flooring material in children's area, allowing children to play safely without harming themselves or others.
- One of the main considerations in neighborhood park design is not to have attractive elements within the park. This is because the design of a neighborhood park should target only the surrounding and adjacent citizens. If more users use the park, there will not be enough available amenities and facilities. This also helps maintain and protect the privacy of the neighborhood and citizens.
- In any park, there are fixed elements provided by the public park department. These elements are shading devices, a children's playing area, benches, toilets (male/ female), ramps for special needs users, security rooms (male/ female), and pathways. Moreover, the park is 60% hard and 40% soft. These design elements may change from one area to other. This is because the citizens' use adjusts to the park's design. Some refuse to have a cafeteria in the park and consider it as a source of noise. Others refuse to have a football court designed for teenagers because it

could become accessible to strangers. Also, the main entrance location should be approved by the adjacent citizens in some areas.

- Parks should be accessible to all different users. This will create a healthy society in which all users will respect, contact, and understand each other. Still, some activities might need some privacy, so a solution could be to make days for all users and days dedicated only for women. There some elements that could prevent or minimize women’s accessibility to the park. Fountains or wet grass, for example, may bother women in parks.
- This data and knowledge has not only been gathered from experience, but also from the understanding of users’ backgrounds, cultures, and needs. This understanding comes from visiting existing parks and observing users’ behaviors in relation to the park design only.

**4.1.2d Dr. Lizmol Mathew, Qatar University**

Table 12: Interviewee information

Interviewee	Organization	Date and Place	Discussed topics
Dr. Lizmol Mathew, Assistant Professor	Architecture and Urban Planning, college of Engineering, Qatar University. Doha, Qatar.	Monday, 10th of October, 2016 at 12:30 PM, Qatar University, women college of Engineering, first floor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Elements that affect women’s accessibility to parks.</li> <li>o Reasons for visiting parks.</li> <li>o Comparison between the situation now and from ten years ago.</li> <li>o Elements needed to be improved/added.</li> </ul>

#### Discussion:

- The elements that affect women's accessibility to parks are time, security, people's behavior, and lighting.
- In Doha parks, the security is very effective. The parks are open, there are not too many trees, and the visibility is clear.
- The preferred and chosen park to visit should be close to users' dwellings and stable for walking.
- Ten years ago, entering public parks was not preferred because of communication "language": signage system was very weak. Now, the situation is becoming more advanced in terms of communication. The signage system has been developed but not completely enough.
- In Doha, there are different levels of culture, tradition, and how people see themselves. All of that affects certain users and the accessibility to parks.
- The accessibility to parks is also affected by purposes. Different activities available in the park also affect the accessibility.

### 4.1.3 Observation

Tables 13, 14, 15, & 16 show the data obtained from the observed parks.

Table 13: General information from observed parks

Level	National		Town	District	Local		Neighborhood	
Park	DAFNA	NEW SHERA TON	DAHL AL- HMAM	ONIZA	RAYYAN	LUQTA	NUAIJA FAMILY SOUTH	ALWA AB
Location	Zone 60	Zone 61	Zone 32	Zone 63	Zone 53	Zone 52	Zone 44	Zone 55
Shape	Organic	rectangu lar	rectangular	L shape	rectangular			
Gates	No gate	No gate	No.4	No.3	No.3	No.2	No. 3	No.2
Parking plot	240 car parking	2,000 car parking	161 car parking	80 car parking	No parking area,	13 car parking	12 car parking	No parkin g
Courts	-		1 court	3 courts	1 court	-	-	1 court
Fence Height	No fence		2.90					

Table 14: Features of the observed parks

Level	National		Town	District	Local		Neighborhood	
Park	DAFNA	NEW	DAHL	ONIZA	RAYY	LUQTA	NUAIJA	ALWAA
		SHER	AL-		AN		FAMILY	B
		ATON	HMAM				SOUTH	
Buildings	No.2,	No.7	No.11	No.5	No.3	No.6	No.3	No.3
Lighting	Spot & column	Spot, column, directional and focus	Spot and column					
Benches								
No	Many			60	16	30	16	7
Material	Wood & concrete			Wood				
Size/ Shape	Different			6	1			
Children area								
Shading	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Floor material	rubber and sand			rubber				
Trees & plants	trees, palm trees, grass, bushes.	Few no. of trees,	trees, palm trees, grass, bushes.		More colorful flowers.		trees, palm trees, grass, bushes.	

Table 15: Users in the observed parks

Level	National		Town	District	Local		Neighborhood	
Park	DAFNA	NEW	DAHL AL-	ONIZA	RAYYAN	LUQTA	NUAIJA	ALWA
		SHER	HMAM				FAMILY	AB
		ATON					SOUTH	
Users								
Women / Age								
mother	25-45	30-40	30-40	30-40.	30-40.	25-40	25-45	30-40
single	18-30	25-30	30-40	-	30-40	20-25	25-30	-
Maids	30-45	-	30-45	30-45	30-45	30-40	30-45	30-45
Men/ Age								
Father	25-45	30-45	30-50	30-40	30-50	-	30-40	30-40
single	18-45	30-45	30-40	20-45	-	--	-	-
Boys/ Age								
Teenag ers	13-17	-	13-16	13-16	13-16	-	-	12-14
Children	1-12	3-5	2-10	2-8	2-10	1-7	2-8	2-7
Girls / Age								
Teenag ers	13-17	-	13-16	-	13-16	14-17.	-	-
Children	1-12	3-8	2-12	2-12	2-12	1-10	2-8	2-7

Table 16: Users Activites in the observed parks

Level	National		Town	District	Local		Neighborhood	
Park	DAFN	NEW	DAHL	ONIZA	RAYY	LUQTA	NUAIJA	ALWA
	A	SHERAT	AL-		AN		FAMILY	AB
		ON	HMAM			SOUTH		
Activities								
Siting	✓							
Walking	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Playing	✓							
Taking by phone	✓							
Gathering	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eating /drinking	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Using Wi-Fi	✓							





The park has one shaded children's playing area, one water cooler, one toilet, one cafeteria (Costa Café), car parking, and free internet wi-fi. The park topography is a mixture of flat land and artificial hills. The plantation, trees, and palm trees are varied in the park. There are different types of trees, like neem and Alalbeza trees. There are also many types of attractive shrubs and seasonal flowers.

The park users are from different ages, nationalities, genders, cultures, and ethnicities. Park users can see different faces from the entire world. On weekdays, most of the users come to walk and exercise. On weekend mornings, users come to walk, exercise, and use the park recreationally. Most users on weekend days come to the park to gather with family and friends from afternoon until 11:00PM. Users also eat/drink, walk, read, use their phones, sit, use Wi-Fi, exercise, play, and run, among many other activities.

### 4.1.3.1.1b Photos and Comments

Table 17: Photos with comments from Dafna (old Sheraton) park (A).





Photo	Comment
	Parents sitting on a bench watching their children.
	Group of men & women (Asian) sitting on the grass facing the sea and chatting.
	Single Arabic woman sitting on a bench facing the sea.
	Parents sitting on the grass watching their children play in the children's playing area.

Table 18: Photos with comments from Dafna (old Sheraton) park (B).

Photo

Comment



Arabic family putting their stuff down to sit on an artificial hill.



Group of men sitting in the artificial hills; opposite to them, a woman reading a book.



A ZOMPA class for women held on a Friday morning.

Table 19: Photos with comments from Dafna (old Sheraton) park (C).

Photo

Comment



A woman riding a bicycle in the park's pathway opposite to the sea.



A group of women walking in the park's pathway opposite to the sea.



Old western couple sitting on a bench facing the sea.



Men using the sport facilities in the park.

Table 20: Photos with comments from Dafna (old Sheraton) park (D).

Photo

Comment



Vendor selling children's toys.



A large group of Arabic women sitting under a tree.



A woman sitting on a small bench in the children's area watching her children.



A child loses his control before reaching the toilet in the children's playing area.

#### **4.1.3.1.1c Users and activities**

- Two Asian men doing UOGA exercise on a Friday morning.
- An single Arabic woman (20 years) in abaya running on the park pathway.
- Asian couple (30-35 years) competing with each other to complete the walking cycle in the park.
- Qatari father (35 years) playing with his daughter (5 years) in the children's area, preventing her from playing in the sand.
- A single man (30 years) sitting in a chair and using his smartphone connected to the free Wi-Fi on a weekday.
- A group of men and women (different ages, cultures, and ethnicities) exercising with a coach during the day.
- Two men sitting in their own chairs on the hill facing the sea and using the free Wi-Fi.
- Arabic couple sitting on a bench facing the sea and chatting.
- A group of friends sitting on two benches facing the sea and chatting.
- Asian family gathering near the sea on a weekday.
- Children biking along the park pathways.
- A mother trying to change her baby's diaper near the Sheraton hotel.

#### **4.1.3.1.1d Park assessment**

- The signage system in the park is not sufficient. Most of the signs are hidden by plants or trees.
  - This affects the wayfinding in the park especially for women.
- The car parking is always full during the day.
- There is only one toilet, which is far from the main areas of the park.
  - From my observations, mothers and children are using other ways rather than going to the toilet. This will affect women's choice of parks in the future and will affect the park's image.
- In some spots, the pathways are not in good condition.
  - This affects mothers walking with children in trolleys.
- The available cafeteria (Costa) is not affordable to all users.
  - This could be a way to control and limit user's accessibility to public parks, especially to women with limited economic abilities.
- The lighting system is not very effective. Users are complaining about this issue.
  - This decreases rather than enhances women's accessibility to the park.
- In the park, there is no praying room for both women and men. Users tend to pray in an empty area next to the toilet. Now, this empty area has been shaded.



- The location of the park gives it significant character, especially with the sea view.
- In the children's area, there are some seats where parents could sit and watch their children.
  - This gives parents the ability to watch their children and be next to them.
- Vendors are annoying families in the park by standing next to them and trying to convince them to buy toys for their children.
  - The presence of strangers next to them makes mothers feel uncomfortable.
- Many different activities are done by the users in the park.
- There are no varied types of plants and flowers in the park.
- There are no any spaces designated for teenagers

### 4.1.3.1.1e Behavioral map



Figure 17: Behavioral mapping of Dafna park layer 1



Figure 18: Behavioral mapping of Dafna park layer 2

#### 4.1.3.1.2 EXAMPLE TWO: NEW SHERATON PARK

##### 4.1.3.1.2a General information

The location of the new Sheraton Park is in zone 61, in the AL Dafna district. The park area is around 70,000 m<sup>2</sup>. The park was opened in the beginning of 2016 without a grand opening. The design of the park is unique because of the available water elements. The park is surrounded by AL Funduq and AL Corniche streets. The park is next to the Sheraton hotel, old Dafna Park, and the towers zone (Figure 19). The regulations in zone 61 and zone 60 are the same.

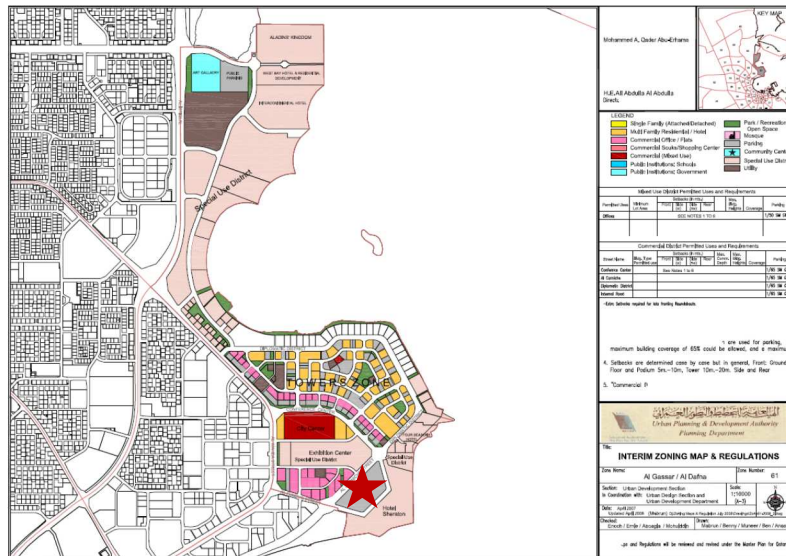


Figure 19: Land use of zone 61 from MME; the star icon is the park location.

The park has different building types like toilets, praying rooms, restaurants, and a medical room. The park is not gated and is accessible to all different users. The park has a two-story underground car park that could occupy 2,000 cars.

Also, there are different zones in the park: waterfall zone, wadi zone, discovery zone, children playing area zone, fountain of colors zone, fitness zone, hills zone, event zone, and tidal pool zone. The park design is a combination of hard and soft landscaping. The ground is a mix of flat and pyramid-shape mounds. Both types offer a variety of activities and views. The children's playing area is at the end of the park near Ooredoo Tower. The flooring material is a mixture of rubber and sand. Near the children area, there are some sports facilities. Most of the users who live in the adjacent towers are western. Different users use the park (different ages and gender). On weekdays, users walk, play, exercise, talk on the phone, sit, and practice dancing. On weekend days, users do the same activities, but there are more participants. Security guards are available in most park areas. Users located themselves in main three areas: pathways, children's area, or flat grassland.

### 4.1.3.1.2b Photos and Comments

Table 21: Photos with comments from New Sheraton park (A).

Photo

Comment



Visual access in this spot is very limited.



Signage system is very clear and effective.



The presence of a security guard is very effective.

Table 22: Photos with comments from New Sheraton park (B).

Photo

Comment



The water feature in the park gives it value.



Two western friends are walking in the park's pathway.



Some spots are undergoing maintenance.

Table 23: Photos with comments from New Sheraton park (C).

Photo

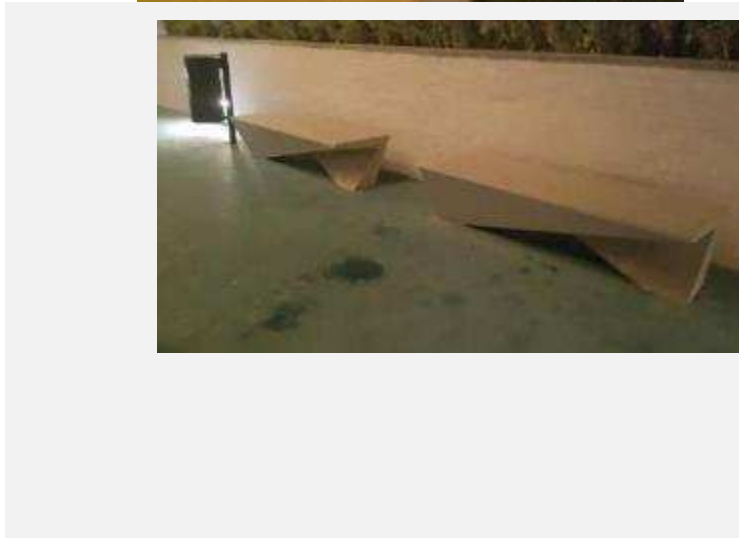
Comment



Two men are skating.



A western father is playing with his daughter.



A new style of benches opposite to the traditional wooden benches are available in the park.



Table 24: Photos with comments from New Sheraton park (D).

Photo

Comment



A couple sitting sitting in the grass chatting.



A western couple is sitting at the top of the pyramid-shaped mound.



A pregnant Qatari woman is walking in the park's pathway.

#### **4.1.3.1.2c Users and activities**

- An Asian family of three is walking in the main pathway.
- An Asian father is playing with his children while the mother is watching.
- Two single western women are walking in the main pathway.
- Two western men are practicing for a dance performance next to the children's area.
- An African family is playing with their in the flat wide grassy area.

#### **4.1.3.1.2d Park assessment**

- In the five-sensory zone, there are many stairs, streams, waterfalls, and dense plantation which limits or prevents the visual access.
  - As a result, a limited number of users could be seen in this area, especially women.
- The children's area is located at the end of the park.
  - This reduces the importance of the children as users. Also, this could be dangerous because it's near a street.
- Most of the grass areas were closed because of maintenance.
  - This minimizes user's ability to sit on the grass.
- The lighting in some areas are effective but ineffective in others.
  - This will lead to concourses in some spots and areas, which will overload pressure on the facilities and amenities, while other areas will be relatively empty.
- The presence of security is very clear and effective.
  - This maximizes and enhances women's use of the park.

- The available water features give the park significant importance.
- People are not aware of the park; this could be because the park didn't have a grand opening.
  - Thus, most of the users are neighbors from the residential towers.
- There are no shading devices or trees.
  - This will affect users' choice of parks to visit, especially if they come to gather and sit.

### 4.1.3.1.1e Behavioral map



Figure 20: Behavioral mapping of New Sheraton park layer 1



Figure 21: Behavioral mapping of New Sheraton park layer 2

### **4.1.3.2 EXAMPLE OF TOWN PARK**

#### **4.1.3.2.1 EXAMPLE ONE: DAHL AL-HMAM PARK**

##### **4.1.3.2.1a General information**

The location of DAHL AL-HMAM Park is in zone 32, MADINAT KHALIFA North/ Dahl AL Hamam district (Figure 22). The park area is almost 97,770m<sup>2</sup>. The park gains its name from a nature feature it has. The park location has a dahl, which is a natural cave in the ground (Figure 23). The cave is gated with a steel fence and closed door. There is usually a security guard near it. DAHL AL-HMAM Park has gone through several developments and enhancements. The park is surrounded by two main streets, AL-Markhiya and Arableague Streets.

The park is mainly surrounded by residential, commercial, and public institutions (schools). The height of the adjacent residential area as stated by MME regulations is G+1+P. The park is gated. There are two entrances and two exits. The main entrance and exit orientation is to the south, facing residential units. The other entrance and exit orientation is to the west, facing a school. There is a car parking plot inside the fenced park. The total number of parking spots is 161. The fence's height is 2.0 m. The fence is a decorated steel fence.

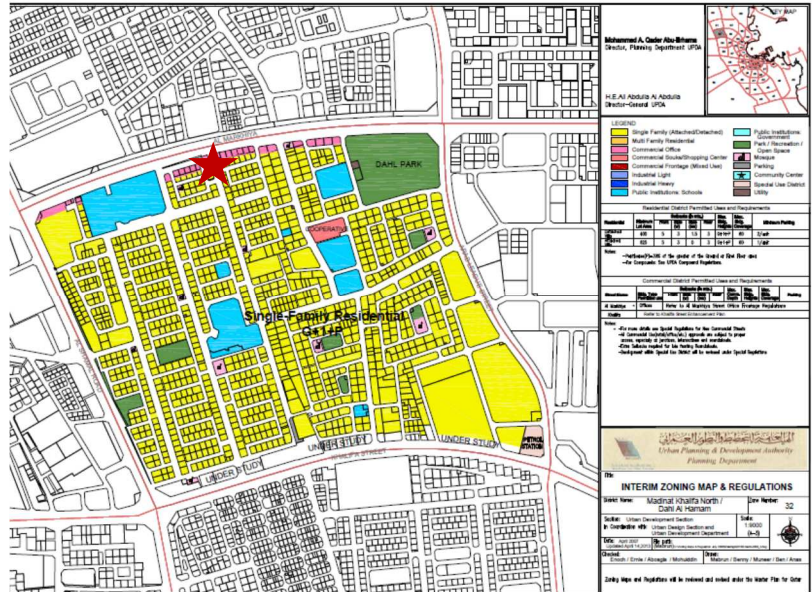


Figure 22: The land use plan from MME for zone 32; the star icon is the park location

The park now has many different types of buildings in the park. There are security kiosks, four toilets for both females and males distributed throughout, a restaurant, three food kiosks, an administration office, separate praying halls for females and males, and a multi-purpose hall.



Figure 23: The Dahl (ground cave)

There are four different children's playing areas with different features. All the children's areas are shaded. The children's areas vary in size, the number of games provided, and the flooring material. Two of them have sand as flooring material; the other two have rubber material. There is also a volleyball court. The flooring material of the court is rubber. There is one sports equipment in the park. There are two spots or areas where children can play with their bicycles or scooters. There are three areas for community events. The first one is a roman stage. The second one is an empty paved court. The third one is a fenced court that simulates a traditional fareej with a small stage (Figure 24).



Figure 24: Different areas for community events in the park

The landscape of the park varies between hard and soft landscape. There is a variety of different native plants, trees, and palm trees. In some spots, the plantation is dense; in other spots there is only grass. The park ground is a mixture of artificial hills and flat land. The lighting varies only between two types: column and spot lighting. The benches in the park are of different shapes, but all



of them are wooden. Some of them are under shading devices others are not (Figure 25).



Figure 25: Different available benches in the park

The park has limited signage. Wi-Fi is available in the park. There is a recycling container with an informative board that encourages users to recycle their rubbish. There are some boxes near the parking plot distributed by charities to encourage users to donate their used clothes. There are some tennis tables arranged next to one of the children's playing areas and in the paved court (Figure 26). There are drinking fountains distributed in the park.



Figure 26: Some of the available facilities that enhance and educate users.

Users of the park are mostly families. They come to the park for different purposes. The main activities done by users are gathering, chatting, sitting in grass/benches, walking, playing in the children's area/volleyball court, bicycling, eating/drinking, talking on the phone, reading books, training for a performance, or attending a community event. The women present in the park are categorized as singles (20-35), mothers (25-45), maids (30-45), employees (30-45), and old women (55+). The men in the park are categorized as singles (30-45), fathers (30-50), employees (35-45), and old men (55+). The security guards are distributed all over the park.

#### 4.1.3.2.1b Photos and Comments

Table 25: Photos with comments from Dahl Alhmam park (A).

Photos

Comments



A mother (35 years) sits with her children in the grass and teaching her daughter (10 years) her lessons.



A maid sits in the grass talking in the phone.



A maid takes care of children in the playing area, while the mother takes photos of them.



A family sits in the bench and chats.

Table 26: Photos with comments from Dahl Alhmam park (B).

Photos

Comments



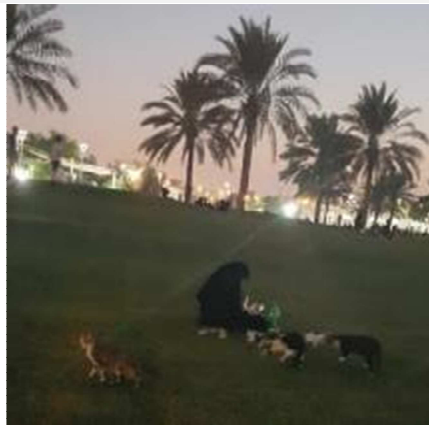
The volleyball court next to the playing area, this affect or minimize the use of both.



A child playing on her scooter in the specified area.



The presence of security guards in the park is very clear.



A mother sits with her baby in the grass and uses Wi-Fi without consider the cats around her.

Table 27: Photos with comments from Dahl Alhmam park (C).

Photos

Comments



Family members sit in their own chairs instead of in the provided arranged benches in the park.



A mother with her baby in a trolley passes through the grass.



Family members sit in their own chairs watching their children in the playing area.



A family sits in the shaded benches watching children in the playing area.

Table 28: Photos with comments from Dahl Alhmam park (D).

Photos

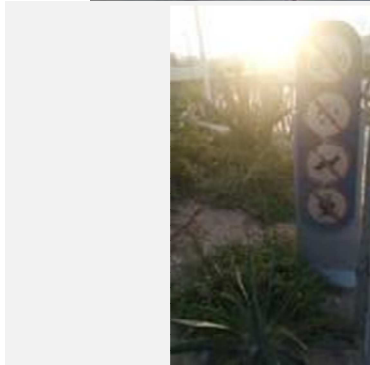
Comments



A group of workers (women) sit in the grass and chat.



A woman walks in the park pathways. Still, in some spots, the pathway conditions are very poor.



Most of the signage is hidden by plantations.

#### **4.1.3.2.1c Users and Activities**

- A group of women (25-35 years) sits on the grass chatting and eating.
- An extended family sits under a big tree.
- A family of four members sits on a bench next to the food kiosk.
- A man (55+ years) sits in a chair in the grass reading a book.
- Different parents (30-45 years) sit on shaded benches or in the grass facing children playing area watching their children (3-10 years).
- Fathers (30-35 years) play with their children in the playing area while the mothers (25-35 years) chat.
- Parents (30-35 years) play with their children in the grass.
- Single men (30-40 years) and women (25-30 years) walk on the paved walkways.
- Teenagers (12-14 years) play on the volleyball court while their parents (30-45 years) watch.
- A girl (8 years) plays with her scooter, and another boy (6 years) rides his bicycle.
- Two single men (25-30 years) train for a dancing performance.
- A single man (35 years) sits under a palm tree and uses his smartphone.
- A couple (30-35 years) sits in their own chairs under a palm tree using their smart phones.
- On the paved court, different users sit on the surrounding benches and children play with their bicycles, scooters, or balls.

- The Roman stage is empty unless there is an event.
- The praying area is usually empty unless it is praying time.

#### **4.1.3.2.1e Park assessment**

- The presence of both male and female security guards in the park create the feeling of comfort for women.
  - This increases women's presence in the park.
- The location of the signage and lighting systems are not very effective. Most of them are covered by the plantation.
  - This reduces rather than enhances women's access to public parks.
- In the park, community education and participation are very effective.
  - Community events increase women's presence in the park.
- The pathway's material is not very appropriate for walking.
  - This limits and decreases women's ability to walk in the park, especially for mothers with their babies in trolleys.
- The two main entrances are on secondary streets.
  - This could be considered a positive point. This will create a safe, easy, and moderate entry to the park especially for women on foot.



### 4.1.3.1.1e Behavioral map



Figure 27: Behavioral mapping of Dahl Alhmam park layer 1



Figure 28: Behavioral mapping of Dahl Alhmam park layer 2

### 4.1.3.3 Example of District Park

#### 4.1.3.3.1 EXAMPLE ONE: ONIZA PARK

##### 4.1.3.3.1a General information

The location of ONIZA PARK is in Zone 63, the ONIZA district (Figure 29). The park area is almost 63,363m<sup>2</sup>. The park is facing AL-Istiqlal and AL-Intisar Streets. The park is surrounded by senior staff and a public housing plot, petrol station, social development center, and mosque. Near the park, there are four international schools and a multi-purpose hall. The ONIZA district is a multi-land-use district. The land use in the district varies from residential buildings and towers to commercial offices/showrooms, public institutions, (schools/government), and mosques. The buildings' heights from the MME regulation is G+1+P for residential, minimum height is G+15, maximum coverage is 50% and 35% for the Tower.

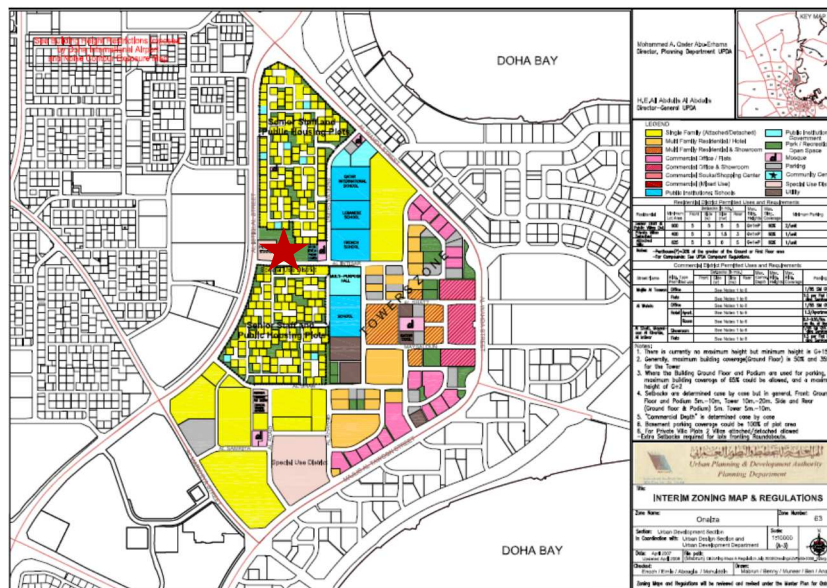


Figure 29: Land use of zone 63 from MME; the star icon is the park location

There are three entrances in the park. The main entrance faces south to AL-Intisar street. The second entrance is a secondary entrance oriented to the west facing AL-Istiqlal street. The third entrance is a secondary entrance oriented to the north, facing the car parking (Figure 30). Two entrances are opened and one is closed. The fence is 2.90m tall.



Figure 30: The two secondary entrances in the park.

The park has five different types of buildings: two security rooms adjacent to the main entrance, one utility room, and two toilet rooms (female/male). The park has two types of lighting: spot and column. They are in different locations within the park. The children's playing area is shaded, and the flooring material is rubber. Three football courts are attached to the park. The court entrance is from inside the park. There is an entrance to the courts from outside, but it is closed. Near these courts, there is a toilet that serves the users of the courts. There is clear signage distributed within the park. There are 60 benches in the park. All the benches are wooden and come in different six shapes (Figure 31).



Figure 31: Different benches in the park.

The park had different types of trees, palm trees, grass, bushes. The plantation is not dense and distributed effectively in the park. In the park, there is 68 car parking next to main entrance and 12 car parking next to the secondary entrance to the north. The dominant users of the park and its attached courts are men. Men appear in the park as singles (18-45), fathers (30-45), workers (30-35), old men (55+). Women in the park are mothers (25-35), maids (30-40), workers (30-40), and old women (55+). Teenage boys (13-17) also are seen on the football field. Young boys and girls (2-10) are also present. Most of the users are expatriates from western countries. People of other nationalities such as Arab & Qataris are present but not common. The main activities done by the users are sitting, walking, playing, chatting, eating /drinking, and playing football.

### 4.1.3.3.1b Photos and Comments

Table 29: Photos with comments from Oniza park

Photo

Comments



A mother watching her children playing in the children area.



Two old couples walking in the park's pathways.



Children playing on the small Roman stage.



Different groups of men playing on the football field.

#### **4.1.3.3.1c Users and Activities**

- A group of western mothers (30-35) sit on a bench and chat while their children (3-5) play next to them.
- An Arabic family sits on a bench next to the children's playing area watching the children (6-10).
- An old western couple walks in the park.
- Three Asian maids (30-40) with a group of seven Qatari children (5-8) play in the children's area.
- A group of Arabic teenage boys (14-17) play football on the big football field.
- A group of western men (30-35) leave the football court after they finish a game.
- A Qatari man (40) walks alone in the park.
- Two Asian couples sit on a semicircular bench and chat.
- A single Asian man (35) sits on the bench next to the main entrance.

#### **4.1.3.3.1d Park assessment**

- The arrangement of different types of benches is not very efficient. For example, the semi-circular benches are all on the western side of the park.
  - These types of benches allow groups to sit together and see each other. This type of bench should be located next to the children's playing area.
- The pathway floor material is not great for smooth walking activities.

- Women enjoy walking, so having good pathway material will improve women's access and participation in the park.
- The entrance to the courts is from the park. The main court's entrance is closed.
  - This creates more flow of men and teenage boys through the main park entrance. This will affect women's accessibility to the park.
- There is a shaded area with benches arranged in the shape of a U.
  - This area could be used as a meeting spot.
- There is a small, shaded, round stage where small children's events can be held.
  - This will enhance the community's involvement in the park, thus increasing women's access to the park.



### 4.1.3.1.1e Behavioral map



Figure 32: Behavioral mapping of Oniza park layer 1



Figure 33: Behavioral mapping of Oniza park layer 2

#### **4.1.3.4 Example of Local and Neighborhood Parks**

Local and neighborhood parks that were observed shared some characteristics and features (Figure 34). These characteristics and features are:

- The building types in the park:
  - Security room, which is just next to the main entrance.
  - Utility room.
  - Toilet room F/M.
- Lighting is present in different locations throughout the park. There are two types of lighting:
  - Spotlighting
  - Column lighting.
- The fence is 2.90m tall. Half of the fence is a wall and the rest is decorated steel.
- The park has different types of trees, grass, and bushes. The plantation is not dense and is distributed effectively in the park.
- The children's area:
  - Is shaded.
  - Has floors made of rubber.
- There is a clear signage system in the park. The lighting, as well as the visual and physical access to the park, is very effective.
  - This enhances women's access and presence in the park.



Figure 34: Fence, children's playing area, lighting, & signage in local & neighborhood parks

#### **4.1.3.4.1 EXAMPLE ONE OF LOCAL PARK: RAYYAN PARK**

##### ***4.1.3.4.1a General information***

The location of the park is in zone 53, New Rayyan (Figure 35). The area of the park is about 4,530m<sup>2</sup>. The park is near AL Salam and AL Wajba Streets. The park is surrounded by residential plots and a mosque. The right half of it faces a mosque and the other half faces empty land. The left side is facing houses and the back side is facing empty land. The height of the adjacent houses as stated by MME regulations is G+1+P. The park has three entrances. The main entrance's orientation is to the east and faces empty land. One of the secondary entrances is oriented to the south and the other is oriented to the west. Both secondary entrances face villas and they are closed. There is no car parking in the park.

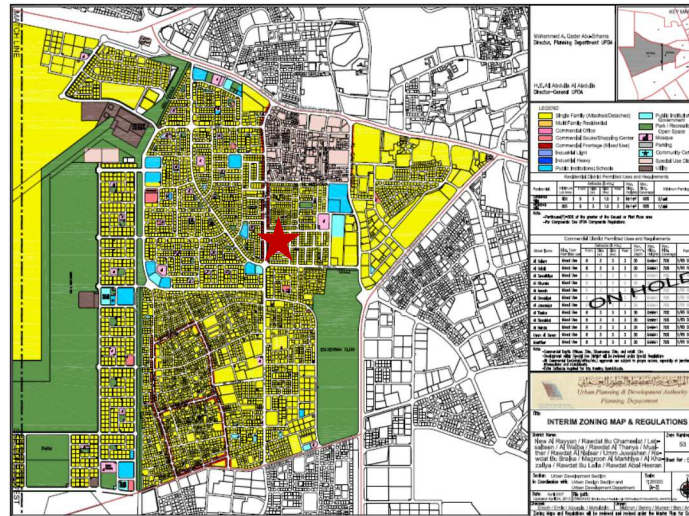


Figure 35: Land use map of zone 53 from MME; the star icon is the park's location.

There are 16 benches in the park. All the benches are wooden and the same shape. The children's area is mostly 240m<sup>2</sup>. The football field area is 400m<sup>2</sup>. The field entrance is from inside the park. However, teenage boys managed to make a hole in the field fence to enter from outside.

The main activities done by the users are sitting, walking, playing, talking on their phones, chatting, and eating/drinking. The users are mainly Arab. Around 80 users usually occupy the park. The dominant users are women and children. Women participated in the park as singles (25-30 years), mothers (25-45 age), maids (30-45 years), and old women (55+ years). The only men present are fathers (30-40 years). Children (2-8 years) are the third type of users. In this park, teenagers from both genders are present. They range from 12-15 years old.

#### 4.1.3.4.1b Photos and Comments

Table 30 :Photos with comments of Rayyan park (A).




Photo	Comments
	A group of women gathering and sitting in the grass.
	Children fighting in a game.
	A group of girls entering the park.

Table 31:Photos with comments of Rayyan park (B).

Photo

Comments



Boys fighting for their turn to play in the football court.



A group of maids, half of whom are sitting in the grass and the other half on a bench.



Two mothers sitting on a bench.

#### **4.1.3.4.1c Users and Activities**

- The park is located in a very dense area. The park is crowded.
- A group of Arab women sits in the grass, gathering and chatting.
- A group of Asian maids sit on a bench while others stand or sit in the grass.
- Three men sit on a bench near the main entrance away from the children's area and chat.
- A group of Arab teenage girls walk and chat.
- Most of the children play alone in the playing area only an old grandmother is watching her grandsons.
- A woman sits on a bench and talks on the phone.
- A group of Arab teenage boys play football on the football field.
- A father sits on the ground watching his children play in the children's playing area.

#### **4.1.3.4.1d Park assessment**

- The football field entrance is from inside the park, not from outside. Boys manage to enter it from outside.
  - More control by security guards is needed in the park. This will create a sense of control within the park. Women will feel more comfortable.
- Park users prefer to sit in the grass rather on benches, so the grass areas are not enough.
- The benches' shapes and distribution don't fulfill users' need.



- Different bench types may increase women's presence in the park.
- The location of the toilets is good because it serves both the children's area and the football field.
- The park is easy to find because it is located next to a mosque.
  - The mosque serves the needs of the park users so there is no need to made a specific room for praying.

4.1.3.1.1e Behavioral map

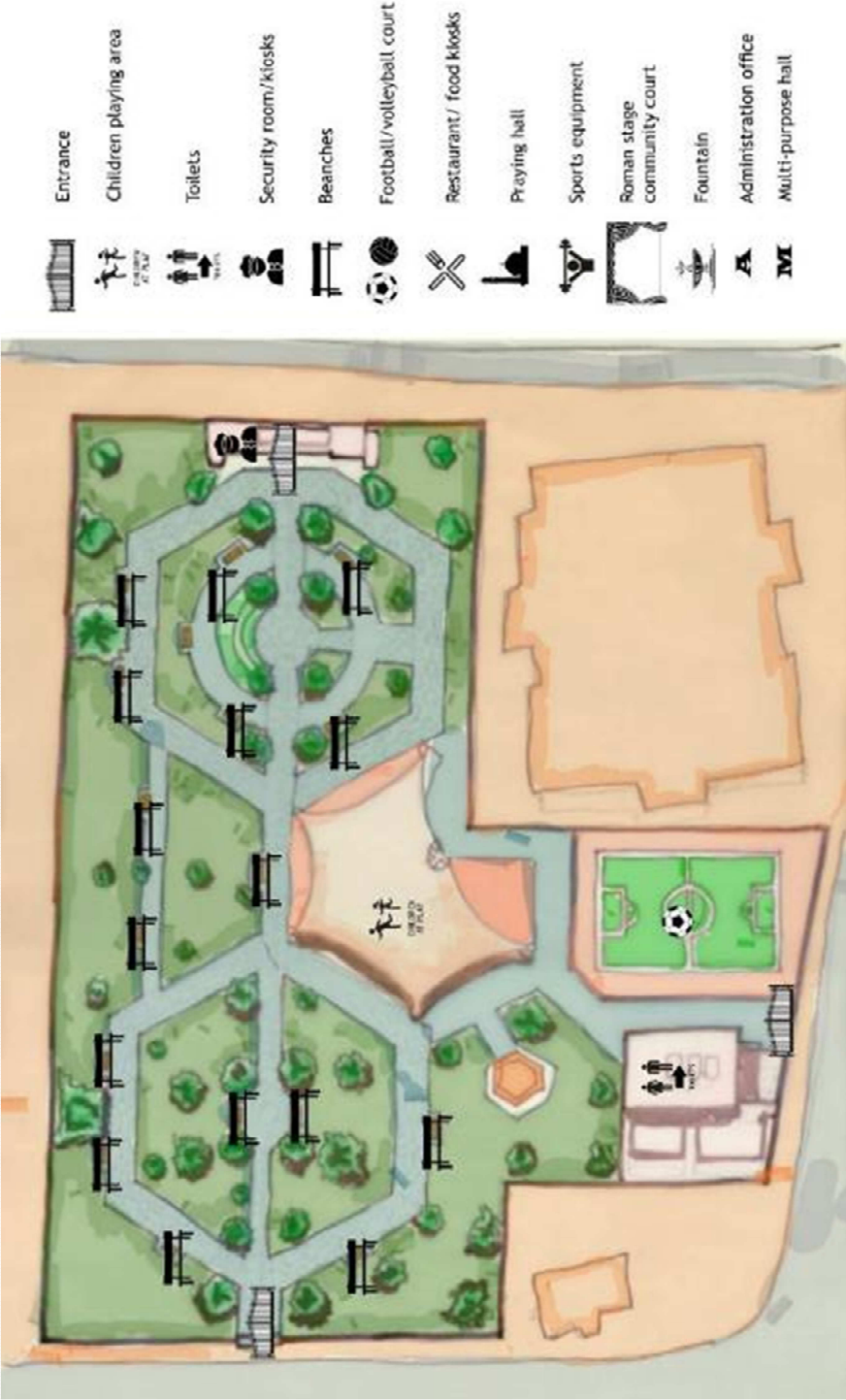


Figure 36: Behavioral mapping of Rayyan park layer 1



Figure 37: Behavioral mapping of Rayyan park layer 2

#### 4.1.3.4.2 EXAMPLE TWO OF LOCAL PARK: LUQTA PARK

##### 4.1.3.4.2a General information

The location of LUQTA Park is in zone 52, LUQTA district (Figure 38). The park area is almost 9,246m<sup>2</sup>. The park is near Luqta and 22 February Streets. The park is surrounded by a residential area. The regulation from the MME regarding the height is G+1+P. The park has one main entrance. The entrance oriented to the east faces empty land. There is a secondary entrance oriented to the north, facing a secondary street. This entrance is a service entrance only serving the cafeteria. There are 13 car parking spots.

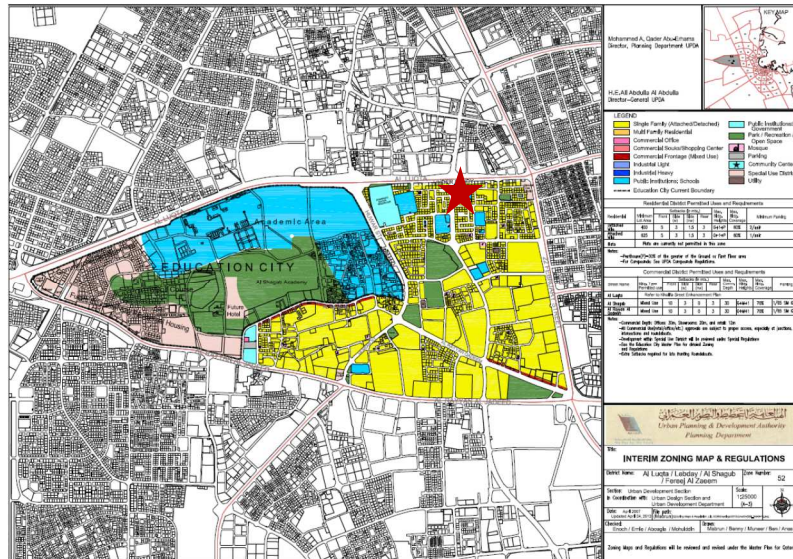


Figure 38: Land use map of zone 52 from MME; the star icon is the park's location

In the park, there are four building types: two security rooms adjacent to the main entrance, an administration building, a toilets room, and a cafeteria. The cafeteria is not open yet. As planned by public park department, a gym should be

available, but there is no gym in the park. One children's playing area is available in the park. It is shaded, and the flooring material is rubber. The park ground varies between flat and artificial hill land. Different plantation and trees are used in the park. They are not dense and are distributed in the park effectively. There is a big fountain that is not yet open.

The park is designated only for women and children. Most of the users are Qatari women with their children. Few Arab or Asian women appear in the park. Women appear in the park as singles (20-30 years), mothers (25-35 years), and maids (30-40 years). Children (1-8 years) both boys and girls come with their mothers or maids. Female security guards walk around the park. Male security guards are only located at the main entrance. Activities done by women in the park are walking, sitting in the grass/on benches, chatting, watching children play, eating/drinking, talking on the phone, and listening to music.

#### 4.1.3.4.2b Photos and Comments

Taking photos while users were the park was forbidden. The photos were taken when the park was empty to show the available spaces and areas in the park.

Table 32: Photos with comments in Luqta park (A).

Photo

Comments



The administrative building located on the east side of the park next to the main entrance.



Shaded area with benches.



Small Roman stage could be used for small events.

Table 33: Photos with comments in Luqta park (B).

Photo

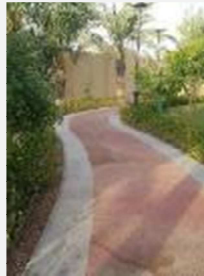
Comments



Park's fence and surrounding building, both are affecting the park's privacy.



Ornamental metal features in the park's fences. Some are closed by glass; others are not. This could affect the park's privacy.



Rubber is the pathway material in the park. This could improve walking.

#### **4.1.3.4.2c Users and Activities**

- A group of Qatari women (25-30 years) and teenager's girls (13-15 years) taking off their hijabs and abayas sit in the grass next to the cafeteria.
- A group of Qatari mothers (25-35 years) taking off their hijabs with their children (2-8 years) sitting on the grass facing the children's playing area.
- An Arabic mother sitting on a bench next to the playing area watching her children.
- An Arabic mother (30 years) playing with her child (5 years) in the playing area.
- A single Arabic woman (25 years) walking in the park pathways.
- A Qatari mother (30 years) sitting in the grass taking off her hijab and using her smartphone while her children (5-8 years) play next to her.
- Qatari boys (6-8 years) playing and annoying other children in the playing area.

#### **4.1.3.4.2d Park assessment**

- The fence is not very high and the trees and plantation surrounding the fence are not very dense. This minimizes the privacy of the park.
  - This could limit women from doing different activities freely.
- There is a waste of space not yet used effectively. The cafeteria and the gym are not yet opened.
  - This decreases the number of women accessing and participating in the park.



- The air movement is not sufficient in the park. The administration building is to the east, preventing air flow.
  - This could be improved by adding water fans that moderate the park's microclimate.
- The presence of male security guards outside the park female and security guards inside the park.
  - This increases the level of comfort.
- There is not enough space for community events in the park.
  - This will minimize the ability for female organizations to participate in the park.

### 4.1.3.1.1e Behavioral map



Figure 39: Behavioral mapping of Luqta park layer 1



Figure 40: Behavioral mapping of Luqta park layer 2

### 4.1.3.4.3 EXAMPLE ONE OF NEIGHBORHOOD PARK: NUAIIJA PARK

#### 4.1.3.4.3a General information

The location of the park is in zone 44, Nuaija district (Figure 41). The area of the park is about 3357m<sup>2</sup>. The park is surrounded by residential plots. The front side of the park faces houses. The right half of it faces a house and the other half faces empty land. The left side faces houses and the back side faces empty land. The park is next to Bilal Bin Rabah and Musaineer Streets. The height of the adjacent houses as stated by MME regulations is G+1+P. The park has two entrances. The main entrance is to north and faces houses. The secondary entrance is oriented to the east facing empty land.

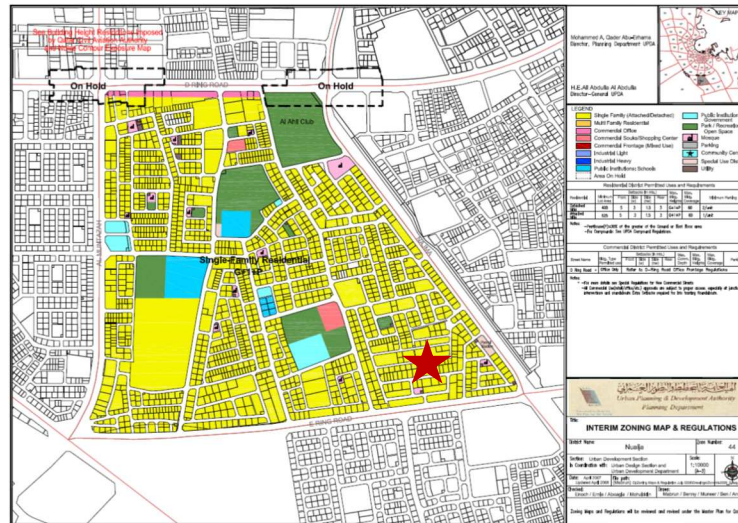


Figure 41: Land use map of zone 44 from MME; the star icon is the park's location

There are 16 benches in the park. All the benches are wooden and the same shape. There are 12 car parking spots available in the park. There are also two columns of sun sensors that are used for phone chargers.

The main activities done by the users are sitting, walking, playing, talking on their phones, chatting, and eating /drinking. The users are a mix of different nationalities, ages, genders, and ethnicities. About 50 users usually occupy the park. The dominant users are women. Women participate in the park as singles (25-30 years), mothers (25-45 year), and maids (30-45 years). Men are not frequent users of the park. Men appear only as fathers (30-40 years). Children are the third type of users, ranging from 2-8 years old.

#### 4.1.3.4.3b Photos and Comments

Table 34: Photos with comments in Nuaija park

Photo

Comments



Worker sits on a bench.



Children play in the children's playing area while their mother walks.



A family sits on a bench and chat.

#### **4.1.3.4.3c Users and activities**

- An Arabic mother (age 35) was walking on the pathway and at the same time watching her children play in the playing area. The pathway has a circular shape and surrounds the park.
- A Qatari single woman (age 25) was walking and listening to music; she only spent a half hour and then left.
- Arabic parents were playing with their children.
- Other parents were using their smartphones while their children were playing.
- There were two sisters (age 8-10) moving around and playing in different places in the park.
- There were two maids taking care of children while the children were playing.
- After 8:30 PM during the week, the park started to become empty. Only maids with children between the ages of 2-5 years were present in the park. Also, a Qatari man (age 35) entered the park to walk.

#### **4.1.3.4.3d Park assessment**

- The location of the park is easy to reach by car or by foot. Most of the users come on foot.
- The pedestrian circulation around the park needs more modification.
  - This will increase accessibility for women, especially for mothers with children in trolleys.

- The arrangement of benches is good. The bench types should be varied.
  - This will help make it possible for groups to sit together.
- The walking path material could be changed to rubber to make walking smoother.
  - Many women were seen in the park walking; changing the material will increase and enhance walkability in the park.



### 4.1.3.1.1e Behavioral map

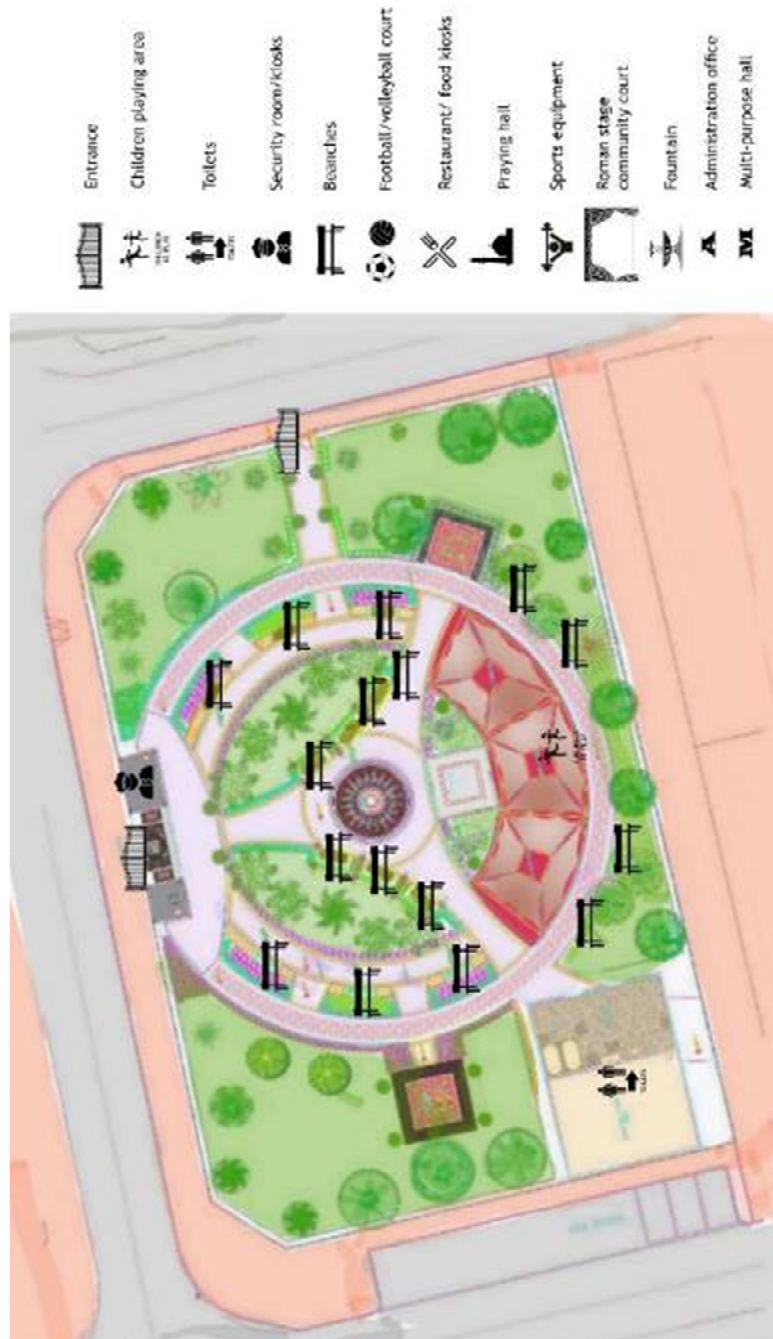


Figure 42: Behavioral mapping of Nuaija park layer 1



Figure 43: Behavioral mapping of Nuaija park layer 2

#### 4.1.3.4.4 EXAMPLE TWO OF NEIGHBORHOOD PARK: AL-WAAB PARK

##### 4.1.3.4.4a General information

The location of the park is in zone 55, Al Waab (Figure 44). The area of the park is 2614m<sup>2</sup>. The park is near Salwa Road and Al Bustan Street. The park is surrounded by residential plots. The park is in the middle of three gated compounds; only the right side of the park is bordered by a villa owned by a Qatari family. The height of the adjacent houses as stated by MME regulations is G+1+P. The park has two entrances. The main entrance's orientation is to the northwest, facing a gated compound. The secondary entrance is oriented to the west, also facing a gated compound.

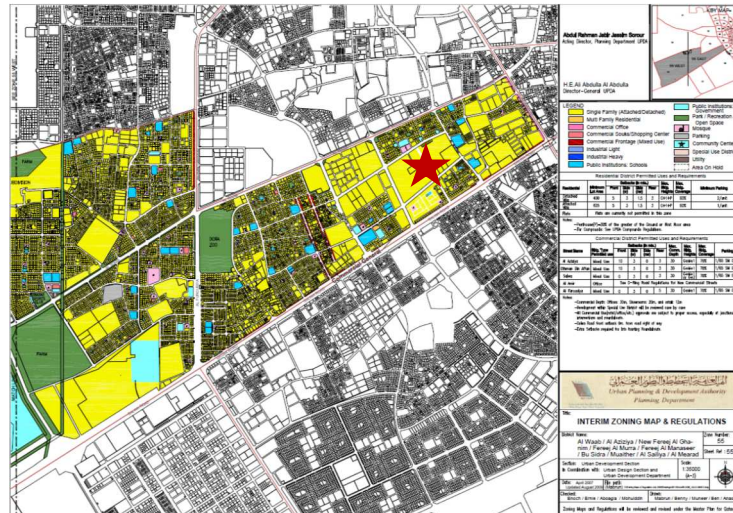


Figure 44: Land use of zone 55 from MME; the star icon is the park's location

There are seven benches in the park. All the benches are wooden and in the same shape. The children's area is shaded and the floor material is rubber.

The court had one entrance, which could only be accessed from inside the park. The court is on the west side of the park because the Qatari owner of the villa refuses to have it next to his home.

The main activities done by the users are sitting, playing, talking on their phones, gathering, and eating/drinking. Most of the users are western, but there is a small group of Arabs. The park is usually occupied by 50 users. The dominant users are women. Women participated in the park as mothers (30-40 years) and maids (30-45 years). Men are not frequent users of the park. The men present were all fathers (30-40 years). Children are the third type of users (2-7 years). Some older boys (10-12 age) were also present.

#### 4.1.3.4.4b Photos and Comments

Table 35: Photos with comments in Al waab park (A).

Photo

Comments



Two mothers are chatting. One of them is standing, while the other is sitting at the edge of a fountain.



A father is playing with his child.



Children are playing football on the football field.

Table 36: Photos with comments in Al waab park (B).

Photo

Comments



Parents are playing with their children.



A family of mostly women is sitting in the grass.



A mother is sitting by the shading device column in the children's area watching her children.

#### ***4.1.3.4.4c Users and Activities***

- A mother is sitting watching her children play.
- A father is sitting on a bench watching his children play in the playing area.
- An old western couple is sitting and chatting on a bench near the main entrance.
- A group of mothers is sitting and chatting by the fountain. The fountain does not operate and is empty.
- Boys (10-12 years) are playing on the football field with their parents' assistance.
- A group of western couples and parents are sitting in the grass and gathering.
- Arabic parents are sitting in the grass watching their children in the playing area.
- Qatari boys on their bicycles are playing outside the park next to the park's entrance.
- A maid is taking care of children in the playing area.
- A group of maids are chatting and watching children play in the park.

#### **4.1.3.4d Park assessment**

- The location of the park is very efficient because it is surrounded by gated compounds. These compounds don't have recreational spaces.
  - By this, women will be able to access the park easily from their homes.
- There is no car parking plot, yet there is no need for it, since most of the users live around the area.
  - This decreases the ability to access the park if not living near it. This limits the access of strangers, and women will feel more comfortable.
- The football field's location was implemented with respect to the request of the Qatari family living next to the park.
  - This will create a sense of respect and improve community engagement in accessing the park.
- The football field size is relatively small and the entrance is only from inside the park. This will control and limit users entering the field.
  - This will not provide older teenagers (15-18 years) with the possibility of entering the park. Women will feel more comfortable and safe, and children will play comfortably.
- Small benches need to be provided within the playing area.
  - As a result, women will feel more comfortable.



- There are not enough benches, and they are not distributed fairly in the park.
  - More benches are needed, fixed and not fixed.
- The pathways are not designed to encourage walking.
  - Improving and changing the pathway material will increase walkability for women in the park.

### 4.1.3.1.1e Behavioral map

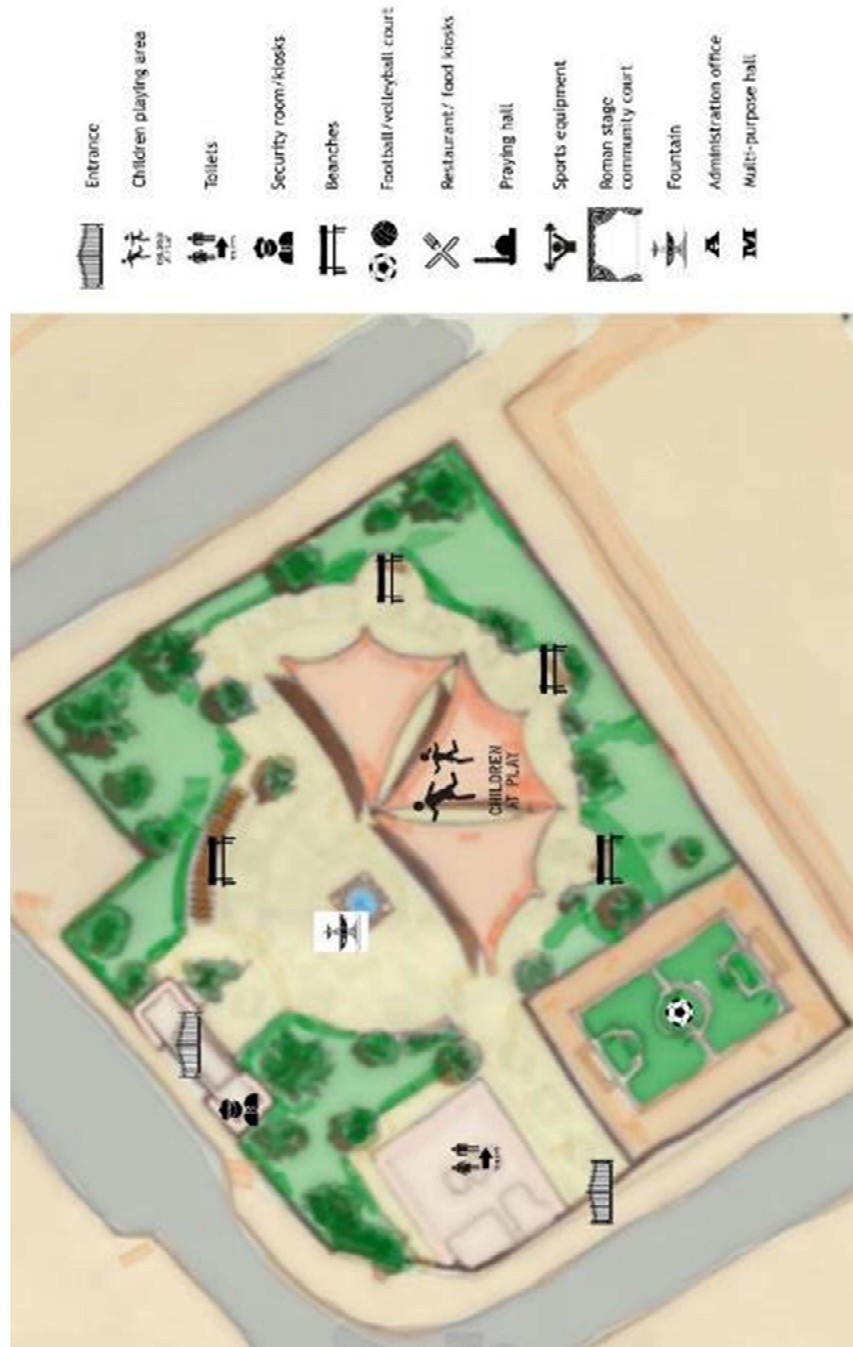


Figure 45: Behavioral mapping of AL Waab park layer 1

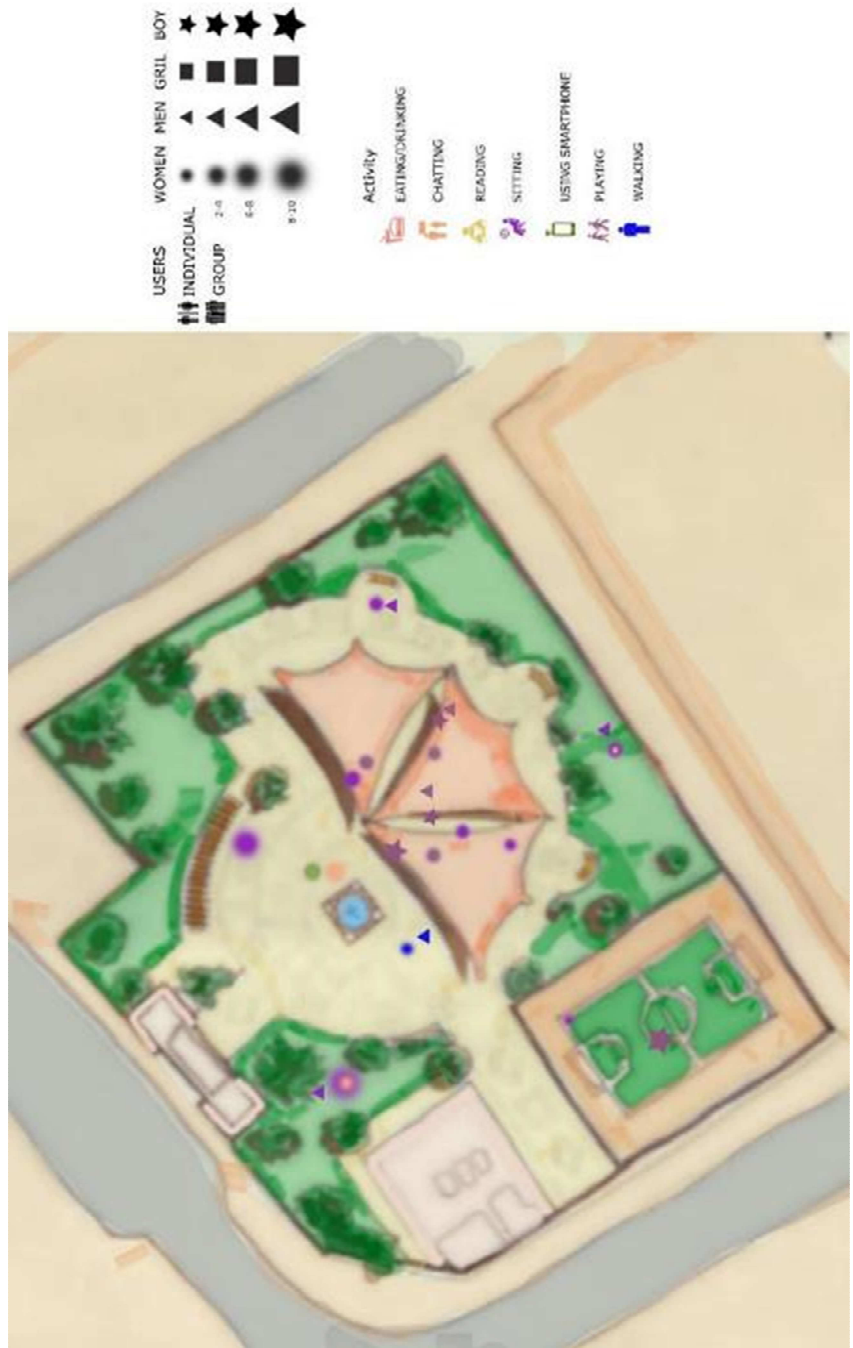


Figure 46: Behavioral mapping of AL Waab park layer 2

## 4.2 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In general, from the observations, the different provided activities and the presence of security guards in public parks enhance women's accessibility and participation in the parks. However, in some parks, there are extra spaces that are not used efficiently, and other parks need more facilities. In some parks, the pathways are not designed for walking. Signage systems are not effective in most of the parks. The number of benches, their shapes, and how they are distributed in the parks are not very sufficient. To improve this, a clear understanding of the types of users and how they use the park is needed. By this, public parks would be for all users, and the differences would be adapted and respected as Prof. Ali believes (Abd-Alraouf, 2016).

In Dafna (old Sheraton) Park, many different users access the park, but some elements need to be added to enhance, increase, and support diversity. The cafeteria in Dafna (old Sheraton) Park is not affordable to all users compared to the one in Dahl Alhamam Park. Moreover, in the park, there is lack of or limited amenities such as toilets that affect the park's accessibility and user participation.

In neighborhood parks, the users are mostly neighbors who live in the same area. This could provide a clear understanding of the different nationalities, cultures, and ethnicities living in the different neighborhoods in Doha. This, of course, should be respected in the design process. It was obvious and clear from observation that the park located in Rayyan was mostly visited by Arabs. This

could be because Qataris live in Rayyan and prefer to live next to other Arabs.

On the other hand, in AL Waab Park, most of the users are western. The AL Waab zone was planned to accommodate expats. However, in AL Waab Park, a Qatari neighbor suggested having the football field next to the gated compound and not next to his house.

The allocation of some activities near each other could decrease the use of both activities, as in Dahl AL Hamam, where there is a volleyball court next to the children's playing area, limiting the use of both. In another case, placing the football field next to the park could increase the number of users who use the park. If both share the same main entrance, however, this could decrease women's accessibility because of the men's dominant presence next to the main entrance, as is the case in Oniza Park.

In general, women go to public parks with at least one partner or friend or with their husbands, children, or family. Rarely, a woman could be seen alone in the parks unless it was during the day; after dark, most women were seen in groups. This is evident from both the questionnaire and observation. 126 of the participants said no when they had been asked if they go to public parks alone and only 86 said yes.

Walking is the most common activity that women prefer to do in public parks, as 171 participations chose it in the questionnaire. The pathway design, material, and maintenance are factors that enhance this activity. Also, lighting and visual access have a huge impact on women's ability to walk in public parks. For example, in Duhl Al Hmam Park, the pathway needs immediate maintenance

in some spots. The lighting & pathway condition in Dafna (old Sheraton) Park are not ideal either. In the new Sheraton park, especially in the five-sensory zone, visual access is limited.

Sitting/hanging out/relaxing and eating/drinking are also women prefer to do in public parks. These types of activities require adequate space for sitting, such as benches, shading devices/trees, and grass. In the new Sheraton Park, there are not enough shading devices or trees, and the number of benches is not appropriate. This is different to Oniza Park, where different types of shaded benches are distributed in the park. In Doha, movements in public parks is considered a huge ordeal because families, friends, and couples move, walk and sit together. The type of benches provided in public parks does not consider that.

From the questionnaire, benches, good lighting, and security guards are the main elements that enhance women's accessibility in public parks. In all the observed neighborhood parks, security guards, lighting, and benches were available. The western residents prefer to play with their children, which was very clear from observation in Al Waab Park. Therefore, benches are needed in the children's area so parents can sit and be close to their children. Parents were seen sitting on the floor watching their children. Low lighting and insufficiently available security guards are both elements that decrease women's accessibility to public parks as seen in the questionnaire. From observations, these two elements are missing and need to be improved in Dafna (old Sheraton) Park.

In Luqta Park, which was designed only for women and children, there is a waste of spaces. The cafeteria and the gym are still not open. The fence doesn't

offer full privacy for the users. Therefore, Luqta Park doesn't have any extra features that make this park only for women, besides the lack of men. Otherwise, this park, in terms of activities and facilities available, is like any other public park.

Adding elements such as wi-fi and sports equipment improves women's access and participation in public parks, though women's use of sports equipment is limited. This could be because there are more men using them.

Overall, women's access, participation, and presence in public spaces has been developed and affected by the huge amount of migration that Qatar has witnessed. This development could be considered as a positive movement, especially when compared to the case of Dubai, as Prof. Ali believed (Abd-Alraouf, 2016). To sum up, women's access and participation in public parks in Doha is fair enough, but some improvements in some features are needed to increase women's presence in public parks.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

This research used mainly three types of data collection: a questionnaire, interviews, and observations. The main purpose of doing the questionnaire was to try to understand women's opinions and their actual behavior in public parks. Moreover, the questionnaire was in both Arabic and English in order to reach a good number of different participants. The interviews targeted different specialists and expats. Interviews were conducted with academics, action makers, and architects, which helped me gain a full understanding of different aspects of public park design and the process, construction, and elements

affecting them. The observation of different public parks provided a clear and full understanding of how women access and practice on them.

The outcomes from the questionnaire were presented in charts that summarized the results. The questionnaire tried to answer the question, “Do women in Doha have full/ fair access to public parks?” The behavior maps and photos reflected the outcomes of the observation. I then tried to come up with a conclusion to the questions “How do women use public parks?” and “Do women in Doha need segregated parks?” The interviews also tried to solve these questions, as well as the question “What are the consequences of multiculturalism on women access to public parks?”

To sum up, women’s presence in public parks in Doha is fair enough. Women of different ages, cultures, nationalities, and ethnicities are accessing and participating in public parks fairly. Their presence could be affected by factors such as time of day and purpose of visit. These factors are not only affecting women in Doha, but also women in different countries and cultures as stated in the literature review.

However, there are many elements that also have a big influence on women’s access and participation in public parks. These elements were identified from the literature review, questionnaire, interviews, and observations. These elements are lighting, security guards, trees, pathway material, and amenities. Some of them are in good condition; others need more attention and maintenance.



By improving these elements in public parks, women's access and participation in public parks will be increase. In terms of having segregated parks only for women, this could serve certain and specific group types. However, the huge immigration has influenced women's presence in public parks in a positive manner. Now, women can be seen in different public parks doing different activities.

## 5 CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Recommendations and implications

From what was analyzed in the previous chapter, women's access and participation in public parks in Doha is fair enough. Yet, there is a need for more adjustments and modifications in the design process or in the action process. To enhance and improve women's accessibility and participation in public parks, I have a set of recommendations and suggestions for improving the situation.

— The public park department should:

- Improve the conditions of existing parks in terms of lighting, physical & visual access, pathway material, amenities, signage systems, and benches.
- Create a database, online park website, or app that provides information about the current and future public parks in Doha. It should state their locations, activities, amenities, plantations, and events. By this, users will be aware of:
  - How to reach the park nearest to them.
  - The different types of plantation, trees, and flora available in the park.
  - Be more respectful about the park.
- Create an online park rating/review system in the apps and through social media.

By this, users will be able to compare different parks and decide on which park to go to. This will improve the work of the public parks department and determine which park needs maintenance and development.

— Improve public awareness about public parks by:

- Using newspapers and social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat) to:
  - Encourage users to use public parks
  - Announce community events held in public parks.

This will improve the sense of care between users and make them keep, improve, and enhance their parks.

— Engage community organizations to create events in the public parks:

- Schools and community organizations could organize and collaborate with the park's administration to clean the park or plant saplings.
- Involve women's communities and associations in the management of the parks, particularly neighborhood parks.

By creating community events in public parks, more people will use the public parks, especially if these events involve and engage children. By this, families and mothers will be motivated to come and participate. Also, events and activities that enhance women's participation in public parks such as bazaars and weekly markets are needed. Community organizations' involvement in public parks will make public parks more accessible, especially for women.

- This will lead to call for spaces and areas in public parks to host these events.

— Urban planners, architects, and designers should work and collaborate with different departments, organizations, local women’s associations, and ministries, as well as with the public. This collaboration will lead to improvements and developments in women’s access and participation in public parks.

- Direct observations and communication with the public in current parks will give them ideas about what users need especially women.
- The collaboration with the different departments, ministries, and organizations will save time, lower budgets, and share information and knowledge among different entities. This will help planners easily identify the challenges that they face and come up with solutions.
- This will create good environments to be enjoyed by the public and, of course, women.

— From my observations, there were some features or elements that needed to be improved. These elements were plantation, benches, lighting, signage systems, and amenities.

- Plantation can create open spaces where women have a sense of security while alone or with children.

- More protected environments that can be used by families like the family spaces in the restaurant.
- Spaces specially dedicated to botanical gardens with educational purposes where mothers can show children the value of growing plants, etc. More educational spaces could be dedicated to the protection of the environment.
- Benches need to be designed to accommodate huge movements by families, friends, and couples. Therefore, a variety of benches—in terms of shape, color, material, and location—is important. Shaded benches are also needed.
  - For example, in the children’s playing area, wavy colorful benches are stable for both children and their parents.
  - In other areas, benches that allow for a group of users to sit on them facing each other are needed.
- Signage systems in parks are very bad.
  - Immediate enhancement is needed, especially in the case of Dafna (old Sheraton) Park and Dahl Al- Hamam Park. Their locations need to be studied and signs should be inserted in very clear and accessible locations.
- Lighting is considered a very important feature that could totally prevent women from accessing and participating in public parks. Lighting is linked to safety and comfort for women.

- Consequently, lighting needs to be improved by implementing different types of modes such as spot, column, target, and direct lighting.
    - Moreover, the distribution of lighting should be done in a systematic way to ensure that no part of the park is dark.
  - The distribution and location of amenities should be near and reachable from the most usable spaces in the park. In addition, they should be clearly marked by signage, especially for the benefit of mothers and children.
  - Provide affordable cafeterias and kiosks that fulfill the needs of all different users.
  - Create kiosks for vendors to sell their products without annoying families and women in the park.
- Adding other elements to the parks could enhance women’s accessibility and participation in parks. As stated in the literature review, public art and monuments will enhance women’s presence in public parks.
- Public art is considered to be a contemporary feature used to add value to space. It also could be used as a significant element to lead and define the space. For women, defining or describing a space will be easier with a significant element such as public art. Therefore, the presence of public art in public parks will make parks more accessible to women.

- Living walls are also contemporary features that are used in public spaces such as parks. The living wall is a vertical green wall. It could be part of a wall or a free-standing wall. It can be used to improve air quality and as sound barriers. It could be used to create semi-private areas within parks to be used by women or families. As in the case of the sports equipment area, the allocation of living walls around them will increase women's use of sports equipment.

### ***5.1.1 Conceptual implementation in Dafna (old Sheraton) park***

Table (18) summarize the positive and negative features in all the observed parks. This help to come up with conceptual initial proposal for Dafna (old Sheraton) park with the use of the recommendations (Figure 47). The elements that could be added to the park to make it more accessible for women are:

- electronic signage in different and clear spaces
- public art defines the car parking entrance to the park
- living walls around sport equipment to create semi-private space
- presence of security-guard will create the feeling and sense of comfort
- kiosks that serve different economic backgrounds and minimize the presence of seller men
- amenities as toilets near active spaces in the park

Table 37: Positive and negative features in the observed parks (A).

Park	Positive features	Negative features
DAFNA (OLD SHERATON)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Water feature (sea)</li> <li>○ Free Wi-Fi</li> <li>○ Seats within children area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Signage location</li> <li>○ Not enough amenities</li> <li>○ Lighting</li> <li>○ Seller men presence</li> <li>○ Security-guard are not presented</li> </ul>
NEW SHERATON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Signage</li> <li>○ Security-guard</li> <li>○ Water features</li> <li>○ Physical access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Limited visual access.</li> <li>○ Shading devices &amp; tress</li> <li>○ Some areas under maintenance</li> <li>○ Available number of benches</li> </ul>
DAHL AL-HMAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Security-guard</li> <li>○ Different activities, spaces, and amenities</li> <li>○ Free Wi-Fi</li> <li>○ Different types of benches</li> <li>○ Community events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Signage location</li> <li>○ Lighting</li> <li>○ Pathway's material &amp; condition</li> </ul>
ONIZA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Different types of benches</li> <li>○ Security-guard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pathway's material</li> <li>○ The entrance of the football courts is from the park</li> </ul>



Table 38: Positive and negative features in the observed parks (B).

Park	Positive features	Negative features
RAYYAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Park location next to a mosque</li> <li>○ Security-guard</li> <li>○ Good lighting</li> <li>○ Physical access</li> <li>○ Visual access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Benches shape and disruption</li> <li>○ Pathway's material</li> </ul>
LUQTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Security-guard</li> <li>○ Good lighting</li> <li>○ Physical access</li> <li>○ Visual access</li> <li>○ Different amenities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Privacy</li> <li>○ Wasted Spaces</li> <li>○ Building's location</li> </ul>
NUAIJA FAMILY SOUTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Security-guard</li> <li>○ Good lighting</li> <li>○ Physical access</li> <li>○ Visual access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pathway's material</li> <li>○ No football/volleyball court</li> <li>○ Park size compared to number of users</li> </ul>
ALWAAB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Security-guard</li> <li>○ Good lighting</li> <li>○ Physical access</li> <li>○ Visual access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pathway's material</li> <li>○ Benches shape and disruption</li> </ul>

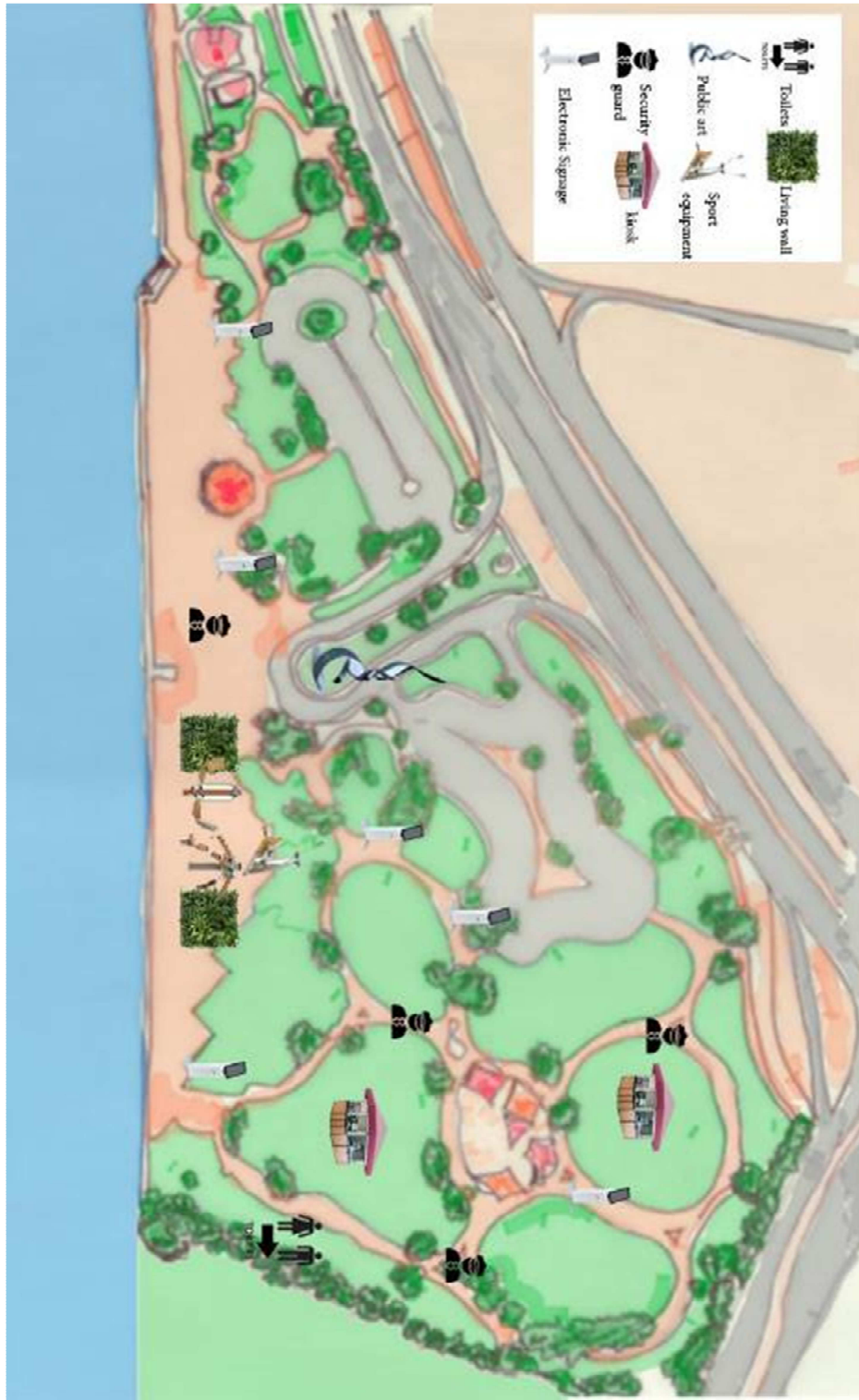


Figure 47: conceptual initial proposal for Dafna (old Sheraton)

## **5.2 Research Limitations and Delimitations**

There was general difficulty in getting information from planning institutions where confidentiality was confused with secrets. This creates reduced a sense of transparency for the public in regards to the management of the public realm. The research limitations mainly involved getting site plans to be used in the process of making the behavior maps by the public parks department.

The public parks department did not have all park files because some of the parks were old and others had still not submitted by the contractor companies even if the parks had been constructed. Because of that, the behavioral maps of the Dafna (old Sheraton), New Sheraton, Dahl AL Hmam, Oniza, Rayyan, and AL Waab Parks were created via Google Earth images.

In Luqta Park, photos were taken only when the park was empty. Photos didn't show how users use the park because the park rules provided privacy for the users.

New Sheraton Park didn't have a grand opening, so there are fewer people aware of it compared to other parks. This limited the study in terms of assessing the different parts of the park. In the neighborhood parks, users recognized that the researcher was a new visitor; this also influenced the researcher, making her feel welcome.

### **5.3 Suggestions for Future Research**

This research focused only on women's access and participation in public parks. Future research could focus on women's use of public spaces in Doha. The research may focus on different spaces such as indoor or outdoor, separately or together. The target could be shopping malls, plazas, squares, souks, or bazaars. This could provide a full understanding of women's participation in public spaces in Doha.

Also, this research did not touch on the issue of women's sports. This is a complex cultural issue because women need special spaces to perform different exercises freely because some activities require specific types of clothes and movements. Still, it is not culturally or socially accepted for women to practice some of these activities in public; thus, this could be a specific thesis.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

Women's presence in public spaces has been affected around the world by many factors. Women, as opposed to men, were mainly supposed to stay in private spaces. Because of this, women have faced many challenges when seen in public spaces. Therefore, this research focuses on examining women's access and participation in public parks in Doha to determine whether women in Doha have full access to public parks or not. Moreover, it defines factors and features that affect women's accessibility and participation in public parks by observing different parks in Doha. This helps in defining recommendations that will make public parks accessible to all citizens, especially women.

Throughout history, women had many limitations that decreased their ability to access and participate freely in public parks. This has been changed and developed by women's ability to access education, the workforce, and other entities. In Qatar, the discovery of oil and the resulting huge migration has affected urban planning, especially in Doha. Qataris have been pushed to the city's boundaries away from Doha's center. Also, being the host of World Cup 2022 increased immigration to Doha. Prof. Ali believed that the flow of migration gave the idea of women in public parks a positive image (Abd-Alraouf, 2016).

The process of selecting land to be a park, the design process, the construction, and the follow-up maintenance and development are the responsibility of different entities in the Ministry of Municipalities and Environment (MME). The urban planning department in Qatar selects the land once they have a clear vision about recreation/open space planning. The recreation/open space

is categorized into six levels: national, metropolitan, town, district, local, and neighborhood. Parks of different levels target different users and provide different activities and facilities. After the urban planning department selects the land, the public parks department designs and constructs the park in collaboration with different design and construction companies. The public parks department submits the park to the parks department in each municipality to follow up with maintenance and development.

A literature review was conducted with the aim to examine and study women's access and participation in public parks in Doha. This literature review studied many different aspects that helped in formulating the research methodology and outcomes. The definition of public spaces was identified and discussed in terms of fair and full access to all users. Multiculturalism and its consequences in Doha's urbanism were stated in the literature review. This helped in understanding who lived where and how this transferred to the use of public parks within neighborhoods. Moreover, the literature review discussed women in public spaces and what factors, features, and aspects influenced their presence in public spaces based on different studies. The last topic discussed in the literature review was about public parks. In this part, the definition, history, and benefits of public parks were stated, as well as users' genders and ages.

The literature review also stated the most effective methods for data collection for this type of research. As stated in the literature review, the observations, interviews, and questionnaire were the most effective data collection tools for this study. These tools helped in answering the main research

questions. The literature review defined the variables that were used in the questionnaire to examine women's access and use of public parks in Doha. The questionnaire allowed me to make a conclusion about what factors limited women's accessibility and participation in public parks. Also, define the features that enhance and improve women presence in public parks.

Concentrating on these features and seeing their effects on women's access to public parks also helped during the observation phase. Eight parks were observed from different levels: national, town, district, local, and neighborhood levels. The selection of the neighborhood parks was also influenced by the literature review, specifically the part that discussed urban development in Doha. The focus of the observations was the facilities and amenities that the parks had and the activities that users participated in. The parks were observed several times on different week and weekend days.

The interviews focused on people from the field: urban planners, action makers, architects, designers, and academics. The outcomes of the interviews helped in better understanding the process and the collaboration among different entities and organizations that affect public park design. Also, it helped in understanding, in general, the movement and development of urban planning in Doha. Moreover, it helped in understanding the challenges that architects and designers face in their design processes. All this data is reflected in charts, behavioral maps, and photos that show how women access and participate in public parks.

From all the gathered data and information, women's access and

participation in public parks in Doha is fair enough, though some features need enhancement and improvement. The research comes up with recommendations that will help in improving and enhancing women's presence in public parks in Doha.

The recommendations could be summarized in an online database to enhance public awareness about parks. Also, engage community organizations. Moreover, improve and develop features in the existing parks and add elements such as public art and living walls. All of that should lead to the development of the current existing parks. Moreover, all of that should be considered from the early design stages of parks. Continuous monitoring and examining of parks' situations after the design and construction process should also happen. By considering all of that, the parks department will ensure full and fair access and participation for women in public parks.



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## **APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FROM**

### **"Questionnaire "**

#### **Introduction:**




The definition of public spaces promotes a free access to all citizens. Unlike men, women had limitations regarding their feeling unsafe in accessing and being in public spaces. Women had many concerns about feeling free to go out at any time. This reduces rather than enhances women's access to public space. Thus, public spaces themselves become gendered. Women may find it difficult to participate in public spaces. Many factors are limiting women from accessing public spaces in any time. This research is aiming to find and define the factors that affect women access to public spaces in Doha. Moreover, try to know the level of access to public spaces that women had in Doha. The questionnaire had been developed to see if women had full access to public-spaces in Qatar. It had been designed to understand the women feeling regarding the access to public spaces.










#### **Aim:**

I am a student from Urban Design and planning of Qatar University. I am doing a thesis about Women access to public spaces in Doha. My main focus is on parks. I would like to ask you some questions about user satisfaction and needs on these spaces beside assess the design of these spaces. Your participation is voluntary and your data are anonymous and confidential. This information will be very useful in understanding what makes a successful open space.

Part 1- Personal Particulars:						
1	Are you?	Studying	Working	A house wife		others
1						
1	Education level?	Secondary school	Diploma degree		Bachelor degree	Graduate degree
2						
1	What is your nationality?		Qatari	Arab	Others please specify?	
3						
1	How old are you?	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 and more
4						
1	Do you drive?		Yes		No	
5						
1	Do you have children?		Yes		No	
6						
Part 2- Commuting details:						
2	Do you feel more safe in public spaces at...?				Day	Night
1						
2	How often do you go to public spaces?			Everyday	Weekly	Monthly
2						

2 . 3	Until what time do you stay there if you are alone or with a friend at night?	7-8P M	8-9P M	9-10 P M	10 -11PM	11PM-12AM	More than that
2 . 4	Until what time do you stay in the public spaces if you are with a family at night?	7-8PM	8-9PM	9-10PM	10 -11PM	11P M- 12A M	More than that
2 . 5	Do you go to public spaces by yourself?	Yes			No	Please specify with whom.....	
2 . 6	Are you taking your homemade to take-care of your children?	Yes			No		
2 . 7	Do you go to public spaces only for specific purpose as to meet a friend, family gathering, do sports?	Yes			No		
2 . 8	What activities do you typically have in these spaces? [Check all that apply]						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Walking through <input type="checkbox"/> Sitting/Hanging out/Relaxing <input type="checkbox"/> Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Working			<input type="checkbox"/> Talking on the phone <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting with family or friends <input type="checkbox"/> Playing with or watching children <input type="checkbox"/> Attending community events			

	<input type="radio"/> Using computer	<input type="radio"/> Eating/drinking
<b>Part 3- Identity and sense of place:</b>		
3 . 1	What elements could be added/ removed to public spaces to increase accessibility?	
	<b>Added</b>	<b>Removed</b>
	<input type="radio"/> Good Lighting <input type="radio"/> Trees <input type="radio"/> Security-guard <input type="radio"/> More people <input type="radio"/> Less People <input type="radio"/> Fences <input type="radio"/> Gates <input type="radio"/> Woods & bushes	<input type="radio"/> Good Lighting <input type="radio"/> Trees <input type="radio"/> Security-guard <input type="radio"/> More people <input type="radio"/> Less People <input type="radio"/> Fences <input type="radio"/> Gates <input type="radio"/> Woods & bushes
3 . 2	Chose from these photos what make it more accessible park for you?	
		
		
	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B
		<input type="radio"/> C

3	Where you prefer to sit.....?		
3			
	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
3	What activities do you prefer to do ? Please select all applicable		
4			
	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C
			
	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> E	<input type="radio"/> F

## استبيان

### المقدمة

تعريف الأماكن العامة يعزز حرية الوصول إلى جميع المواطنين. على عكس الرجال فإن النساء لديها القيود المتعلقة بشعورهم غير آمنة في الوصول والتواجد في الأماكن العامة. للمرأة العديد من المخاوف حول الشعور تتردد في الخروج في أي وقت. وهذا يقلل بدلا من يعزز وصول المرأة إلى الأماكن العامة. قد تجد المرأة صعوبة في المشاركة في الأماكن العامة. العديد من العوامل التي تحد المرأة من الوصول إلى الأماكن العامة في أي وقت. هذا البحث يهدف إلى إيجاد وتحديد العوامل التي تؤثر على المرأة الوصول إلى الأماكن العامة في الدوحة. وعلاوة على ذلك، في محاولة لمعرفة مستوى الوصول إلى الأماكن العامة للمرأة في الدوحة. وقد وضعت الاستبيان لمعرفة ما إذا كان للمرأة حق الوصول الكامل إلى مساحات عامة في الدوحة. قد تم تصميمه لفهم شعور المرأة فيما يتعلق بالوصول إلى الأماكن العامة.

### الهدف

أنا طالبة ماجستير من قسم التصميم الحضري والتخطيط من جامعة قطر. أنا أعمل في بحث حول دخول و وصول المرأة إلى الأماكن العامة في الدوحة. تركيزي الرئيسي الحقائق العامة . أود أن أطرح عليك بعض الأسئلة حول مدى رضا المستخدمين واحتياجاتهم على هذه المساحات إلى جانب تقييم تصميم هذه المساحات. مشاركتكم طوعية والبيانات مجهولة وسرية. سوف تكون هذه المعلومات مفيدة جدا في فهم ما يجعل الأماكن العامة ناجحة.










### الاسئلة:

I . معلومات شخصية				
هل انت ؟...	طالبة	موظفة	ربة منزل	أخرى
المستوى	تعليم ثانوي	دبلوم	بكالوريوس	دراسات عليا
وى				
التعلي				
مي				

أخرى...؟ الرجاء التحديد.....					قطرية		ما هي جنسيتك؟					
55 فأكثر		55-45		44-35		34-25		24-15		كم عمرك؟		
لا					نعم		هل تقودين؟					
لا					نعم		هل لديك أطفال؟					
لا					نعم		هل لديك خادمة؟					
2. بيانات تفصيلية												
الليل					النهار		هل تشعرين بالراحة أكثر في الحداثق؟					
شهريا			اسبوعيا		يوميا		كم مرة تذهبين إلى الحداثق؟					
اكتر من 12 ص		11م-12ص		11-10م		10-9م		9-8م		7		إلى اي وقت تبقيين في الحداثق لوحدك في الليل؟
اكتر من 12 ص		11م-12ص		11-10م		10-9م		9-8م		7		إلى اي وقت تبقيين في الحداثق مع اهلك أو اصدقائك في الليل؟



					8	
					م	
هل تذهبن إلى الحدائق العامة لوحدهن؟				نعم	لا الرجاء التحديد مع من؟.....	
هل تأخذين معك الخادمة للعناية بأطفالك؟				نعم	لا	
هل تذهبن إلى الحدائق العامة فقط لهدف معين كلقاء أصدقائك، لتجمع عائلتك،				نعم	لا	
لتمارين الرياضية..؟						
ما هي الأنشطة التي تقومين ببيها في الحدائق العامة؟						
المشي			العمل			
الجلوس			استخدام الحاسب الشخصي			
القراءة			التحدث بالهاتف			
المشاركة في فعاليات عامة			لقاء العائلة و الاصدقاء			
الاكل / الشرب			اللعب مع أو مشاهدة الاطفال			
3. الاحساس بالمكان و الهوية						
ما هي العناصر التي يمكن إضافتها أو الاستغناء عنها إلى الحدائق العامة لتزيد من فرصة دخولك للحدائق العامة						
إضافة			استغناء			
الاضاءة الجيدة			الاضاءة الجيدة			
الاشجار			الاشجار			
الحراس			الحراس			
عدد كبير من الناس			عدد كبير من الناس			
عدد أقل من الناس			عدد أقل من الناس			
السور			السور			
البوابات			البوابات			
شجيرات			شجيرات			
اختاري من هذه الصور أكثر ما تشعرين انه مناسب لك كمدخل للحديقة؟						

		
ج ○	ب ○	أ ○
أختاري المكان الذي تفضلين الجلوس به؟		
		
ج ○	ب ○	أ ○
أختاري من الصور أكثر ما تفضلين فعله في الحدائق		
		
ج ○	ب ○	أ ○

		
<p>و ○</p>	<p>ه ○</p>	<p>د ○</p>

## Appendix B: QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

<b>Q1.1: Are you:</b>	
housewife	50
others	5
Student	30
Working	130
<b>Q1.2: Education level</b>	
Secondary school	35
Bachelor degree	130
Diploma degree	15
Graduate degree	35
<b>Q1.3: What is your nationality?</b>	
Qatari	40
Arab	170
Others	5
<b>Q1.4: How old are you?</b>	
18-24	56
25-34	86
35-44	48
45-54	20
55 and more	5
<b>Q1.5: Are You...?</b>	
Married	124
Single	91
<b>Q1.6: Do you drive?</b>	
No	95

Yes	120
<b>Q1.7: Do you have children?</b>	
No	105
Yes	110

<b>Q2.1: When do you feel more safe in public spaces at...?</b>	
Day	160
Night	55
<b>Q2.2: How often do you go to public spaces?</b>	
Everyday	17
Monthly	68
Weekly	130
<b>Q2.3: Until what time do you stay in public spaces if you are alone at night?</b>	
7-8PM	65
8-9PM	35
9-10PM	60
10 -11PM	40
11PM-12AM	9
More than that	6
<b>Q2.4: Until what time do you stay in the public spaces if you are with a family at night?</b>	
7-8PM	5
8-9PM	9
9-10PM	36
10 -11PM	45

11PM-12AM	75
More than that	45
<b>Q2.5: Do you go to public spaces by yourself?</b>	
No	126
Yes	89
<b>Q2.6: Do you go to public spaces only for specific purpose as to meet a friend, family gathering, do sports?</b>	
No	17
Yes	198

<b>Q3.1: What activities do you typically have in these spaces?</b>	
Attending community events	89
Eating/drinking	140
Meeting with family or friends	18
Reading	27
Talking on the phone	35
Sitting/Hanging out/Relaxing	143
Playing with or watching children	123
Working	35
Using Computer	19
Walking	171
<b>Q3.2: What elements could be added to public spaces to increase accessibility?</b>	
Good lighting	177
Trees	106
Security-guard	145

Chairs	186
signage	88
Fences	51
Gates	48
Woods	59
Low lighting	32
<b>Q3.3: What elements could be removed from public spaces to increase?</b>	
Good lighting	11
Trees	15
Security-guard	5
Chairs	4
Signage	7
Fences	38
Gates	29
Woods	21
Low lighting	149
<b>Q3.4: Chose from these photos what make it more accessible park for you?</b>	
A	48
B	112
C	55
<b>Q3.5: Where you prefer to sit?</b>	
A	16
B	102
C	97

<b>Q3.6: What activities do you prefer to do?</b>	
A	72
B	85
C	129
D	135
E	75
F	136