

STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATION AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF CITY PARK IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract.

The study sought to establish the nexus between stakeholders' participation and the environmental sustainability of city park in Nairobi county, Kenya. Stakeholders theory (1980s) and Co-management theory were selected to anchor the study. This study employed the descriptive research design. The target population was the stakeholders involved in sustaining City Park environment, as well as the users of the park. According to Nairobi County 81 stakeholders are involved in the park affairs. Purposive and judgments expert sampling technique was applied to select relevant institutions at County level. The same method was applied to select the CSOs, and private sector. Simple random sampling was used to select the users of City Park. The recommendations of Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) of 10% to get a random sample size of the users during the weekend was applied. Main data collection instruments were interview guides. 60 questionnaires were also used on the park users. The observation helped to obtain information from direct observation on the field. Numerical data analysis was done using SPSS version 20. Descriptive statistics such as mean, mode and percentages were calculated. For inferences, correlation coefficient was calculated. Conventional content analysis was used to analyze narrative data. The study findings indicated that there was a weak positive correlation between stakeholders' participation and environmental sustainability in Nairobi county Kenya.

***Key words: Stakeholders, sustainability, environmental, Green Spaces.**

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Introduction.

In Kenya Cities, for instance Kisumu, the inadequate use of green space affects the environmental quality of the city. Management of recreational green spaces for the future growth of the city are based on the regional planning and legislation (Owino, Hayombe, & Agong', 2017). Mombasa in the other hand is facing a scarcity of green part. The strategy, in Mombasa city that involves a wide range of stakeholders is more oriented towards a tree planting exercise in order to mitigate the physical vulnerability of the city to climate change (Kithiia & Lyth, 2011). In Nairobi where the population was estimated at approximately 3,188,364 people in 2009 KNBS (2013), had an approved Master Plan since 1948. However revisions made in 1973 were not considered (UN-Habitat, 2016). This implies that the urban development took place without a clear and well defined urban policy framework. (Makworo&Mireri, 2011) argued that public spaces in Nairobi have been threatened by congestion and deterioration as a result of the rapid rate of urbanization (5-7.5%). Nevertheless, a regulatory framework guiding their sustainability exists and has not been successful in addressing the constraints associated with public realm. This has led to a weak planning, inadequate management or maintenance (UN-Habitat, 2016). Similarly, the Nairobi Integrated Urban Development Master Plan that declares the vision for the Nairobi Metropolitan Region supports the overall national agenda, but lacks the details on public place in general and green spaces in particular (NIUPLAN, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

The County Government institutions are in charge of the management or maintenance though they have not yet succeeded in providing a healthy environment in relation to green public spaces. The country has legislation relating to urban green spaces planning, design and management but seems to lack adequate management plan with regard to urban green areas. Many studies have focused more on challenges related to the urbanizing phenomenon as a result of degradation of recreational areas without suggesting solutions to solve them. Moreover, studies have not explored much co-management involving many stakeholders such as the civil society, the private sector, the local community and so on. This lack of collaboration between different groups might have contributed to a weak environmental protection and sustainability of green public spaces. This study thus examined the impacts of stakeholders' influence on the environmental sustainability of City Park in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this research was to assess impacts of stakeholders' influence on the environmental sustainability of City Park in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Specific Objectives

The following specific research objectives were:

To examine the relationship between Nairobi County Government strategies and the environmental sustainability of City Park.

Stakeholders Theory

The Stakeholder theory emerged in the mid-1980s. It is an idea about that businesses should not be financial benefits oriented only, but both owner and stakeholders of the business should get satisfied too. Businesses should create value for all the actors involved, to maximise larger overall profit (Fontaine, Haarman, & Shamid, 2006). The theory is also about organisational management and business ethics that address morals and values in managing an organization. This was detailed by Edward Freeman in the book "Strategic Management, (1984)".

Freeman (1984) stated that stakeholder strategy identifies and models the groups which are stakeholders and both should describe and propose techniques by which management can give proper attention to the interests of a number of people. In short he emphasizes on what is really useful for satisfactory outcomes.

Traditional strategy scheme did not help managers to develop new strategies with regards to management and also did not help establish new possibilities. Stakeholder theory alternatively alluded that there are other category of players involved and this include a range of people as well as governmental bodies and partners, political groups (Friedman, 2006). The stakeholder view of strategy integrate both a resource-based and a market based-view and adds a socio-political level. One version of stakeholder theory attempts to define the key stakeholders of the company: the "normative theory of stakeholders" (Freeman & Evan, 1990) and examine the conditions under which managers behave towards these parties as stakeholders: "the descriptive theory of stakeholder salience" The theory is popular today. People and stakeholders are worried

about the sustainability at all level. The usefulness of this theory with respect to the current study is the fact that the approach predict a successful management through stakeholder cooperation. Cooperation implies a group of people working and moving together in the same direction. Hence cooperation in this study means the combination of efforts to achieve a common goal. Stakeholders involved in the management include the county government, the CSOs, the private Sector and also the users. A synergy among those actors is very important. Therefore the environmental sustainability of green public space could be better handle by stakeholder's participation (Carmona, Magalhaes, Blum, & Hopkins, 2004).

Government Strategies and the Environmental Sustainability of Green Public Spaces

CABE (2007) stated that government recreational spaces strategy establishes out an authority's perspective for using its public realm and the results that have to be obtained, inclusive the approaches needed to reach these goals. A best strategy should first, lean on national regional and local policy objectives. Secondly, the strategy should rely on clear analysis of the local community's present and future needs, opportunities, the design, the management and maintenance processes. The strategy should also support the preparation of the local development structure by recording the location and characteristics of existing parks and green spaces, reducing any deficiencies. Lastly, the strategy should establish a plan of activities that lay down the design, management and maintenance principles, take into account an implementation programme that includes monitoring and review procedures. CABE's opinion strategy tend to guide authorities through the process of coming up with effective's strategies based on clear assessments of stakeholders view point. The strategy should corroborate with the policies which are one of the key element for achieving an effective management of public spaces in general and green ones in particular.

Several studies that have been conducted on the creation and the sustainability of public spaces around the world are in agreement with CABE ideas. According to the City of Perth (2012) public spaces are public land that has been developed by local authorities for recreational activities or to be enjoyable by the communities. Their sustainability therefore, requires planning but also look at all the institutional and policy framework, the regulations and approaches in order to guide the planning process, the design process, the management process that contribute

to their sustainable maintenance, protection and conservation. In European countries for instance, guidelines and standards put in place regulate the planning, the implementation mechanism, the monitoring and the evaluation of all types of open public spaces (Scottish Government, 2008; Government of Canada, 2006).

UCLG (2016) recognizes the importance to have a public space policy framework as a key element to guide the strategy for local government in which public space is a priority. According to the report, local government should develop public space policy and implementation strategies to improve or replace existing policies. In addition to that, the sustainability of the policy has to be checked by frequent monitoring of social, economic and environmental benefits.

In their research work related to the environmental management of public spaces, Magalheas& Carmona (2009) indicated that all public spaces no matter how inclusive, accessible and open need some form of environmental maintenance. This refers to a complex set of activities and actions that often goes well beyond the scope of government and partners concerned. To effectively accomplish the purpose sought and satisfied the need of the users, Magalhaes and Carmona (2009) suggested four process linked to the managerial function; the first is the regulations of utilization of the spaces and conflicts between uses emphasize on the way all types of public spaces have to be used either through bylaws or social sanctions and therefore promote a responsible use of the area. The second point focused on the daily maintenance, a routine maintenance or again a periodical maintenance that include the infrastructure, equipment, amenities, cleanness and safety, paved or hard surfaces, the vegetation, the lighting, the toilets among other. The third element includes the financial and material to revitalize the areas or replace the existing old facilities.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Research design refers to a developed plan of action that includes elements of the study (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). This study will employ descriptive research design to explore the effect of stakeholder participation on the environmental sustainability of City Park in Nairobi County. This design provides exact description of events as they are, as they were or as

they will be (Oso & Onen, 2009). The design addressed the objectives of the study with regard to environmental sustainability. The design facilitated an in-depth study of the research problem. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be used to enlarge the findings of the study. Therefore the use of statistical parameters along with the thematic approach made the approach more comprehensive and useful for the success of the study.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Sample can be defined as manageable version of a larger group or populace selected for data collection to generate estimates on behalf of the whole population (MacCallum, 2016). Sampling is necessary in research because a researcher usually cannot gather data from the whole population, therefore taking a sample that represents the population saves the researcher resources in terms of time and money. Two main research populations were concerned by this study. The first group was made of Nairobi County government stakeholders and partners, as well as the site manager who implements the strategies and ensures enforcement of management standards. The second group was mainly the city park users.

The sampling design used both non-probability sampling and probability sampling techniques. The purposive sampling technique was appropriate for the study because it helped to identify relevant individual from who detailed and concise information were drawn to have a clear understanding of the strategies used to sustain the park. Purposive sampling technique was applied to designate City Park as an illustrative green public space to provide information sought with respect to the study's objectives (Kothari, 2004). City Park was purposively selected as study area because it belongs to the set of green public spaces that fall under the management of Nairobi County Government. In addition to that City Park is situated in Parkland ward which attract private investors and property developers, as a result the area is becoming more urbanized. Moreover, its location off Limuru Road, not far from Nairobi CBD and others nearby neighborhood facilitate the accessibility into the Park.

Relationship between Nairobi county government strategies and the environment sustainability of City Park.

To establish the relationship between Nairobi County Government strategies and the environmental sustainability of City Park, various statements were drawn. The statements were likert scaled on level 1 to 5, whereby 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= indifferent, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree. The results are as presented in table 4.1

Statements	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Indifferent (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)	Mean	Std Dev
The management of solid and liquid waste is well done	30.0	61.7	3.3	3.3	1.7	1.85	.777
Air free from odors	5	58.3	23.3	8.3	3.3	2.46	.857
The green vegetation cover the soil entirely	80	11.7	3.3	3.3	1.7	1.29	.795
the plants & flowers are well maintained	46.7	41.7	5.0	5.0	1.7	1.73	.899
The river is not polluted	68.3	11.7	13.3	1.7	0	1.46	.899
The toilets are adequately provided and well maintained	15	70	11.7	3.3	3.3	2.03	.637
Park amenities are adequately provided (lights, bins, benches, water taps) and are well maintained	25	68.3	3.3	1.7	1.7	1.87	.700
The overall park landscape is attractive	1.7	38.3	45.0	13.3	1.7	2.75	.773

Table 4.1: Relationship between Nairobi County Government Strategies and the Environmental Sustainability of City Park

The data in table 4.1 indicates that 61.7% (38) and 30% (18) of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that the management of solid and liquid waste is well done.

However, few of them, 3.3% (2) and 1.7% (1) remained indifferent and strongly agreed respectively with the statement. This therefore indicates that 91.7% (55) of park users knew and disagreed that the county government strategies have been successful in waste removal to facilitate a well sustained park environment. Every park space must be clean. Magalheas& Carmona (2009) confirms this and indicated that all public spaces regardless of their inclusiveness, accessibility and how open they are need to be maintained environmentally.

In relation to this, majority of the respondents 58.3% (5) disagreed that the air is free from odors, 23.3% (14) of them were indifferent as 8.3 % (5) and 3.3% (2) agreed and strongly agreed respectively that the county government is effective in enhancing odorless air at the city park. Those who strongly disagree that the air is clean due to county government effectiveness represent 5% (3).

Ineffective of waste removal leads to bad odor in any environment. Since the county government has not been effective in garbage and waste water removal, the place is in certain corners smelly. This is the reason why majority of users 58.3% (35) felt the place is smelly. Contrary to what was suggested by Government of Canada (2006), Nairobi County Government could not be effective in its monitoring of its open public spaces to ascertain their wellbeing.

It was found that the green vegetation doesn't cover the soil entirely and is not well maintained as supported by 80% (48) and 11.7% (7) of respondents who strongly agreed and disagreed respectively. Nevertheless, 3.3% (2) and 1.7% (1) agreed and strongly agreed respectively with the statement, while few of them 3.3% (2) remained indifferent. The presented data thus indicates that the government does not facilitate effective greening and maintenance of the existing vegetation.

Moreover, the plants and flowers are not well maintained as reported by 46.7% (28) and 41.7% (25) of the users who strongly disagreed and agreed with the statement. 5% (3) and 1.7% (1) agreed and strongly agreed with the statement respectively whereas 5% (3) of them remained indifferent. This statement related to flowers and plants is also supported by 80% (48) of users who felt that the vegetation is unkempt in City Park recreational space.

This is not in conformity with Magalhaes and Carmona (2009) indication that there should be daily maintenance or periodical maintenance that include the infrastructure, equipment, amenities, cleanness, safety, paved or hard surfaces, the vegetation, the lighting, the toilets among other.

The study unveiled that 68.3% (41) of the respondents strongly felt that the government is ineffective in resolving polluted river issue, as 13.3% (8) are indifferent. 11.7% (7) and 1.7% (1) disagreed and agreed, respectively. The data that has been presented indicate that county government has not been facilitating effective and efficient waste removal and disposal in the park. This has even polluted the river adjacent to the park. UCLG (2016) and CABE (2007) posit that governments should have effective approaches that make the public spaces comfortable to use. They should reduce any existing inadequacy for sustainability. This is on the contrary at City Park.

Further, 15% and 70% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that toilets are not well provided and are not well maintained. Others at 11.7% and 3.3% are indifferent and agree respectively. Most of the users know that the county government has not provided adequate number of well-maintained toilets. This has contributed feeling of uncleanliness while using the toilets and also the bad odor within the park vicinities. This is contrary to the indication and position of the Scottish Government, (2008) on monitoring and evaluation of public spaces for sustainability.

Regarding park's amenities, 68.3% (41) disagreed that there are well maintained amenities like lights, bins and water taps in the park. There is a proportion of 25% (15) who strongly disagreed that the county government has provided comfort in the park. Few of them 3.3% (2) and 1.7% (1) remained indifferent and agreed respectively. Also another 1.7% (1) strongly agreed with this statement. These findings show that amenities in the park are not maintained. It is also evident through personal observation that the park has only one clean water tap and worn out pavements all round. This goes against Magalhaes and Carmona (2009) position that there need be regular material revitalization in parks to replace the existing old and nonfunctional facilities.

On the overall park landscape attractiveness, most of the respondents 45% (27) were indifferent as 38.3% (23) disagreed. 13.7% (8) of them and 1.7% (1) agreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. Only 1.7% (1) strongly agreed. These findings indicate that most of the users may not be bothered about how attractive the park is. There is still a large proportion of users who opine that the park is not attractive 38.3% (23). This proportion of disagreement goes up when combined with those who strongly disagreed that the overall park landscape is attractive 1.7% (1).

To ensure the success of governments, countries have guidelines and standards put in place to regulate the planning, the implementation mechanism, the monitoring and the evaluation of all types of open public spaces (Scottish Government, 2008; Government of Canada, 2006). In agreement, UCLG (2016) recognizes the importance to have a public space policy framework as a key element to guide the strategy for local government in which public space is a priority. Olaleye, Ayoale and Omisoro (2013) note that weak management is more or less associated to the lack of tools and this prevent the institutions from performing their duties in a proficient manner. The county government of Nairobi does not have well-structured and adequately facilitated management and well set policies to guide strategies in regulation of public spaces use. The local authority is thus ineffective in the execution of its mandate to ensure environmentally sustainable public parks. It has not successfully implemented existing ideas which would lead to sustainability of the park environment.

Pearson correlation coefficient

To determine the strength of relationship between the county government strategies and the environmental sustainability of City Park, the Pearson correlation coefficient of analysis was used. A value of 0 indicates that there is no link between two or more variables. A value greater than 0 shows a positive relationship between variables. In this case as the value of one variable increases so does the value of the other variable. As value less than 0 implies a negative relationship. In this case as the value of one variable increases the value of the other variable decreases (Fieller, Hartley and Pearson, 2017).

	<i>Environmental sustainability</i>
<i>County gov't relationship-solid & liquid waste removal</i>	<i>Correlation</i> .243
	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i> .085
	<i>df</i> 49
<i>County gov't relationship-air free from odors</i>	<i>Correlation</i> .222
	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i> .117
	<i>df</i> 49
<i>County gov't relationship -green veg cover & veg maintenance</i>	<i>Correlation</i> .349
	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i> .012
	<i>df</i> 49
<i>County gov't relationship -plants & flowers well maintained</i>	<i>Correlation</i> .248
	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i> .079
	<i>df</i> 49
<i>County gov't relationship-river not polluted</i>	<i>Correlation</i> .077
	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i> .593
	<i>df</i> 49
<i>County gov't relationship-adequate & well maintained toilets</i>	<i>Correlation</i> .118
	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i> .411
	<i>df</i> 49
<i>County gov't relationship-adequate amenities(lights, bins, benches, water taps) & well-conditioned</i>	<i>Correlation</i> .061
	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i> .672
	<i>df</i> 49
<i>County gov't relationship -overall park landscape attractive</i>	<i>Correlation</i> .084
	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i> .559
	<i>df</i> 49
<i>Environmental sustainability</i>	<i>Correlation</i> 1.000
	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i> .
	<i>df</i> 0

Correlation between county government strategies and environmental sustainability

The above table indicates that there are mutual linear relationships between each county government strategy and the environmental sustainability. However, all of them indicate very weak correlations. That is solid & liquid waste removal ($r=.243$), air free from odors ($r=.222$), green veg cover & veg maintenance ($r=.349$), plants & flowers well maintained ($r=.248$), stream/river not polluted ($r=0.077$), adequate & well maintained toilets($r=0.118$), adequate

amenities; lights, bins, benches, water taps & well-conditioned ($r=0.61$) and overall park landscape attractive ($r=0.84$). The p values in these results are all above the applied level of significance (0.005). We therefore have enough evidence to show that the county government strategies are mutually related to environmental sustainability. In concurrence, the City of Perth (2012) posits that public spaces are public land that have been developed by local authorities for recreational activities to be enjoyed by the communities. Their sustainability requires planning based on institutional and policy framework, the regulations and approaches in order to guide the planning, the design and management processes to foster their sustainable maintenance, protection and conservation.

Concerning key informants' interview guide administered to the county government officers, interviewed officers were asked questions related to the strategies implemented for the environmental sustainability of green public space in general and City Park in particular. The findings revealed that there is not yet policy which is directly linked to the environmental sustainability of green recreational realm in general thus City Park as well.

“Similarly, a plan of action clearly defining activities to be undertaken to sustain City Park environment has never been defined. However guidelines such as the County Government act 2012 which acknowledges the value of green open spaces and takes responsibility for them. Some acts such as the water Act of 2002, the antiquities and monument Act (Cap.215), emphasize on the environmental affairs, while the cities and urban act of 2011 focuses on urban issues, without a direct impact on green public spaces environmental sustainability” (Official, Urban Planning Design and Public Space Management Department, IDI: 21/06/2018).

The National Museum and Heritage Act of 2009, established in 1920 was updated to guarantee, protect and conserve Kenya's rich diversity. This act emphasizes not only the conservation of Kenya national heritage, but encourages the sustainable use of natural resources. However,

“Green open space and City Park in particular are protected and administered based on the rules set by the National Museum and Heritage act 2009. City Park was gazetted as a national monument and urban open space managed by the Nairobi City County Government. Meanwhile, based on the Nairobi wide open space inventory and assessment done in 2016 by UN-Habitat,

the department of Urban Planning at the Nairobi County Government is currently working hard to establish a policy that will positively impact on the environmental sustainability strategy with regard to City Park” (Official, Urban Planning Design and Public Space Management Department, IDI: 21/06/2018).

In support, Olaleye, Ayoale and Omisoro (2013) assert that weak management is more or less associated to the lack of tools and this prevent the institutions from performing their duties in a proficient manner. It appeared from the interview that the County Government has challenges in achieving satisfactory outcomes.

“Challenges which prevent success are so many and big. Among them, the land grabbing and encroachment by illegal investors, for 30 years. City Park was originally 90 hectares, but has lost 30 hectares. 60 hectares is the remaining part. The second challenge is weak collaboration on the shared responsibilities for the administration of City Park between several county departments such as the Department of Environment ensuring the daily maintenance (cleaning, waste removal and treatment, watering, greening maintenance and landscape aesthetic, plants nursery, soil fertility, fight against soil erosion etc. The enforcement section department in charge of ensuring security within the park, the department of infrastructure should provide park’s furniture, amenities, the financial department should provide finances to facilitate all the operations” (Official, City Park manager, IDI: 18/06/2018; Director of department of Environment, IDI: 22/06/2018).

Collaborative management theory encourages the distribution of responsibilities and obligations between all the parties involved. The above statement established that the participatory administration of City Park is not effective. Unfortunately, this weak collaboration seriously handicaps the environmental sustainability of City Park. An efficient collaboration would have facilitated the success and enhance the environment.

Conclusion

The study concludes that City Park like most of the public recreational spaces in Kenya is not in the preferred condition. It is apparent that the county government of Nairobi is quite inefficient and ineffective in the way it conducts management and maintenance activities in the park.

Without any guiding policy or strategy from the county government the park management has not been able to keep the environment well maintained. However the adoption of a green recreational spaces policy, the establishment of a good management plan, and a good organizational arrangement among the department involved in the process, and the availability of adequate finance will positively impact on the environmental sustainability of City Park.

Again, the study concludes that the county government and the city park management team have not actively involved Friends of City Park in decision making and in the management of City Park. They are occasionally being active in cleanliness activities and other minor activities. They may know when certain projects may start but are never involved in any participatory definition or design of any such projects. This does not help in facilitating any meaningful maintenance of the park. There is no sense of ownership and of personal responsibility towards park wellbeing. Contribution of the civil society would fill the gap and ensure sustainable use and maintenance of the environment in and around the city park. Therefore, Nairobi County Government should consider involving Friends of City Park in all affairs related to the Park.

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