Muslim Perspective on Neighbourhood Park Use in Birmingham City, United Kingdom and Aachen City, Germany

Nazila Keshavarz

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Muslim Perspective on Neighbourhood Park Use in Birmingham City, United Kingdom and Aachen City, Germany

Nazila Keshavarz

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Doctoral Committee:

Supervisor: Prof. Christa Reicher

Second Supervisor: Prof. Dr Ingrid Breckner

Examiner: Dr Sabine Weck

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Abstract

Research examines the ways that Muslim immigrants use their neighbourhood parks, in order to understand park use from the perspective of Muslim residents, specifically focusing on how they relate to their neighbourhood parks as members of an ethnic group which practice Islam as religion. The aim of the research work is to understand if qualities and factors including age, gender, identity, use pattern, satisfaction, comfort and expectations, sociability, access and proximity are meaningful factors from a Muslim perspective in a western society where Islam is a religion in shadow. And if these factors affect Muslim relationship with their neighbourhood park.

Case studies in two cities were selected following an assessment of each city's demographic data to identify city areas with high proportion of Muslim residents and parks located within these areas. Using these criteria, three local parks, two in Birmingham and one in Aachen Cities form the case studies for the research.

Research is set within the framework of existing literature regarding park usage, but considered in the context that there are few studies which specifically address park use and associated meaning from the perspective of immigrant Muslim populations located within European urban conurbations.

Work adopts a methodology which is qualitative based on the following:

1. Literature review of park use.

2. Data collection regarding Birmingham and Aachen Cities' green infrastructure including the collation of population data derived from National Statistics (2001 and 2004) to profile Birmingham Wards in order to target parks located in predominantly Muslim populations.

3. Gather information, relating to the perception and usage of local parks through a series of onsite interviews and household questionnaires using selected interviews of individual park users and potential users inside and around the case study parks.

4. Observation of park users and park characteristics associated with day time use including recording using photography and personal observations.

Research findings detail the meanings associated with parks, including positive and negative reactions, to reveal that park usage and meaning has to be considered as part of a reflection of Muslim park users' identity concerning feelings, trust and perceptions of risk all, of which are underpinned by the social norms and cultural ideals regarding the practice and philosophy of Islam. A local park has strong meaning as a place of co-existence for Muslim communities, they are associated with a well-articulated 'sense of place' which is also related to the philosophy of Islam and which is particularly so for the first generation of Muslim immigrants to an extent that they miss the park while they are away of the neighbourhood. From a Muslim point of view, a local park embraces the practices of 'other non-Muslim' park users with what are considered, from a Muslim perspective, modes of anti-social and anti-cultural behaviours and resistance. These include aspects related to gender separation which, according to Islamic law, is fundamental for Muslims while they are using the local park, many users in both genders requested a women and children only

area to be designed and designated to the females with young children.

Despite the adoption of the same methodology in both cities the results indicate that there are distinct differences between the Muslim populations in each city in terms of their urban character, size, population, social geography and ethnicity as well as their population profiles and total area; however, while caution is urged regarding comparisons, there are underpinning aspects that reveal how a religious group such as Muslims use the space which are related to a specific religious mind set and needs to be considered in developing appropriate park strategies that can embrace different religious groups.

Setting Out Research Goal

Research is set in the context of a broad range of challenges that urban planners and landscape architects face in creating neighbourhood parks for communities with high percentage of Muslim residents that are considered as a minority ethnic group who practice Islam as their religion.

It is necessary to explain the original thinking behind this research work, which was started in September 2004 in Birmingham City University and reached to Technical University of Dortmund in Germany in 2010.

The first intention was to study about Persian Gardens as a healing traditional green space and its connection to Sufism and Islam but a journey from a socially confined environment suppressed by Islamic regime of Iran to the multicultural City of Birmingham in 2004 has changed the direction of the research towards a new idea of studying about Muslims in Western societies and their connection with neighbourhood parks. This new approach was based on a set of personal questions developed during early weeks of residency in Birmingham City as a student. The initial questions that raised are a basis for the final research question:

1. Is it only me that experiencing an unexplained feeling in a neighbourhood park in Birmingham City?

2. Is my feeling related to the landscape character and English design of the park which highly differ from a Persian garden and its design philosophy in an arid land?

3. Is this vague feeling related to the identity, spirituality, mental health (homesickness), sense of place, family background, age, gender, non-Muslim park users and unfamiliarity of the park? If so, what about other immigrants? Do they have the same feeling?

4. Is it possible to answer these questions through an academic research?

5. Why Muslims immigrants?

- My own knowledge about Islam and Islamic culture
- The importance of research about Muslim communities who are living in West
- The opportunity that Birmingham City provided as a multicultural city and later, the Aachen City.

Research question as explained, is based on initial personal questions developed in a neighbourhood park. The final question which is a cumulative one made of few short questions is:

What is the relationship of Muslim immigrants with their neighbourhood park?

Here, the word relationship means dependence, connection, involvement and an emotional relation, where neighbouhood park is an urban green open space, less than 25 hectares that offers a range of facilities with passive and active recreation opportunities for interaction with nature. Neighborhood parks are accessible by foot (5-30 minutes' walk).

In other words, to understand such relationship, the research examines different factors that create or affect Muslims interaction with their neighbourhood park and its users.

It is interesting to understand how Muslim residents who are member of a multicultural society relate

themselves to a neighbourhood park and its components such as other park users and/or its design. What is their perception of a non-native place and what is the degree of their satisfaction while being in a neighbourhood park. The reason behind developing a series of relevant questions as described above - to formulate the research question - is more related to the controversial mind set of a Muslim in a western society where there are different elements that are affecting Muslim park users' attitude if these elements are not in harmony with Islamic principles. So to fully comprehend the research question, it is necessary, for example to look at degree of mental satisfaction, personal

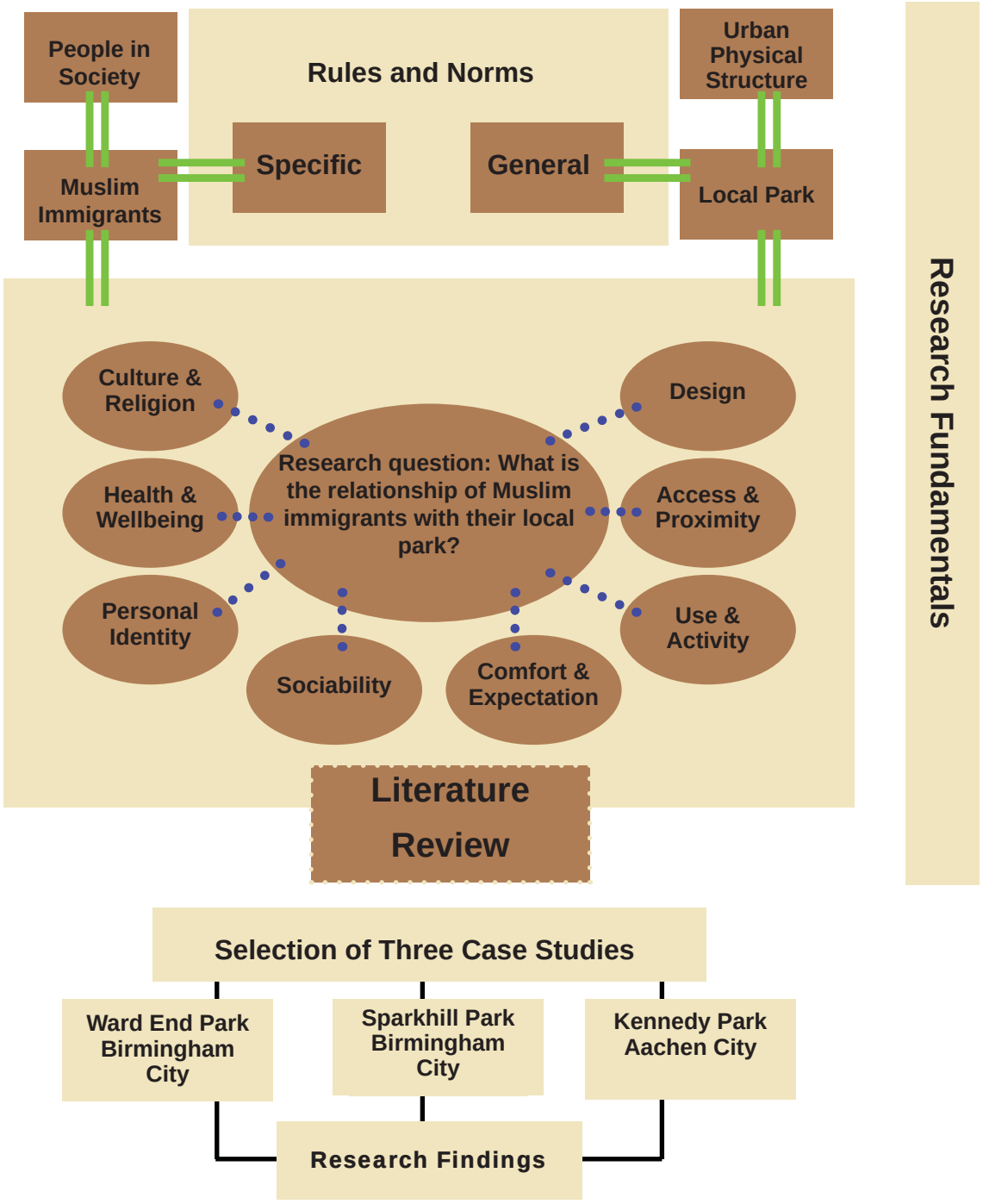


Diagram 1 - Flowchart of the Research

identity, sense of place, access and proximity, comfort and expectations and similar criteria that are used as research tools to evaluate how Muslim park users feel satisfied or homesick, included or excluded, attached or detached, respected or humiliated when they spend their free time in a neighbourhood park. The relationship is about, if they are longing for their own type of greeneries back home or existing leisure time and place are satisfactory and comfort them.

Within this context the desire was to identify the parameters which will aid in the improvement and management of neighbourhood parks in respect to satisfaction and well-being of minority ethnic group of Muslim residents in two Wards of Birmingham City which have the highest rate of Muslim population and least share of green space according to UK National Statistics 2001 and one District in Aachen City with highest Muslim immigrant population. On this basis, research has set up the following aims to be achieved through individual and group interviews within the parks and nearby neighbourhoods:

• To investigate the use preference and perception of selected neighbourhood parks in Birmingham and Aachen Cities regarding a predominantly local Muslim population.

• To establish parameters derived from the perspective of the Muslim park users which aid our understanding of the impact of neighbourhood parks on Muslim immigrants and how they define these parameters.

• To develop findings that will be useful to understand the importance of neighbourhood parks, its improvement and management and how it relates to the well-being and living of ethnic groups in cities that embrace residents with Muslim identity.

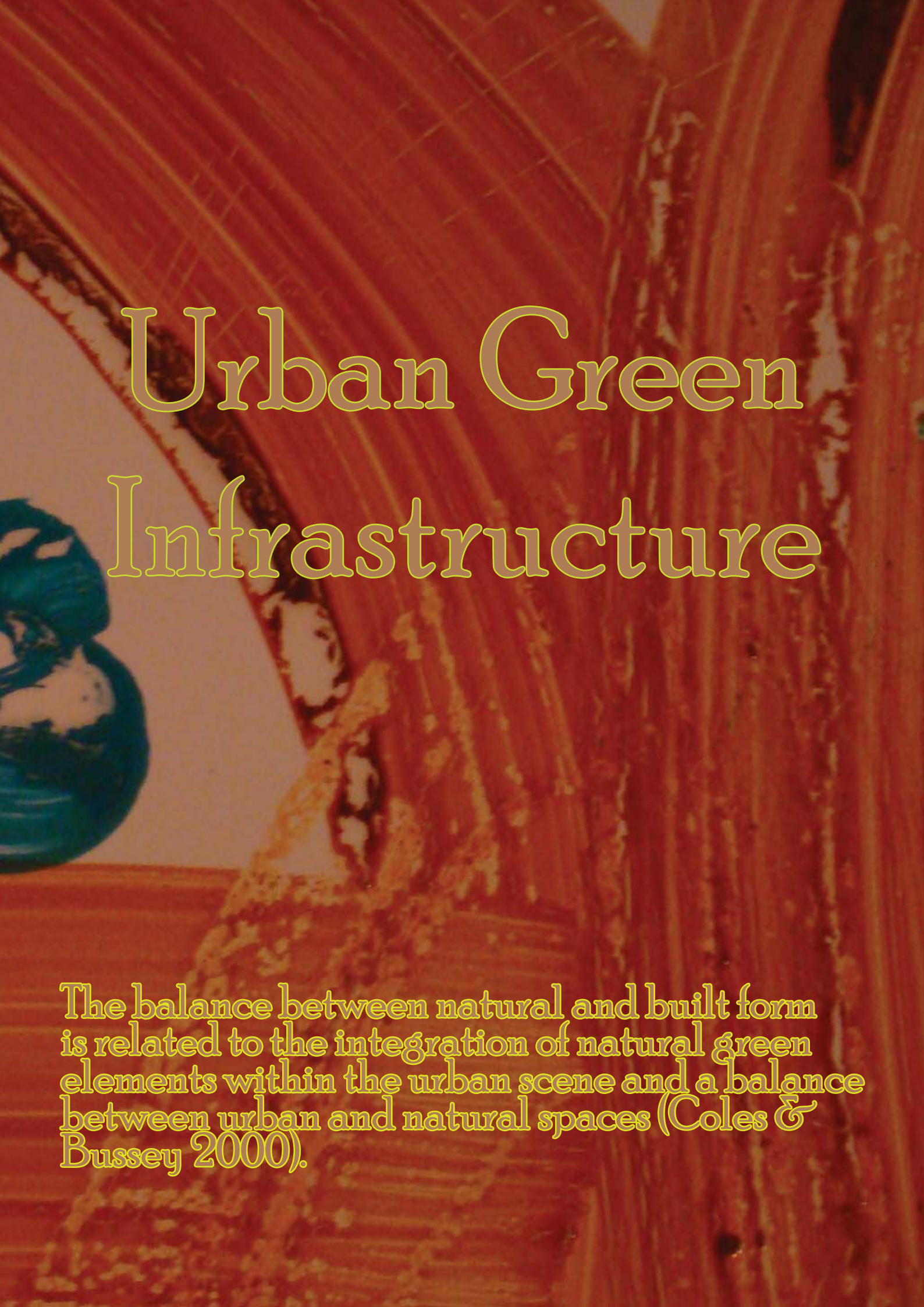
• To advance our understanding of the ways in which neighbourhood parks are capable of delivering restorative/therapeutic benefits, in order to form a sound basis for their improvement.

• To evaluate Muslim park-users' perception of and sensitivity to the neighbourhood parks in order to understand their relationship as part of their everyday livelihood and their connection to the neighbourhood.

Research looks at the first, second and third generations of Muslims who resided within the catchment areas of the selected case study parks as group or individual park-users.

This research is based on a personal level of understanding of three neighbourhood parks in Birmingham and Aachen Cities which are Ward End and Sparkhill Parks in Birmingham City and Kennedy Park in Aachen City, as well as analysing the results of the onsite photography and observations, interviews and household questionnaires.

1



Urban Green Infrastructure

The balance between natural and built form is related to the integration of natural green elements within the urban scene and a balance between urban and natural spaces (Coles & Bussey 2000).

1.1 Introduction

For the purpose of this research, components of urban green infrastructure is introduced from different literatures in order to give a clear picture of a neighbourhood park versus other types of public open spaces, which are not considered in this study.

According to Mark A. Benedict (2001), green infrastructure is an interconnected network of green space that conserves natural ecosystem values and functions and provides associated benefits to human populations. Green infrastructure is the ecological framework needed for environmental, social and economic sustainability which can be defined as the natural life sustaining system accessible to people.

Natural England which is the government's advisor on the natural environment in 2008 published eco/ town Green Infrastructure Worksheet in which encourages planners and designers to design, incorporate and operate green infrastructure that is fully 'fit for purpose' as an important subject in urban planning, development and management. Green Infrastructure should provide environmental, aesthetical and socio-economical benefits for residents.

It has to be strategically planned in order to be able to deliver a network of high quality green spaces that need to be designed and managed as a multifunctional urban resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green Infrastructure includes important land uses such as parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotment and private gardens.

Green infrastructure has multi-functional benefits such as providing and protecting a wide spectrum of urban wildlife, aesthetical, recreational and cultural experiences for its proximate communities as well as delivering ecological services including flood protection, pollution control and moderating microclimate. These services are likely to be increasingly important in adapting to climate change.

In defining the green infrastructure, a broad approach is taken to reflect aspects that might contribute to perception of the neighbourhood parks, thus details accumulated consist of defining the range of green spaces and green linkages. It is this infrastructure which the local population can access in a range of ways, specific visits, walking to the shops, the view from the window or recreational activities such as allotment gardening.

However, a neighbourhood park is part of residential environment and research looking at factors to take into account including the overall distribution and proportions of neighbourhood parks compared to the built form, and an assessment of the level of maintenance or dereliction as indicated by such factors as litter, general street scene, or other evidence of neglect.

The eventual outcome is anticipated as basis, through an understanding of the details associated with neighbourhood park and park users interaction. That is to identify the relationship between park and users and if it is positive need to be reinforced. The negative aspects of park use, infrastructure quality that need to be removed as they limit a positive interaction between potential Muslim users and neighbourhood park. Thus, a

neighbourhood park as a component of the urban green infrastructure needs to be evaluated in terms of users' ethnicity and ultimately to fine tune its quality within the local agenda.

1.2 Urban Green Space and Neighbourhood Park

In this research the focus is on neighbourhood parks which are important components of urban life and if neglected, they are prime locations to attract crime and reduce aesthetical quality of the environment. They need to be well designed, made relevant to the needs of local people and support wildlife. Neighbourhood parks are considered as important components of the neighbourhood built environment and provide ideal open spaces for physical activities and leisure in free time as well as important venue which promote community gatherings and social interactions within the community and social network.

Neighbourhood, according to H. Barton (2010), has no clear definition and it can be defined from different point of view. He refers to a generally accepted basis and claims that neighbourhood may be defined as a social unit or community, as a concept, as a political division of land use or even as a natural area with natural boundaries. For the purpose of this research, neighbourhood is the catchment area of a local park or the built form that engulfs an urban park which has an area less than 25 hectares and park users can have access to the park on foot (5-30 minutes' walk). This definition is based on a primary study of the research case studies which will be described in later chapters.

In line with the above definition of neighbourhood, a neighbourhood park provides public spaces for regular local use and may include:

- Areas of open space in different size and shape accessible to local residents for relaxation, walking, biking and sitting

- Places for recreation activities of different age groups from toddlers playgrounds to playing fields for organised sport (from 1-3 hectares in size) which can also be used for walking and informal activities

- The potential to provide an identity and a sense of place for the neighbourhood community especially where it incorporates important natural and historical features such as a lake, ancient trees or a preserved mansion.

Table 1 has adopted from Tzoulas, K., James, P. (2004) clarifies different typologies of urban green space as a division of urban open spaces based on green space typology developed by Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions in 2002. According to Tzoulas, urban open space comprises all civic and green spaces considering urban open space as a significant part of the built environment that allows for transport, reserves land for future urban development creates wildlife habitats and is a major urban amenity. The quality of the built environment is reflected in the quality of its urban open spaces as well as in the quality of the built fabric.

Urban green infrastructure has health benefits and review of literature shows that a balance between natural and built form which is related to the integration of natural green elements within the urban scene and a balance between

urban and natural spaces should be present (Coles & Bussey 2000). In relation to health, green infrastructure appears to be more complex in that the balance between natural and built form must be such that it is able to remove or negate the stressful aspects of urban living and reinforce the positive aspects. Ideally this effect has to be produced throughout the urban scene so that one continuously encounters therapeutic environments, with the ability to freely access green infrastructures either at work or at home.

The therapeutic green environment is one that accords with the wider definition of health it sits within the ecological model of health which identifies lifestyle and culture as key aspects.

While it is possible to identify environments that induce a positive impact upon individuals, it is unclear the extent to which the existing patterns of urban green space are capable of delivering positive effect within a culturally diverse society, and that it is necessary to examine a much broader range of features represented within the urban scene. These include conventional urban parks such as a neighbourhood park but also the routes, along which users walk, or bike and the views that users access from where they live or travel.

Many researches suggest that green urban infrastructure has a quality that can be defined as non-urban, lack of noise especially traffic, emphasis on the natural elements and reduction of urban intrusion (Coles & Bussey 2000).

There are also observations regarding diversity of land form, landscape

Urban Open Spaces	Urban Green Spaces	Parks and gardens	Urban parks, country parks, formal gardens.
		Provision for children and teenagers	Play areas, skateboard parks, hanging out areas.
		Amenity green spaces	Informal recreational spaces, housing green spaces, domestic gardens, village green s and other incidental green spaces.
		Outdoors sports facilities	Sports pitches (including artificial surfaces), golf courses, athletic tracks, schools, institutional playing areas and other sports areas.
		Allotments	Allotments, urban farms, community gardens.
		Churchyards	Churchyards, cemeteries, crematoria.
		Natural and semi-natural green spaces	Woodland, urban forestry, grassland, heath or moor, wetlands, open and running water, wastelands, bare rock habitats.
		Green corridors	River and canal banks, road and rail corridors, cycling routes, pedestrian paths, rights of way & permissive paths.
	Civic Spaces	Sea fronts and promenades	
		Civic squares and plazas	
		Market squares	
		Pedestrian streets	
		Other hard surfaced pedestrian areas	

Table 1- Urban Open and Green Space Typologies (Adopted from DTLR 2002 from Tzoulas, K., James, P. 2004)

elements, varying terrain, which may be associated with a potentially therapeutic environment, their ability to engage the senses (Westphal 2002; Hartig 2004), and that similar observations have been made by urban designers (Gehl 2004), however environments must be capable of being interpreted by the user to reinforce personal lifestyle values since it is personal interaction that is key. Access to a site that has no meaning to the observer is unlikely to result in more than a superficial response or even a negative response.

The lifestyle values of a broader range of cultural groups in relation to green infrastructure is becoming better understood by professionals, but needs wider research particularly in relation to the wellbeing agenda of ethnic groups, and in turn the development of local green-space strategies designed to maximise therapeutic or restorative potential in a muticultural community.

According to two design guidelines such as Healthy Spaces and Places in Australia, (2009), neighbourhood parks are smaller than district and regional parks which supply needs of a broader population.

The types of parks which are bigger than a neighbourhood park in terms of its size and capacity for visitors may include:

District playing fields that provide for a range of active, organised sport and recreation such as football/soccer fields, cricket pitches, tennis courts, baseball fields and the like

Waterfront and other regional parks for social gatherings, such as picnics, recreation and education, and areas reserved for cultural or environmental retention (escarpments and areas of biodiversity value such as wetlands and bush-land) that may provide some limited recreation opportunities, such as bird watching, picnicking and bushwalking.

In another resource developed by Addison Park District Illinois/USA, 2010 Park & Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan, Parks are commonly classified as follows:

- Mini Parks
- Neighbourhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Special Use Parks
- Open Lands

Accordingly, neighbourhood parks are defines as the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighbourhood. Generally designed with a focus on informal active and passive recreation that serves neighbourhood recreation needs, area is provided for recreational activities such as field games, court games, picnicking and playground areas. Many neighbourhood parks may also contain athletic fields that are used by community athletic organizations, thus serving the community as a whole.

Neighbourhood parks serve an area within a 400 to 800 meter radius uninterrupted by major roads or other barriers.

2

Ecological Theory of Public Health

...health is influenced by many factors and that most of them are interrelated which makes it highly desirable to investigate the therapeutic effect of local environments and to try to answer a range of questions regarding the extent to which local environments contribute to the health agenda by virtue of their quality and how do we define quality in terms of green infrastructure from an ecological perspective. (Kickbusch 1989, Antonovsky 1984, WHO 1986).

2.1 Introduction

It is this recognition that mental and physical health are influenced by many factors that most of them are interrelated which makes it highly desirable to investigate the therapeutic effect of local environments. Review of literature show that such effect is highly desirable to be investigated in order to answer a range of questions regarding the extent to which local environments contribute to the health agenda by virtue of their quality and how do we define quality in terms of green infrastructure such as a neighbourhood park, from an ecological perspective. (Kickbusch 1989, Antonovsky 1984, WHO 1986).

Literature indicate, there are a massive surge towards theoretical and practical research in ecological perception of health with development of a diverse range of ecological models of health.

One of the most cited models is the ecological perception that was mapped by Hancock and Perkins (1985) through their Mandala[1] of Health. The Mandala of Health comprises a model that demonstrates three core components of human at the centre which are mind, body and spirit that constitute physical, mental and spiritual dimensions of human health (Diagram 2). The influences on health are represented by three nested circles around the core of the Mandala. These three circles which represent the family, the community and human-made environment are enclaved by outer circle of culture and biosphere. The circles are meant to be both three dimensional implying multilevel and multifaceted, and dynamic in size and shape, depending on the temporal and spatial context. This ecological model of health can also be compared against the landscape to show the structure and function of it that can be related to a psychological component with identifiable meaning by the user. Such models, like the Mandala of Health recognise the fused linkage between urban elements and that it is necessary to take a holistic assessment of the urban environment in relation to usage and users (Caserio 2005).

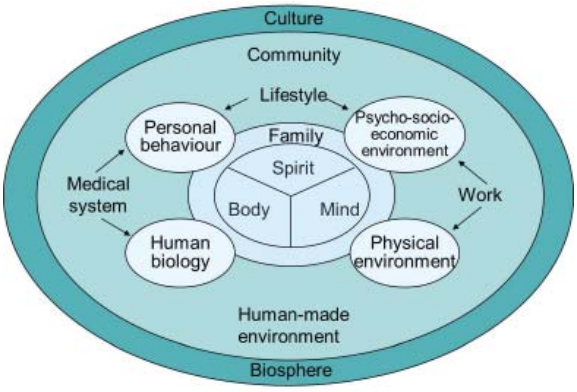


Diagram 2 - The Mandala of Health. Adopted from Hancock & Perkins, 1985.

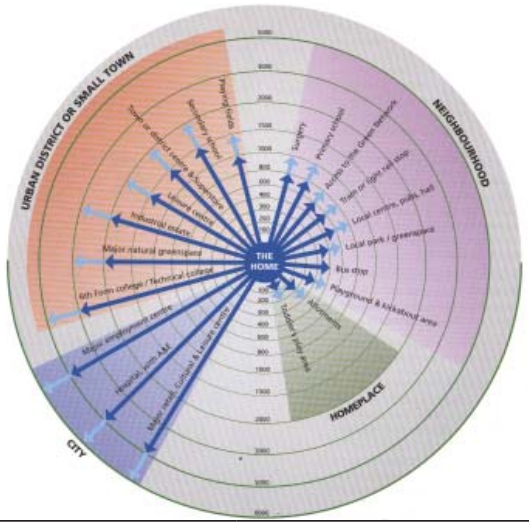
Diagram 3 - The Settlement Health Map. Adopted from Barton and Grant, 2007.

[1]Mandala is a Sanskrit word that means "circle". In the Hindu and Buddhist religious traditions, their sacred art often takes a mandala form. In common use, mandala has become a generic term for any plan, chart or geometric pattern that represents the cosmos metaphysically or symbolically, a microcosm of the Universe from the human perspective. (Wikipedia: 2010).

These models have been identified by accessing the views and language of residents and associated key aspects of the local landscape which are key concepts to perception. They identify the importance of spiritual values, familiarity, childhood experience and change and substantiate the need to link urban landscape infrastructure to health and well-being.

In another context, Barton and Grant (2006) have presented an updated version of the World Health Organization (WHO) health map which introduces the global ecosystem, natural environment and biodiversity to the range of determinants of health and wellbeing in neighbourhoods (Diagram 3). They state that concerns about physical and mental health problems and inequalities have forced town planners to take account of factors previously were not considered in health agendas.

Diagram 3 also shows the relation of different components of environment from a very local level to global ecosystem. This model was designed to be a dynamic tool to provide a focus for collaboration across practitioner professions and across topics directly related to sustainable development of healthy neighbourhoods. The Settlement Health Map organises thoughts and analysis of the human habit in an integrated ecosystem with an emphasis on biophysical environment. In this model social determinants of health and wellbeing are analysed and presented to show how these determinants are linked and related to each other. The model embraces everything from personal level to the planet level by putting people at the centre with definition of a critical life-support function for human that is ecological and put limits on spatial growth to be in line with a



Acessibility Criteria		
Urban Facilities	**Desirable distance to "the home" (m)**	**Criteria**
Toddler's play area	100-200	**Homeplace**
Allotments	300	
Playground & kickabout area	300-400	**Neighbourhood**
Bus stop	400	
Local park/Green space	400-600	
Local centres, pubs, hall	600-800	
Tram or light rail stop	600-800	
Access to the green network	600-800	
Primary school	800-1000	
Surgery	800-1000	
Playing fields	1000-1500	**Urban District or Small Town**
Secondary school	1500-2000	
Town or district centre or superstore	1500-2000	
Leisure centre	1500-2000	
Industrial estate	2000-3000	
Major natural green space	3000-5000	
6th form college, technical college	3000-5000	
Major employment centre	5000>	**City**
Hospital with A & E	5000>	
Major retail, Cultural and Leisure centre	5000>	

Diagram 4 - Illustrative Accessibility Criteria. Adopted from Barton et al 2010, p. 122. with details of illustration.

sustainable development. As the model shows, lifestyle is attached to the core (people) and has major influence on health and wellbeing of people within the neighbourhood. The outer circle to the lifestyle is the community and its social capital that this thesis is based on it and aims to understand the relationship of the park users with their neighbourhood park considering a multicultural community of residents that is influenced by a religion such as Islam.

In this respect, one of the criteria to be considered for the purpose of this research, is accessibility and ability of the park users to get to their nearest favorite neighbourhood park. According to H. Barton (2010), neighbourhood park with facilities should be within 400-600 metre walking distance for the use of certain groups (Diagram 4) such as:

- Parents with young children (often with pushchairs)
- Young children playing ground suitable for cycling
- Elderly people with limit mobility
- Wheelchair users
- Workers, students and passer bys wanting a lunch break

Quality, access and safety are mentioned as the key to local provision and neighbourhood strategy. Depending on the site opportunities and landscape character of the land, these are elements that a landscape architect considers different combination of them in the design of a neighbourhood park (H. Barton, 2010):

- Open lawn kick around area
- Hard court areas (basketball, tennis, squash, etc.)
- Children playground
- BBQ facilities
- Shelter
- Park entry and access way/s
- Native grasses, shrubs and trees
- Seat/table seat
- Picnic setting
- Footpath
- Boundary

2.2 Definition of Human Well-being

As quoted by Burn (1956): In the 5th Century B.C., the Greek statesman Pericles stated that 'Health is that state of moral, mental, and physical wellbeing that enables a person to face any crisis in life with the utmost grace and facility'.

Studies around human wellbeing are diverse and complex as there are aspects related to wellbeing that are singled out and studied such as individual wellbeing, spiritual wellbeing, social wellbeing, community wellebing although all are interconnected with many overlaps. In other hand human health has a clear cut definition by

The World Health Organization (WHO) that defines health as 'A state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' (Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19-22 June, 1946; signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p. 100) and entered into force on 7 April 1948. The Definition has not been amended since 1948.).

According to Yves Luginbühl (2006), the definition of health by WHO, is

complex and for her argument she associates the landscape (which has a complex definition too) with the quality of life that creates interconnected intricate problems. The reason behind such complexity as Luginbühl argues is associated with this fact that all high-quality landscapes are not necessarily related to the individual and social well-being of the people who live in certain area in which the landscape donates visible expression.

In the light of the above broad definitions of health and wellbeing, it is necessary to explore direct and/or indirect links between human wellbeing and his proximate environment such as a neighbourhood park and its landscape.

2.3 Environment and Human Health

Restoration and therapeutic effects of green spaces are set within the wider definitions of health cited by a variety of authors or organisations,

Lalonde(1974), specifically identifies four key factors that shape people's health:

1. Genetics

2. The environments in which they live

3. Lifestyle behaviour

4. The provision and accessibility of medical services

According to House et al., (1988), in industrialised countries chronic disease has increasingly replaced acute infectious disease as the major cause of disability and death. These types of afflictions are often long-term and are potentially much more expensive in terms of health care requirements and cost to the community. Also Kickbusch (1989), explored some of the health problems facing society as follows:

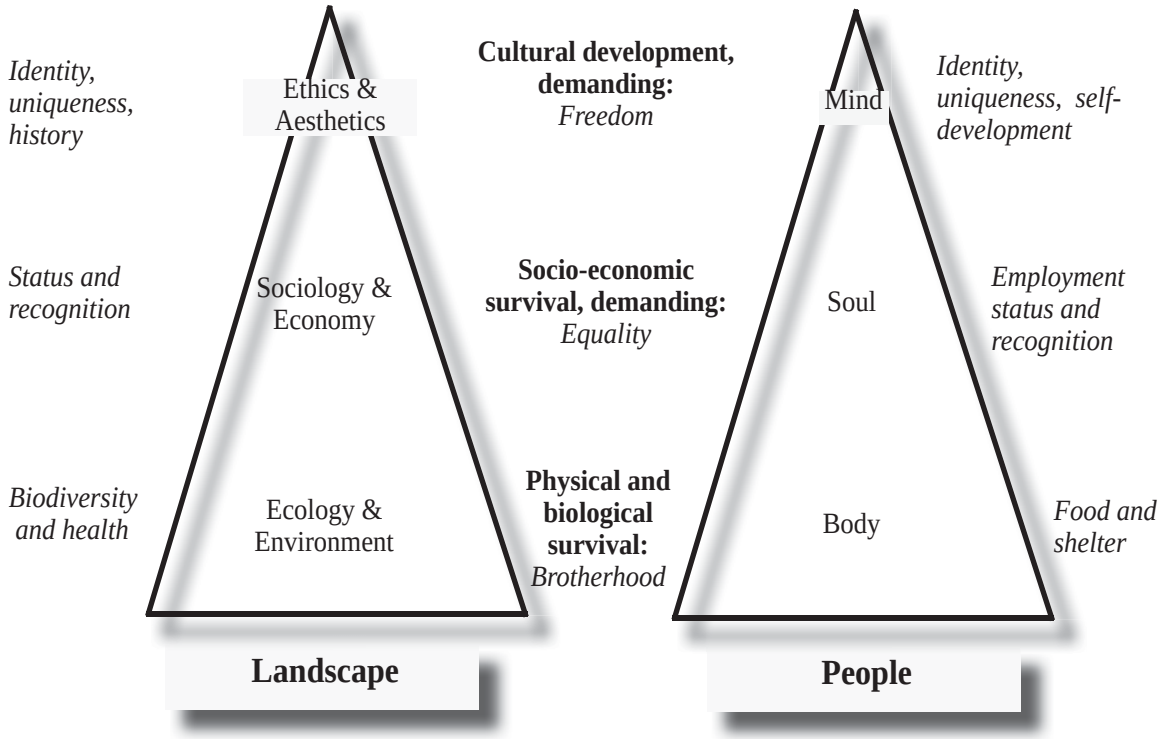


Diagram 5 - Links between the needs of landscape and people. (Diagram re-produced from Van Mansvelt 1999)

• Disease patterns linked to social inequities and ways of life in industrial societies

• Health problems that are social rather than medical in nature

• Health problems that tend to be cumulative, long-term, chronic and not amenable to curative measures;

• A general public that is changing its social perception of health risks and is expressing new expectations

A common conclusion in literature that dealt with human health and environment interaction is that human being may not be fully adapted to an urban existence (Burns, 1998; Kellert, 1997; Kellert & Wilson, 1993). People live in an environment so different to that from which they evolved that natural selection has not had time to revise human bodies for coping with many aspects of modern life, including fatty diets, vehicles, drugs, artificial lights, and central heating (Nesse & Williams, 1991, 1994 in Burns 1998). The reasoning for this argument is that humans have spent many thousands of years adapting to natural environments, yet have only inhabited urban ones for relatively few generations (Gullone, 2000; Suzuki, 1997; Roszak et al., 1995; Glendinning, 1995). Moreover, although humans may have all of their physical needs well satisfied by the urban environment of large cities, our internal psyche is profoundly disturbed (Gullone, 2000; Suzuki, 1997).

There is another view towards human and environment interaction that employ a multi-disciplinary approach to define links between people and green environment or landscape. Van Mansvelt (1999), identified links between the needs of landscape and people.

Diagram 5 shows how Mansvelt introduced the application of the idea that "landscape reflects human needs". In this figure and according to Mansvelt the needs of people and those of the landscape are presented in two separate triangles in which people and landscape's needs and components are related to each other in an interdisciplinary perspective. Respecting both people and landscape that their identity are introduced as self-developmental uniqueness (people) and historical uniqueness (landscape) are essential principles. Accordingly, both types of identity although different in origin, demand respect (historical), understanding and commitment to be managed in a way that is aesthetically, ethically and ecologically sustainable on the long term.

2.4 Landscape and Human Well-being

The majority of papers written about the importance of urban green-spaces are related to the biological needs of people as intelligent animals who benefit from the green landscape and as the result of various activities when they establish a direct relationship between human needs and health. The main reason for such phenomena is still unknown although the positive effects of green environment on human health have been studied, measured and approved through numerous research works that will be discussed in later sections. For such important role of urban greeneries, suburban expansion is always a fascinating planning exercise which increases land value and quality of ;ife where wealthy people can afford expensiv properties, One of the aims of suburbs expansion consisting semi-detached houses between 1920 and 1940 in Britain was increasing the scope for improvements in physical health (Stearn 1972).

The psychological differences between different urban environments and between urban and rural life depend upon people's attitudes and life styles and cannot be related simply to the biophysical environment (Howarth, 1976). Many secondary school children express fears about natural areas or wild lands to which they may be taken as part of school or recreation centre activities (Wohlwill, 1983). Such negative perceptions are often linked to preferences for manicured path settings, urban environments and indoor social recreation activities (Bixler and Floyd, 1997). However, much of the literature refers to greenspace as a place that has contribution to relief from stress that modern urban life style that involve both sensory deprivation and mental fatigue developed by information overload and people can be affected and suffer from these situations. Imbalance in each case causes health problems. In an essay "Human Needs and Inhuman Cities" in 1968, Edward T. Hall believes an adequate living environment balances sensory inputs and provides a mix that is both congenial and consistent with people's culturally conditioned needs (Hall, 1968) and Kaplan in 1984 explored areas of urban natural environment which theoretically provide the environment for recovery from the stress and strains of the built urban environment (Kaplan, 1984). According to Ian Dauglas (2004), four themes emerge from the literature of the benefits of nature in the city (Knopf, 1987; Parry-Jones, 1990):

- Nature restores
- Nature facilitates competence building
- Nature carries symbols that affirm the culture or self
- Nature offers a pleasing diversion.

He also summarised the direct mental health benefits according to other researchers such as (Maller et al., 2002 and Stone and Hanna, 2003):

- Improved self-awareness, self-esteem, self-concept, and positively affected mood state.
- Reduction of negative feelings such as anger, fear, anxiety and frustration.
- Improved ability to recover from stressful episodes.
- Effective alleviation of the symptoms of anxiety, depression and psychosomatic illness (including irritability, insomnia, tension, headaches and indigestion).
- Improved psychological health, especially emotional and cognitive aspects (including reduced symptoms of ADD).
- Restored capacity for concentration and attention

Benefits of urban green spaces and their positive biological and ecological effects have been studied in recent decades and many stakeholders and authorities have adopted the general statements about the benefits of urban green spaces in their works. Researchers' findings emphasise on the biophysical environmental benefits that can be retrieved from good quality green spaces which encourage people to walk, run, cycle and play that all help to socialise and establish an integrated community. Green spaces improve air quality and reduce noise pollution through structural trees and shrubs that help to filter dust and pollutants. Integrated footpaths and cycle networks facilitate sustainable commuting, they help to reduce transport needs and provide safe and healthy access routes from home to the outside world such as a safe access to school for children by

avoiding hazardous road crossings as well as other community members who travel between different points within their neighbourhood.

The overall findings from literature review about the usefulness of the green spaces and their health and well-being aspects are:

Relaxation, contemplation and passive recreation, which are fundamental to stress reduction in current busy world.

Good quality green space relieves stress and promotes physical and mental health that are beneficial for the wellbeing of the both individuals and community

Ulrich in his many research works in area of environmental psychology suggests that stressed individuals feel significantly better after exposure to nature scenes rather than to American urban scenes lacking nature elements. Compared to the influences of the urban scenes, the salient effect of the nature exposures was to increase positive affect including feelings of affection friendliness, playfulness, and elation (Ulrich 1979). In his other works he revealed that parks and green spaces with recreational facilities provide opportunities for healthy physical activity and the relief of stress. Furthermore, the passive benefits to physical and mental health of an urban landscape that has greeneries have been documented in industrialized countries (Ulrich, 1984, 1991, 2000, 2001); enjoyment of green areas help people to relax and give them fresh energy (Ulrich, 1990).

Such findings broadly confirm the conclusions of others concerning contact with nature, reduction of stress and escape from dense urbanity (Greenbie, 1981; Nicholson-Lord, 1987; Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989; Bussey, 1996; Land Use Consultants, 2000; Pretty et al., 2003). Encouraging green space development, that promotes healthy community, reduces violence, and improves mental health are fundamental to any urban development works. The mental and physical health benefits of neighbourhood parks and other green spaces such as allotments and back gardens have been demonstrated by many researchers and these findings are supporting tools for local, national and regional authorities and policy makers to create an environment that prevents violence and increases psychological well-being. According to more researchers in the area of environmental psychology, the green nature within city and accessible to the people can:

- reduces crime (Kuo, 2001)
- fosters psychological wellbeing (Kaplan, 1992; Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989)
- reduces stress (Ulrich et al., 1991b; Parsons, 1991)
- boosts immunity (Parsons et al., 1998; Rohde & Kendle, 1997)
- enhances productivity (Tennessen & Cimprich, 1995)
- promotes healing in psychiatric and other patients (Beck et al., 1986; Katcher & Beck, 1983).

These authors deal with specific instances of green nature where the user interaction and response can be identified. Any analysis of a green local environment has to take into account its actual composition, the places, spaces and routes which local people utilise everyday, the views but also the identity of the users, or potential users themselves (Caserio 2005; Burgess et al. 1988). It remains difficult to unravel specific factors that actually produce

a negative or positive effect without information regarding user response.

Researches suggests that there are differences in the perception and use of the green environment according to cultural origins (Rishbeth 2000; 2001; 2002; 2004; Loukaitou-Sideris 1995) and that a positive reaction to the landscape by one group may be absent, or more specifically meaningless, to a culturally different group (Hartig & Rishbeth 2002; Rishbeth 2005). Such a distinction between groups is crucial since a positive experience can only occur if a highly positive relationship exists. For example Potter (2005) discusses the meaning of ethnicity in terms of common characteristics, ancestry, religion, but also unique community of interests and such a definition is thought be more helpful in considering the ways in which users interact with the landscape and thus define groups in terms of interaction rather than accepting the existing divisions of ethnicity (Maller et al 2002).

2.5 Parks and People

So far the literatures show that the majority of the works in environmental psychology are based on healing aspects of nature and greeneries for human being. According to Jan Hassink, Majken Dijk, van (2006), there are several theories discussed by Ulrich and Parson that explain how and why being in contact with nature especially with plants can be beneficial for health. They discuss the simplest theory which is about the overload and arousal theories and it explains that in the modern world, people are constantly bombarded with so much noise, movement and visual complexity that cause human senses to be overwhelmed by surroundings and lead to damaging levels of psychological and physiological excitement. They explain that environments dominated by plants, on the other hand, are less complex and have patterns that reduce arousal and, therefore, reduce feelings of stress. They also discuss another theory about people‘s responses to plants that are a result of their early learning experiences or the cultures in which they were raised. According to this theory, those individuals, for example, who grow up in western Texas will have a more positive attitude toward flat lands with sparse, natural vegetation and cultivated crops, such as sorghum and cotton, than someone from the mountains of Virginia. Along the same line, this theory could be used to explain why Americans seem to prefer foundation plantings in their front yards even though the style of architecture has changed, and these plants are no longer needed to hide unattractive foundations; or why Americans desire broad expanses of lawn that urban water systems cannot readily maintain, Jan Hassink, Majken Dijk, van (2006).

Numerous research works by environmental psychologists (e.g. (Kaplan & Kaplan (1983), Cooper Marcus, Clare and Carolyn Francis (1998), Adler, Jane (2002), Beckwith, Margarette E. (1999)) has approved that contact with nature causes faster recovery from stress and the reason lays behind the aptness of human being for nature and his positive response to nature stimuli than built settings. Studies show that stress reduction and calmness are responses that man shows when is in contact with nature.

Comprehensive reviews have been undertaken by Hartig Mang & Evans; Kaplan & Kaplan and Ulrich et al, which demonstrate the positive effects of nature on human, stress reduction and calmness. These findings involve a range of settings from nearby nature

to wilderness but none of the studies look at the positive effects of nature regarding the personal identity and cultural background of the park-users.

A substantial amount of research focuses on the actual parameters which influence the perception and use of the landscape, especially in urban contexts exploring the importance of size or extent of a natural area, the effect of different degrees of proximity to the potential user , and the different ways in which a natural space is used, including the perceived levels of satisfaction and benefit derived from natural settings and activities (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Coles & Bussey 1995; Bardwell, 1985; Talbot, Bardwell, & Kaplan 1987; Bussey 1996). From such research it is possible to define the key factors regarding what constitutes a natural setting within an urban context and the language that people used to describe the experience, including the strict factors that must be respected in considering user perception of the landscape, especially at a local level. These include negative and positive perceptions as well as barriers and enablers regarding the use of sites (Coles & Bussy, 2000; Burgess 1995; Washburne and Wall, 1980).

Narrative obtained from these studies by interviewing users of the landscape indicates the value and nature of the experience and identified that the users were recalling past experiences and activities, associated with life events, and were placed in a form of reverie where the mind wandered, an effect, identified as part of the restorative experience. Thus it seems possible to equate a restorative experience with positive language, where we can begin to appreciate some of the characteristics of outdoor settings associated with restorative potential. These seem to emphasise the importance of material elements and spatial configurations that can draw together the physical and mental worlds, stimulating the mind to wander (Thwaites, et al 2004). These authors identify that within the urban scene, networks of small linked spaces of various kinds, may have a restorative potential, arising mainly from its capacity to facilitate social interaction. Whether a restorative experience is occurring can be identified by capturing and analysing the language expressed by users of the landscape (Coles & Bussey, 2000) and also by clinical measure (Owen, P. 1994) or ideally a combination of both.

Further research identifies that people move around a familiar environment to seek out positive experiences (views) and to avoid negative ones where they are denied a positive experience (Hartig, T. 2004).

Within the urban environment neighbourhood parks are the most convenient and accessible green spaces that people have access to them and are considered as a portion of the real nature apart from their home gardens and alike. Parks vary in shape, design, size, quality, and character and therefore may satisfy the whole spectrum of opportunities and park-users for contact with the natural world at various levels.

According to the literature and from an evolutionary point of view, parks are thought to be and were planned as ideal urban green spaces which have positive contributions to personal health that are inseparable from our evolutionary history, but which are nearly impossible to obtain in modern society (Furnass, 1979). These contributions which have been subject of many researches in field of environmental psychology include the physiological and psychological benefits derived from physical activity

within varied landscape, the remarkable change in sensory input, and the spiritual values which can accrue from direct contact with the natural world are few output of being in touch with nature (Furnass, 1979).

The relationship of human and urban parks are summarised in Table 2 in which the contribution of parks to human health, & wellbeing in relation to the ecological model of health is addressed. Parks directly and indirectly contribute to the human health concepts such as physical, mental, spiritual, social and environmental by providing varieties of settings and infrastructures that affects human wellbeing and health.

For the above reasons that are clarified in Table 2, parks have started to specifically regain their connection with well-being and mental health and move away from the previously simpler emphasis regarding their use as a venue for leisure and sport, criticized by Rohde & Kendle (1997), but there has been criticism that parks have been viewed as optional amenities rather than as vital components of urban infrastructure (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989).

Component of Health	Contribution of Parks	Key References
Physical	Provide a variety of settings and infrastructure for various levels of formal and informal sport and recreation, for all skill levels and abilities e.g. picnicking, walking, dog training, running, cycling, ball games, sailing, surfing, photography, bird watching, rambling, rock climbing, camping.	(Friedmann et al., 1983a; Friedmann et al., 1983b; Parsons, 1991; Ulrich, et al., 1991b; Rohde and Kendle, 1997; Beck and Katcher, 1996; Frumkin, 2001)
Mental	Make nature available for restoration from mental fatigue; solitude and quiet; artistic inspiration and expression; educational development (e.g. natural and cultural history)	(Furnass, 1979; Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan and Kaplan, 1990; Hartig et al., 1991; Kaplan, 1995)
Spiritual	Preserve the natural environment for contemplation, reflection and inspiration; invoke a sense of place; facilitate feeling a connection to something beyond human concerns, contact/interface with art.	(Ward Thompson et al, 2005; Cumes, 1998; Cordell et al., 1998; Martin, 1996; Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989; Kuo and Sullivan, 2001; Kuo, 2001)
Social	Provide settings for people to enhance their social networks and personal relationships from couples and families, to social clubs and organisations of all sizes, from casual picnicking to events day and festivals	(Chu and Simpson, 1994; Wilkinson and Marmot, 2003; (Shinew et al., 2004; Ravenscroft and Markwell 2000; Bhatti and Church, 2000)
Environmental	Preserve ecosystems and biodiversity, provide clean air and water, maintain ecosystem function, and foster human involvement in the natural environment (Friends of Parks groups, etc.)	(Gutowski, 1994 in Lewis, 1996; Pryor, Carpenter and Townsend, 2005 p. 11; Pretty, J. and Smith, D. 2003. Social Capital in Biodiversity Conservation and Management. Conservation Biology 18(3): 631-638.)

Table 2 - A Summary of the contribution of parks to human health, and wellbeing in relation to the ecological model of health. Adopted from Healthy Parks, Healthy People. The health benefits of contact with nature in a park context. Review of relevant literature, 2nd edition, March 2008.

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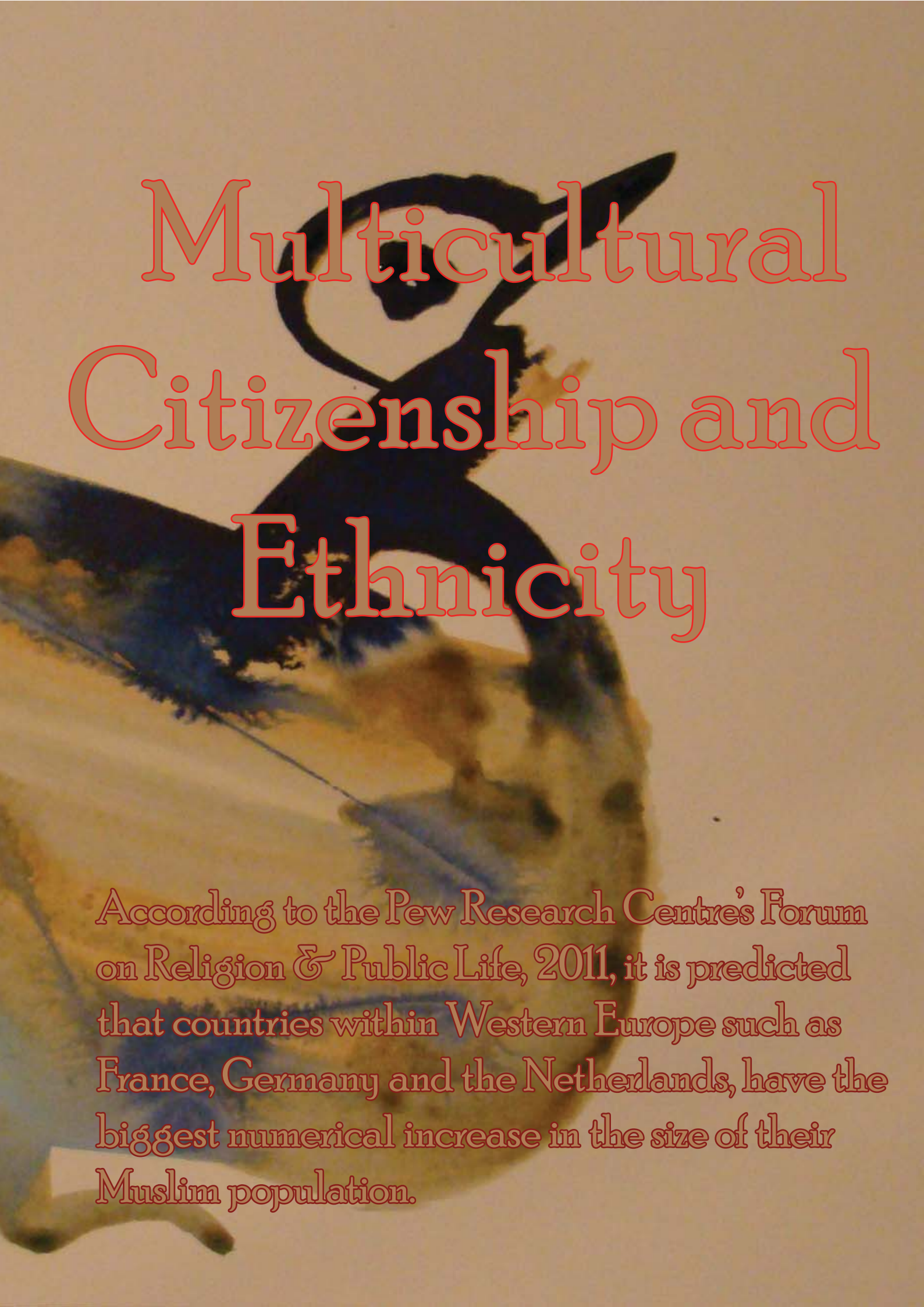


Multicultural Citizenship and Ethnicity

According to the Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2011, it is predicted that countries within Western Europe such as France, Germany and the Netherlands, have the biggest numerical increase in the size of their Muslim population.

3.1 Introduction

According to the Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion & Public Life in 2011, it is predicted that countries within Western Europe such as France, Germany and the Netherlands, have the biggest numerical increase in the size of their Muslim population. The number of Muslims living in these parts of Europe is projected to increase by 5.1 million, from 11.3 million in 2010 to 16.4 million in 2030. The Muslim share of Western Europe's total population is expected to increase from 6.0% in 2010 to 8.6% in 2030.

The number of Muslims living in Northern Europe, which includes the United Kingdom, is expected to increase from 3.8 million in 2010 to 7.5 million in 2030. Muslims are expected to make up 7.0% of Northern Europe's population, up from 3.8% in 2010.

3.2 Minority Ethnic Groups and Immigrants in Western Societies

According to a report (Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities: European Country Cases and Debates, 2010) published by National Institute for Health and Welfare, Helsinki, Germany, France and the UK which are the EU member States have the highest numbers of immigrants. The report states that the migrant influx to these countries from 2001 has become relatively modest compared to what is happening in Spain and Italy today. Many immigrants who enter the European Union through its 'Southern gates' may, however, continue to countries in Northern Europe, where salaries tend to be higher, unemployment rates lower and the welfare state more developed (S. Mannia et al. 2010). Chart 1, shows the growing average rate of migration in 25 European Union Member States plus Romania.

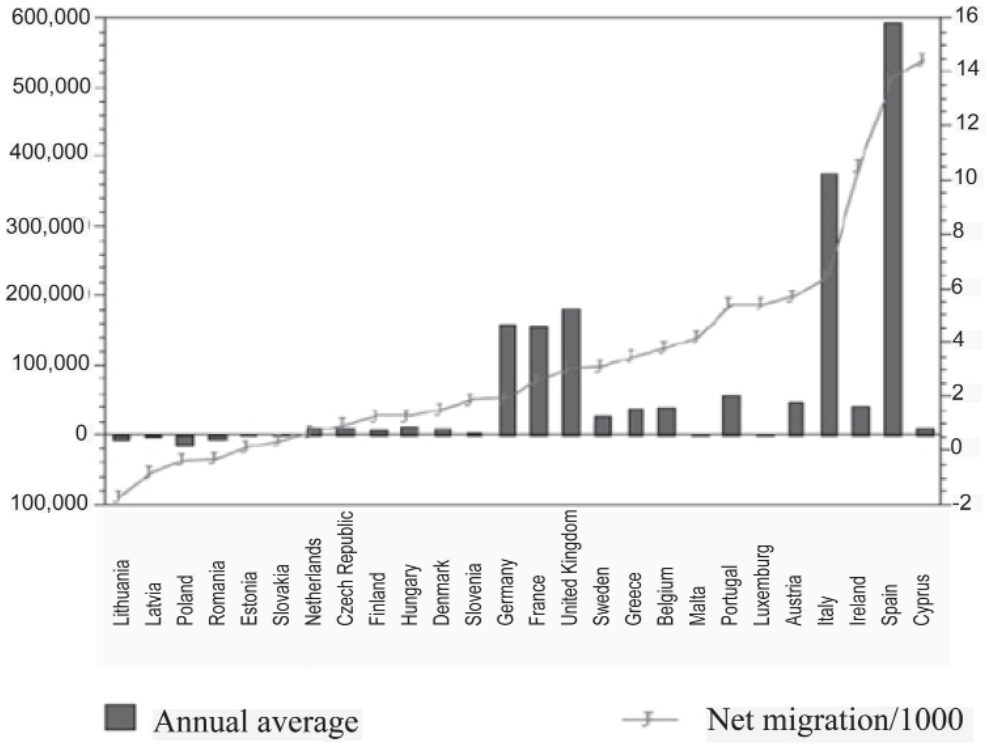


Chart 1 - Migration in 25 European Union member States + Romania. Average annual growth and net migration per 1,000 inhabitants (2001–2005) (Laparra & Martínez, 2008). Adopted from the report Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities: European Country Cases and Debates, 2010.

According to the same report (Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities: European Country Cases and Debates, 2010), the population of Muslims in Europe is diverse, consisting citizens and newly arrived immigrants and most of the Muslim population lives in capital cities and large industrial towns.

In another report (Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population, October 2009) total population of the Muslims in Europe is around 38 million and by 2025 this number will be doubled - Table 3.

Reports also indicate that the majority of Muslims are a long-standing and integral part of the fabric of their cities, many experience discrimination and social and economic disadvantages (Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities: European Country Cases and Debates, 2010).

According to a report published by Crisis Group Europe, Germany[2], with a population of 82.4 million, has the largest Muslim minority (3.2 to 3.4 million) in Western Europe, after France. However, use of the designation "Muslim" belies an internally diversified population. Roughly three-quarters (2.5-2.6 million) are immigrants from Turkey or their descendants, who are more than a third of the country's 7.3 million foreigners and some 3 percent of the general population. The remainder originate in nearly all parts of the Muslim world but only 5 percent are of Arab origin. From Turkish immigrants in Germany to British Indians and Pakistanis, Islam is a vital element in the orchestration of ethnic identity within European societies, especially for the first generations of the immigrants[3].

	Estimated 2009 Muslim Population	Percentage of Population that is Muslim	Percentage of World Muslim Population
Russia	16,482,000	11.7%	1.0%
Germany*	4,026,000	~5	<1
France	3,5554,000	~6	<1
Albania	2,522,000	79.9	0.2
Kosovo	1,999,000	89.6	0.1
United Kingdom	1,647,000	2.7	0.1
Bosnia-Herzegovina	1,522,000	~4.0	<1
Netherlands	946,000	5.7	0.1
Bulgaria	920,000	12.2	0.1
Republic of Macedonia	680,000	33.3	<0.1
Rest of region	3,814,000	1.1	0.2
Regional Total	**38,112,000**	**5.2**	**2.4**
World Total	**1,571,198,000**	**22.9**	**100.0**

* Data for Germany, France and Bosnia-Herzegovina come primarily from general population surveys, which are less reliable than censuses or large-scale demographic and health surveys for estimating minority-majority ratios (see Methodology). As a result, the percentage of the population that is Muslim in these three countries is rounded to the nearest integer.
Note: Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding. (adopted: Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, Mapping the Global Muslim Population, October 2009).

Table 3 - Countries in Europe with the highest number of Muslims.

[2]Islam and Identity in Germany, Crisis Group Europe Report N°181, 14 March 2007.
[3]A. Al-Azmeh, Islam in Europe: Diversity, Identity and Influence Cambridge University Press 2007.

3.3 Ethnicity and Perception of the Place

Environmental psychologists have established an area of investigation with the relationship between cultural and ethnic background and perception of place. Most studies focus on rural landscapes and those, which are urban-based, tend to question preferences for the familiar or the exotic elements of built and natural environment (Canter & Thorne, 1972; Zube et al., 1983; Kaplan & Herbert, 1988; Nasar, 1988).

According to Johnston, M. and Shimada L. D. (2004), Loukaitou-Sideris (1995) and Hutchinson (1987) have carried out surveys in the USA that specifically looks at the perception and use of urban park landscapes by people of different ethnic groups. Different patterns of use between white, black, Hispanic and Chinese park-users in terms of group size and activities undertaken were identified. In addition Loukaitou-Sideris (1995) looked at differences amongst ethnic groups with regard to park quality values. In their studies they showed that white users were more likely to value the aesthetic qualities, whereas Hispanics and black users placed higher emphasis on the social opportunities noting that Hispanics often visiting parks in large extended family and community groups. Chinese users were comparatively few in number, and in interviews implied that US urban parks fell short of the aspirations of the Chinese concept of the beautiful garden-type landscape. For example, the Hispanics tended to use the parks in large groups, brought picnics and rated the relaxing and social aspects most highly. Chinese people, however, were significantly absent from the parks, despite the many Chinese living locally. In discussion with the few Chinese users, the researchers found a discrepancy between the existing park design and the Chinese perception of an ideal park as an exquisite, beautiful space (Loukaitou-Sideris (1995) and Hutchinson (1987)). Studies in the UK suggest that Asian groups do like to use urban parks, especially if the focus is family gatherings and food (Burgess et al., 1988; Blackburn Groundwork Trust, 1999), though they often have particular concerns about fear of crime and contact with dogs (Woolley & Amin, 1995; Madge, 1997).

Regarding the community garden of public space, most academic studies have been undertaken in the USA, partially due to the movements of the 1960s in recovering urban wasteland in New York (Schmelzkopf, 1995). In a study of 63 upstate New York community garden programs, Armstrong (2000) found that in over 30% of the gardens, gardeners from ethnic minority groups formed the majority. Schmelzkopf (1995) also reported high ethnic diversity although found that the leadership roles were predominantly undertaken by white participants. On this respect and according to Rishbeth (2004) comparisons with community gardens in the UK must be made with care, since the emphasis on top-down policies in the USA tends to mean that appropriation of space for public spaces is a more reactionary action. The provision of allotments in UK cities means that community gardens in the UK are less likely to prioritize food production compared to their US counterparts. The use of public green space in the UK by people from ethnic minority groups is covered more fully in Rishbeth (2001) and Morris (2003).

A report from the Runnymede Trust (Islamophobia a challenge for us all, 1997) states that, *"All communities [minority and majority] are changing and complex, with internal diversity*

and disagreements." Rishbeth (2004) challenges this report and states: *"Despite the difficulty of terminology and definition, it is important to address the issues and impact of a multicultural society. A well-intentioned 'colour-blindness' is not an adequate response if designed landscapes are to be inclusive. The situation is far from simple, with a range of social, cultural and environmental factors which need at least to be acknowledged - and many of which need to be addressed on a political as well as an individual level."*

In the same article and in an argument about ethnic diversity in park use Rishbeth raised these questions: "Should landscape architects make different design decisions with regard to the ethnic profile of users? What difference does this make to their work?" To respond to these questions she stretches back to the history of environmental psychology and related researches and states: *"....in the past research tended to focus on environmental perception, questioning whether one group of people rates views for scenic value differently from another. In terms of ethnicity, these findings are contradictory. More pertinent, though, are the studies into the concept of place attachment - the importance of places as having cultural and symbolic value beyond their appearance. For immigrants, this underlies the importance of the physical landscape as a contribution to culture shock and the challenge of feeling 'settled' in a new country."*

In a study about Russian migrants resided in Israel, Churchman & Mitrani (1997) evaluated a range of factors, which influenced the experience of transition by people who emigrated from the former Soviet Union to Israel. They found that the strongest 'homesickness' was for the parks that people had left behind. They also addressed some of the more ambiguous relationships between migrants and their adopted homeland. Analysing responses of nostalgia for the home country, they found that the most regretted places left behind were parks in the former USSR, with streetscape also often mentioned. Those who had a positive reason for moving to Israel were likely to express lower levels of nostalgia for their previous neighbourhood.

In another work Burgess, J., Harrison, C., and Limb, M. (1988) studied the use and perception of parks in South London by Asian women and in a discussion with the users the research drew a link between using open space and a sense of the 'homeland'; the importance of open space both as a conduit for nostalgia and as a way of recognising familiarity in the new.

More easily defined examples relate to differences in how groups and individuals use public open space. Research by Loukaitou-Sideris (1995) in the United States of America found significant differences in the patterns of use and qualities valued in Los Angeles parks by Hispanic, African American, Chinese and white users.

Black Environmental Network (BEN) has been instrumental in developing programmes in partnership with bodies such as the National Parks and the Youth Hostel Association to provide positive experiences of outdoor activities in the countryside. On the basis of information retrieved from BEN website in recent years a number of programmes have addressed the issues of barriers to use of the countryside and of environmental activities in the UK by ethnic minority groups. A number of factors are cited, amongst them low socio-economic factors, particularly the need to work long hours and low car

ownership; negative experience of the British weather. This may seem a facile statement, but climate underpins the pattern of outdoor activities: a lack of information and awareness about the countryside worries about getting lost and coming into contact with animals.

The Viewfinder project was undertaken in Sheffield, UK in 2004 and investigated immigrants' perceptions and experiences of urban public open space (POS) in the UK and aimed to pilot an innovative methodology that would be responsive to the complex nature of landscape perception and use, and would allow researchers to work sensitively with a participant group of refugees and asylum seekers.

Through a comprehensive literature review it was clear that there are substantial amount of research works in area of environmental psychology that are highlighted in following sections, but at the time of the literature review there was not a single study undertaken about Muslims as minority ethnic groups and their relationship with the local parks considering their identity and cultural background. However researchers such as Hartig, T. and Rishbeth, C. (2001 & 2002), have studied the relationship of ethnicity and landscape architecture without focusing on a group of Muslim park users in a multicultural city such as Birmingham City. Although Rishbeth in her research work in 2005 investigated Asian and African immigrants' perceptions and experiences of urban green spaces in Sheffield City/UK and studied how and why they participated in the research or avoid to participate. The results of her study shows that for a specific refugee group that she investigated, there are many physical and psychological barriers for their relationship with the green spaces that need to be overcome if the full benefits of urban public open space are to be realized by refugee users (Rishbeth C. & Finney N. 2006).

3.4 Ethnicity and Identity

Jonathan Friedman (1994) in Cultural Identity and Global Systems raised basic questions about the relations between culture and identity in multi-society social systems. He believes that culture is more about the attribution of a meaning to the individuals which subsequently is considered cultural identity. His detailed explanations about cultural identity and its root in ancient Greek and Hellenism are widely described but out of the scope of this research to be mentioned. In his contribution to the ethnicity and identity he explored forms of cultural identity and conditions that are in use for the establishment and maintenance of cultural identity or ethnicity. He believes that there are strong tie between personal identity and ethnicity and certain ethnic groups consider culture as a means of "distinction" as he states in p. 29:

> *"I am Greek because I live like this, have these symbols, practice such-and-such a religion, etc. "*

Friedman clears the above statement by arguing that such identity expression separates the person with which he or she identifies as social selfhood and immediate subjectivity of identity become separate from each other (p.29):

> *"I am Greek because I do this, that and the other thing does not imply the converse, that I do this, that and the other thing because I am Greek."*

Friedman, also explains that if "cultural identity" is the generic concept, referring to the attribution of a set of qualities to a given population that is experienced as carried by individual, in the blood, it is in fact what is commonly known as ethnicity, therefore cultural ethnicity is not practiced but inherent, not achieved but ascribed. (p. 29). He also has another useful explanation for cultural identity by respecting modern social system in which various culturally defined groups exists in a void defined by the space of the nation constituted by sum total of identically defined individuals. Cultural identity as Friedman conclude is something that individual have and that is the basis of a certain kind of social identity, but such identity is never the content of the social institutions of society and has no institutional role (Diagram 7).

To understand different aspects of a relationship that Muslim immigrants develop while they are living in a Western city, it is important to list such aspects and look at research works and literature that highlighted such complex dimensions.

One of the most important aspects that need to be addressed is individual identity.

Friedman defines social identity as an identity that exists in presence or absence of cultural criteria of classification. He does not suggest that 'citizenery' is in no sense of cultural phenomenon as he believes it is clearly a specific kind of organisation with a definite semantic content. He continues that culture is simply the specific content of social form. To define 'citizenery' which is important criteria in this research, Friedman believes citizenery is empty with respect to ethnicity, religion and tradition in general as it is relevant only to the fact of formal membership in a larger

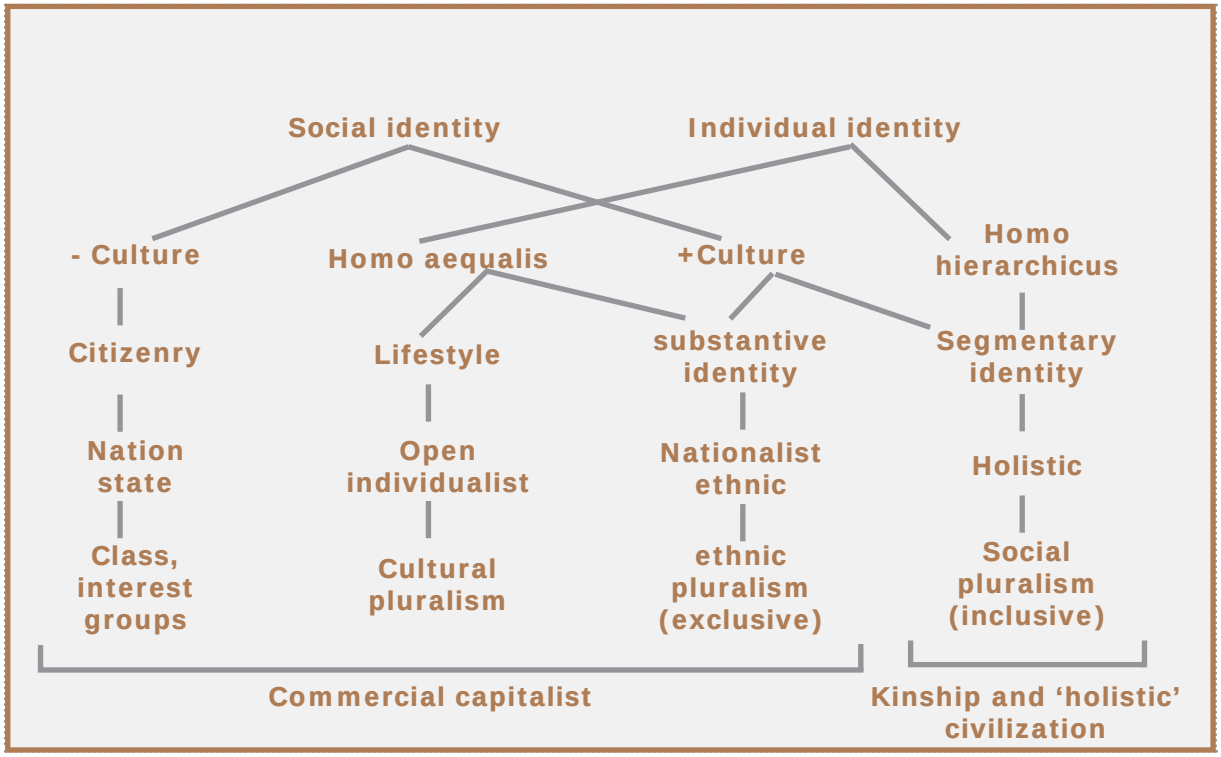


Diagram 6 - Social and individual identity, Adopted from Jonathan Friedman (1994) in Theory, Culture and Society: Cultural Identity and Global Process.

political unit. In his explicit explanation of Diagram 7 about different types of identity, Friedman suggests there are two broad types of cultural identity:

Lifestyle: which is the least ascriptive as it refers to the practice of a culturally specific scheme which makes no claims to historical legitimacy and which can be freely chosen by individual subject.

Ethnic: it must create a subdivision within the larger population of culturally identical citizens which can only be accomplished by redefining the individual, by making him culturally specific.

Friedman defines ethnicity within the world of Homo aequalis (a member of an egalitarian society, a society which absences equality) a phenomenon which is achieved by differentiating a segment of the population in terms of properties ascribed to each member of that segment.

There are considerable research works about sense of place, human–nature relationship, therapeutic effects of landscape and human wellbeing in relation to the green landscape without considering the identity of the actors who were involved in such researches.

Many studies evaluate different aspects of new communities that shaped around and within the cities by immigrants and how they cope with new environment. According to Tim O'Riordan (2001), "global village" is constructed based on the revolutionary movements of radio and television, the long haul jets and the advent of internet that all helped the outreach of the multinational population to create global village. Although he argues that it is probable to have 'local globe' or 'localization of globalization' in 21st century.

Global village as a concept that is widely in use in recent decades need to be more studied from the angle of personal identity.

Cherni J (2001) believes that psychology and sociology are underpinning disciplines in study of identity as individualism and inner process is a psychological domain and in contrast sociologists dealing with individualism as a component of society and its institutions. A remarkable description of social and local identities after analyzing the relationship between capitalism and democracy is the relationship of consumerism and citizenship that the latter led her to propose a new definition of identity. In her essay Social-Local Identities, Cherni argues that identity at one level is the expression of citizenship in the form of group distinctiveness, connectedness and capacity to become collectively aware of how neighbours and partners are being treated by various drivers of change so she believes that through identity, people may become more or less secure, more or less empathetic with their networks, or more or less connected to the general social order (J. Cherni 2001).

She argues that identity can be understood as either having a sense of personal experience 'I know myself therefore I am' or seen as a social constructs in which others know me 'others know me, therefore I am', 'I know myself therefore I am' (Cherni 2001).

In another reference, O'Riordan (2001), argues that definitions of the terms local, locality, localism and localisation all refer to place and distinctiveness of the place which may seem to run counter to globalisation in reaffirming boundaries. Although political boundaries or territories may become more permeable, cultural boundaries are being strengthened as localities of place are defined in relation to other

localities across the globe. Therefore the spatial dimension cannot be ignored by discourses of globalisation as there is a possibility to see a locality as a dynamic arrangement of institutional networks and social and cultural constructs. He also mentions that these combinations will be different for every individual but there will be some areas of commonality – such as language, landscape and religion. According to O'Riordan, although a person may experience multiple identifications, social-local identity applies to residents who see themselves as part of local and groups; who share similar personal characteristics such as economic position, power and ethnicity are conscious of treatment that society metes out to its members; who are a common fate and have similar political visions.

According to the above passage and the notion of social relations that make places, it seems that the local parks within Muslim dominant communities have found a special character because of the influence of the Muslim users and it plays a role in terms of social identity of the park-users as this research will clarifies through case studies in Birmingham and Aachen. This conclusion is in line with existing research findings in respect of its attention to identity and sense of place that makes an acceptable connection between Muslim park-users, their identity and neighbourhood parks.

3.5 Islamic Culture and Religion

Since the establishment of Islam in 7th century especially in recent decades because of the outbreak of radical Islamists in West and their relations to many terrorist attacks all around the world, many books and articles are written about Islam by different scholars, theologists and critics to comprehend the notion of Islamic culture, its foundation and principles. For the purpose of this research which is about Muslim immigrants as minority ethnic groups in West, it is necessary to briefly describe Islamic culture and religion as spiritual foundation of a Muslim family.

Islamic culture is a term that mainly describes the cultural practices common to Muslim people in different geographical locations. As the religion of Islam originated in 7th century in Arabia, the early forms of Muslim culture were predominantly rooted in Arab world. With the rapid expansion of the Islamic empires, Muslims expanded Islamic culture and influenced and assimilated much from the Persian, Turks, Pakistani, Mongol, Indian, Malay, Berber, Indonesian, Greek-Roman Byzantine, Spanish, Sicilian, Balkans, Filipino and Western cultures. Islamic culture generally includes all the practices which have developed around the religion of Islam, including Qur'anic ones such as prayer (salah) and non-Qur'anic such as divisions of the world in Islam mainly Shi'eh and Sunni (Zubaida, 2004).

3.6 Specific Rules and Norms Affecting Muslims

For a better understanding of Muslims expectations and anticipations as park-users in a culturally diverse society such as Birmingham, it is essential to describe the structure of a typical Muslim family according to Islamic culture, thoughts and beliefs. Although a majority of the second and third generations of Muslim immigrants may not follow the same principles their parents followed, research shows how much Islamic thoughts and principles affects the usage of neighbourhood parks by Muslim park users. For this purpose, there are Islamic concepts that

need to be reviewed and demonstrate their relationship with the attitude of a Muslim park user if she/he is religious and bounded to Islamic law (Shariah). As this research is not focusing directly on Islamic notions as one of the objectives, it is planned to point out on few basic concepts in Islam that are basic and general across all sects in Islam and they need to be understand before looking at the behavioral prototype of Muslim immigrants as park users that are reflected in this research. Islamic concepts such as Mahramiyat, Hijab and Haya (Modesty) are described with references to specific Chapters and verses in Qur'an that is base of the Islamic law (Shariah) (Zubaida, 2004).

3.7 Islamic Laws and Muslim Responsibility

According to the Islam Project[4] , Shari'ah, or Islamic law is the centrepiece of the religion of Islam and it is based on the Qur'an, which Muslims believe is the revealed book of God given to Muhammad over 23 years, ending in 632 AC, and the Sunnah, or example of the Prophet Muhammad, whom Muslims believe was divinely guided. The Hadith, which are sayings of Prophet Muhammad and provide information about the Sunnah, were recorded in the two centuries after Muhammad's death in authenticated hadith collections. Islamic law prescribes Muslim behaviour in every aspect of life from private matters between the individual and God to relationships with others from the family or the widest community. The Shari'ah contains categories and subjects of Islamic law called the branches of fiqh (literally, „understanding"). They include Islamic worship, Family relations, Inheritance, Commerce, Property law, Civil law, Criminal law, Administration, Taxation, Constitution, International Relations, War and Ethics, and other categories.

For the purpose of this research the following topics will be briefed to have a better understanding of Islamic laws that affects Muslims and the way they communicate in a Muslim society respecting genders and family structure.

- Man and Woman in Islam
- Mahram
- Hijab
- Modesty (Haya)
- Muslims and Environment

3.7.1 Man and Woman in Islam

According to Khurshid Ahmad in the organisation of the family, a man is in the position of the head and the over-all supervisor. In a Muslim family a father is responsible for the world out of the home and his major duty is to support the family economically and materially, one of his major responsibilities that most of the time is the root of conflicts between youngsters and parents is to look after the relations of the family with the rest of the society, economy and policy and he has to take care of the demands of internal discipline within the family. In contrary a Muslim mother's major responsibilities lie within the family and it is limited to child bearing and care, cooking, sewing, housekeeping and housewifery.

Khurshid Ahmad and many other Islamic scholars refer to verses in Qur'an which support this notion of male and female duties within the organization of a Muslim family.

Qur'an has 30 chapters, each chapter consist of different number of verses which are addressed here with their

[4]www.islamproject.org/overview/overview.htm

relevant figures (No. of Chapter: No. of verse) at the beginning of each citation from Qur'an. For example the following citation which is 4:34 means, the citation is taken from Chapter 4 (The Woman) verse 34:

> Qur'an (4:34) - *"Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (And last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them Means (of annoyance): For Allah is Most High, great (above you all)."*

This is in the interests of proper organisation and management within the family. There is equality in rights. There is demarcation of responsibilities. Man has been made head of the family so that order and discipline are maintained. Both are enjoined to discharge their respective functions with justice and equity.

The question of equality or inequality of the sexes is not what this research aims to achieve and prevail but basic understanding of Islamic notion about male and female and structure of a Muslim family will help to understand how the Muslim park-users deal with different aspects of their Islamic life in a non-Islamic society especially a diverse one such as Birmingham city.

It is also important to recall other Islamic principles that a Muslim family find them challenging in a non-Muslim society such as establishment of an ideological society according to Islamic Sharia which means the society has to be fulfilled with a high level of moral awareness, strong commitment to the ideal of religious leaders and purposive orientation of all human behaviour.

Because of such principles Muslim scholars believe that a Muslim family is protected by prohibiting sex outside marriage. Fornication as such has been forbidden and made a punishable offence. All roads that lead to this evil as Khurshid claims are blocked and whatever paves the way towards it is checked and eliminated. That is why promiscuity in any form is forbidden. The notion behind Islamic system of Hijab is to protect the family and closes those avenues that lead towards illicit sex or even indiscriminate contact between the sexes in society. It prescribes essential rules and regulations about dress, modes of behaviour, rules of contract between the sexes and a number of other questions that are central or ancillary to it.

Now with the above introduction to the Muslim way of thinking in family and society and the challenges they are experiencing to meet the minimum moral requirements that a Muslim should carry, it is clear why Muslim park-users are happy for discriminating non-Muslim park-users for their inappropriate dressing and/or sexual behaviour in public.

There are many citations from Qur'an about place of women in society and how and why she should be protected:

Qur'an (33:33) - *"And abide quietly in your homes... Women are confined to their homes except when they have permission to go out."*

Qur'an (2:223) - *"Your wives are as a tilth unto you; so approach your tilth when or how ye will."*

3.7.2 Mahram

According to Khurshid Ahmad (1974) and reference to Diagram 8, Mahram is an Arabic word and an Islamic legal term with no synonym in English language. Literally mahram is the status of a Muslim person who is not able to marry or has sexual relation with number of his or her kins.

From a Muslim perspective there are principles that affect outdoor and indoor activities especially for female Muslims. Without considering different sectors in Islam (Sunni, Shi'eh) and as a general principle according to Islamic law, anyone whom a Muslim is not allowed to marry is called mahram. It is worth to mention that a mahram is one with whom marriage is permanently unlawful. This is the reason why mahram is translated in English as unmarriageable kin. This permanent prohibition of marriage is established in three ways: By kinship, foster relationship and relationship through marriage.

The concept of mahram in Islam, affects many aspects of the life of both genders as well as being a challenging subject in Western communities where Muslim youngsters by disobeying this legal necessity initiate severe cultural and religious conflicts in their community.

Children in a Muslim family have special place which is affected directly by Islamic law and cultural background of the family as Islam is now a worldwide religion and Muslim communities all around the world are subject to be influenced by dominant cultural framework of the community. Females before marriage have to be supported and guarded by father and in case of his absence the responsibility shifts to her grandfathers, or brothers and uncles (father and mother brothers). These male guardians for a Muslim female are only people who are considered Mahram (of close relationship, with whom marriage is forbidden). Permanent or blood Mahrams with whom one is Mahram by a blood relationship are:

- father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, great-grandfather, great-grandmother and so on
- brother, sister
- son, grandson, great-grandson, daughter, grand-daughter, great-grand-daughter
- uncle, aunt, great-uncle, great-aunt, and so on
- nephew, niece, grandnephew, grandniece, great-grandnephew, great-grandniece and so on

In-law Mahrams with whom one becomes Mahram by marrying someone:

- father-in-law, mother-in-law
- son-in-law, daughter-in-law
- stepfather (mother's husband) if their marriage is consummated, stepmother (father's wife) if their marriage is consummated
- stepson (husband's son) if their marriage is consummated
- stepdaughter (wife's daughter) if their marriage is consummated

Relationship of fosterage (radha) is a Mahram through the relationship

of lineage, will also be considered a Mahram by fosterage.

So what is the reason to bring Mahram concept to explain the gender and age of the Muslim Park-users? The concept of Mahram reveals how male and female relationship in Islam is restricted and is limited to number of family members that a Muslim individual is free to communicate with although there are Islamic principles to get involved with non-Mahrams as well. In this latter notion; none of the female Muslims are allowed to establish any kind of relationship with non-Mahram males. In Qur'an one of the most important commands from God which is the reference of Mahramiyat is

> Qur'an (4:22-23) - *"And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed; indeed it was shameful and most hateful, and an evil way. Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your foster mother who breastfed you, your foster sisters, your wives' mothers, your stepdaughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in -but there is no sin on you if you have not done so (to marry their daughters), the wives of your sons who spring from your loins, and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has already passed; verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

Also in Qur'an there are verses that order men and women to lower their gaze on non-Mahram females as it is one of the biggest sins in Islam:

> Qur'an (24:30) - *"Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: And Allah is well acquainted with all that they do."*
>
> Qur'an (24:31) - *"And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or the slaves whom their right hands possess, or male servants free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And O ye Believers! turn ye all together towards Allah, that ye may attain Bliss."*

These verses from chapter 24 (The Light) in Qur'an, make it clear that why traditional Muslim families expect certain qualities in their neighbourhood or society as we will see in this research

what they expect within a park that are unlikely to be requested from a non-Muslim park-user. The mixture of non-Mahram park-users and enforcement of Hijab as well as gaze avoidance in opposite sexes are examples of challenges that a Muslim family is facing while they spend their free time in a local park.

3.7.3 Hijab

Khurshid Ahmad (1974), describes Hijab as an Arabic word which means veil, curtain, illusion, partition and separation and continues with citation from Qur'an in which there are verses commanding wives of Prophet Mohammed to go veiled and use Hijab:

> Qur'an (33: 59) - *"O Prophet! Tell thy wives and thy daughters, as well as all [other] believing women, that they should draw over themselves some of their outer garments [when in public]: this will be more conducive to their being recognized [as decent women] and not annoyed.*

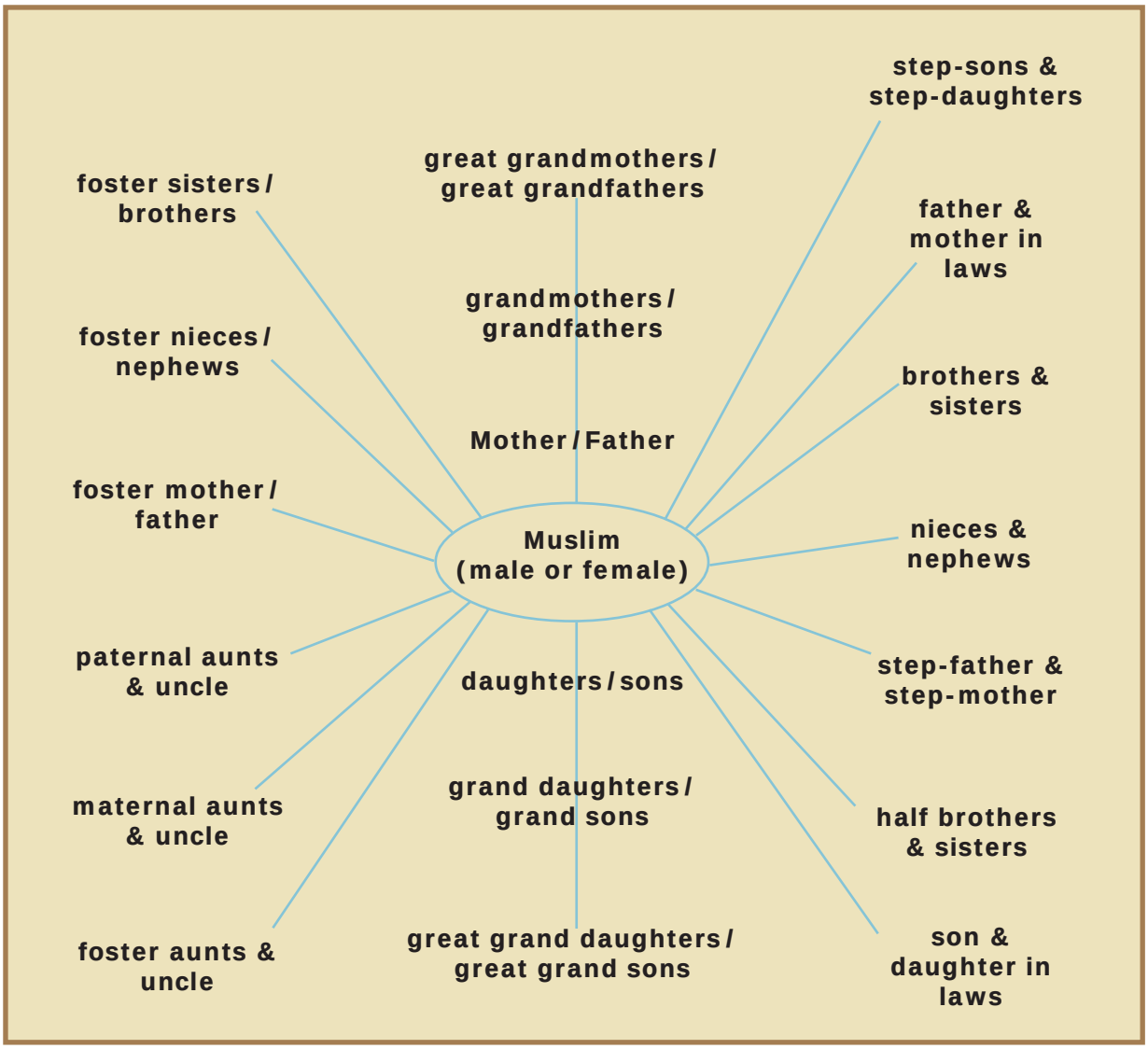


Diagram 7 - Muslims and concept of mahram relationship. According to Islamic law a Muslim male or female is mahram with his/her close family members in opposite sex, if the person is in such family relation.

But [withal,] God is indeed much-forgiving, a dispenser of grace."

Qur'an orders women to cover their „adornments" from strangers (non-Mahrams) that are members of the opposite sex outside the family. Another verse of Qur'an in Chapter 24 (The Light) refers to the institution of a new public modesty rather than veiling the face.

Qur'an (24: 31) - *"And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and to be mindful of their chastity, and not to display their charms [in public] beyond what may [decently] be apparent thereof; hence, let them draw their head-coverings over their bosoms. And let them not display [more of] their charms to any but their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands' fathers, or their sons, or their husbands' sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their womenfolk, or those whom they rightfully possess, or such male attendants as are beyond all sexual desire, or children that are as yet unaware of women's nakedness; and let them not swing their legs [in walking] so as to draw attention to their hidden charms. And [always], O you believers – all of you – turn unto God in repentance, so that you might attain to a happy state!"*

This is one of the most fundamental laws in Islam and all females have to obey this law where ever they live and under any circumstances, in their entire life. So it is obvious that such law affects many aspects of a female Muslims' life. According to the Islamic law Hijab is defined as a type of modest dressing as covering everything except the face and hands in public and it has given the wider meaning of modesty, privacy, and morality. According to Islamic texts, the word for a headscarf or veil used in the Qur'an is khimār and not hijab and there is another metaphysical definition where al-hijab refers to „the veil which separates man or the world from God. Hijab should be used from the age of nine that a girl enters puberty stage of her life and it is the age of marriage in Islam according to Islamic Shariah .

3.7.4 Modesty (Haya)

Haya or modesty in Islamic context is a word which describes both shyness and a deeper modesty that is based on faith. For many people in the West, the modest dress of Muslims particularly the woman's headscarf or hijab has become synonymous with the concept of modesty in Islam although it encompasses far more than the clothes one wears. Modesty, as defined in Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, is "freedom from conceit or vanity" and "propriety in dress, speech or conduct." Islam takes the concept of modesty even further. Modesty in Islam is known as haya, a word which describes both shyness and a deeper modesty that is based on faith. In the Holy Qur'an, God says:

Qur'an (7:26) - *"O children of Adam, We have provided you with garments to cover your bodies, as well as for luxury. But the best garment is the garment of righteousness. These are some of God's signs, that they may take heed."*

A sense of haya should affect a Muslim's behaviour before God, before others and even when one is alone as through Islamic lessons God is everywhere and Muslims have to live in a way that they are living in the God's presence so a faithful Muslim is the modest one.

> Qur'an (57:4) - *".... and He is with you wheresoever ye may be. And Allah is Seer of what ye do."*

3.7.5 Muslims and Environment

Nature and environment have always played an important part in the lives of Muslims as in Qur'an there are many verses within different chapters that God orders Muslims to observe the nature as an aesthetic scene and use and protect it as a source for life and living. According to F. Kamal (2007), in Islam, Muslims believe that man has been given a responsibility by God on this earth and that man will be accountable to God for his actions and the trust placed in him. Islam has urged humanity to be kind to nature and not to abuse the trust that has been placed on the shoulders of man. In fact, to be kind to animals is an integral part of Islam for Muslims which can be considered as another perspective of the relationship of Muslims and their context environment and nature.

There are many verses in different chapters of Qur'an that describes nature components such as the environment, earth (the root of this word in English is Arabic word of ardh meaning, soil and earth), water, weather conditions, rain, wind, natural balance by mountains,... (N. Deuraseh, 2010).

> Qur'an (13:3) - *"And it is He who spread out the earth, and set thereon mountains standing firm and (flowing) rivers: and fruit of every kind He made in pairs, two and two: He draweth the night as a veil over the Day. Behold, verily in these things there are signs for those who consider!"*

> Qur'an (40:64) - *"It is Allah Who has made for you the earth as a resting place, and the sky as a canopy, and has given you shape - and made your shapes beautiful, - and has provided for you Sustenance, of things pure and good;- such is Allah your Lord. So Glory to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!"*

> Qur'an (71:19) - *"And Allah has made the earth for you as a carpet (spread out)."*

> Qur'an (78:6) - *"Have We not made the earth as a wide expanse."*

> Qur'an (67:15) - *"It is He Who has made the earth manageable for you, so traverse ye through its tracts and enjoy of the sustenance which He furnishes, but unto Him is the Resurrection."*

> Qur'an (35:9) - "*It is Allah Who sends forth the winds so that they raise up the clouds, and We drive them to a land that is dead, and revive the earth therewith after its death: even so (will be) the Resurrection."*

> Qur'an (22:63) - *"See you not that Allah sends down rain from the sky, and forthwith the earth becomes clothed with green? For Allah is All-*

subtle, All-Aware."

Qur'an (36:33-35) - *"A sign for them is the earth that is dead. We revive it and We bring forth from it grain, so that they may eat thereof; and We have placed therein gardens of date-palm and grapes, and We have caused springs of water to gush forth therein, that they may eat of the fruit thereof, and their hands made it not. Will they not then give thanks?*

Qur'an (4:126) - *"But to God belong all things in the heavens and on earth: and it is He who encompassed (muhit) all things."*

3.7.6 Gardening and Islam

According to Qur'an verses, Muslims believe that heaven is a garden that is designed for good deed people by God and will be rewarded to true Muslims in a world after death. In the Qur'an there are many verses that describe the appearance of the heaven although there is a debate that Persian gardens, which were in existent before Islam, are what is described in Qur'an as the ultimate place of enjoyment for man. So the concept of Islamic garden and gardening emerged more strongly after Islam established in hot- dried countries of Middle East such as ancient Iran that used to embrace the whole Middle East and Turkey except Arabian peninsula. According to Mehdi Khansari and co-workers (2004), when in 637 AD Arab warriors invaded Persia, in the famous palace of the Sassand kings of Persia they found a carpet in form of a garden, which was modelled on a living royal garden. The dimension of the carpet recorded eighty-four by thirty-five feet. The carpet, which was in the vast audience hall at Ctesiphon on the Tigris, was later recorded by tenth-century Persian scholars and authors such as Tabari and Bal'mi (Plate 1).

Above introduction shows the reflection of historical Persian garden design on Persian carpets that in Islamic culture turned to be a resemblance of heaven as a garden. It indicates the roots of grand place of gardening and beautification of place in islamic and Persian architecture a Islamic point.

Gardening is important practice for ethnic groups with roots in Middle Eastern countries, as they believe it fulfills their moral and financial needs and through gardening process as emphasised in Qur'an they experience a happy and prosperous life.

Muslims respect nature as an important concept which is addressed in Qur'an. There are many verses in Qur'an that show the importance of nature and its components. Also heaven in Qur'an is described as a garden or paradise, which the latter has a Persian root. Pardese in Pahlavi , which converted to Pardees in Middle Persian and became Arabic as Ferdaws, as in Arabic language there is not a P. Any word with P pronounces as F, as a result Pardees became Fardees or Ferdaws as Arabs pronounce. There are two specific verses in Qur'an that Ferdaws (the typical Persian Garden) is mentioned as heaven and final destination of the man with good deed. In Qur'an the word of Ferdaws has been mentioned only twice:

Qur'an (18:107) - *"The hospitality of those who believe and do good works shall be the Gardens of Paradise."*

Qur'an (23:11) - "Who will

inherit Paradise; they shall live there forever."

And Jennah, which means paradise in Arabic, has been mentioned in 74 incidents in 72 verses:

Qur'an (2:25) - *"Bear glad tidings to those who believe and do good works. They shall live in Gardens underneath which rivers flow. Whenever they are given fruit as provision they will say: ‚This is what we were given before,' for they shall be given in resemblance. Therein they shall have pure spouses, and shall live there forever."*

Qur'an (3:15) - *"Say: ‚Shall I tell you of a better thing than that? For the cautious with their Lord, theirs shall be Gardens underneath which rivers flow, where they shall live for ever, and purified spouses, and pleasure from Allah.' Allah is watching over His worshipers."*

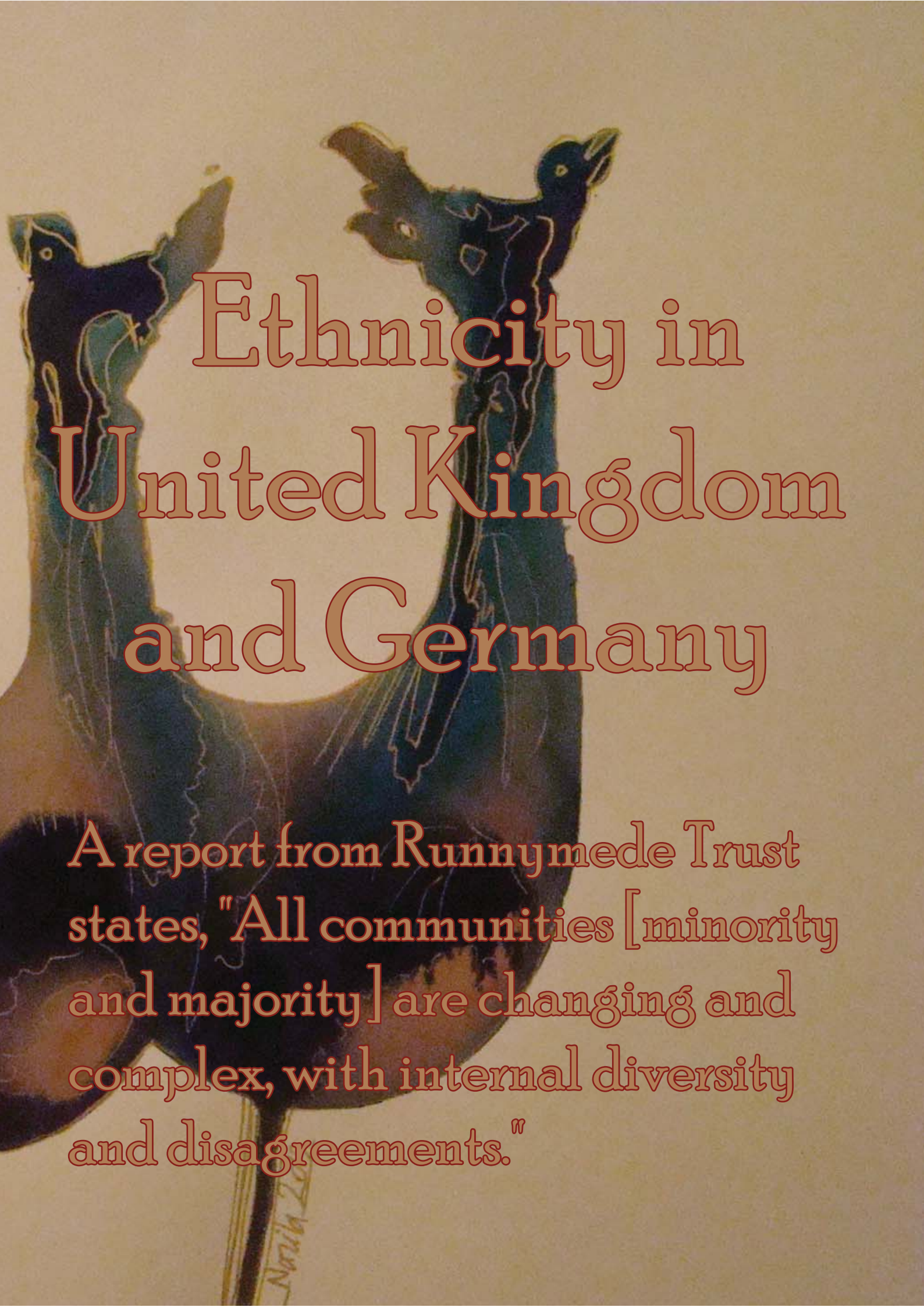
Qur'an (6:99) - *"He sends down water from the sky, and with it We bring forth the plant of every thing. From these We bring forth green foliage and composite grain, palm-trees laden with clusters of dates within reach, vineyards and olive groves and pomegranates alike and unlike. Behold their fruits when they bear fruit and ripen. Surely, in these there are signs for a nation who believe."*

Qur'an (6:141) - *"He brings forth gardens, trellised and untrellised, palm-trees and crops, different to eat, and the olive and pomegranates alike and unlike. When it bears fruit eat of it and pay what is due (the zakat) of it upon the harvest day. But do not be wasteful; He does not love the wasteful."*

Qur'an (9:72) - *"Allah has promised the believing men and women gardens underneath which rivers flow, in which they shall live for ever. Goodly mansions in the Gardens of Eden, and the pleasure from Allah which is greater. That is the greatest winning."*

Plate 1 - Isfahan chahar-bagh "Paradise Garden" carpet, 17th c. adopted from Electrum Magazine, Why the Past Matters, July 2011.

4



Ethnicity in United Kingdom and Germany

A report from Runnymede Trust states, "All communities [minority and majority] are changing and complex, with internal diversity and disagreements."

4.1 Introduction

In this Chapter, history of Birmingham and Aachen Cities is briefly introduced to give a better picture of the context environment of the minority ethnic groups who are studied in this research. In Chapter 3, multicultural citizenship and ethnicity are discussed with an introduction about minority ethnic groups and immigration in Europe. This Chapter follows the same concept which is highlighting ethnicity in Western cities such as Birmingham and Aachen Cities.

4.2 Ethnicity in United Kingdom

According to Mason (2000), Britain is a country with increasing ethnic diversity and has a long history of immigration over centuries. The combination of ethnic groups, predominantly of urban areas, is complex and constantly changing. Each generation profession has different characteristics, and chooses how to focus and report ethnic differences, based on common understandings of the significance of specific ethnic groups at that point in time.

It is out of the scope of this research to scientifically approach and describe the colourful social character of the United Kingdom as a country with a long history of ethnicity which has been an immigration hub for centuries. For this reason, and with reference to the official statistics and literatures, the focus will be only on ethnicity in Birmingham City and its diverse social character with eleven districts and forty wards which are political divisions for electoral purposes.

Plate 2 - Birmingham City Town Hall. Photo courtesy of Birmingham's Big Architecture website.

4.2.1 Birmingham City History

Birmingham city and metropolitan is located in central England. The city is the industrial hub of the England with equal distance from four major cities Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, and London. Birmingham is close to the Black Country with its iron and coal deposits and according to Encyclopaedia Britannica, it was connected to the Staffordshire mines by the Birmingham Canal in the 18th century. Birmingham is Britain's second largest city in both area and population and is the centre of water, road, and rail transportation in the Midlands.

The main industries are the manufacture of automobiles, bicycles and their components and accessories. Other products include electrical equipment, paint, guns, and a wide variety of metal products. By the 15th century, Birmingham was a market town active in leather and wool trade. By the 16th century it was also known for its many metal-works which the industry is active in Jewellery Quarter. In the English Civil War the town was in hands of pro industrial development and population growth accelerated in the 17th and 18th centuries.

In 1762, Matthew Boulton and James Watt founded the Soho metal-works, where they designed and built steam engines. In early 19th Century, Birmingham had representative in Parliament and subsequently

experienced a comprehensive development program by the municipality. The program included slum clearance and the development of gas and water works. Birmingham was among the first English localities to have a municipal bank, a comprehensive water-supply system, and development planning. The area of the city was enlarged in 1891 and again in 1911 under the Greater Birmingham scheme.

Birmingham was severely damaged in World War II with subsequent rebuilding which resulted in modernization, especially of the city centre. Birmingham important buildings are town hall, built in 1834, modelled after the temple of Castor and Pollux in Rome (Plate 2); the

Plate 3 - Cathedral of St. Philip in Birmingham, an 18th century English baroque church by Thomas Archer, with its famous stained glass by Burne Jones,Photo courtesy of Geograph website.

Plate 4 - St Chads is the Roman Catholic Cathedral in the centre of Birmingham. Photo courtesy of Carmelite Communities and Ministries in Britain.

Plate 5 - View towards Bull Ring in Birmingham City Centre, Photo by NK 2010.

Plate 6 - View towards St. Peter Church from Bull Ring in Birmingham City Centre, Photo by NK 2010.

18th century baroque-style Cathedral of St. Philip (Plate 3); and the 19th century Cathedral of St. Chad, the first Roman Catholic cathedral to be built in England after the Reformation (Plate 4). Bull Ring, in the centre of Birmingham, is the site of the city's oldest market (Plate 5 & 6). Aston and Birmingham City Universities are located in the City Centre and the University of Birmingham is in the suburb of Edgbaston (Ref. Encyclopaedia Britannica Online).

4.2.2 Birmingham Wards and Muslim Population

According to the 2001 Population Census, 70% of the City's population indicated that they had a white background, compared with National and Regional averages of about 90%.

Almost 20% of the City's population were from one of the Asian minority ethnic groups. Residents from the Black groups made up about 6% of the population. About 3% of the City's population indicated they had a Mixed Background, the majority sharing Black Caribbean and White Backgrounds. Chinese and Other groups accounted for about 1% of the population (Table 4).

In British planning system, electoral wards/divisions are the key building block of UK administrative geography, being the spatial units used to elect local government councillors in metropolitan and non-metropolitan districtsa. In Birmingham metropolitan there are fourty wards that shape eleven districts, both are under supervision of the City Council which is equal to municipality

(Plan 3, Appebdix I). Birmingham City has 40 wards and Washwood Heath and Sparkbrook wards are the most Muslim dominant wards with the minimum area of greenspace per capita (Chart 1.5). So it was aimed to select two local parks within each ward as case studies. The rationale behind this research design was to get access to as many as Muslim residents across the wards so it was necessary to understand the multicultural character and green infrastructure of the Birmingham City.

There are significant difference between wards character. Charts 2 (Appendix I) indicates the variation between wards in terms of population mix and green space available, varying from 91 to.3.8 hectare per 1000 resident. Additional data gives further breakdown regarding the dominant groups within each ward, and data regarding the physical structure of the landscape components, while aerial photographs are available as a starting point for an analysis of the overall landscape character Charts 3-5 (Appendix I).

Ethnic Group	Residents	Group Total	Percentage (%)
White		687,406	70.4
British	641,345		65.6
Irish	31,467		3.2
Other	14,594		1.5
Mixed		27,954	2.9
White & Black Carribean	15,647		1.6
White & Black African	1,448		0.1
White & Asian	6,308		0.6
Other Mixed	4,551		0.5
Asian or Asian British		190,689	19.5
Indian	55,749		5.7
Pakistani	104,017		10.6
Bangledeshi	20,837		2.1
Other Asian	10,086		1.0
Black or Black British		59,835	6.1
Caribbean	47,831		4.9
African	6,205		0.6
Other Black	5,799		0.6
Chinese or Other ethnic group		11,215	1.1
Chinese	5,105		0.5
Other	6,110		0.6
All People		**977,099**	**100**

Table 4 - Number of ethnic groups resided in Birmingham. Source: UK National Statistics, 2010.

4.2.3 Ethnicity In Birmingham City

Birmingham City's total population, according to the 2001 UK census, was 977,099 from which 2001 Census identified 140,000 Muslims with approximately 104,000 originating from Pakistan and 20,800 from Bangladesh.

According to the website of The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life , the first Muslim community which permanently settled in the United Kingdom is reported to be Yemeni sailors who arrived in ports such as Swansea, Liverpool and South Shields shortly after 1900. Later some of them migrated to inland cities like Birmingham and Sheffield where there are 23,819 Muslims.

According to the census data in 2001, 14.3% of the Birmingham population identified themselves as Muslim which comprises 140,000 Muslim population. This is significantly higher than the average for England and Wales which is 3.0%.

Muslims in Birmingham City have 161 mosques as their place of worship according to the MuslimsInBritain.org website.

Plans 2-3 (Appendix I) show the distribution of major ethnic groups including Muslim population within Birmingham City across its 40 wards. Plan 3 indicates that the concentration of Muslim community in and around the City centre is higher than the peripheral wards.

Birmingham City is considered one of the most diverse cities after London (Noha N. 2005) with a wide spectrum of people originally from Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Although the earliest Muslims to arrive in Birmingham and England generally are said to have been from Yemen and the regions of India now known as Bangladesh, it is the Kashmiri community from Mirpur in Pakistan who form the largest group of migrated Muslims.

The majority of the Muslims in Birmingham continue to be born abroad as more and more migrants arrive into the city although the number of British-

born Muslims and those who convert to the faith are said to be near 50% of the total Muslim population. More recent Muslim settlers hail from Somalia, Kosovo and Algeria and neighbouring nations (Nasser N. 2005) .

According to Nasser N. (2005) Midlands was one the areas in UK that is largely affected by large scale post-colonial migration from the mainly rural areas of the Indian subcontinent since the 1950s and today there are almost 2 million Muslims living in Britain, of whom more than half are of South Asian, primarily Pakistani, origin (Modood, 2001, p.113).

Most evident in the powerful processes of decolonization and migration has been the gradual reverse movement of architectural styles from the colonies to the heart of empire (King, 1990 p.9; Jacobs, 1996, p.20; Nasser, forthcoming). This movement signalled the beginning of major urban and architectural changes created by the post-colonial settlers.

Significant numbers of South Asian settlers have transferred their own particular cultural practices, conceptualizations of space, built forms and functional requirements to the new context, in the process modifying British urban forms to their own designs. It is important to note that not all settlers from South Asia were Muslims, and in many respects, the communities they formed share cultural, regional and linguistic identities which transcended religious affiliations (Baumann, 1996, p.144).

Birmingham is home to 7% of the nation's cultural minorities, the second largest concentration outside London (Dudrah, 2002, p.335). In terms of South Asian settlement within Birmingham, there are nearly twice as many South Asians as African and Caribbean groups and the Pakistanis form the largest single group (National Statistics Online). The spatial concentration of South Asians settled in the traditional inner city areas is represented numerically with 70% of South Asians living in eight wards.

Charts 2-5 (Appendix I) demonstrate available green space in Birmingham in each ward with respect to Mulsim population of the Birmingham City. They confirm that Muslim community in Birmingham City are amongst the most densely populated wards with minimum share of urban green space.

4.3 Ethnicity in Germany

According to the Encyclopaedia of Nations, the population of Germany in late 50s was 99% German and the only minority ethnic group was the Danes or Danish people in Schleswig-Holstein. After the Wold War II in late 50s the surge of immigrant guest workers increased the number of ethnic minorities as permanent foreign residents that Turks constitutes largest ethnic group in Germany, Table 5.

According to Ursula Spuler-Stegemann[5], the first footstep of Islam in Germany is believed to date back to 8th century, the time of Caliph Harun al-Rashid in Baghdad and Charlemagne in Aachen. The article, which was published in Spiegel Online International in 2008, does not provide references for the claims, although the author is a distinguished professor for Islamic studies at the University of Marburg in Germany. Also, it has been mentioned, various sources relate that Charlemagne established diplomatic relations with Abbasid ruler in the year 797 or 801 through which both rulers guaranteed freedom of belief for members of the other religion in their respective empires.

History of Islam in Germany has a social aspect which is more relevant to this research and it is the arrival of guest workers who resided in former West Germany to help rebuild the country after the World War II and to fuel the German economy as stated by Spuler-Stegemann. The flow of Turks, Moroccans and Tunisians workers in 60s made Islam a permanent part of the Germany's cultural landscape. In recent decades after political conflicts and wars in Middle East and Eastern Europe, Muslim immigrants have been joined by refugees from Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Bosnia. According to the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in London[6] , in 2010 the population of Turkish people living in Germany was estimated 3.5 million, although other resources published different estimates suggesting that there are more than four million Turks and German citizens with part or full Turkish ancestry in Germany[12], forming about 5% of Germany's total population[7].

The nationmaster.com[8] has published percentage of ethnic groups living in Germany in 2005. Table 5 summarizes data that were retrieved from this website and it shows Turks have the highest share of 2.4 percent of ethnic groups after Germans.

Ethnicity	%
German	91.5
Turkish	2.4
Italian	0.7
Greek	0.4
Polish	0.4
Other	4.6

Table 5 - Percentage of ethnic groups living in Germany in 2005

These statistics shows the importance of research in areas that focus on Muslim population where multiculturalism especially in Western Europe has become a focal point in social, political and cultural research. In this piece of work the focus will be on Turkish community who are living in Aachen

[5]www.spiegel.de/international/germany/allah-and-the-occident-how-islam-came-to-germany-a-559927-druck.html

[6]Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany London. "Turkey: strategically important partner". Retrieved 2010-09-08.

[7]www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/15/germans-struggling-resolve-issues-race

[8]www.nationmaster.com

City and they practice Islam as their religion to study their relations to their local park. The research is a follow up of a same research in two Wards of Birmingham City in UK.

To comprehend Muslim perspective about their local parks and the way they find themselves in such urban entity, it was necessary to look at a bigger picture and find out more about the demographic status of the Muslim population in Germany as described although access to data was so limited and impossible to access to same data such as UK National census. data protection in Germany was a big barrier in evaluating quamtitave data that would develop a clear picture of Muslims living status as immigrants in Germany and subsequently in Aachen City. the most comprehensive analysis about distribution of minority ethnic groups that are not necessariliy Muslim is demonstrated in Plan 4 (Appendux II).

4.3.1 History of Aachen City

Aachen was founded in 1306AC and historically has been a spa town in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany with 258,664 inhabitants in 2010. Its area is 161 km2 and the place of coronation of the Kings of Germany.

According to Encyclopædia Britannica, the city of Aachen also known as Aix-la-Chapelle in western Germany is best known for its association with Charlemagne and subsequent Roman emperors. It has the preserved Aachen Cathedral and its remains.

The Romans first settled in site of modern Aachen for its hot springs and they named them Aquisgranum which probably is derived from the Celtic god of water and health according to Encyclopaedia Britannica. In 790AC work began on the Aachen Cathedral and Charlemagne made Aachen his second

Plate 7a - An old photograph of historical town centre of Aachen City with Aachen Cathedral (Dome) located to the up right. Courtesy of RWTH University of Aachen, Faculty of Spatial Planning portal. The photographer is unknown and dated circa 1900-1944. Photo was taken from Lousberg with view towards the south and Hürtgen Forest.

Plate 7b - View towards south towards Aachen Cathedral (Dome) from Katschhof. Photo by NK May 2012.

Plate 7c - View from Melatener Strasse in Aachen towards northeast towards Lousberg. Photo by NK june 2012.

home, and the city quickly became an important cultural center. During his lifetime, Charlemagne collected relics to store in the cathedral's treasury, and upon his death in 814 he was himself buried within its walls. From 936 AD to 1531, Aachen Cathedral was the coronation site of the Holy Roman emperors.

Plate 7d - Klappergasse Fountain (Türelüre-Lißje) a sculpture group showing three boys and a girl by Hubert Löneke, German sculptor from Aachen. Photo by NK May 2012.

Plate 7e - The Puppenbrunnen (Dolls Fountain), another iconic urban sculpture in Aachen City centre by Bonifatius Stirnberg. Above the figures there is the rooster to remember the French occupation time. All dolls have moveable joints. Photo by NK May 2012.

Aachen's importance began to decline in the 16th century, primarily because its location became an inconvenient as the German capital. In the 1560s, the coronation site was moved to Frankfurt am Main.

Aachen was occupied by its Belgian neighbours after World War I and it suffered extensive damage in World War II. Today, Aachen is a major railway junction, an industrial centre, and a significant tourist destination. It has a population of about 257,000 people. Aachen is known in French (and to many English speakers) as Aix-la-Chapelle and in Italian as Aquisgrana (reflecting its earlier Latin name).

Plates 7a to 7e show the historical character and peaceful atmosphere of Aachen City with its iconic bronze sculptures around the town by artists such as Hubert Löneke, German sculptor from Aachen who had sculptured the bust of J F Kennedy for Kennedy Park (Plate 34, Chapter 6).

4.3.2 Ethnicity in Aachen City

No official statistics were available about minority ethnic groups such as Muslim inhabitants in Aachen City. The only official document The Integration Monitoring Report of Aachen City 2011, indicates, there are 156 nationalities living in Aachen in 2009 which the details of the population are summarised in Table 6.

Country	Total	Male	Female
Major European Countries			
Turkey	7.037	3.734	3.303
Netherland	1.607	804	803
Greece	1.472	855	617
Poland	1.308	501	807
Bosnia	1.089	556	533
Croatia	953	409	544
Russia	893	373	520
Belgium	838	399	439
Italy	838	519	319
Serbia	816	405	411
Spain	780	404	376
Ukraine	676	282	394
France	539	249	290
Major African Countries			
Morocco	744	419	325
Kongo	516	243	273
Major Asian Countries			
China	1.329	768	561
Iran	759	423	336
Iraq	603	364	239
India	426	300	126
Total of all countries	**33.326**	**17.213**	**16.113**

Table 6 - Foreign population by nationality in Aachen– Ref. Integrationsmonitoring der Stadt Aachen, August 2011.

4.3.3 A Historical Overview of Aachen-Ost

From a reference book dated 1957 edited by the City of Aachen, "Aachen - Eine Stadt an der Grenze baut auf" / "Aachen - A city built on the border", it is understood that the municipality was interested to expand green surroundings into the City. In an attempt to develop new land use plans for a city that suffered from World War II, new green open spaces and parks were envisaged to boost the aesthetical and ecological character of the City. This new land use plan (Appendix II, Plan 5) is part of the "Second Development Planning of the City of Aachen".

Urban planners emphasised on beautification and reservation of the existing forests that engulfed the city in time of development of the plan despite this fact that at present, most of the green areas of Aachen City are consumed and converted to cluster of buildings and access roads or railways. Also, in Aachen land use plan, the surrounding hilly and partially wooded landscape of the city is highlighted, not only for their aesthetic values but also for environmental reasons by so called „green fingers“ or green corridors along the river valleys to the edge of historic old town. These green areas have been identified as corridors that provide fresh air and the aim was to keep them free of any development.

Reference to an unpublished paper by Dr Dietmar Kottmann from Aachen municipality (Aachen - eine Gartenstadt, 2010), Aachen City has a long history of valuing green spaces and protecting its surrounding forests, although the increasing demand for new housing and industrial development in early twenty century and after WWII has enforced a change in land use planning. Hermann Josef Stübben a prominent urban

planner, who is one of the pioneers of urban planning in nineteen and early twenty centuries, developed the idea of Green Fingers (Green Corridors) for the City of Aachen to expand the surrounding green landscape into the core of the city. Following his idea after the World War II, facilities such as building blocks including the yellow and red barracks (gelbe und rote Kaserne) in eastern part of the city - which is now Aachen-Ost - were not functionally usable and with respect to the post WWII economy boost in Germany and increasing number of immigrants who needed living places, the municipality decided to demolish the barracks and construct new tower blocks and a public green space. This development was in line with Stübben idea of Garden Cities and Green Corridors as well as a response to new housing development in 50s and 60s.

The historical land use plan of the area (Plan 6) shows the eastern part of Aachen City (Ostviertel) were particularly significant for the railway, the nadelfabric (needle factory) as well as other heavy industries, and two historic and demolished ruins of barracks, of which hardly anyone knows anything about them. East of Aachen was not only the most important industrial and business transport centre, but also a focal point of Garden City of Aachen.

4.3.4 Kennedy Park Historical Background

Next to the Church of St. Joseph there were two barracks: The Red and the Yellow barracks which their names were reflection of the colour of the brick from which they were built. These two buildings were considered as important urban elements in its time, especially the yellow barrack that was an ancient landmark. Their importance had roots in their visibility, spatial character, size and economic importance (Plan 6 & Plate 8).

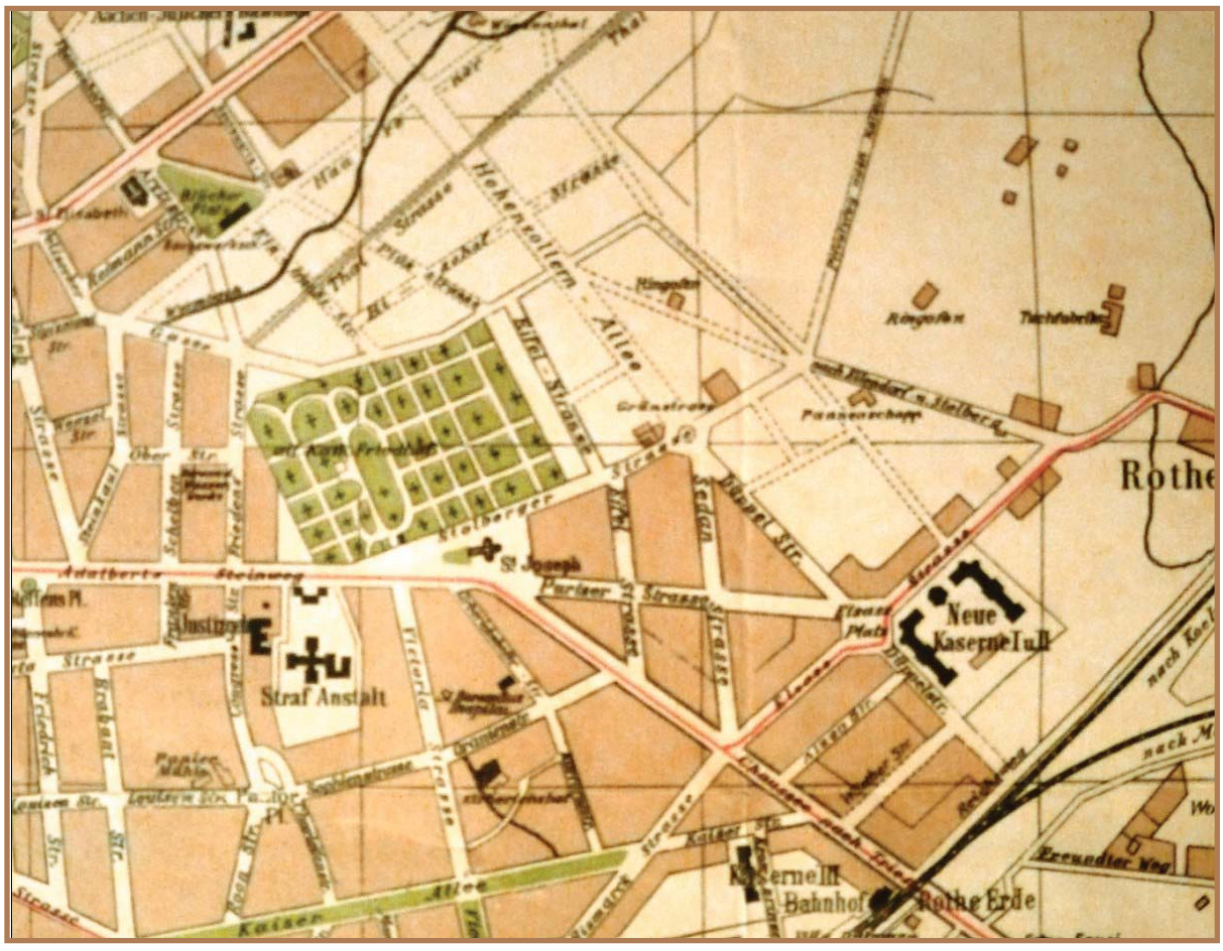
Plate 8- An undated postal card of the Aachen Barack (Kasserne) in Elsass Plaza, the site of Kennedy Park and its residential tower blocks that were built in mid 60s.

In 1963, U.S. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, and his assassination was concurrent with opening of a newly developed park in Aachen and the city of Aachen took the Kennedy's assassination an opportunity to name the completed park after his name. In other words the name of the park is a tribute and dedication to a man and a nation who gave Germany a „second chance" and to show the mutual acceptance of both nations to the international community. The name of the Kennedy Park depicts a symbolic notion with recreational activities in a multicultural neighbourhood.

Kennedy Park is a small park (app. 1.5 Hectare), located in the biggest districts of the city namely Aachen-Ost. The size

Plate 9- View towards Kennedy Park from Elissasplatz. The residential tower blocks are hidden behind the remaining columns of the Yellow Barack to the left. view towards east. Photo by NK 2012).

of the district is not only related to its spatial dimension, but also to the high population density of the district that are mostly middle and working class



Plan 6- Ruthe Erde District in Aachen East (Aachen-Ost) with plan of Yellow Barack (gelbe Kasserne) to the right. Courtesy of Aachen Municipality, date of plan: 1909.

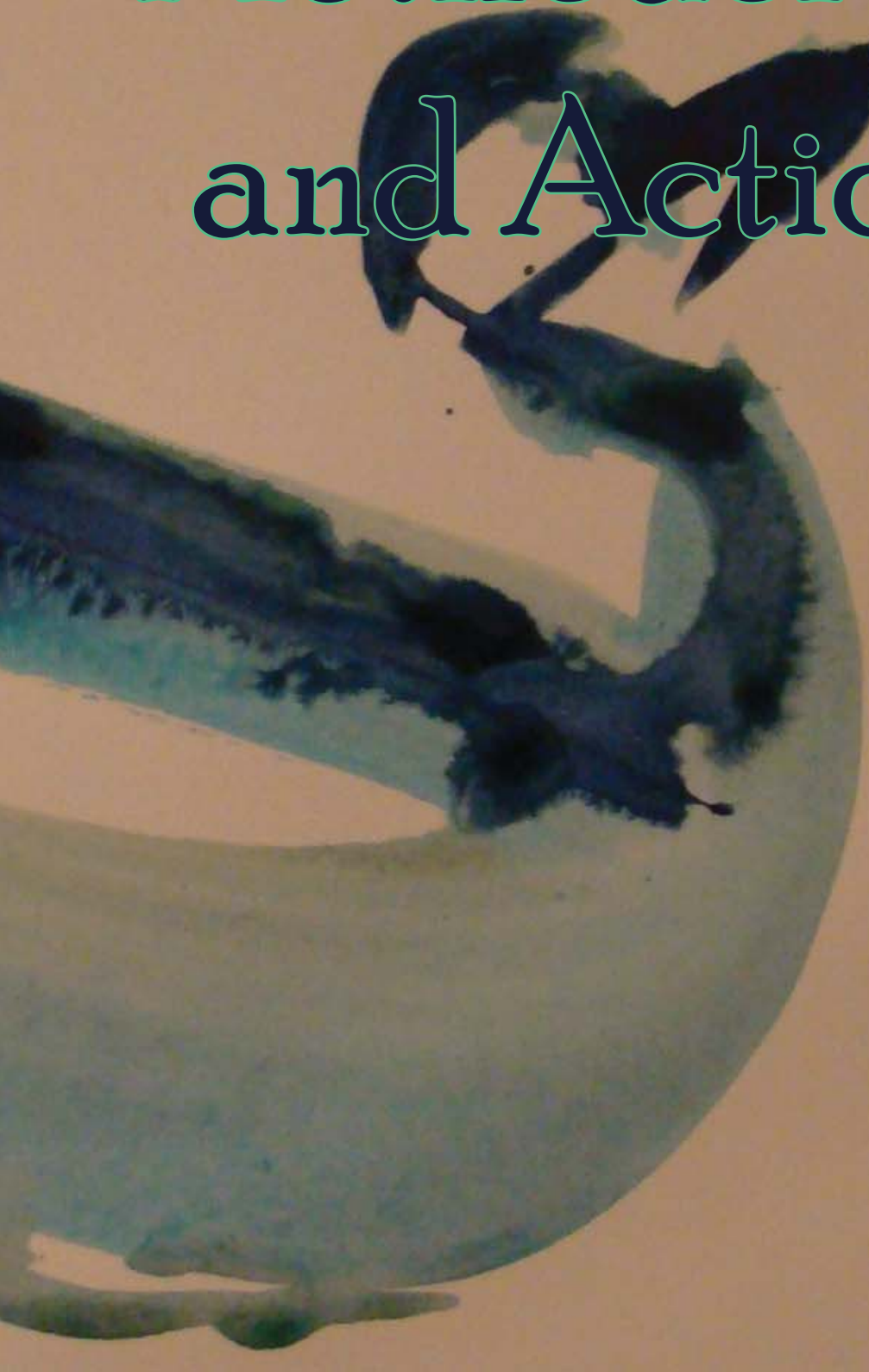
immigrants from Turkey, Eastern Europe, North Africa and Middle East that have created an ethnical culture in their so called ethnic communities. Because of the compactness of the district and lack of other major parks in Aachen-Ost, Kennedy Park has an important role to maintain an urban microclimate or ecosystem in a busy and heavily built up area and also play as a community hub and venue for events and festivities of ethnic groups throughout the year.

Kennedy Park is located in Rothe Erde District or in the Aachen-Ost as local uses the latter to address the area. It is approximately five kilometer to the Aachen Dom, which is located in the town centre. The spatial components of Kennedy Park are described in Chapter 6 under Research Materials and Methods (Map 3). The park is engulfed by Elsassstrasse to the northwest and Düpplestrasse to the southeast. To the northeast there are plots of allotment gardens and schools which are separated from the park by walls. To the southeast there is a row of former textile factories and existing car showrooms and offices that are faced to the Reichsweg and parallel railways.

Existing Kennedy Park has a playing house (Spielhaus) which is the result of the new town planning and bringing children close to the nature and make green spaces available for students and schools.

5

Research Methodology and Actions



5.1 Introduction

This research is carried out in two phases during the following years and in two different European cities that host a diverse range of Muslim immigrants:

1) 2004-2010, Birmingham City, United Kingdom

2) 2010-2013, Aachen City, Germany

To answer the research question which is mainly about how Muslim park users relate to neighbourhood parks, three neighbourhood parks as research case studies are selected to measure certain criteria that are introduced and discussed in review of literature.

Referring to Diagram 9 that visually explains different approaches in research methodology, it was envisaged to collect data that support qualitative analysis of findings and also each approache complete each other for a better understanding of the Muslim park users and their expectations in a neighbourhood park. For example, photography and on-site observations are used as supporting tools for interview that help to give more scientific and realistic output, although, there is a kind of disharmony between collected data in Birmingham and Aachen Cities due to major differences in their size of population and spatial character of the context neighbourhoods such as the size of the selected parks and number of park users which highly differs in two cities.

The methodology associated with the research aims, draws upon previous work which substantiates the factor that contribute towards effective green space strategies (Costa 2004; Coles & Casiero 2001; 2003), but which is largely set outside the detailed perspective of the cultural groups represented in Birmingham and Aachen

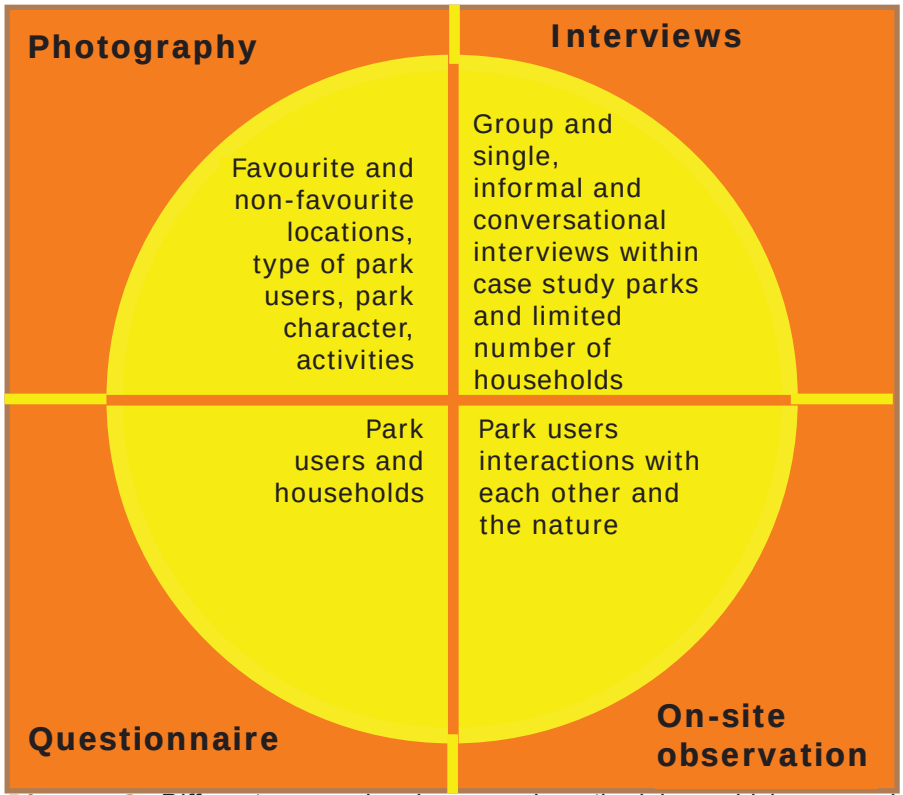


Diagram 8 - Different approaches in research methodology which are used for qualitative analysis of collected data and subsequent analysis of the findings.

Cities. It took a multilayer approach in identifying the Muslims user response to neighbourhood park including qualitative techniques in order to be able to broadly map the case study parks as well as identifying how Muslim park users relate themselves within the cultural groups, with follow up investigation regarding the more specific aspects of interaction and meaning.

5.2 Data Collection

Data are collected through questionnaires, on site surveys in different seasons and week days, photography, group and individual interviews. The groups and individuals that were interviewed are park users from minority ethnic groups mostly Muslims immigrants from South Asia (Pakistan, Bangladesh and India) and Turkey. Most of them consider a chat to be nicer that writing responses on paper as this informal conversation, engaged them in the process and ensured a personalised feeling to be added to the research.

As shown in Diagram 9, data gathering methods and tools that are used for the purpose of this research are based on:

- Personal observation
- Photography
- Onsite questionnaires and interviews
- Household questionnaires and interviews

5.2.1 Official Statistics

Without a thorough analysis of demographics, it is impossible to understand Muslim community character and place of minority ethnic groups within the fabric of selcted cities. Also it is essential to clarify the composition and distribution of green infrastructures to weigh them against the cities' population.

There are 40 wards in Birmingham City, with an average population of 24,400. Each of the wards has distinct characteristics. A comprehensive analysis of the wards' population, ethnicity, green infrastructure, gender, age and other criteria is used to determine the structure of wards in terms of their size, population, share of green space, number of neighbourhood parks and wards with highest population of Muslim immigrants. The materials which are used in analysis derived from the 2001 Census Area Statistic the most reliable and comprehensive source of information. All census material is Crown Copyright and were provided by help of Birmingham City Council through their website or library. The council has a 'click user licence' issued by Her Majesty's Stationery Office. This allows the re-use and publication of Census data from a wide range of topics including age structure, cultural background, health, qualifications, housing and households and economic activity. In support of this research the analysis helpes to verify the most appropriate wards with nighbourhood parks that are frequently in use by Muslim communities. (Appendix I, Plans 1-3, Charts 2-5).

For the case of Germany access to official demographic data is highly restricted so it is impossible to get access to important data such as population of ethnic groups, distribution of Muslim immigrants within the city fabric, their age, gender and social class that to some extent hampered research in Aachen City. Following organizations and websites are reached with no positive outcome:

GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences

IT.NRW - Information und Technik Nordrhein-Westfalen

Zentralinstitut Islam-Archiv-Deutschland

Microcensus which provides official representative statistics of the population and the labour market in Germany

For this reason, German embassy websites and Aachen City municipality are only official resources that provide a handful of data to be used as basis for Aachen City demographic analysis (Appendix II, Plan 4).

5.2.2 Personal Observation

Personal observation developes fundamental research data for it is based on personal level of understanding and to a higher degree results are honest. The process of observing the pattern of space usage within the parks is based on an unstructured observation that means the researcher records her own experiences as one of the park users while interacting with other people in the park or observe activities. The results of personal observations are recorded in a diary, via photographs and questionnaires during onsite visits. The main idea of observation is to be part of the case study while recording personal experiences as a non-native female park-user that belongs to the minority ethnic groups in Birmingham and Aachen Cities beside observing how other park users response to the nature while they are being in touch with other community members. In other words through this process it is possible to see how different age groups and genders use the park alongside of each other and to see which features in parks are subject of interest from a Muslim perspective.

Park visits happen during different seasons, weekdays and weekends to record frequency and intensity of the park use and park visit in different timing during course of a year.

Park visits are accompanied by photography to record the important features and activities that have relations with cultural identity of park users and how Muslim interact with other users and with the nature. These activities are discussed in following sections where it is necessary to demonstrate certain activities or features through photographs and narratives.

Another aspect of the research is to deal with personal exploration as an observer. It is important to use the park not only as a researcher but as a park user which makes the interpretation of the collected data more understandable and transferable.

5.2.3 Photography

During the course of research more than 1500 photographs are taken in Ward End, Sparkhill and Kennedy Parks as a supplementary tool beside unstructured observation and onsite interviews. The pictures are the best medium to depict scenes in which lively activities of park-users are happened. They are used to demonstrate landcape character, design, park furnitures and components such as playing fields, access footpaths, facilities and type of park users. The photos are used in different sections throughout the thesis.

5.2.4 Questionnaires

Two sets of questionnaires are tested and revised to reflect research idea through 24 questions in Birmingham and 21 in Aachen City. Approximately 250 questionnaires (electronically and as hard copy) are used through network of Muslim friends in Birmingham from which 121 items recorded. 40

questionnaires are distributed between Turkish residents in Aachen-Ost from which 17 are collected. A profile for each respondent is created through excel spread sheet to keep a record of responses and analyses of the answers.

The questionnaire for Aachen is slightly modified. Non-relevant questions are exculded to collect precise answers (Appendices I & II)

All questions seek answers for the following criteria through different close and open ended questions and comments:

- Age
- Gender
- Identity (personal, cultural, social)
- Use and activities
- Accessibility
- Time (frequency of visit, length of stay)
- Favourite open spaces (park, allotment, garden)
- Type of usage (sport, relaxation, meeting,..)
- Sociability
- Comfort and expectation

5.2.5 Interviews

Interviewing is the most exciting and challenging part of the research as it is needed to approach Muslims in a way that they trust and respond honestly. Interviews take place in three different location:

- household interviews (15 Washwood Heath, 5 Sparkbrook, 4 Kennedy Parks)
- onsite interviews (4 Ward End, 4 Sparkhill, 4 Kennedy Parks)

Access to Muslim families within the neighbourhoods for interviews is a challenge but possible through network of Muslim friends and colleagues. Families are hospitable, kind, friendly and responsive to questions in a chatty manner like story telling. Majority of respondents are women as Muslim men in most of the cases avoid to sit and chat with a female researcher but the answers of the male members of interviewee families are collected through questionnaires.

Interviews conducted within three parks are based on random selection of park users by asking individuals who look like Muslims (women in Hijab or men in traditional dress) if they are interested to answer few questions about the park and how they would like to see it following a short introduction about the research topic. In some cases people refuse to answer and talk although few show interest to participate in interview with paying attention to the questions with enthusiasm and curiosity. The onsite interviews were conducted during 2005-2010 in Birmingham and 2010-2012 in Aachen Cities.

6

Research Materials and Methods

6.1 Introduction

Analysis of UK National Statistics (Appendix I, Chart 3, Plan 3) shows wards with highest number of Muslim population are Sparkbrook, Bordesly Green, Washwood Heath, Springfield, Aston, Lozells & East Handsworth and Nechells with 8000-20,000 Muslim inhabitants.

In this particular analysis being Muslim is the base for setting up the religious character of the wards regardless of the ethnicity of the Muslims or being member of different sects in Islam.

Nasser N. (2005) in her research Expressions of Muslim Identity in Architecture and Urbanism in Birmingham, UK, has revealed that Pakistani communities are heavily concentrated in Small Heath, Sparkbrook, Sparkhill, Washwood Heath and Nechells and the highest proportion of Bangladeshis is in Aston, Handsworth and Sparkbrook wards. her findings are in line with this research census analysis that are based on UK National Statistics.

From seven wards with highest Muslim residents two wards with the least share of green space (Appendix I, Chart2) are selected as case study wards:

Ward End Park in Washwood Heath ward (Map 1)

Sparkhill Park in Sparkbrook ward (Map 2)

Kennedy Park In Rothe Erde District (Map 3)

Selection of case study ward (district) in Aachen City is based on personal observation of the city character and seeking advice from local experts who has a good knowledge and clear understanding of the most populated districts in Aachen City with Muslim inhabitants. Following a careful evaluation, although not able to access similar data that are used for the selection of UK cases, Rothe Erde district in Aachen-Ost (Aachen East) and its main and famous neighbourhood park Kennedy Park are selected to be studied (Appendix II, Plan 4). From Aachen Municipality Integration Monitoring Report 2009, Turkish immigrants with 7037 inhabitants construct the most populated minority ethnic groups in Aachen and as a result Turkish park users become target group of this study (Table 7).

Park	Type of Park	Total Area (Ha)	Multi-use Game Court	Play Area
Ward End	Community	21.84	6	5
Sparkhill	Neighbourhood	7.49	2	2
Kennedy	Neighbourhood	1.5	1	4

Table 7 - Case study parks spatial data

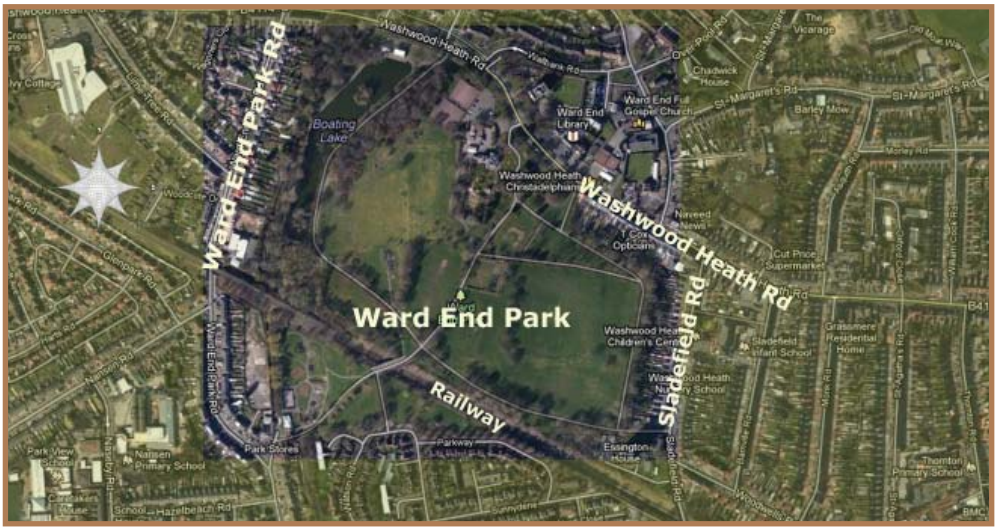
6.2 Birmingham Washwood Heath Ward

Washwood Heath with 17% Muslim residents belongs to Hodge Hill district which is one of the eleven districts in Birmingham City with four Wards: Hodge Hill, Shard End, Washwood Heath and Bordesley Green. The district office is located in Ward End Park

House, situated in Ward End Park, on the Washwood Heath Road. Amongst these four wards, Washwood Heath has a large Muslim community and in time of writing in 2005, the largest group of Muslims from Pakistan, Kashmir and Bangladesh make the dominant shape of the communities.

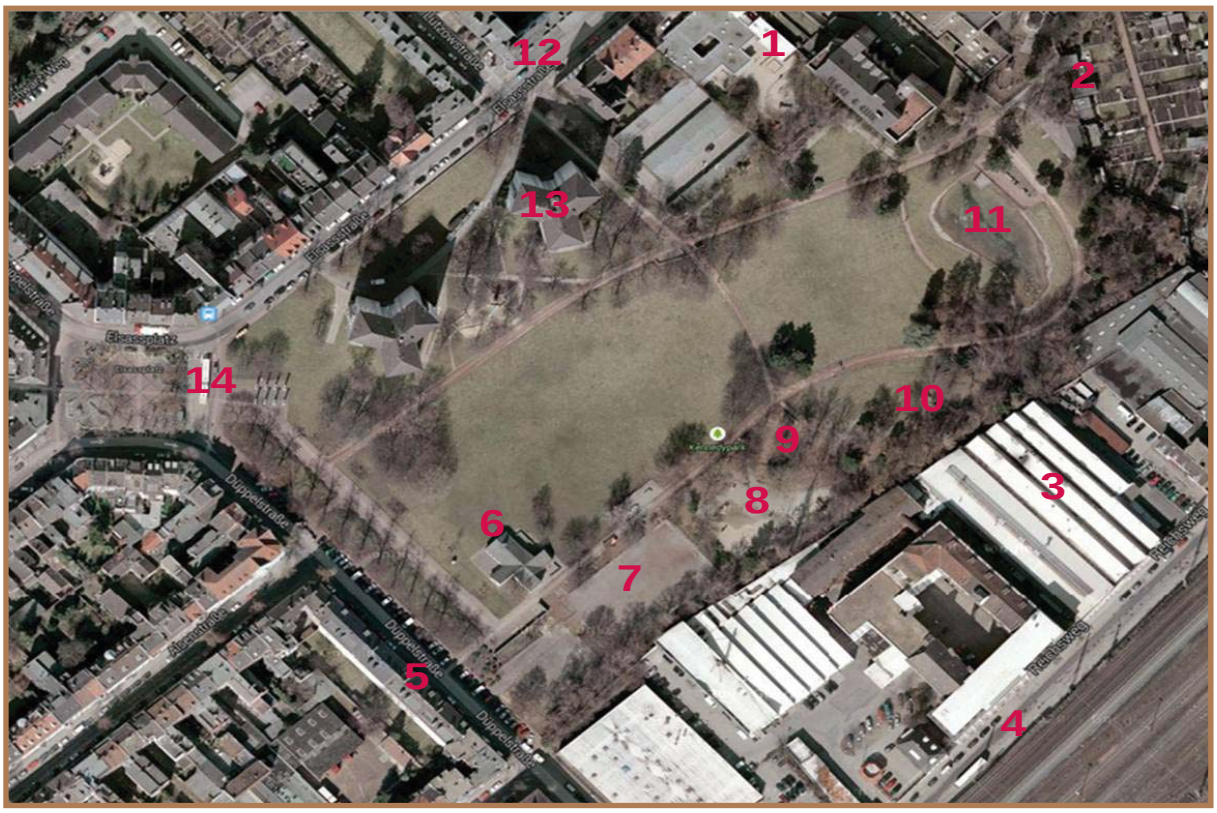
The ward has an industrial character as it is centred on manufacturing, small scale workshops, motor trade, wholesale/retailing businesses and property. Large van manufacturer Leyland Daf Vans (LDV) was based in the ward but closed in 2009. By contrast, a new Pakistani superstore (PAK Superstore) opened in 2009 that shows how the ward's urban character is becoming more ethnic dominant.

According to the internal documents of Birmingham City Council, Ward End Park House in Ward End Park is the pride of Washwood Heath Ward. The exact age of the property is uncertain, but it is mentioned as early as 1759 on Tomlinson's map of Little Bromwich Manor. (Plates 10-17).



Map 1 - Ward End Park and its major access roads in Washwood Heath ward, *Source:* Google Map 2010.

Map 2 - Sparkhill Park and its major access roads in Sparkbrook ward, *Source:* Google Map 2010.



Map 3 - Kennedy Park and its spatial relation with surrounding settlements in Aachen City – *Source:* Google Map 2011.

Legend:

1. AWO-Seniorenwohnsitz Kennedypark nursing home
2. Allotment Gardens and Geschwister-Scholl-Gymnasium
3. Mixed-use commercial blocks (former needle factory famous as nadelfabrik)
4. Reichsweg Street
5. Düppelstraße Street
6. Spielhaus Kennedypark (children game house)
7. Hard court area for ball games with two table tennis
8. Skating court
9. Children playing area
10. Shaded seating area
11. Lake
12. Elassstraße
13. Residential tower blocks
14. Main entrance / four pairs of preserved columns from gelbe und rote Kaserne buildings

Plate 10- Ward End Park, view towards pathway which runs along the long side of the lake. Muslim females making short cuts to access the Washwood Heath Road. Photo by NK 2010.

Plate 11- Ward End Park, „White" park users walking towards railway bridge to get to the south neighbourhoods. Photo by NK 2010.

Plate 12 - Ward End Park, view towards west towards pathway over the lake. Muslim females feed the ducks, a kind action which causes severe problems for the wildlife of the lake and its management and maintenance. Photo by NK 2010.

6.2.1 Ward End Park

According to a non-documented internal report from Birmingham City Council, in September 1903 Birmingham Corporation purchased 43 acres of land and a further 11 acres in November 1903. These were officially opened to the public as Ward End Park on 14 May 1904.

The current lake area Plates 14 and 17 was originally a marshy bog land which was created as a work finding measure at the beginning of the 20th century. Boating on the lake ended when the boathouse (a 20 m long 8 door wooden building) was burned down and all boats, canoes, rowing boats and catamarans were lost (circa 1978).

The TS Dolphin building now occupies the place of the old boathouse (plate 14). Facing the current Fire Station on Washwood Heath Road, a wooden fire engine shed, a Nissan-hut like building, housed the local fire engine and firemen until the new fire station was built in 1980.

According to the same document, the park contained a bandstand, which was demolished in the 1950's, grass tennis courts and an 18 holes putting green. Bowling greens, one flat rink green and a crown green were well used up to the seventies.

The original conservatories and greenhouse were replaced in 1960/1961 by new structures which were used as a nursery for plant propagation. There was also a tropical show house housing banana plants. These were in turn demolished in 1990 when a new centralised nursery for the council was brought into operation.

From 1904 up to the 1960's the park

was looked after by three park keepers i.e. one sergeant and two keepers. They were given power of arrest, similar to British Rail Police and patrolled the park, which was divided into different beats. A Park Superintendent was in charge. He was based and at some time occupied personal accommodation in Ward End Park House. In addition to the keepers there were game and boat attendants and gardeners. At the end of the 1960's mobile park patrols with dogs were installed. About 60 men in blue uniforms regularly checked all of Birmingham's parks and responded to calls. At this time uniformed park keepers and attendants were still employed. However, a new strategy in the 1970's and 1980's replaced keepers with Park Rangers. Their role (without power of arrest) was 'friendly' and focussed towards education and the environment. As they were mostly stationed in the new Country Parks and larger parks like Sutton Park for example - smaller parks like Ward End were left with no representative.

Over the years a number of refurbishments and developments have taken place within in the park. With sponsorship from Coca-Cola the National Playing Field Association, then based in Ward End Park House, managed to refurbish play equipment and establish a play centre, later to become a youth centre, known as 'The Base'. They also managed to refurbish the main car park and some of the main pathways including those around the pool area.

The last major investment into Ward End Park took place in 1989 when a 10 year programme released several millions of pounds for Birmingham's inner city parks. For details of more recent developments and improvements

Plate 13 - View towards west, towards Ward End Park House, built circa 1759. In 2001 it was partially refurbished. It is an education centre for the local community for adult education and training. Varied lessons are held there including computer, Yoga, sewing and upholstery, flower arranging, Mehndi hand painting, English as a second language. Photo by NK, 2010.

Plate 14 - View towards north towards Washwood Heath Road and Ward End Park Boat House (not in use anymore). Photo by NK, 2010.

Plate 15 - View towards south from Ward End Park House towards railway bridge south of the Park. Photo by NK, 2010.

Plate 16 - View towards east over Ward End Park football and cricket pitch. Photo by NK, 2010.

Plate 17 - Ward End Park Lake. Undated photo courtesy of L.L.M. Local white residents who still live in Washwood Heath, recalled good memories of the Ward End Park and its lake when it was not a Muslim dominant open space.

Plate 18 - View towards southern playground that is the closest one to the nearby neighbourhood and more in use. It is adjacent to the Ward End Park Community Centre and Library. Photo by NK, 2010.

to the park since 2004 please see the attachment at the foot of the page.

From 2000 a Park Warden was appointed to the park and additionally in 2005 a Park Keeper post was re-introduced. Ward End Park has Adult Education Centre, Outdoor pitches and 3 playgrounds (Table 8).

Plate 19 - Graffiti art on guard wall of the bridge over the railway. View towards south of Ward End Park. Photo by NK 2010.

6.3 Birmingham Sparkbrook Ward

Basd on UK Nationl Statistic and Birmingham City Council internal documents, Hall Green district is made up of four council wards: Sparkbrook, Hall Green, Moseley and Kings Heath, and Springfield. Each of the wards in Hall Green district is ethnically diverse. Most residents in Sparkbrook ward are from an Asian–Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi background. Sparkhill Park is located within Sparkbrook Ward.

Sparkbrook ward is located in the centre of Birmingham and lies within Sparkbrook district, together with Acocks Green and Springfield wards. According to 2001 Census, Sparkbrook ward has a much younger population than that of Birmingham as a whole, with relatively far more children and fewer persons of retirement age than the city.

Through a statistical analysis taken from the UK 2001 Census data 80% of Sparkbrook ward population are non-white and people with roots in Pakistan represent the largest non-white ethnic group in Sparkbrook ward, followed by immigrants from Bangladesh, Afro-Caribbean and India. Proportionally, Sparkbrook ward has four times as many Pakistanis and Bangladeshis compared with Birmingham as a whole.

6.3.1 Sparkhill Park

Sparkhill Park has located within one of the most multicultural communities in Birmingham along the Stratford Road and is adjacent to the famous Balti Triangle which is a famous place for its Asian cosine and neighbourhoods.
From extract taken from the City of Birmingham History and Description of the Public Parks, Gardens and

Plate 20 - Sparkhill Park softball court. View towards west towards Park Road. Photo by NK 2010.

Plate 21 - View from Park Road towards Sparkhill Park gazebo. View towards east. Photo by NK 2010.

Plate 22 - Sparkhill Park view towards hard-surface courts. Photo by NK 2010.

Recreation Grounds by Robert K Dent Published, under the direction of the City Parks Committee 1916, the total area of the original Sparkhill Park was 19 acres, 2 roods, 22 poles[10] (app. 7.7 Ha), and the formation of Sparkhill Park was begun by purchase of a piece of land 3r 21p in extent by the Yardley Rural District Council on December 5th, 1902, for £1,470 and 4s. 10d.
In March, 1904, the Governors of the Charity Estates gave a further plot of land, 16a. 2r 34p in extent, and 2a 0r 7p were added at a cost of £2,500 from Mr. W. Waring in 1909. The provision thus made was carried into effect by City Corporation, and the park was thrown open to the public on the 9th of May, 1912. It is a nearly extensive recreation ground, in the rapidly growing neighbourhood adjoining Stratford Road, and is frequently used by the young male players from minority ethnic groups.

Sparkhill Park is also the largest piece of green open space in the Sparkhill ward and comprises over 50% of the total open space for the entire ward.
The site has playing facilities such as squash, basketball and softball courts, and serves the whole of the wards residents as their main park although it is a neighbourhood park according to Birmingham City Council categorisatio of the Birmingham City green infrastructures. The park has a park warden and because of its small size it looks tidy and clean although there are signs of antisocial behaviour and problems caused by pigeon feeding and graffiti around the park.

There are number of facilities such as Sparkhill Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre, Court Road Health and Fitness Centre, St John's Church and Primary School as well as two preschool nurseries.

Plate 23 - Muslim mothers supervising their children while they are playing. The first from the left has lived near the Spakrhill Park since 1982. Photo by NK 2010.

Plate 24 - View towards northeast towards Sparkhill Park children playground. Photo by NK 2010.

Plate 25 - Another view towards softball court, towards north. Furnitures in Sparkhill Park were heavily used as a canvas for throwing tags and graffiti. Photo by NK 2010.

These elements beside Pakistani retailers and businesses spreading at major roads around the park, have given active and vital roles to the park and its surroundings. Sparkhill Park is mostly used as a shortcut to access different neighbourhoods and streets around the park (Map 2 & Plates 20-29).

Plate 26 - Sparkhill Park pigeon feeding trays which looks like a trash field full of food leftovers. View towards southeast, towards Court Road. Photo by NK 2010.

Plate 27 - View towards north. Sparkhill Park is more in use as a shortcut. Photo by NK 2010.

Plate 28 - View towards western gate of Sparkhill Park at Park Road. Photo by NK 2010.

Plate 29 - View towards north towards hard surface courts in Sparkhill Park Photo by NK 2010.

6.4 Aachen Rothe Erde District

Aachen is comprised of sixty districts (Lebensträumen) according to 2009 Integration Monitoring Report published by Aachen Municipality (Appendix II, Plan 4). Rothe Erde District where this research concentrates, located in eastern part of the city, Aachen-Ost (Aachen East) or Ostviertel are other names commonly used by people. Rothe Erde district is characterized by its old industrial past with lack of enough green open space, parks and playground. The cityscape of the district is marked by rows of post-war blocks of four to five story residential buildings with close access to the nearby sites of non-operational factories which are converted to new land uses such as car show rooms and office buildings as remnants of the heavy industry of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Residential blocks are the settlement houses of the workers mostly immigrant Turks that dominate Rothe Erde with their retail shops and businesses scattered along the high streets of the district. The district is approximately 240 acres and makes about 1.5 percent of the total area of Aachen. District population in 2007 is estimated around 10,500 inhabitants mainly, immigrants, students and young families. The history of Rothe Erde backs to the 14th Century. The district originally belonged to a territory named Schönforst and was integrated with City of Aachen in 1906.

Plate 30 - View from Elssasplatz towards northwest towards residential blocks and retail shops. Photo by NK March 2011.

Plate 31 - View from Euroturk Office towards opposite renovated office block which all are based on a former needle factory (Nadelfabrik) that was operating for 150 years until 1998 that the factory stopped its operation. Photo by NK March 2011.

Plate 32 - View from Kennedy Park towards north towards shops at E+lsaasplatz. Photo by NK March 2011.

6.4.1 Kennedy Park

Kennedy Park in Rothe Erde District or Aachen-Ost as local uses the latter to address the area is a small park with 1.5 ha area. It is approximately 5km to the east of Aachen Dom in town centre. Referring to an old plan from 1909 (Plan 6) Kennedy Park is developed over remnant lands of two historical barracks that used to be next to the Church of St. Joseph. The Red and the Yellow barracks which their names were reflection of the colour of the bricks from which they were built. These two buildings were considered as important urban elements in its time, especially the yellow barrack that was an ancient landmark. Their importance had roots in their visibility, spatial character, size and economic importance.

Renovation of German cities that were destroyed in World War II and surge of new foreign workers, increased the need for new housing developments such as two tower blocks by the Kennedy Park that are constructed in 60s (Map 3). In 1963, assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy was concurrent with opening of a newly developed park in Aachen and the city of Aachen took the Kennedy's assassination an opportunity to name the completed park after his name. In other words the name of the park is a tribute and dedication to a man and a nation who gave Germany a "second chance" and to show the mutual acceptance of both nations to the international community. The name of the Kennedy Park depicts a symbolic notion with recreational activities in a multicultural neighbourhood.

Plate 33 - View from Kennedy Park towards southwest towards five story block of residential flats at Dupplestrasse. Photo by NK March 2011.

Kennedy Park is a small park (app. 1.5 Ha) but has a specific social importance as the venue of Annual Integration Festival by participation of 50 local organisations active in integration programmes. Its location in a district with middle and working class immigrants from Turkey, Eastern Europe, North Africa and Middle East is important and creates an ethnical culture in their so called ethnic communities. Because of the compactness of the district and lack of other major parks in Aachen-Ost, Kennedy Park has an important role to maintain an urban microclimate or ecosystem in a busy and heavily built up area.

The spatial components of the park are described in the legend of an aerial map (Map 3). The park is engulfed by Elsassstrasse to the northwest and Düpplestrasse to the southeast. To the northeast there are plots of allotment gardens, a high school and nursery which are separated from the park by walls. To the southeast former textile factories and existing car showrooms and offices are located that are faced to the Reichsweg and parallel railways.
Existing Kennedy Park has a playing house (Spielhaus) for use of small children, which is the result of the new town planning where bringing children close to the nature and make green spaces available for students and schools are important.

Plate 34 - The head statue of former US President John F. Kennedy who was assassinated in 1963. Photo by NK March 2012.

Plate 35 - Main gate of the Kennedy Park which is designed by eight monumental columns that are preserved from demolished former Yellow and Red Barracks. Photo by NK March 2012.

Plate 36 - Kennedy Park public art featuring symbols of 15 nationalities that are living in Aachen City. They are located north of the park. . Photo by NK March 2012.

Plate 37 - Kennedy Park Lake and children playground, view towards northeast. Photo by NK March 2012.

Plate 38- A massive tile artwork on a wall that separates children‘s playground by the lake and neighbouring school/nursery, view towards northeast of Kennedy Park. Photo by NK March 2012.

Plate 39 - Annual Integration Festival in Kennedy Park. Photo: NK July 2012.

Plate 40 - Skate court in Kennedy Park which is heavily tagged with graffiti. A white dog walker had fun with his dogs for half an hour within the skate court while other park users where watching a sort of dog fighting. Photo by NK March 2012.

Plate 41 - Kennedy Park Children Game House with a confusing and not very welcoming access door to the left. Photo by NK April 2012.

Plate 42 - View towards hard surface playing court in Kennedy Park. Photo by NK April 2012.

Plate 43 - View towards east towards playing area separated from renovated nadelfabrik office blocks. Photo by NK April 2012.

Plate 44 - View towards Children Game House (Spielhaus) in Kennedy Park. Photo: NK March 2011.

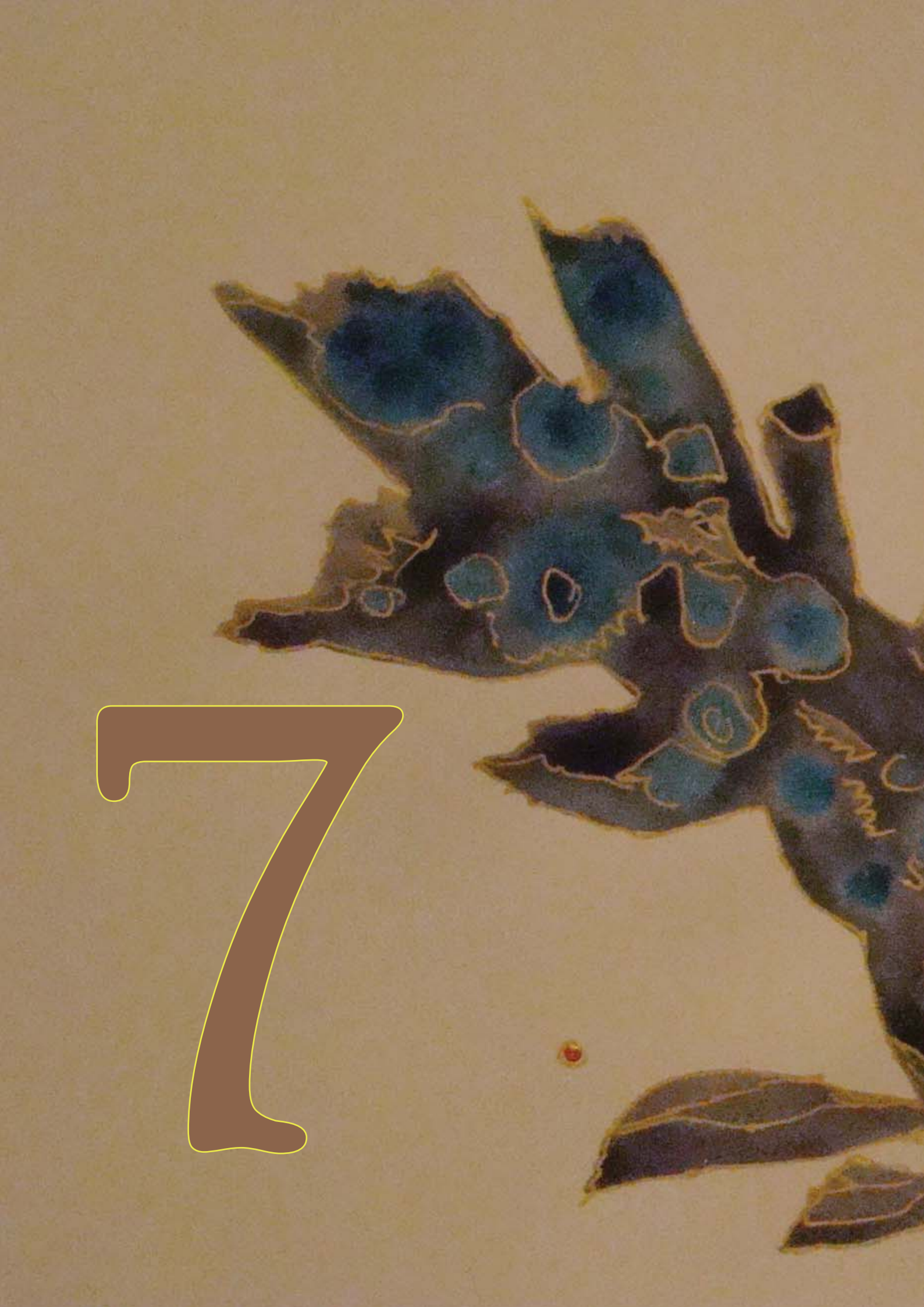
Plate 45 - Kennedy Park, view towards playing house from Elsassplatz. Turkish men chatting in the park. Photo: NK March 2012.

Plate 46 - View from main pathway in Kennedy Park towards northwest towards Elsassplatz. Photo by NK March 2012.

Plate 48 - Kennedy Park main access opposite of Elsassstrasse. Photo: NK March 2012.

Plate 47 - An elderly park user walking towards Kennedy Park from Elsassstrasse access footpath. Photo by NK April 2012.

Plate 49 - Two native park users chatting in a quiet corner of the Kennedy Park. Photo by NK March 2012.


7

Results and Findings

7.1 Introduction

Classified results and findings of the research are presented and discussed according to the case study parks and methodology that is adopted to collect data which is described in Chapter 5. Two major findings are discussed and classified according to the adopted methodology:

- Results from interview of park users within the parks and in nearby neibourhoods

- Results derived from collected questionnaires with high attention to the descriptive comments

As explained in Chapter 5 Methodology, on-site observations and photography by author are supporting tools that enhance the quality of results from interviews. Through photography of park user activities and observation of type of users (age, gender, appearance,..) help to deliver a better analysis of collected data and understand how park users relate themselves to a neighbourhood park.

Questionnaire analysis supports findings gathered from onsite interviews. Majority of park users identify themselves by their country of origin whether it is Turkey, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh or Afghanistan. Also age and gender have a relationship with the identity of respondents as the majority of male teenagers identify themselves as British then adding their parents' country of origin. Park users in age groups above 30 describe themselves as a person who resided in UK or Germany to work with great attachment to their cultural and religious background. Their statement is acceptable as majority of the elderly Muslim park users especially in UK wear traditional cloths, hats or turbine in both genders.

It remains to be seen how, in a culturally diverse society citizens actually perceive their local parks in terms of where they go, what they do and what they say and to link this to health, well-being, identity and sense of place. What the park users say is crucial since this allows us to identify user based experiences of how the neighbourhood park actually supports individuals' lifestyles and to identify positive and negative aspects. It is mainly through the language of users that we can start to identify positive association with specific sites and actions to consider the more specific aspects of users' relationship with neighbourhood park such as restorative experience or therapeutic value.

7.2 Results from in Depth Interviews

A major part of the whole research strategy is based on a series of in-depth interviews with Muslim park-users in Birmingham and Aachen Cities, from summer 2005 until summer 2012. The purpose is to collect qualitative data that supplement the results gathered from personal observation and by photography. It is essential to set up the interviews in a very ethical way as Muslim are not sociable in some respects and the conservative character of Muslim families sometimes makes a barrier to approach them for interview.

The results of the interviews are recorded on a questionnaire to make it possible to compare the results at the end of the survey with other data collected from questionnaires themselves.

Interviewing Muslim families is a challenge as it is essential to adopt a systematic approach based on respect and mutual understanding to get the best results. It is unlikely to meet a Muslim family without any kind of

connection and support within Muslim communities. For such reasons to approach families who are interested to be interviewed, it happened to receive supports from Muslim friends who live in Washwood Heath, Sparkbrook and Rothe Erde wards and district. They become volunteer to help and make appointments with families for interview.

Most of Muslim females especially the first generation of immigrants, who resided in Birmingham and Aachen Cities with their husband and extended family of their spouse, are housewives who do not work outside and do not speak English or German. Because of the life style of the ladies that is limited to child raising they have many stories about their first days, months and years of residency in West.

Considering huge difference between their homeland and Birmingham or Aachen they talk about experiencing cultural shock that they have to face. A Bangladeshi lady in Washwood Heath in her sixties recalls her first few days of arrival in same neighbourhood 35 years ago when she felt so much homesick as the oldest children of her was only six years old in that time and her husband was working full time even for the weekends. She considers Ward End Park as the best place to take her children to sit by the lake for hours and relax as it is similar to a lake in her village back home.

Twelve interviews are selected from 25 interviews in total to be presented as the most comprehensive answers received from participants. Four interviews in each park amongst 25 in total are selected to be presented and discussed as qualitative results with the most comprehensive answers (Table 8).

Case Study 1	Case Study 2	Case Study 3
Ward End Park	***Sparkhill Park***	***Kennedy Park***
Female 25 British/ Pakistani	Male 62 & 65 Pakistani	Female 72 Turkish
Male 47 Pakistani	Female 47 Pakistani	Female 42 Turkish
Females 50 & 17 British/ Muslim	Male 41 Indian	Male 53 Turkish
Male 69 Pakistani	Female 12 Pakistani	Male 23 Turkish
Female 65 Muslim	Male 23 Pakistani	Male 20 Romanian
Female 36 British/ Bangladeshi	Female 18 Pakistani	Female 15 & 16 Turkish and German

Table 8 - Interviewees in Birmingham and Aachen Cities.

Observations approve that Muslim prefer to visit the parks in winter as there are substantial number of park-users during winter season on weekend days especially Muslim males uses parks during cold seasons for field games, jugging and running. Many of Muslim male park users state that in winter non-Muslim women wear modest cloths because of the weather so they like to use the park more often when the park is not full of semi naked white women as they described. The issue of female dress code in parks are commented by many male and female park users as the most important issue that affect the usage of the park by them. They believe in winter there is a better connection with park as it is full of Muslims and there is not scenes that make the enjoyment difficult as these are scenes (couples kissing in the park and semi-naked women) as these are scenes which compromise Muslims faith and morality values. The frequency of mentioning these issues

by interviewees within UK parks is high although in Aachen no interviewee point out dress code and showing affections by couples as a problem. The morality values that are discussed during the interviews are more than complaining about issues such as drug use and dog fighters which the latter are retrieved from the notes on questionnaires and the results are reflected in Appendices I & II.

Being able to Speak Farsi, Dari, Arabic and a little bit Urdu and Turkish as well as English, helps to communicate with interviewees from minority ethnic groups.

As an Islamic tradition it is important to start conversation by saying Hello (Salam Alaykom) which means peace be upon you in a way that the voice is heard very clearly by the person you want to communicate with especially when meeting elderly people saying Salaam is essential for a friendly communication. Knowing this tradition is another bonus to reach target group or individuals by showing respect to audience and to Islamic culture.

Most of the Muslim park-users interested to be interviewed did not consent to be photographed if they had their spouse or daughters along but in cases when the male Muslim were in the park by themselves or accompanied by their male friends it was possible to photograph them.

7.2.1 Ward End Park - Female, age 25, British/Pakistani

Resident of Stechford a neighbouring ward of Washwood Heath. She believes that parks in her neighbourhood is more white-dominant and her children as well as herself do not like to use their own neighbourhood park because of the very low number of Muslim park users in Stechford Park. She mentions that her mother-in-law lives very close to Ward End Park (ten minutes walk) so she used to come to her in-laws and also use the Ward End Park when her children want to play. She likes the park as she thinks it is beautiful with many Muslim park users wandering around that makes her to feel safe and protected as she can communicate in Urdu with them and her children have a chance to improve their mother language while playing with other kids (Plate 50).

Plate 50 - Muslim mother and her children in Ward End Park, consider herself as British/Pakistani. Photo: NK, March, 2010.

7.2.2 Ward End Park - Male, age 47, Pakistani

A permanent park user with a great interest to feed birds and ducks. As part of research observation it is noticed that he stands by the lake with few shopping bags full of fresh sliced bread (it was expected he is a passerby using the park as a shortcut) but every weekend he comes to the park only to feed the birds with few packages of fresh bread. He agrees to answer questionss in an informal conversation. He believes feeding needy creatures or poor peaple has moral value and it is Muslim's responsibility to care about others. In his own words: *"... as a*

faithful Muslim I am responsible to take care of the nature and animals so when I feed the ducks I feel rewarded and happy so I do this feeding exercise every week on weekends or bank holidays when I am free..." he complains about the condition of the lake as it stinks and covered with trash. He is not aware that dumping such amount of bread to the lake every week is the main reason for a polluted lake. (in an interview with member of the Birmingham City Council they believe feeding avian birds in parks by Muslims has caused environmental and economical problems such as water pollution). He likes the park and its atmosphre and uses the shortcuts to get to his shop in Washwood Heath Road since 1996 when he resided in Birmingham as a Pakistani immigrant. He mentions that sometimes he brings his family with himself to the park and this happens once per two months or three months. He is not happy with the loitering teenagers around the park and find it difficult to bring her teenage girl to the park to mix with other male or female teenagers. He strongly believes that he consider himself Pakistani as his identity comes from his birthplace although he is a British citizen only on documents and paper (Plate 51).

7.2.3 Ward End Park - Mother & Daughter, 50 & 17, British/Muslim

A Pakistani mother and her daughter in a very cold morning of a weekend day in early March, are usual park users. Every day they come to the park in the morning and only in cold seasons for walking and jogging. They mention: *"... in winter we feel more comfortable and safe as the park is not in use by white (non-Muslim) joggers who wear improperly".* They believe in winter people have to wear cloths because of the cold weather so they do not feel embarrassed looking at women or men in shorts and improper cloths. They like the park and have access to the park by ten minutes walk from their home. Both as first and second generations of Muslim immigrants consider themselves British Muslim with strong ties to their homeland culture. They agreed to be photographed. The mother admits her daughter never come to the park alone for security reasons. They like Ward End Park as a Muslim park as most of the park users are Muslims living in the same neighbourhood (Plate 52).

Plate 51 - Muslim Pakistani feeding birds in Ward End Park. Photo: NK, March, 2010.

Plate 52 - Muslim mother & daughter, permanent users in cold seasons. Photo: NK, March, 2010.

7.2.4 Ward End Park - Male, age 69, Pakistani

In a freezing Sunday morning a Pakistani grandfather is watching his grand children playing in the children playground south of the park. He consents to be interviewed and photographed. He considers himself a Muslim immigrant from Pakistan, a British resident since 1966 who for the last thirty years lives in Wash Wood Heath ward. He remembers his early days of arrival that park was mainly used by white residents of the neighbourhoods close to the park but during the course of the last decades the number of white residents reduced as they moved out by selling their properties to Muslim immigrants. He is not happy with the current situation of the park as he believes in the past people used to be more friendly with each other even non-Muslim white people used to talk and chat with Muslims but now there are rare occasions that Muslims and non-Muslims meet up in the park as the park turned to be a totally non-white park that is used mainly by young Asians who play crickets or softball games (Plate 53).

Plate 53 - Pakistani grandfather supervising his grandchildren while playing in Ward End Park, Photo: NK, March, 2010.

7.2.5 Sparkhill Park - Males, 62 & 65, Pakistani & Indian

Friends for 40 years since their arrival to UK as young workers. They used to work in nearby workshop and established their life here by bringing their families from India and Pakistan. They remember the park as a part of their memory and livelihood as they use the park as the neighbourhood focal point with beautiful old trees that were young when they arrived. Both of them agreed that when they are abroad for a family visit in their homeland countries Sparkbrook Park is the first place they miss and makes the sort of homesick when they are not in Birmingham. Their daily walk in the park and meeting friends are things that make them homesick out of UK so they love to get back to Birmingham as soon as they can to socializing with their long-term friends. They do not have any White friends but knowing many of them through their work places in the past. They like the park as it is small and not very much busy like other big parks and believe that, it is an ideal shortcut to access to different neighbourhoods and Stratford Road. They comment that regardless their religious difference (Muslim Pakistani and Indian athiest), they do not have any problem to

Plate 54 - Pakistani and Indian friends use the Sparkhill Park every day, Photo: NK, March, 2010.

consider themselves long-term friends and co-workers since their arrival to UK as young and homesick immigrants, they have lots of memories together. They complained about darkness of the park in night time and lack of proper lighting which makes their commuting difficult and unsecure in long winter nights (Plate 54).

7.2.6 Sparkhill Park - Female, 47 Pakistani

The only person amongst three who can speak English. She lives five minutes to the park for more than twenty years. She is married to a native Pakistani and immigrated to UK after her marriage. She remembers Sparkhill Park was a white dominant park in early years even before year 2000 but little by little park turned to be a Muslim dominant open space. Now she likes the park more as it is not in use by many white people anymore. She is happy that the dominance of Muslim population which is increasing by time, enforced non-Muslim residents of Sparkbrook to sell their properties to Muslims and move out. She is pleased that girls in miniskirts and partially dressed do not like to come to this park as the number of Muslim ladies with Hijab are too many these days. Their routine for park visit is every day when the schools are open and they have free time in the morning to catch up with neighbours in the park while their children are at school or with children playing in the park, mothers can chat and enjoy their time. She considers herself Muslim then British. (Plate 55).

7.2.7 Sparkhill Park - Male, 41 Indian

An Indian Sikh who as a dog walker uses the park for the past twenty years is complaining about agressive behaviour of some female Muslims who hate his dog and sometime elderly Muslim ladies argue with him to stop him bringing his dog to the park although despite such difficulties and unfair treatment of Muslins as he describes, he use the park permanently. He never confronts complaining Muslims and believes in tolerance and social integration. He explains that he has many Muslim friends and most of Muslims are pet lovers but not those he meets every day in Sparkhill Park. He consideres himself British with cultural roots in India (Plate 56).

Plate 55 - Pakistani ladies from nearby neighbourhood as permanent users of Sparkhill Park, chatting while their kids are playing, Photo: NK, March, 2010.

Plate 56 - Indian dog-walker with his dog Sony, Sparkhill Park, Photo: NK, March, 2010.

7.2.8 Sparkbrook Ward - Female, 12 Pakistani

This interview is conducted by help of a Pakistani friend who has access to a family with five minutes walk to Sparkhill Park. The family has a twelve year old school girl who never visited a park in her life. She is the second child of a populated family living with six other brothers and sisters in a small terraced house and always dreams to spend some time in a park and use children playground. The parents are conservative and reluctant to let their children to go to the park for the safety reasons. They believe anti-Islamic behaviours that are widespread within the community make the park unsafe especially for a young girl. To make the teenage girl happy, her parents turn their back garden to a mini-park by installing swing and slide as well as a patchy grass area to play softball. Instead of their hard work to make the back garden a real park for the satisfaction of their young girl, she wants to get out and mix with her friends in a real park. Even though the mini-park is enjoyable for a couple of weeks as the teenage girl describes, she is not happy: "...it is a boring place as there is no one to play with and all the time I am playing with my sisters and brothers..." she loves to experience a real park where she can meet and see strangers and get in touch with real nature. From her comments two conflicting points are raised, one is the Islamic principles, (Mahramiyat, Hejab, Haya) that are the reasons behind the establishment of the mini-park as the family want to respect religious orders but they fail to keep their daughter happy even though they discussed and explained Islamic law which makes no sense to her in a western society. In this specific case the teenager understands why her life is secluded and she is not allowed to mix with other teenagers in the park but can not make a connection between her belief imposed by her family and enjoyment she may experience in a real park. In other words she needs to understand the notion of Islamic laws in such a way that she could feel pleased and satisfied in a totally secluded life style. Unfortunately, they do not allow taking photos or sketch the back garden. the only permission they give is to take a photo of the facade of their house which is in Park Street, east of Sparkhill Park (Plate 57).

Plate 57 - House of a Pakistani family who did not allow to interview their daughter with a small park in backyard , Photo: NK, March, 2010.

7.2.9 Kennedy Park - Female, 72 Turkish

Now a grandmother, with her husband and two children (3-4 year old) emigrated from Turkey to Aachen in 1976. It is six years she is living in Rothe Erde neighbourhood in Fringsgraben and before moving to her existing address, she used to live in Eilendorf. She believes in her new neighbourhood there are more German families who are kind and friendly with good relationship with Turkish families. She cannot speak German, although her children grew up and went to school in Aacchen. She believes language is so important to be part of the society as without good communication with German neighbours life becomes so difficult. She has her own little back garden and grow small amount of herbs and vegetable (cucumber). She complains for lack of enough land for gardening as the limited space of the back garden prevents her to grow more herbs and vegetable. For her, privacy is important and she prefers her own little garden than an allotment garden as she believes in allotment gardens women are exposed to the public during the work and this situation is not pleasing for her. When her children were young (3-4 years old), and in the first few years of their arrival to Germany, they used to go to Kennedy Park more frequently as they used to feel more homesick and isolated. In Kennedy Park they could see more Turkish families and park was very important for them as a place to spend free time and relax with children. When she goes to the park, she wants to speak with German ladies in her age, but she cannot communicate as she does not speak German and language remains a difficult concern that never she was able to remove it because of the lifestyle and being a mother and housewife. She believes in integration of ethnic groups in a host society by respecting culture and religion of the host country which in this case if we respect they respect our culture and religion as she believes it is a mutual agreement. She wears Hijab and finds no problem to practice Islam. She goes to the park with her friends once per week if the weather is good and for her and her family it is okay to meet non-Muslim park-users but the problem is the language. They have a corner in the park with few seats which is their

Plate 58 - While interviewing Alex, we were witnessed of arresting two male park users by police inside the Kennedy Park. Photo by NK April 2012.

Plate 59 - Kennedy Park children playing ground with only one user in a quiet Tuesday. She spent less that ten minutes playing while her Turkish mother supervising her from far distance and calling her to end her playing. She did not agreed to be interviewed Photo by NK April 2012.

permanent meeting place and they spend few hours sitting and chatting with Turkish friends and families. She never goes to the park by herself and always someone (a family member or a friend) walk with her to the park. The main reason to have someone with her while going to the park is due to not being able to speak German and also she believes park is located in a rough area and if something happens such as robbery and disturbance by loitering youth, she cannot defend herself although as mentioned, one of her hobbies while in the park is to watch people who are fighting. She believes that the park has "nothing" and it is just a meeting place for elderly men and women and a crime scene for drug smugglers and loitering youths. She believes there is no park guardian to keep the park clean and tidy or a gardener to take care of the plants. She also mentioned, there is no lighting for night use although this comment differs from the actual situation that is recorded and shows park guardian working in Kennedy Park.

7.2.10 Kennedy Park - Female 47, Turkish

Mother who as a teenager used to go to the Kennedy Park with her family or during school hours with her classmates and teachers as part of school program. By time when she was more grown up she didn't find the park an interesting place to go because it turned to be rough and unsafe with nothing important to go there and enjoy. The most obvious memory for her is the loitering boys that used to dominate the park and this was something that prevented the girls to feel free and safe in a neighbourhood park. As a result, she lost her interest to play in a park as her habits changed as she gets older. She says: "*I do not enjoy in a park which suffers badly from vandalism and it's not safe to sit and relax.*" Currently she lives in Eilendorf where she has a large green space as the backyard of her house and she enjoys her free time in this space more than anywhere else but if the weather is good and she wants to change the scenery she goes to Ferberpark which is close to her house and she believes the park is nice and clean. In response to the question of identity she believes that she is a Turkish Muslim and also a German resident as she is living in this country but the cultural and religious roots are stronger than the host culture to be fully merged in it and totally feel that the emigrant is a real German.

7.2.11 Kennedy Park - Male 25, Turkish

University student, born and raised in Aachen-Ost. His memory about Kennedy Park is limited to his childhood when he used to go to the park with his parents to play and also in school the teachers used to hold classes such as sport and biology within Kennedy Park. He describes the park in early years as an untidy and run down space with trashes scattered everywhere and not so much appealing and interesting for playing with not enough playing equipments for children in 90s . In recent years the park had a facelift with lots of improvements that changed the atmosphere of the park and now it is turned to a clean park. In overall he does not like Kennedy Park because of his bad memories from childhood. He considers himself a Turkish Muslim who lives in Germany and being German for him is the third identity.

7.2.12 Kennedy Park - Male 20, Romanian

A young Romanian Muslim who does not speak German although able to communicate in English. He lives with

his brother in nearby neighbourhood close to the park. He uses the park as a place to relax and watch kids while playing football but despite the fact that he does not know German language, sometimes he joins the crowd and plays football. Also he likes to sit where he can see the skatepark and the football court at the same time and relax. He thinks the park is not a good park with high standards to invite his friends who live in other parts of the city to meet up and chat here. During the interview a police van stopped on the other side of the park questioning other male park users. The interviewee believes because of daily presence of police around the park, it is not a safe place and there are trouble-makers such as drug smugglers active in Kennedy Park (Plate 58).

Plate 60 - Two young park users that like the park and use it as a meeting place and to socialising with other friends. View towards Nadelfabrik from skate area in Kennedy Park. Photo by NK April 2012.

Plate 61 - View towards Euroturk Office (nadelfabrik) and hard surface ball game court to the right in south of Kennedy Park. Photo by NK April 2012.

Plate 62 - View towards Euroturk Office which has a walking access to the south of Kennedy Park through a door. Photo by NK April 2012.

7.2.13 Kennedy Park - Female 14 & 15 German/Turkish

Both are school friends with Turkish and German parents. They are allowed by parents to go to park when ever they would like. They live in nearby area and visit the park once per week or more to play together or to sit, chat and relax. Park for them is more a meeting place and there is nothing within the park that disturbs them. They do not see Kennedy Park as a special place as they think it is flat and small with too much vandalism (Plate 60).

Plate 63 - View towards Kennedy Park main access, bus stop and retail shops at Elsassplatz. Photo by NK April 2012.

7.2.14 Kennedy Park - Male 58 Turkish

Introduced by Eurotürk organisation of Aachen as a candidate to be interviewed. An architect and a professional photographer, resident of Aachen since 1970 when he immigrated to Germany with his parents in age of 15. In two hours interview, questions are more focused on subjects that help to understand his own experience. His memories about Kennedy Park and neighbourhoods in Rothe Erde are interesting. He describes how his sense of place in a western city developed and how he identifies himself Turkish national in a new environment. He describes Kennedy Park a heaven, not only for himself but for his Turkish friends who used to go to the park after finishing the school every day. The reason for his description he says is behind this fact that Kennedy Park was the only free space that they had a limitless access to it and they could play sport, listen to the radio together in summer nights or swim in the small lake as it was possible in 70s. Through his story telling he shows that he has developed a strong tie with Kennedy Park for many reasons. One of the reasons that he loves the park is about a photo that was taken by a stranger while he and his Turkish friend were swimming in the pond in early 70s and few years later when he was mourning for his lost childhood friend, accidently he explored an old photo published in a book which was taken by a stranger in Kennedy Park. He explains how excited he was to gift the book as a memorabilia to the son of his friend. Through his description it is obvious that Kennedy Park is so important for him as a place that he spent good times in it with friends, family or alone. He believes the Park plays an important role to give him a new sense of place after moving to Germany.

It was asked that whether his mother and sisters or other female members of the Turkish community used to go to Kennedy Park in early years of their arrival when they were more homesick and used to miss their hometown. He explains Turkish ladies instead of going to the Park, used to go to the Rothe Erde train station where they can sit, chat and relax. The train station has a symbolic meaning for them as it used to give them a sense of leaving Aachen and going to Turkey or waiting for the arrival of a loved one who was not in the town.

This sense of homesickness and attachment to places that used to comfort them were stronger in 70s and 80s when means of communication

Plate 64 - View towards lake in Kennedy Park. Photo by NK April 2012.

Plate 65 - Turkish father teaching his daughter to ride a bike in Kennedy Park. Photo by NK April 2012.

were limited to letters and radio news or information brought by travellers from Turkey. In late 80s little by little telephone became more accessible and operable in remote areas of Turkey then it was easier to communicate and at the same time less pressure on immigrants in terms of homesickness and living and working in Aachen without being in touch with their families.

He believes German (in early years when the world was not very much connected) used to be more friendly and kind with Muslims. Since the surge of immigrants to Germany in late 90s and after 9/11 terrorist attack in USA, the gap between Germen and Turks becomes deeper and wider.

His wife and two children used to go to Kennedy Park every now and then but his daughter stops to go to the park with her parents or friends since she was eleven as she does not like the park anymore. She describes Kennedy Park a degraded place for gathering of loiters and gangs. So his daughter does not enjoy herself in the park. Every weekend they go to other parks in Aachen which have a better social and physical character such as West Park, Alsdorf Park and zoo which is out of the town.

He remembers in mid 90s a teenage girl was raped and killed in Kennedy Park, as a result the park and whole neighbourhood around it lost their reputation and social status as a safe place to live in Aachen-Ost. He remembers how people from other parts of the town used to treat them negatively if they realise they live near Kennedy Park.

7.3 Questionnaires Analysis

Development of two sets of questionnaires is explained in research methodology. Collected questionnaires from three case study parks are represented in Table 10. The interviews are conducted mainly based on asking questions from questionnaire designed for each city with open-ended questions by filling out the questionnaire personally during one to one or group interviews.

	Household Questionnaires	Household Interviews	Park Questionnaires	Park Interviews
Washwood Heath	20	15	25	20
Sparkbrook	16	5	10	10
Total collected= 121	36	20	35	30
Rothe Erde	5	4	4	4

Table 9 - Total number of distributed questionnaires and performed interviews in three case study parks

Results of data analysis retrieved from questionnaires and on-site interviews, as well as results from analyses of narratives received from interviewees and respondents to the questionnaires are presented according to the following common grounds of responses which are described in research methodology too:

Age and Gender

Identity

Park visit frequency

Type of favourite green open spaces

Use pattern

Degree of satisfaction

Landscape and human needs

Comfort and expectations

Sociability

Use and activity

Access and proximity

7.3.1 Age and Gender

Age and gender are two important and basic factors in social science surveys that are used to understand the use pattern of the parks in different age groups within both genders. Through the questions it is aimed to realise what is the social pattern of the park use considering the age and gender of the majority Muslim park users. There are important considerations in Islamic law for gender and age that affect many aspects of a Muslim life. The Islamic connotation about gender and age are explained in Chapter 3 under concepts such as Mahram, Hijab and, Haya (Modesty).

Referring to the bar charts in Appendix I & II that are developed from the collected research data after the analysis of questionnaires in case study parks in Birmingham and Aachen Cities and onsite observations that are recorded through photographic images (Plates 10-29, Chapter 6 and 50-57), Muslim park users from all age groups and both genders are willing to use their local park. The age groups in this research are categorised as follow:

The most frequently age group of park users is 15-25 male as group users that frequently use the parks for ball games. It is noted that all female park users in the same age category are accompanied by family or friends. There are no single occurrence of a teenage female using parks alone or accompanied by non-Muslim friends. Female park users activity is limited to chatting with friends, watching their children while they are playing, feeding the birds around the lake in Ward End Park, walking in group and also mother and daughter walking in the parks are common.

Another park-usage pattern by elderly Muslim males (51>) is that of walking in pairs with male friends and not with their wives. This behaviour is common in Middle East and Islamic culture that 50+ Muslim couples rarely appear in park for walking or enjoying the nature.

Data analysis shows in Sparkhill, Ward End and Kennedy Parks males within the age range of 15-25 make the majority of users and 36-50 years old females are ranked in the second place. This data analysis complies with onsite observation as the majority of the park users are either young teenager boys or mothers with kids. It is possible to claim that the majority of Muslim park users are amongst housewives with young children who use the park as a place of gathering to meet and chat with neighbours and friends also giving this chance to their children to play with other Muslim kids.

According to interviews with Muslim females 36-50 years of age, the majority commented that the park is the gathering place for mothers as they can enjoy talking and communicating with their friends and families while their children are playing. In holidays when the schools are closed they usually come to the park in the morning around 10:30 to noon which is the time for the mid-day Muslim praying (Salat). In contrary to this finding the teenage boys usually use the park in the afternoon and this is the reason

Question	Use Pattern	Findings
How did you get there?	(Car, Walk, Bicycle, Bus,..) to realise how accessible is the park and if the park is interested for people living in other neighbourhoods.	Ward End Park has visitors from other Muslim-dominant wards of the Birmingham City while Sparkhill Park give services to the Muslim residents of the Sparkbrook ward especially the residents who are in 300m catchment area of the park.
How long does it take you to get to your favo-urite open spaces?	(-5min to 30min>) to measure how much time a park-user allocates to get to the park. Spending more time means the person for some reasons is more interested to this specific park.	Park-users spend more time to get to the Ward End Park as they believe it is a Muslim Park and a gathering point for Muslim families and their friends. Ward End Park is three times bigger than Sparkhill Park and has a lake that attracts more visitors.
Who do you go with?	(alone, alone with dog, with family, with friends, with school) to understand park-users choice of accompaniment .	The majority of the Muslims go to the park with families specially young females. There were not a single case of female Muslim observed in the park who were alone even those commuters who cross the park were accompanied by family members.
How often do you usually go to your fa-vourite open spaces?	(Everyday, less than, more than or once a week, less than, more than or once a month, every six months, once a year, less) this question shows that how many people like their local park and use it regularly.	Data analysis shows that majority of the respondents are weekly and daily park-users at least those who were interviewed or approached to fill out the questionnaire. The result was expected as both parks are neighbourhood parks located in the mostly dense wards of Birmingham.
Would you go to your favouri-te open spaces alone?	Three questions were designed to find out the pattern of park use in terms of favourite people that a Muslim park-user is interested to go with and who might be this person or group of people. These show the sociality status of the community.	In both cases a high percentage of the females never go to the park alone for security and cultural reasons regardless their age. Teenage girls also are not allowed to go to the park with their female classmates unless they are supervised with a male family member. Males except for three cases are free to go to the park alone or with family and friends.
Would you go to your favourite open spaces alone?	(alone, alone with dog, with family, with friends, with school) to understand park users choice of accompaniment.	[According to Islamic principles male and female Muslims should not have any relationship out of marriage even as a very simple friendship but some of the new generation of Muslims who are raised in UK do not listen to the Islamic law and have secret girl and boyfriends. This growing cultural shift was one of the main concern of the Muslim adults who were part of this study and they have talked about few boys and girls who are Muslim but they are friends and made the park a place of admitting sin as an elderly Muslim man complained in his interview within Sparkhill Park.
If your answer is “No”, why not? If the answer is Yes who do you go with?	Three questions were designed to find out the pattern of park use in terms of favourite people that a Muslim park-user is interested to go with and who might be this person or group of people. These show the sociality status of the community.	In both cases a high percentage of the females never go to the park alone for security and cultural reasons regardless their age. Teenage girls also are not allowed to go to the park with their female classmates unless they are supervised with a male family member. Males except for three cases are free to go to the park alone or with family and friends. [According to Islamic principles male and female Muslims should not have any relationship out of marriage even as a very simple friendship but some of the new generation of Muslims who are raised in UK do not listen to the Islamic law and have secret girl and boyfriends. This growing cultural shift was one of the main concern of the Muslim adults who were part of this study and they have talked about few boys and girls who are Muslim but they are friends and made the park a place of admitting sin as an elderly Muslim man complained in his interview within Sparkhill Park.

Table 10 - Use pattern development according to the data retrieved from questionnaires and interviews in case study parks.

that mother with kids are not happy to use the park at the same time that the teenage males use the park and disturb the mothers and kids.

7.3.2 Identity

In multicultural societies of today's world where people have the privilege to travel, immigrate and reside in a new country, the study of identity has become an active subject of new researches in social science and human geography. This new academic subject that has fluidity and plurality character has been addressed by McCrone in 1993 as follow:

"theorising identity to contemporary thinkers involves generally a questioning of "route" rather than "roots". Identity is not something that once was created and subsequently has become fixed and fundamentalised, but on the contrary something that is always changing, contextual, relational and shifting."

Social and cultural identity of park users are considered core of the study as they manifest how Muslim immigrants define their attachment to their local environment from cultural, moral, personal and/or social point of view. So, in order to understand identity of park users, their own descriptions are used as a manifestation of their identity such as way of introducing themselves in interviews or written answers to the question number 3 in Birmingham and number 4 in Aachen (How you describe your cultural identity?). Factors such as gender and age group are considered as influencing or relevant factors in data analysis in order to understand how all these factors work together.

The question about park users' cultural identity is chosen to realise how each individual in different age groups and genders introduce themselves. Identity is important to be considered as a factor that helps to be attached to the surroundings. As an immigrant for example, a person from Iran, enjoy her time more in a Persian restaurant or attending an art exhibition of a Persian artist which is about Persian calligraphy in UK as there are many ingredients in such venues and gatherings that boost the identity of a person who consider herself Persian, a quality that is healing and relaxing as familiarity to language, objects, people, space, motifs and what ever that comes from mother land, ease the mind. Identity has a direct relation with cultural and religious background and the degree of the attachment of the individuals to their surrounding environment such as a Western neighbourhood park.

Cultural identity plays a major role in mental health and wellbeing especially for the people who belongs to the minority ethnic groups. Works of few researchers about identity of ethnic groups such as Suzuki, 1997; Verkuyten, 1998; Rivenburgh 2000, where focus is on psychological wellbeing of a group of people from minority ethnic groups and ethnic identification, psychological wellbeing and intergroup competence are notable.

Description of different types of identity by Friedman 1994 (Chapter 3, Diagram 7) is important to be highlighted here. Friedman defines social and individual identities as two broad categories that affect individual character in absence and presence of "culture" which is a personal preference and makes his definition narrower and specific to demonstrate affecting factors an different types of identity such as his definition of "segmentary identity" which is an identity that is entirely positional and entirely relative. It is defined in terms of the relations between person, ancestors and gods presiding over a

given territory. He believes individual identity is neither carried out by subject nor can it be chosen freely. This is because it is primarily positional. Identity is determined by one's place in a larger network of relations.

Table 11 summarises how park users define their identity in three case study parks.

Ethnical & cultural identity	No. of respondents
Pakistani & British/ Pakistani	20
British	6
Indian, British/Indian & West Indian	12
Bengali	3
Turkish	16
Total	**41**

Table 11 - Number of Muslims in relation to their ethnical and cultural identity

There are many observations of large group of female park users with young children in Birmingham, such as a group of twenty young mothers with their children picnicking in Ward End Park in April 2007. They look religious by wearing Hijab and very difficult to be interviewed, although after convincing them about the nature of the research, one of the ladies accepts to answer questions on behalf of the group without giving permission to be photographed. The representative explains all are Muslim friends and family from Pakistan and Keshmir who live in different wards in Birmingham with families in Washwood Heath that makes them to arrange weekly gathering in Ward End Park because it is a Muslim-dominant park with enough space for children and mothers to spend a whole weekend day together. They find Ward End Park peaceful with good sense of place as it becomes their gathering point for socialising with their friends while their kids can play together, speaking in native language and keep their identity alive through communication with people who have religious and cultural values in common.

The importance of learning Urdu or Arabic from early age was so important for the mothers as it was mentioned. They wanted to give a chance to their children to learn and speak Urdu and Arabic to prevent them being slipped away from their cultural and religious qualities as they believed the impact of western life on their children is significant and they are not willing to experience same problems that some Muslim families with teenage children are facing these days.

From the conversations with Muslim mothers during interviews in houses and in parks, future of their children as a faithful Muslim is one of the main concerns that gives them incentives to build up an inner Muslim community and sometimes use the local park as a gathering place. The concept of finding Muslims from a same culture background such as Pakistani Muslims was one of the reasons that brought park-users who live in different wards of the city together in Ward End Park.

Identity for Turkish park users in Aachen is more attached to nationalism as the results of interviews and questionnaires analysis show that identity is about place of birth and religion comes next. Maybe this kind of national-based identity that Turkish people shows is a reason that Muslim park users in Aachen are less religious in appearance comparing to Muslim park users in Birmingham.

7.3.3 Park Visit Frequency

Frequency of park visit is evaluated to realise what factors encourage or prevent the individuals to use the parks or open spaces on a daily, weekly, monthly or aunnual basis. The question seek to find out how often do the park users get out of house and spend time to socialize and use a park or open space.

Majority of respondents are weekly users of the case study parks. There are Muslim families who live in white-dominant wards such as Stechford and Selly Oak but prefer to come to the Ward End Park more frequently and plan for their weekends to socialise with other Muslim park-users who are their family or friends (Plate 18). Parks for Muslims especially in Birmingham if they have high number of Muslim users attract mothers and children on a regular basis. All case study parks are a venue for gathering of male teenagers on a daily basis if they can walk to the park in 5 to 15 minutes. Majority of female park users visit the parks weekly in company of family members such as mothers.

7.3.4 Park versus Allotment

Majority of Muslim park users respect nature as a gift from God and feel responsible to protect and cherish it as a divine entity based on Islamic thinking. Furthermore female Muslim show too much interest for gardening and horticultural activities within a private allotment or garden. In response to question 6 in Birmingham and 7 in Aachen (Appendices I & II) which asks: do you enjoy yourself more in a park or gardening in an allotmnet? Many elderly Muslim women reply: *What is the benefit of sitting here in a park and looking around? Why municipality do not convert parks to allotments? If they do so, we come here to do something benefitial for our health and home. Producing vegetable and herbs is more healing than spending free time in a park by doing nothing.*

They also request to design a part of neighbourhood park (Ward End) for use of mothers with young children as a Women Garden in which they can do gardening while their children are playing in a playground within the garden. Many Muslims in both genders suggest to create parks with fruit trees instead of cultivating fruitless shadow trees. They think it is waste of money and water to create parks and gardens that the plants do not produce any fruit or crop for use of needy people specially homeless individuals who spend more time in a park during summer or when the weather is good.

Results show, 15-21 age category in both genders are not interested in gardening and prefer to have fun in a park with friends also males in 51+ age category enjoy more in a park than working in an allotment.

Preference for Turkish park users is a private garden as they enjoy gardening and gathering more in a private family garden. They do not find it interesting and relaxing to set up BBQ party in a neighbourhood park even if they want to share their times with neighbours they prefer to do it privately at back garden if they can afford it. In Aachen there are park users who like to grow vegetables and herbs in their own house instead of renting plots from municipality. results from surveys in Aachen show that majority of Muslim Turks have interests in more private, spacious and green open spaces such as a family garden next to their house.

7.3.5 Use Pattern

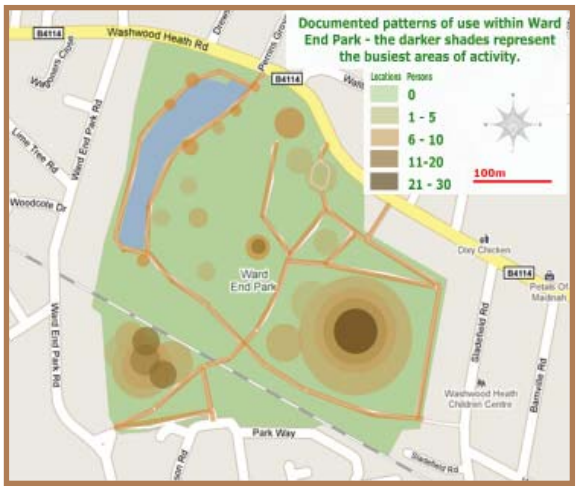
A neighbourhood park is a place that people in all age groups with different social background and from different races and cultural identity have a chance to share same space and revitalise after work or school, or even during a working day in a lunch break. Users of a neighbourhood park can be elderly residents of the nearby houses, staffs and workers of the nearby offices or workshops or in playing hours of the toddlers by their mothers. This means park users are diverse from different age group, genders, social status, and ethnicity that make neighbourhood park a place for different kind of activities. Different kinds of activities demonstrate a web of "use pattern" if they are recorded and understood as a whole concept.

Plans 7-9 which are developed following frequent observations of use pattern by Muslim park users in case study parks, indicate the most in-used spots and footpaths.

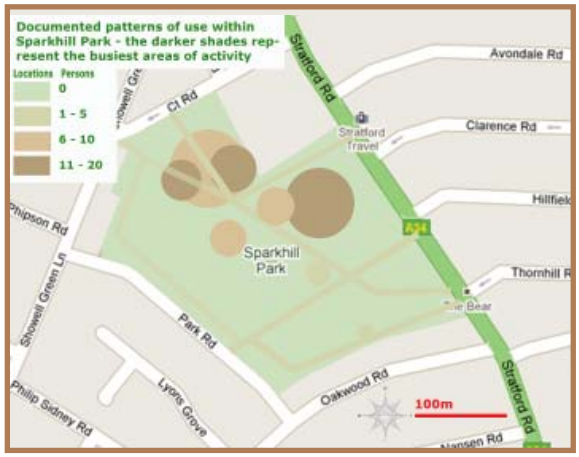
Use patterns by Muslim park users are important criteria in this research that needed a full understanding of the park visits by individuals or group of Muslim people. Through this assessment the use patterns will help to depict a clear picture of the park users' interests, requirements and expectations while they are in a neighbourhood park.

A vast majority of people who are observed in case study parks, indicate they use a park either as a short-cut to get to the local premises, houses of family members, bus-stops, etc or as a place for leisure, relaxation, time-out and playing games. All case study parks are venues for young male to play soft ball games (soccer, cricket, volleyball, etc.) or to walk/jog, and/or socializing within the park by meeting their friends and family.

Dog walking is observed in three case study parks but the number of dog walkers is limited to the minority of white British, German and non-Muslim



Plan 7 - Use Pattern in Ward End Park. Base map courtesy of Google Map, 2010.



Plan 8 - Use Pattern in Sparkhill Park. Base map courtesy of Google Map, 2010.

Plan 9 - Use Pattern in Kennedy Park. Base map courtesy of Google Map, 2013.

immigrants (e.g. an Indian Sikh, Plates 56). In Aachen many Turkish and non-Turkish dog walkers use Kennedy Park.

Muslims usually do not keep pets especially dog as it is against of the Islamic thoughts. It is believed that, to prevent diseases such as rabies or being affected by tapeworms, Muslims should not be in touch with dogs and cats to avoid such diseases that most commonly transmitted from cats and dogs to humans. Many Muslim park users that are interviewed in this research complain about unleashed dogs that make it difficult for Muslims to enjoy their time in a park.

Notable commentary and explanatory responses from park users are represented in Table 12 in which diversity of interests and usage of parks by community members are recorded.

Picnics in summer happen by Muslim families in Ward End as it is bigger than Sparkhill Park. They know the best picnic spots near the lake although complain about non-Muslims with improper dress code in summer.

Referring to the research questionnaire (Apendix I & II) and Table 12, questions 7 to 11 in Birmingham and 8 to 12 in Aachen are designed to realise the use patterns of the parks by Muslim park users. The results of the data analysis and onsite survey are analysed for a better understanding of the spots with high usage in order to demonstrate the primary uses of the spaces within the parks and the needs of Muslim park users which are discussed in the subsequent section. The results are categorised according to the answers that have a common ground in terms of usage by different respondents and also by analysing the space use within three case studies focusing how Muslims use the case study parks (Plans 7, 8 & 9).

In Kennedy Park, the first impression during site visit is that the park plays an important role as a connecting hub within Rothe Erde district as it makes the surrounding businesses, schools and residential clusters connected by providing accessibility to the pedestrians. In few site observations during winter and summer, it is noticed the most apparent pattern of park use is the frequent usage of the park through its connecting footpaths. The spots which are most in use in Kennedy Park are linear seating benches in front of children playing house which is usually in use by Turkish men. The other busy spots are hard surface playing court and children playing grounds (Plan 9).

7.3.6 Degree of Satisfaction

It is necessary to understand the concept of satisfaction and contentment from a Muslim point of view to realise differences between a Muslim and non-Muslim who has a different mind set in respect to satisfaction. A general meaning of satisfaction at a personal level that is not necessarily related to the park use and its services is cited from Qur'an as the most quoted source of reference for Muslims. One of the subtle characters of Muslims when they are asked to answer a question is their interest to mix their answer with a relevant verse or chapter in Qur'an. In this way the respondent attests his/her answer to make sure the answer is correct and in accordance with Islamic thoughts. Following verses from chapters of Qur'an are good example of verses that are in use by Muslims in their conversations about worldy or divine satisfaction:

> Qur'an (13:28): "*Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah: for without doubt in the*

remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction."

Qur'an (9:109): "*So, is he who founded his structure upon piety to Allah and all-blessed Satisfaction more charitable, or he who founded his structure upon the brink of a toppling precipice, (and) so it has toppled down with him in the fire of Hell? And Allah does not.*"

These verses are fundamental principles in Islamic thoughts and philosophy. Muslims have to follow these principles if they want to feel satisfied as they believe a true satisfaction happens if God is satisfy with the man and this feeling of contentment is a reflection from God's satisfaction.

According to the above introduction and referring to the research findings, degree of satisfaction in a neighbourhood park depends on the people that Muslim park users have to spend time with them. For majority, being with family and friends are main factors that satisfy them the most while they are in a clean and tidy park which has enough greeneries, furniture and security.

7.3.7 Landscape and Human Needs

"*landscape*" reflects "*human needs*" and there are links between the needs of urban landscape and people (Diagram 5). When human relationship with urban green space is centre of attention, responses and relation of residents who are members of the minority ethnic groups, become important to be undestood. Thus, this understanding demonstrates what are needs and dreams of people who are classified as ethnic groups and how urban landscape can respond to their need.

This part of research is to show how much a neighbourhood park as a landscape reflects needs of minority Muslims and how Muslims identify themselves or relate themselves to such landscaoe. In the concept of both people and landscape, identity is an essential integrating ingredient that bounds community members together, although individual and cultural identity may differ in origin, such as demanding respect, understanding and commitment but they need to be managed in a way that the overall landscape is aesthetically, ethically and ecologically sustainable, usable and pleasant during on a long term (J. Buckemuh et al, 2000).

With above introduction it is more convenient to describe another aspect of the research which deals with understanding Muslim park users satisfaction while they are in touch with nature or landscape.

Also it worth quoting the following verses from Qur'an as the most cited verses by interviewees in this research. Few respondents refer to these verses to describe the importance of landscape as a green space and means for gardening and its role in human satisfaction.

Qur'an (18: 107): "*The hospitality of those who believe and do good works shall be the Gardens of Paradise.*"

Qua'an (23: 11): "*Who will inherit Paradise; they shall live there forever.*"

Muslims who were interviewed in this research have addressed these verses that landscape is a gift from God and a reflection of its creature so there are many reasons for Muslims to be a nature lover. Gardening for Muslim is a holy practice and entertainment as they

believe such activities are conditions to enter heaven after life.

7.4 Place-making Project

Projects for Public Spaces (PPS) is a non-profit planning, design and educational organization in New York and it is dedicated to helping community members to create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. In 2009, an online survey called Place-making conducted by this organization and people from all over the world were asked to define Placemaking. More than 750 respondents completed this sentence: "Placemaking is….." and the results led the researchers to develop The Place diagram (Diagram 10).

In this research the Place Diagram is used to interpret research findings and data gathered from the questionnaires. This is a community evaluation tool which put the place (any place outside of a building) at the centre of the circle and relate different attributes about that place in circumference of the circle. In this way findings can be easily categorised and systematically defined and understood.

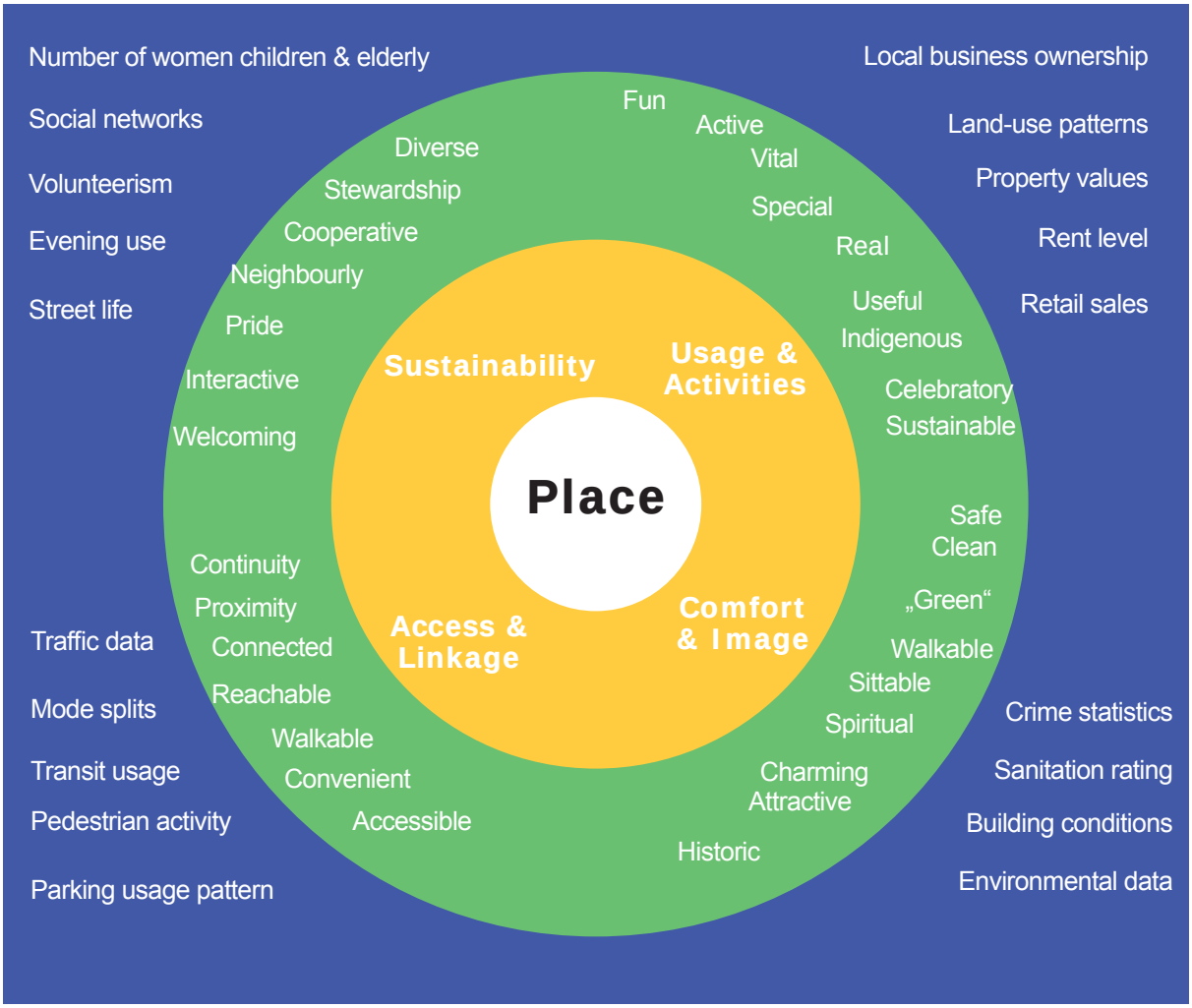


Diagram 9 - Place Diagram (re-designed from Projects for Public Spaces (PPS) survey in 2009)

The "Place" at the centre of the Place Diagram can be a specific place that is known to the respondent such as a neighbourhood park in this research, civic centre, and street corner. The orange rings are four main attributes that are tools to evaluate the Place or Neighbourhood Park in this research which are amended according to the research key attributes that are developed from imperical results. In the outer green ring there are a number of qualitative aspects by which a place can be judged and evaluated but for the

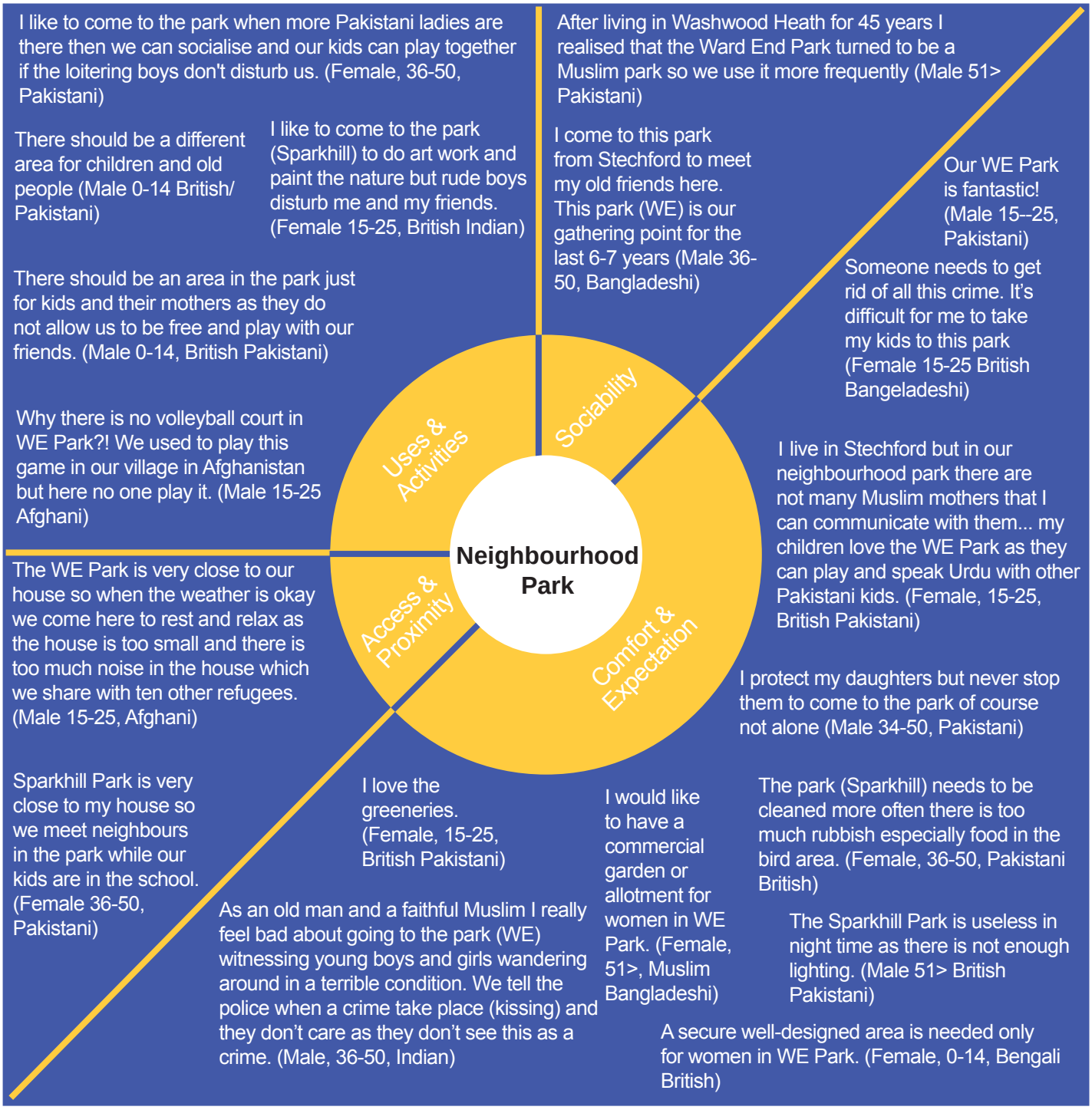


Diagram 10- - A model developed according to the Place-Making Project and research findings through comments received from interviewees and responses within questionnaires in Birmingham City.

purpose of this research the green ring is merged with the blue area. The blue area shows the quantitative aspects that can be measured by statistics or research but the blue area represents the most specific and informitive comments by Muslim park users in all case study parks (Ref. www.pps org. 2010).

As described, Diagram 11 is developed to combine responses received from Muslim park users followed by onsite surveys in different seasons in Ward End, Sparkhill and Kennedy Parks. The model is solely relevant to the recorded answers, personal observations and onsite investigations. It represents findings from the surveys, and follows rationales that are represented in PPS Place-making model. The usefulness of this model is its capability to evaluate community integrity through four key attributes which are:

1. Comfort & Expectation

2. Sociability

3. Uses & Activities

4. Access & Proximity

Open and closed-end questions help to get diverse answers and information about park usage. The research Neighbourhood Park Model (Diagram 11) is developed according to the story telling of the park users and demonstrates certain qualities in a neighbourhood park that are important for a Muslim park user such as a woman only area that has roots in Islamic thoughts and culture. This Neighbourhood Park Model is based on Muslims' perspective, needs, memories and expectations.

7.4.1 Comfort and Expectations

Ccomfort and expectations for a Muslim park user are dependent on few factors that have roots in Islamic thoughts. There are religiously important principles which Muslims need to obey and the subsequent result of adhering to these principles are peace in mind and experiencing a comfortable environment. Referring to Diagram 11 which is developed according to the following comments of Muslim park users, there are issues related to gender such as gender separation which is not possible in a free society but such concerns of park users are important to be noticed and understood. The most important expressions of park users expectation and comfort are related to their culture and religion:

• Someone needs to get rid of all this crime. It's difficult for me to take my kids to this park (female 15-25 British Bangeladeshi)

• There should be a different area for children and old people (male 0-14 British/Pakistani)

• I'd like to see a woman only area in the park in addition to that some security.

• The parks are about a bus ride away from us but again we cannot use them properly as the teenagers use the swings and stuff. I can't put my kids on the stuff if I ask they swear at me.

• Our Park is fantastic

• There should be an area in the park just for kids and their mothers.

• There should be a different area for children and old people.

• I'm worried about the safety of women and kids.

• There is so much crime in the park.

• We tell the police when a crime takes place and they don't care. As an old man I feel bad about going to the Park.

• I'd like to see some kind of security in the park it is not safe for old people and young girls/kids.

• The park needs to be cleaned more often there is too much rubbish especially food in the bird area.

• We seriously need more security for kids and women secondly need to address the problems of drugs and dog fighting etc. The local council is just not interested when we make complaints.

7.4.2 Sociability

Sociability is one of the four key attributes of a neighbourhood park. Through a research at the Urban Parks Institute in USA, the issue of sociability and its connection with community habits is studied that shows in recent years there is an increasing debate about the importance of sense of community and sense of place that both seem lost in cities especially with diverse population. For minority ethnic groups time is needed to get familiar with neighbourhood and its components such as a local park, to meet neighbours and frequenting meeting in vital places. There are many urban organizations and city commissions that believe people are discovering that unique places once integral to people's everyday lives are slowly disappearing and parks are no exception. Research shows that many parks no longer function as important places that capture the hearts of local residents (PPS 2012).

According to the researches by psychologist Robert Sommer (1864-1937) people tend to have four and a half times more sociable talks with people in a market versus a supermarket. By definition a sociable place is one where people tend to go to observe the passing scenes, meeting friends, and engaging and interacting with a wide range of people that are different from them and at the same time have something in common to share. Through Sommer's research it is Have you ever noticed how many enjoyable conversations you can have at a farmers' market or a flea market? How can the builders and managers of today's parks learn more from other places such as markets about where and how social activity occurs?

The analysis of research findings shows that case study parks in two cities have potentials for socialising Muslims who live in adjacent neighbourhoods or other parts of the town. Although most of the comments are about insecurity of females because of the reported crimes and also different age groups do not getting along while they are using the park at the same time, from observations and on site surveys it is evident that the Parks are focal points for Muslims that bring them together for various reasons even though there are reported conflicts that are received from the park users and non-users.

Results of data analysis in Appendices I & II reflect how park users responded to questions about comfort while using the park that can demonstrate sociability of the park users. As an example most of the respondents complain about the bad behaviour of the young teenagers that prevent them to come to the park and use it as a common place for socialising with other Muslim peers and at the same time young Muslims complined about mothe and kids that want the park for themselves.

7.4.3 Uses & Activities

There are certain types of activities that make three parks community magnets for Muslim residents despite recoded complains from different age groups and genders.

As it was mentioned before, both parks provide a place for Muslim to meet and socialise as there are areas within the parks where people can sit and talk or play and walk but there are lack of certain places such as a place to get warm in winter and get something to eat or drink.

According to The Great Good Place by Ray Oldenburg there are good places in a neighbourhood such as a neighbourhood park that have characters to bring community members together. playing court in a park, a corner bar, a coffeehouse or a playground that act as the glue of their communities attract people for friendship, companionship and relaxation. These places which are characterized by popular informality are regularly available so that people can rely on it when they need to chat and anticipate lively conversations with the 'regulars characters' (such as Muslims) and other neighbors. According to Oldenburg, in good places every person is known for their social self, not as an employee or family member — roles, he says, *that can make people feel like they are in straight jackets from which they long to escape. A good place also encourages people to 'sit and set a spell.' Being able to sit, converse or just look at passersby is a key.*

Considering Muslim park users with respect to Oldenburg account on activities and uses in parks, there are certain characters within research case study parks that are missed from a Muslim point of view such as a "woman or mother with children" park or excluding park users who dress improperly (females in shorts and vests). So we see how complicated is to dive into a mind of a religious and conservative Muslim park user.

The following questions and the answers to them that are used in questionnaires and interviews enable the research to demonstrate the uses of the parks' facilities and activities by Muslim park users:

• Is the park comfortable and does it have a good image?

• How satisfied are you with the appearance and green beauty of your neighbourhood park?

•How important do you think the green spaces are to the local image?

• How do you rate the general quality of your favourite open space (park, local market, place of worship, front or back garden, other……..) as an area for relaxation?

• How do you rate the general quality of your favourite open space as a refuge from the pace and noise of urban life?

• Are any facilities missing from this open space?

• Does anything disturb you while using the open space?

• What do you use your favourite open space for?

• Are green spaces in this neighbourhood suitable for your use?

• How long do you stay in the green space/market on average?

• Are its activities varied and physically combined?

• Do people socialize there?

A combination of responses which received from questionnaires and interviews are analysed to set up a common ground for this aspect of research. The research clearly confirms that informal and passive activities are the main reasons that Muslim park users visit case study parks. The information from the survey shows that

people's reasons for using parks fall into six broad categories:

1- enjoying the environment

2- social activities

3- getting away from home and workplace

4- walking activities excluding dog walking

5- passive or informal enjoyment

6- active enjoyment, including sport and specific activities

These six categories of primary use are combined with a social typology, based on age, gender and ethnicity to create a categorisation of users.

Muslim park-users especially mothers with small children emphasis on having a separate space as women garden within the neighbourhood park only designated for the women and children without any access for the young and adult males. This request is mentioned frequently by the majority of the male and female Muslim park users. The reason has roots in Islamic thoughts and beliefs and as it is discussed in chapter 3, separation of male and female who are not Mahram is so important in a Muslim family which affect many aspects of a their life. As Muslim respondents described their willing for such separated space because they want to experience peace and comfort while they are using the park as they feel uncomfortable if a male stare at them when they are jogging or playing with their children as well as such act from a male park user will consider a sin that the female will be responsible to it because she exposed herself to males. What the female respondents comment about gender separation in the parks is exactly same request from male respondents specially teenagers as they believed mother with kids disturb them and they cannot freely play in the park.

The concept of gender separation within the park that come from Islamic principles is not practical in a western society.

7.4.4 Access and Proximity

Case study parks are accessible to the nearby neighbourhoods and main streets and businesses around (Maps 1, 2 & 3).

Reference to Shaping Neighbourhood for Local Health and Global Sustainability, 2009, the research has examined accessibility of the case study parks for park users and how satisfied they are in terms of access and proximity parameters.

Easy access to different locations within the parks to perform special activities such as playing games, sitting by the lake or fountains or under a favourite tree or a special bench or having good views towards other parts of the parks are factors that different park users such as mothers with buggies, elderly and less mobile people or teenagers have mentioned that they have direct relationship with satisfaction and ultimate wellbeing and comfort if they are easily accessible and not occupied by other users.

Barton (2010) defines accessibility thresholds to demonstrate the relation between physical activity and mental wellbeing. He set out minimum distances from different land uses to home as accessibility thresholds which is useful for readers to consider access and proximity are important for both physiological and psychological reasons.

According to his research the desirable thresholds which are summarised in Table 16 show that the minimum distance from a neighbourhood or local park to the nearby home should be 300

meter or less.

Land Use	Min. Distance to Home
Toddlers play area	100 m
Playground and kick-about	300 m
Local park/green space	300 m
Access to the green network	600 m
Playing fields	1000 m
Major natural green space	2000 m

Table 12 - Accessibility thresholds in a local park (H. Barton et al, 2010).

All three case study parks are located within high density urban areas of Birmingham and Aachen cities so they meet this criterion and the results of the research approve that the parks are accessible as the majority of the park users walk or bike to get to the parks.

Case study Parks also have desirable access routes from different directions which create shortcuts for commuters to walk between main streets that encompass facilities and residential areas around the parks that do not have direct access to the main access roads.

Another finding of the research in respect of the access and proximity is about Islamic or ethnic character of the Ward End Park which is in use of Muslim citizens from many close or far wards of Birmingham City. The majority of park users who have been interviewed like mothers with children use the public transport or car to get to the park in weekends and holidays only for the familiar elements and connected atmosphere of the Ward End Park. In Sparkhill Park because of its size which is one third of the Ward End Park the number of park visitors from other wards is less comparing to Ward End Park although there were few cases that the park was in use by families and friends in weekends that use the park as a gathering place. Kennedy Park also is significant as a green pocket that is engulfed by main streets with heavy urban traffics, businesses, vacant factories, residential block towers and schools. It connects major roads through its footpath that are heavily in use by pedestrians and cyclists. From site observations it was noticed that the park is not a place for long stay by families except for cases that young children were learning how to bike under supervision of their parents. Kennedy Park is constantly in use by passerbys and from a personal point of view it is not a cozy and warm place for relaxation as it is very much exposed to the surrounding environment. Kenendy Park is connected to childhood memories for Turkish families who used to live in nearby neighbourhoods so it induces nostalgic feelings in Turkish individuals who arrived in Aachen as immigrants in 60s and 70s.

7.5 Conclusion

Research tried to answer a complex and new question: "*What is the relationship of Muslim immigrants with their neighbourhood park?*" that has overlaps with disciplines such as sociology, environmental and human psychology, landscape architecture and urban planning and design. Because of limitations and constraints that the complex question imposed on research it was not possible to dive into each field of study relevant to the question, and then thoroughly understand specific aspects of Muslim park users and their relationship with a neighbourhood park in each specific research field and through available research tools.

In the first section of thesis, Setting out Research Goal, the research question is formulated and subsequently delimitations and scope of the presented research are described. The research question is the resultant of a number of initial questions about effects and relationships of cultural identity, personal spirituality and mental health on Muslim park users who are immigrants in a Western society. It was aimed to study how they relate themselves to the space and physical character of a neighbourhood park.

To get a collective result from research works, the thesis adopted a multilayer approach to break down the research question into simple and specific elements. Research looked at general and specific rules and norms that influence people (i.e. Muslim immigrants) in a Western society (Birmingham and Aachen) while using a neighbourhood park (three case study parks) and how they are influenced by urban physical and natural infrastructures. These two broad aspects of research become more detailed and specific to create building blocks of research question as described above and a base for literature review. Review of literature about urban green infrastructure in Chapter 1 and ecological theory of public health in Chapter 2 reveal that how much human health and wellbeing such as mental health are attached to local environment. Looking at multicultural citizenship and ethnicity in Chapter 3, helped to understand how other researchers define ethnicity, identity and perception of place. In the same chapter important principles in Islam are introduced and discussed to briefly demonstrate how a Person who practice Islam thinks, behave and expects to be behaved. Family character in Islam and Islamic rules that affect men and women in Islam are important to be understood to answer the research question. In Chapter 4, ethnicity in United Kingdom and Germany is addressed with figures and literatures about Birmingham and Aachen Cities to figure out in which part of the cities Muslim immigrants have the highest population. Following demographic study and evaluation of districts and wards of two cities, three neighbourhood parks which are located in the most dense neighbourhoods with highest number of Muslim residents were selected as research case studies.

Research methodology as described in Chapter 5 adopted different approaches for collection of data and subsequent qualitative analysis of gathered information in order to provide a comprehensive result through questionnaire distribution in case study parks and adjacent neighbourhoods, on site photography, observation and interviews with Muslim park users.

Chapter 6 presents research materials and methods such as details of case study parks and how they are evaluated and selected. Results and findings of research are presented in Chapter 7

where this conclusion is based.

7.5.1 Evaluation of Research Work

The research work presented in this thesis is a qualitative, observational study based upon qualitative data gathered from on-site observations, records of events and type of park users and their activities by interviews and photography through close contact with the research materials for a prolonged period of time. The research develops a profound understanding of Muslim immigrants relationship in a neighbourhood park and propose to formulate a conceptual theory to explain the phenomenon under investigation based on interviews, observations, and analysis of questionnaires. In addition, literature reviews are performed to the extent required to develop sensitivity in observation and interpretation of data. The qualitative research approach is used to develop necessary understanding for evaluating variables and components of the study and to examine if these are relevant or non-relevant variable to study of Muslim immigrants in a neighbourhood park and which variables we need to count to understand their relationship.

Research is undertaken in two European countries, within two different cities in terms of their size, population, cultural diversity and urban character, during two different timeframes although the target of research in both cities are the same: Muslim immigrants in a neighbourhood park.

Birmingham City is the second largest city of the United Kingdom and case studies in Birmingham City are two large parks which the smaller one is four time bigger than Kennedy Park in Aachen City which is the third case study. Approximate population of Birmingham City is one million inhabitants that a quarter of them are Muslim immigrants mostly from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Aachen has around 25000 inhabitants with 7000 Muslim immigrants with Turkish root.

The colourful and multicultural character of both cities provided many opportunities for this research including access to the Muslim communities and their activities within a neighbourhood park, Islam as a controversial religion in a global village, park users and their relationship with park as a person practicing Islam and living in Western society that religion (Islam) is not as important as it used to be in their own country as a political constitution. The research shows how Muslims in a rough neighbourhood thinks about principles of Islam and Shariah law and how they try to adjust their beliefs with factors that affect their daily lives such as using a neighbourhood park as a place for relaxation.

Through the course of research, it was possible to learn and better understand Muslim park users' expectations, necessities, ideas, dreams and fears that depict a more clear picture of their life and existing situation; and if it is necessary to deepen this understanding.

Identity and sense of place are also studied which are important aspects of the research that help to realise how immigrants define their being in a western society.

Subjective evidence seems to be variable regarding the use of neighbourhood parks by Muslim minority groups such as non-Muslim park users or park facilities such as children playing grounds. There are neighbourhood parks that attract a good range of users across ethnic groups, though the pattern and time of use may vary

between these parks. Studies into issues of fear in urban settings point to higher levels of fear being expressed by Muslim immigrants. Fear of racial attack or harassment cause Muslims to modify their behaviour and limit park use especially amongst female Muslims. For Muslims, there is also a need to avoid contact with dogs, a practical disincentive to using many parks.

Research examines influence of neighbourhood parks on Muslim park users, their expectations and concerns by measuring use patterns and developing a use model for a better understanding of the park users' interaction with their neighbourhood park, perception of wellbeing and personal satisfaction.

The case studies presented in this research approve there is a relationship between Islamic thoughts and usage of a neighbourhood park. It shows how religious families justify their perception of wellbeing in a Western park such as considering nature a valuable creation by God that needs to be protected and cherished.

Muslim park users of three case study parks in UK and Germany have their own park use patterns that differ slightly with non-Muslim park-users which are related to their culture and religious beliefs such as frequent use of Ward End Park in winter days to avoid busy summer days that non-Muslims do not care about covering the whole body.

Major findings of the research are as follows:

• Ward End Park is a focal point for Muslim families especially mothers with children who cannot speak English and looking forward to socialize with ladies from their native countries who can speak Urdu or Arabic. It can be considered as a Muslim-mother-with-children Park.

• Muslims use neighbourhood parks in winter more frequently to avoid non-Muslim park users with inappropriate dress code in summer. In winter days and cold weather, parks were mostly in use for jogging and walking by Muslim men and families. This finding applies to Ward End Park in Birmingham City, mayne for its size which is a community park located in the most densely populated wards of Bormingham with high population of Muslims.

• Female park users are kin to be segregated and have a woman-only garden or area within the park in order to feel more free and safe while playing with their children. Being overlooked by male park-users is the major concern of Muslim females. They believe gender segregation gives them a chance to take their hijab out while they are in their woman-only garden or area with more secure feeling of being away of strangers and passerbys.

• Dog walking, dog fighting, drug and crime are major concerns of Muslim park users that prevent them to let their young children use the park with schoolmates or without presence of their parents or family members.

• There are Muslim families living in Birmingham for the last 40 years or more who are very much bounded to their cultural identity and consider themselves a Muslim instead of Pakistani, Bengali, Indian or British.

• For young mothers with small children and male teenagers neighbourhood parks are important part of their daily life although these two groups of users oppose each other because of the nature of their uses of space.

• Nature as a divine gift and a creation of God is highly respected and valued by park users and its protection is important from a Muslim point of view according to Islamic thoughts.

• Research also looked at non-users which are defined as people who have used a neighbourhood park once in a year, or less, or never, while infrequent users are defined as those who use neighbourhood parks less than once a month or only once in six months. Research indicates 10% of interviewees are non-users and 12% are infrequent users.

• Muslims who do not use their neighbourhood parks at all or only use them infrequently have less actual experience of using these spaces and so may have limited knowledge of how real, or otherwise, the perceived barriers may be. Their perceptions may therefore be quite different from users and the barriers that they identify could be imagined as much as they are real. Nevertheless, seven main barriers have been identified that deter Muslims in two cities from using their neighbourhood parks. In approximate order of importance, and based on all sources of information that are described in methodology, they are:

Lack of sense of place and unfamiliarity with the environment

Lack of gender separation in children playing areas and women sitting areas

Lack of, or the poor condition of, facilities including playing facilities for children

Other users, including undesirable characters, (drug users, loitering teenagers, dog walkers, non-Muslims with inappropriate dress code)

Concerns about dogs, dog mess and dog fighting

Safety and other 'psychological' issues such as lack of lighting for use of parks in night

Environmental quality issues such as litter, graffiti and vandalism

In a subtle way, research supports alternative theories such as works of Benedict Anderson (1991), about multicultural communities that suggests national cultures and collective identities are shaped by common histories, shared languages, and deep-rooted religious traditions that persist for centuries. In this respect, Muslim park users and immigrants who have acquired strong and stable social norms and cultural values through family and native friends are carriers of their culture within a Western society.

7.5.2 Recommendations

Instead of limitations, research work opens new windows for future studies about perception of place by non-native urban residents with religious/ spritual background and mind set with respect to their interactions with urban components such as a neighbourhood park.

For future studies, it is useful to consider a matrix of concepts that are important to be considered in order to realise what elements in a Western society can enhance connections between immigrants from different ethnic groups and the cityscape as an unfamiliar entity for users such as members of minority ethnic groups. This will help to look at more factors that affect their connections with neighbourhoods that engulf natural and man-made elements that have different meanings for new arrivals such as asylum seekers or immigrants.

For future studies, it is important to know how different ethnic groups who are immigrated to a Western city (considering Eastern versus Western philosophy), interact with each other and with surrounding environment. It is interesting to initiate a new research work to investigate about degree of integration through use of urban spaces such as a district park, allotment and community gardens and similar green components of Western cities.

It is useful to encourage curban planners and urban designers to consider design elements in neighbourhood parks that has special character and meaning for minorities such as use of ethnic colours (e.g. turquise colour tiles with Persian motifs) to design a pond or water feature , a bench or meditation garden in a park. There are many design elements that can enhance sense of place for immigrants and subsequently it can improve integration efforts and experience of melting in a new society.

It is vital to know that to what extent do park users from minority ethnic groups carry their original culture with them that helps to plan and design more carefully and comprehensively.

Landscape designers and urban planners who are working in multicultural cities need to collaborate more with members of community who are considered minority ethnic groups in order to hear their voice. To design and plan in a multicultural society it is important to avoid segregation and gender separation as expected by Muslims by enhancing more user friendly design.

It is important to encourage Muslims to be integrated into a Western society by learning that religion is a private matter and it must be kept for peace of mind.

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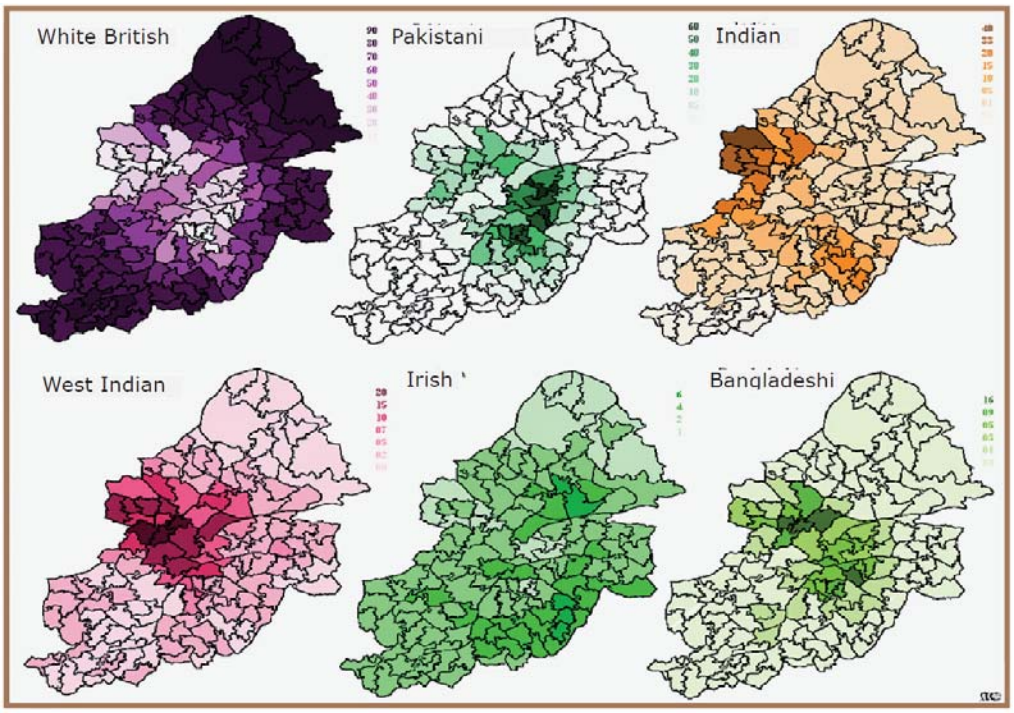
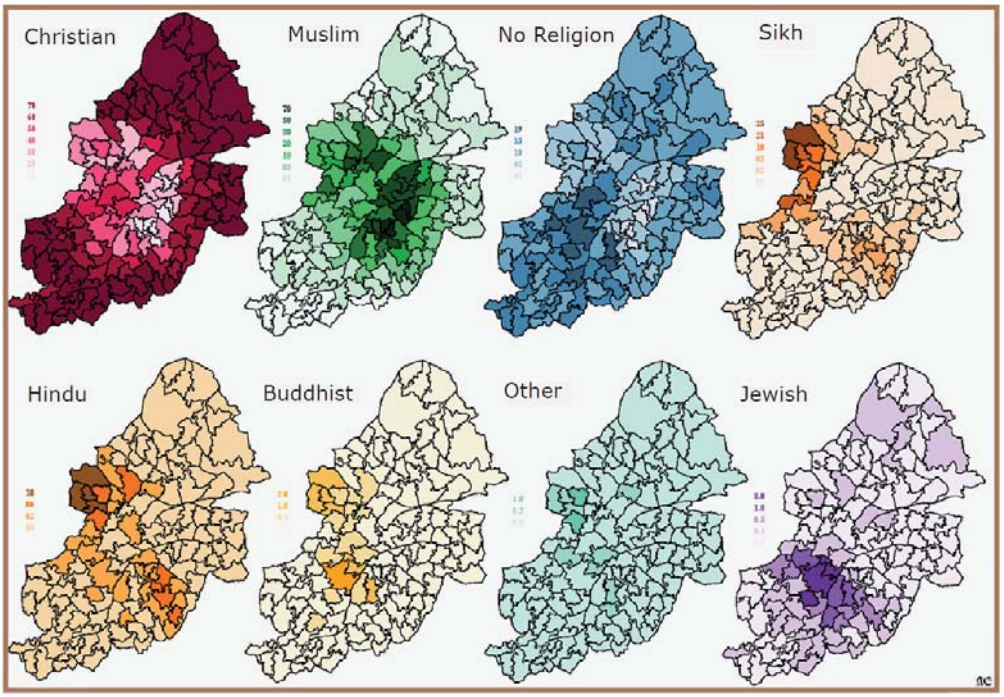
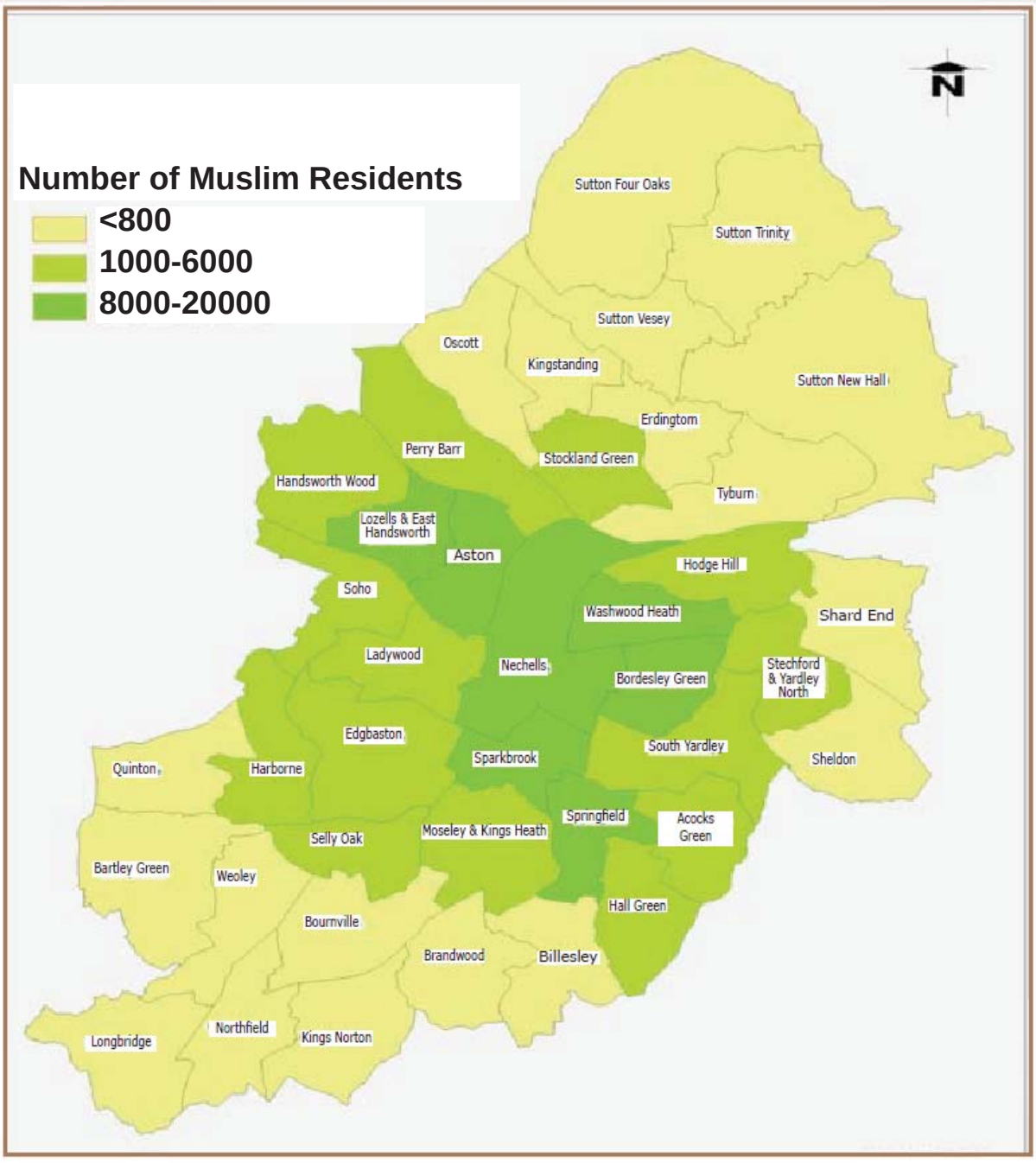
Appendix I Birmingham City Survey



Plan 1- Distribution of major ethnic groups in Birmingham City according to the UK National Statistics website 2010.



Plan 2 - Distribution of major religions in Birmingham City according to the UK National Statistics website, 2010.



Plan 3 - Distribution of Muslim residents in 40 wards of Birmingham City. Source: UK National Statistics website 2010.

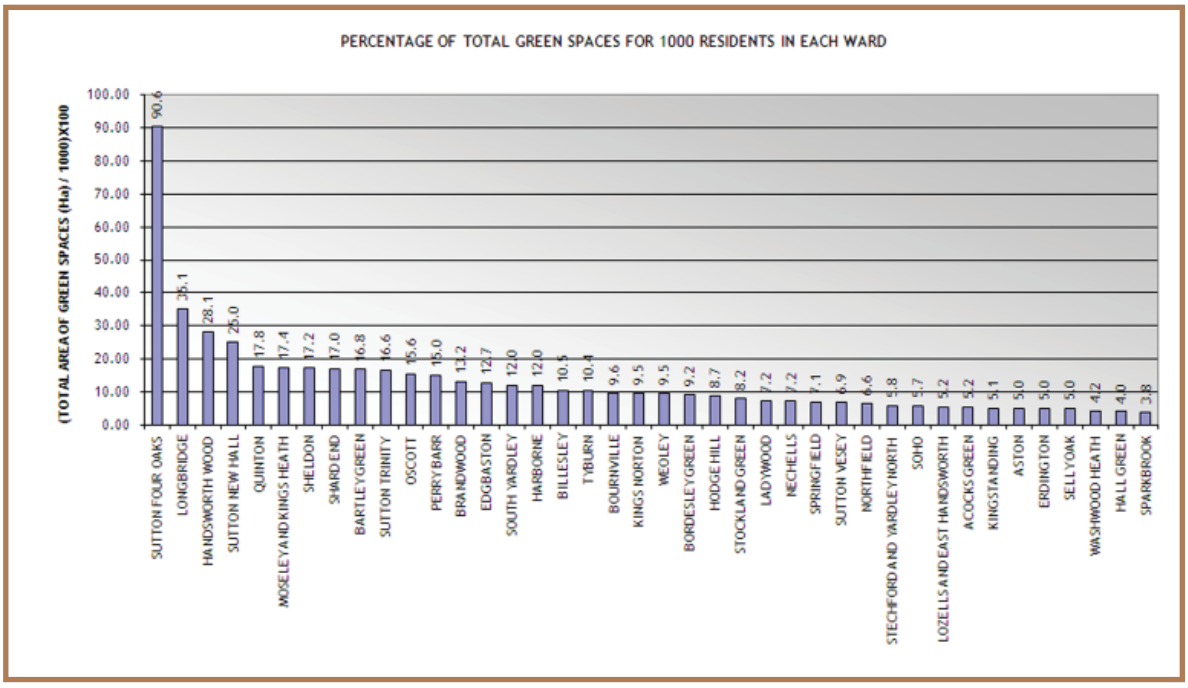


Chart 2 - Green spaces available expressed as the percentage of the city's total green spaces adjusted to represent the share of green space for 1000 residents of each ward. (Source: researcher's data analysis, 2005 from 2004 UK National Statistics)

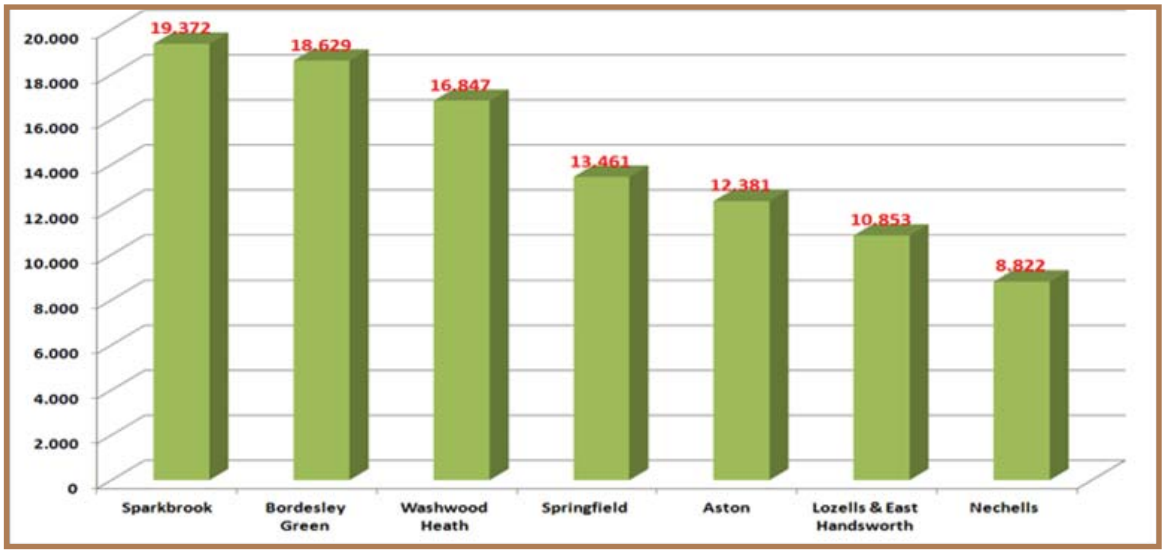


Chart 3 - Wards in Birmingham City with highest number of Muslim population. (*Source*: researcher's data analysis, 2005 from 2004 UK National Statistics)

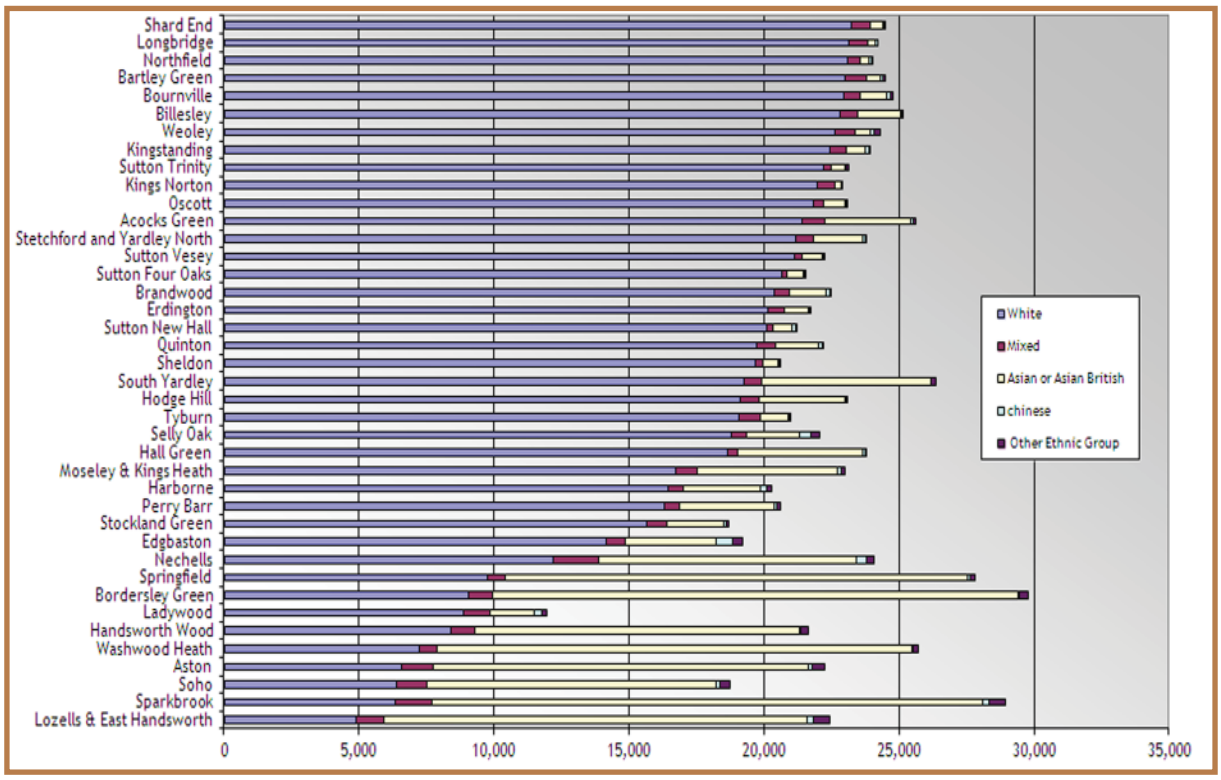


Chart 4 - Comparison of ethnic background of residents in each ward, by population. (Source: researcher's data analysis, 2005 from 2004 UK National Statistics)

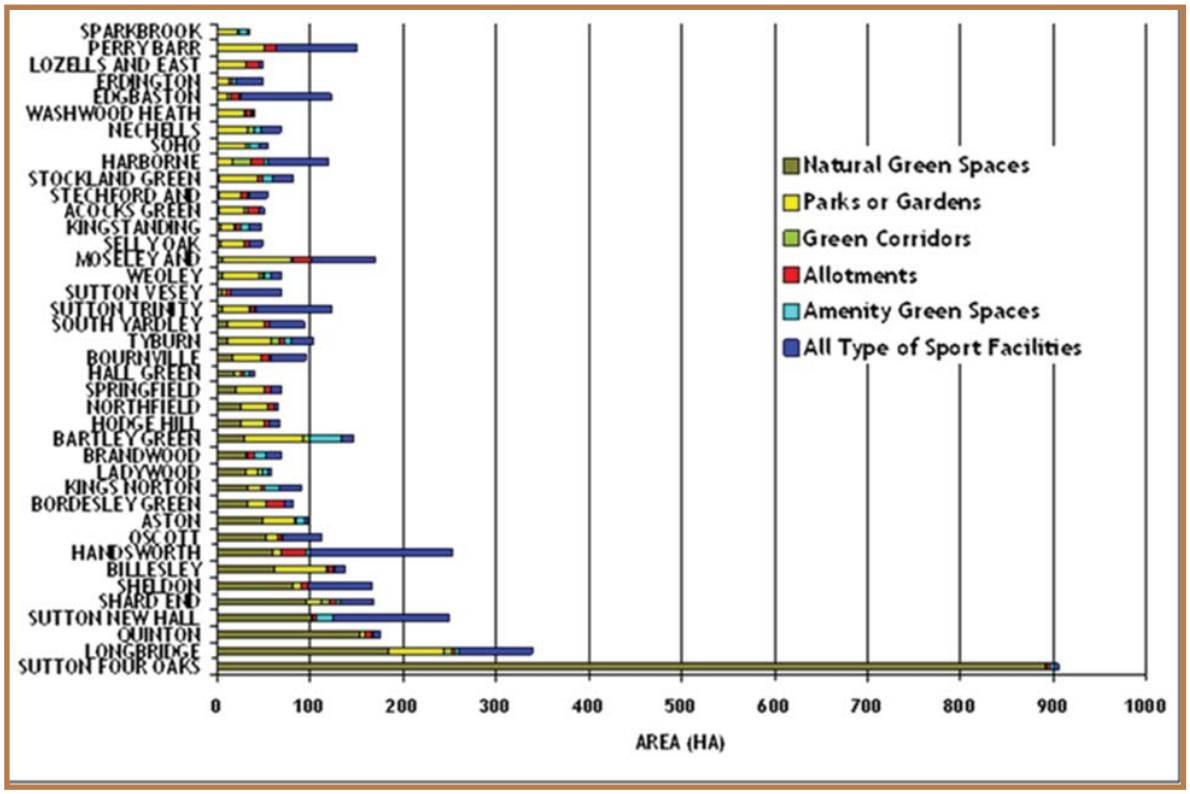


Chart 5 - Comparison of green infrastructure in 40 wards of Birmingham City by the area and type of the green space designations. (Source: researcher's data analysis, 2005 from 2004 UK National Statistics)

Birmingham City Questionnaire

Questionnaire for research on Muslim Perspective on Park and Green Space Use in Birmingham, United Kingdom.

Please answer the following questions:

1.How old are you?

2.Are you: Male

3.How would you describe your cultural identity?

4.When was the last time you visited a park in your neighbourhood?

5.Which park, open spaces or market do you visit the most often in your neighbourhood?

6.Do you enjoy yourself more in a park or gardening in an allotment?

7.How did you get there?
Car
Walk
Bicycle
Bus
Motorcycle
Other

8.How long does it take you to get to your favourite open spaces?
-5mins
5mins
-10mins
10mins
-15mins
15mins
20mins
25mins
30mins
more

9. Who have you go with?
Alone
Alone with dog
With family
With friends
With school
Other

10.How often do you usually go to your favourite open spaces?
Everyday
+ Once a week
Once a week
- Once a week
+ Once a month
Once a month
- Once a month
Once every six months
Once a year
Less

11.Would you go to your favourite open spaces alone?
Yes
No

12.Why not?
Prefers company
Fear of attack
Fear of trees
Fear of animals
Loitering teenagers
Too dark
Fear of getting lost
Bad media reports
Other

13.Is there any park or public green spaces close to your home?
Yes
No

14.Do you visit it more often than any other?
Yes
No

15.How satisfied are you with the appearance and green beauty of your neighbourhood green spaces? Score your response by giving a value between 1 and 5 (score1 =Low, to 5=High)
High Low
1 2 3 4 5

16.How important do you think the green spaces are to the local image?

(score1 =Not important, to 5=Very Important)
Not important Very important
1 2 3 4 5

17.How do you rate the general quality of your favourite open space (park, local market, place of worship, front or back garden, other……..) as an area for relaxation?
Name: Score 1=Poor, to 5=Very good)
Poor Very good
1 2 3 4 5

18.How do you rate the general quality of your favourite open space as a refuge from the pace and noise of urban life? Not very good

19.Are any facilities missing from this open space? everything

20.Does anything disturb you while using the open space? The smell

21.What do you use your favourite open space for? Relaxation
Walking
Walking the dog
Playing with children
Enjoying nature
Relaxation
To keep fit
To get away from work
To unwind after work
To meet friends
Other … (please specify)

22.Are green spaces in this neighbourhood suitable for your use?
(If NO please specify your wishes/ requirements) Yes

23.How long do you stay in the green space/market on average?
Less than 1 hour
1-2 hours
2-5 hours
More than 5 hours

24.Do you have any comment?
Thank you very much for your time and participation in this survey

Table 14 - Responses of the park-users in Ward End Park to the questions about uses and activities: What do you use your favourite open space for? Are any facilities missing from this open space?

Age & Gender	Response
51>m	Not very good
36-50f	It's remind me my childhood village
0-14f	It's boring
36-50f	It's good but can be friendlier.
15-25m	Wardend park is beautiful and I like playing cricket with my friends over there.
15-25f	It's OK when the weather is good
0-14m	It's fantastic
51>f	Generally it's okay
15-25f	Could be better
36-50m	It's very good
26-35m	It's good.
36-50m	It's OK
51>f	It's rubbish
0-14f	Not very good
26-35m	Does the job
0-14m	It makes me angry as I don't see friendly people in the park
36-50f	It's okay
15-25f	Not very good
51>m	It's okay for walking if rude teenagers allow.
0-14m	It's good
26-35m	It's okay
36-50m	Could be better
26-35m	It's OK
51>m	It's OK
51>m	It's OK
15-25m	It's OK
15-25m	It's OK
15-25m	It's very good
15-25m	It's fantastic
15-25m	It's beautiful but very cold and quiet in winter
0-14m	It's good
26-35m	It's good
0-14m	It's good
15-25m	It's okay but too much noise prevent to rest under the shadow of trees
26-35m	It's a great place to rest when it is quiet and weather is not windy and rainy
15-25m	It's nice
15-25m	It's okay but could be better

36-50m	Could be better
15-25f	I prefer our back garden as It is safe and clean
15-25f	It's safe
51>m	Not very good
36-50m	It is a nice and beautiful place but need some improvement
26-35m	It's good
36-50m	It's rubbish
36-50f	I take my kids there to play
0-14f	I have to stay in our back garden as my father dose not let me to go to the park with my friends. The back garden is boaring
36-50f	It's very bad.
15-25m	It's nice
15-25f	It's very bad
0-14m	It's fantastic
26-35f	Too noisy sometime but generally it's okay
15-25f	Could be better

Table 15: Responses of the park-users (Sparkhill Park) to the questions about sociability: Would you go to your favourite open spaces alone? If no, why not? Does anything disturb you while using the open space? What do you use your favourite open space for?

Age & Gender	Response
48f	in a big garden or park I feel better
68f	In my backyard little garden
23m	In both, I think a park is a space for things you can do in the public, for example hanging around with friends, having a short break, playing football or whatever etc. An allotment is more private... here you meet with family or friends and have barbecue, talk and laugh about things etc.
56m	In park
43f	park: there is enough space for everyone to play and enjoy the nature
56m	both me and my family like to go to the park but for special occasions we would like to stay in our back garden and enjoy more because of the privacy we have at home.
22m	Park
22m	Private garden is better
24f	in a private garden because of the size (smaller). Moreover it is created more individual.
56f	in a park because it is open to everybody and it has enough space for everyone.
43f	in a park because it is open to everyone and has space for everyone
56m	I like parks to go there with friends or family but i prefer to use my own garden because here it is private only for me and my family and i can do what I want and don't have to take care for others.
27m	we never had a private garden so I don't know which one is better. I grew up in parks, so I like them.
44m	I like parks to relax during my work-break, but I enjoy myself more in my own allotment
57f	parks, because they are huge and have so much nature to see.
48f	It's not very good but okay.
23m	Very high! The nearest open space is a forest so it's a perfect place to relax from the noise and smell and stress of the city. Sometimes, if I have a lot of work to do I first have a walk in this forest to free my mind.
56m	Okay, there are playing grounds in the park that boys can use instead of playing in quite streets or pathways around the neighbourhood
51> m	Crime, drugs and dog fights
51>m	Attitude of teenagers and crime.
26-35m	Teenagers
0-14 m	No
26-35m	Not really
15-25f	Drugs and crime
51>m	The attitude of today's youth.

15-25f	Crime, drugs and dog fighting.
26-35f	Crime, drugs and dog fights
26-35m	Crime, drugs and dog fights

Table 16 - Responses of the park-users (Ward End Park) to the questions about comfort and expectation: What do you use your favourite open space for? Are any facilities missing from this open space?

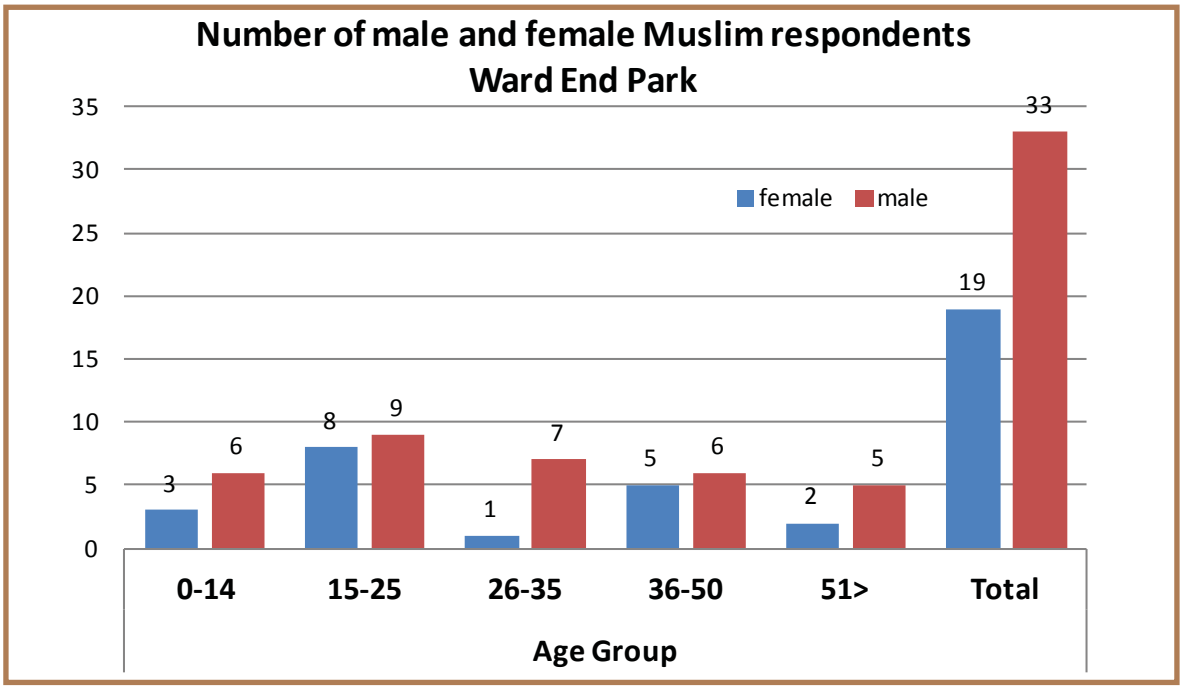
Age & Gender	Response
51>m	Not very good
36-50f	It's remind me my childhood village
0-14f	It's boring
36-50f	It's good but can be friendlier.
15-25m	Ward End park is beautiful and I like playing cricket with my friends over there.
15-25f	It's OK when the weather is good
0-14m	It's fantastic
51>f	Generally it's okay
15-25f	Could be better
36-50m	It's very good
26-35m	It's good.
36-50m	It's OK
51>f	It's rubbish
0-14f	Not very good
26-35m	Does the job
0-14m	It makes me angry as I don't see friendly people in the park
36-50f	It's okay
15-25f	Not very good
51>m	It's okay for walking if rude teenagers allow.
0-14m	It's good
26-35m	It's okay
36-50m	Could be better
26-35m	It's OK
51>m	It's OK
51>m	It's OK
15-25m	It's OK
15-25m	It's OK

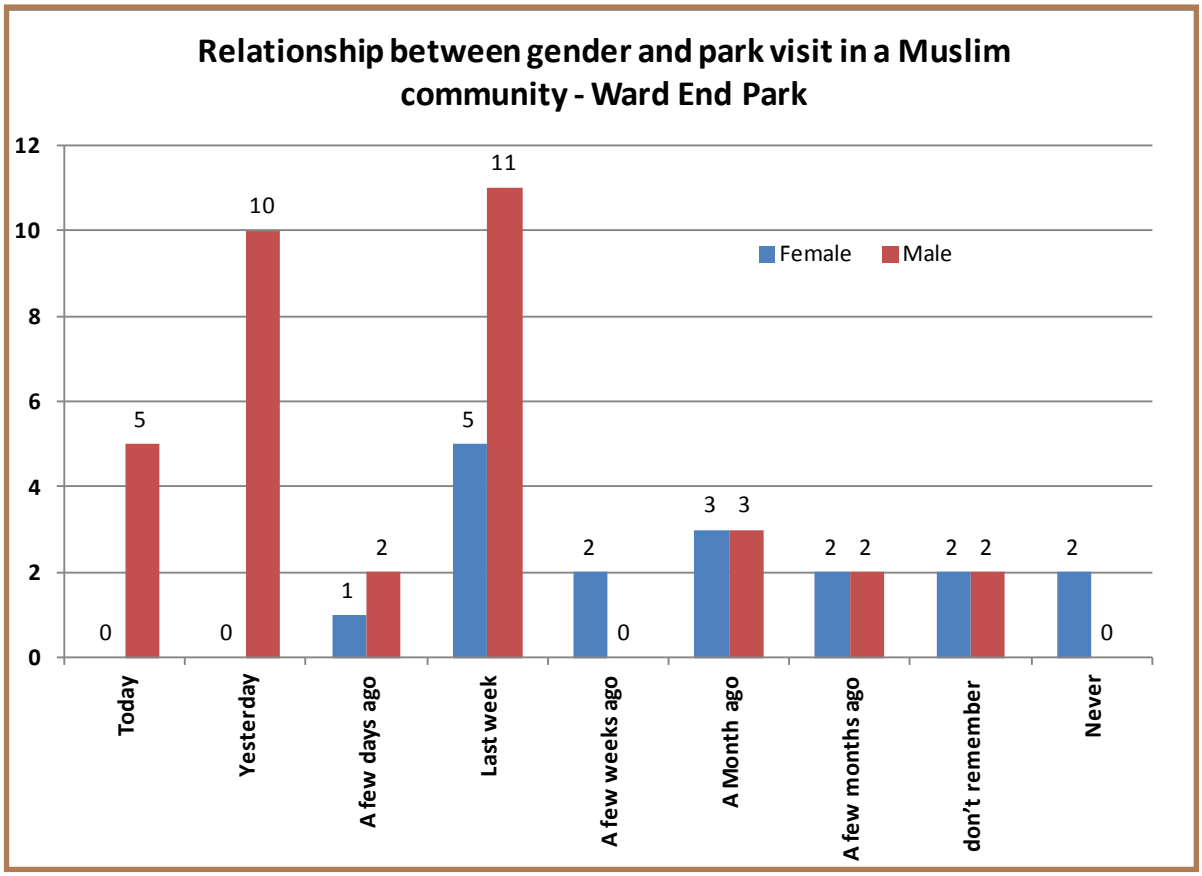
15-25m	It's very good
15-25m	It's fantastic
15-25m	It's beautiful but very cold and quiet in winter
0-14m	It's good
26-35m	It's good
0-14m	It's good
15-25m	It's okay but too much noise prevent to rest under the shadow of trees
26-35m	It's a great place to rest when it is quiet and weather is not windy and rainy
15-25m	It's nice
15-25m	It's okay but could be better
36-50m	Could be better
15-25f	I prefer our back garden as It is safe and clean
15-25f	It's safe
51>m	Not very good
36-50m	It is a nice and beautiful place but need some improvement
26-35m	It's good
36-50m	It's rubbish
36-50f	I take my kids there to play
0-14f	I have to stay in our back garden as my father dose not let me to go to the park with my friends. The back garden is boaring
36-50f	It's very bad.
15-25m	It's nice
15-25f	It's very bad
0-14m	It's fantastic
26-35f	Too noisy sometime but generally it's okay
15-25f	Could be better

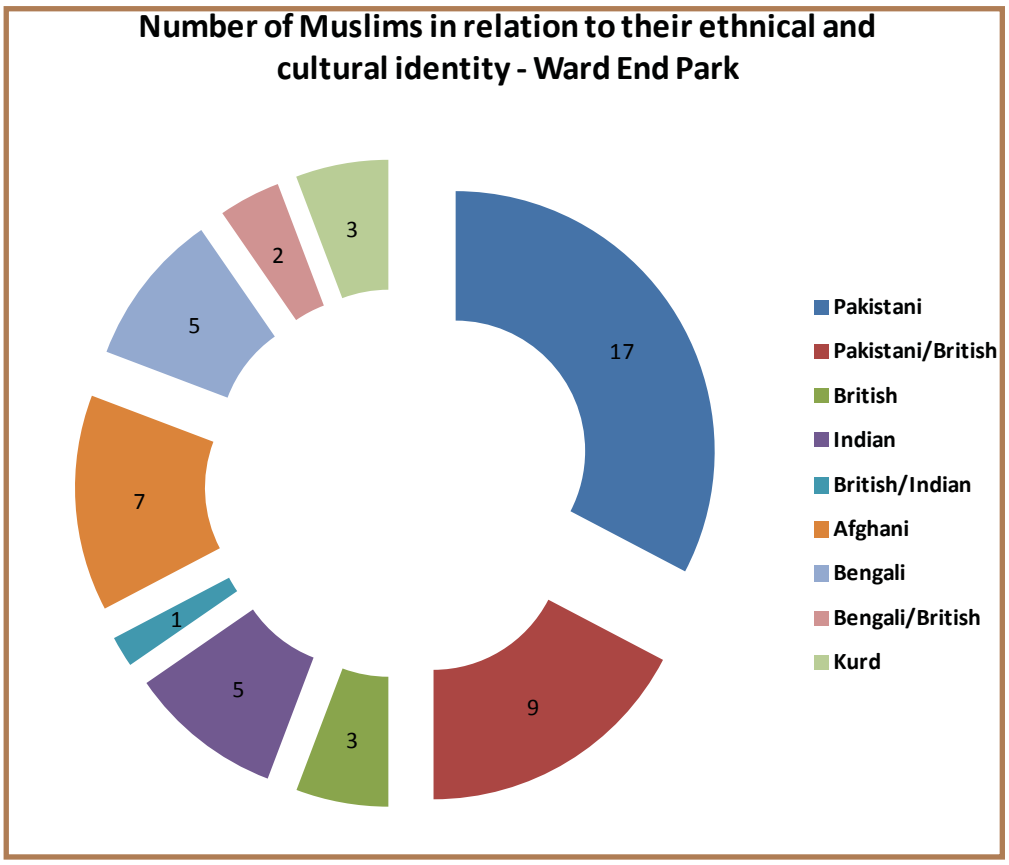
Table 17 - Responses of the park users (Sparkhill Park) to the question about comfort and expectation: How do you rate the general quality of your favourite open space as a refuge from the pace and noise of urban life?

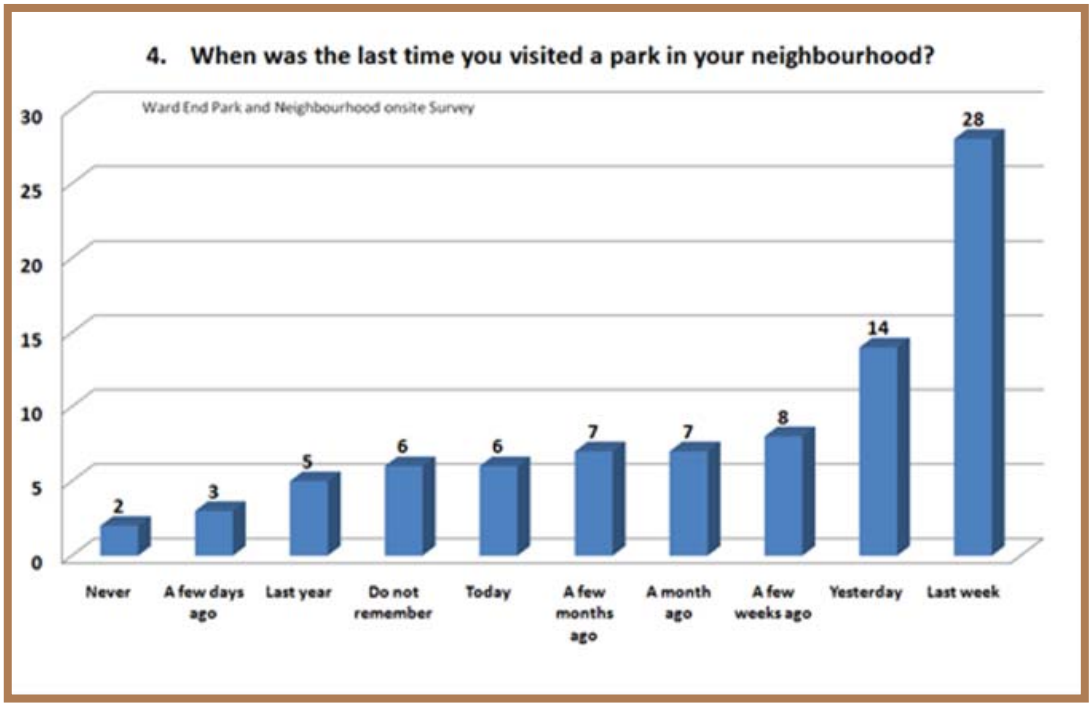
Age & Gender	Response
0-14f	Not very good
26-35f	To-o loud at times but generally it's okay
36-50f	It's okay
15-25f	It's safe
15-25m	It's good but could be better
36-50m	It's rubbish
36-50m	Could be better
0-14m	It's good
26-35m	Not very good
15-25f	It's very bad
0-14f	It's boring
36-50f	It's very bad
36-50m	Not very good
0-14m	It's fantastic
36-50m	It's too quite
15-25f	It's bad
15-25f	It's okay
15-25m	It's fantastic
15-25m	It's nice
15-25f	Could be better
15-25f	It's safe
0-14m	It's good but could be better
51>f	It's rubbish
26-35m	it's good
0-14m	It's good
15-25m	It's nice
51>m	Could be better

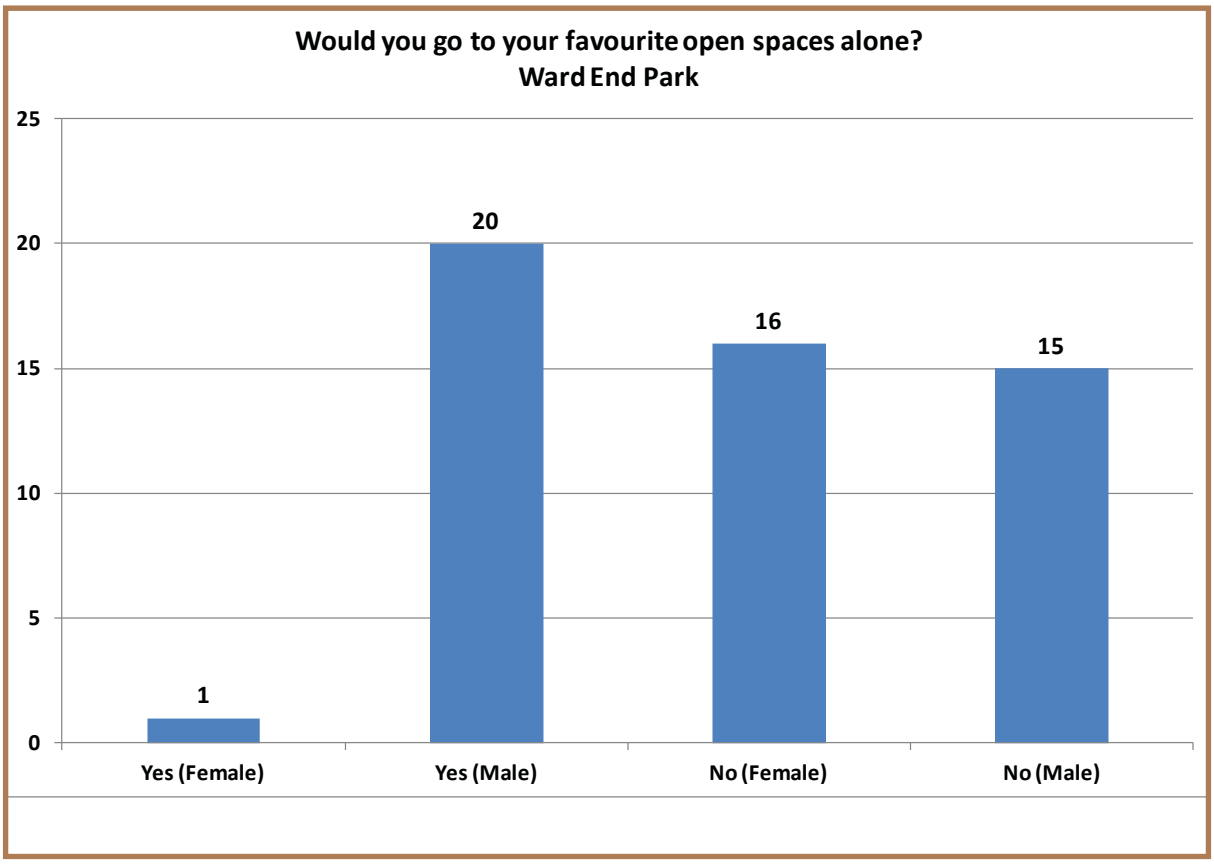
0-14m	it's boring
51>m	It’s okay
15-25m	It’s cool
51>m	It’s okay
51>m	It’s okay for walking
26-35m	It’s okay
0-14m	It’s good
26-35m	Does the job
15-25f	It’s okay
51>m	Does the job
15-25f	Not very good
26-35f	It’s okay
26-35m	It’s okay for walking the dog

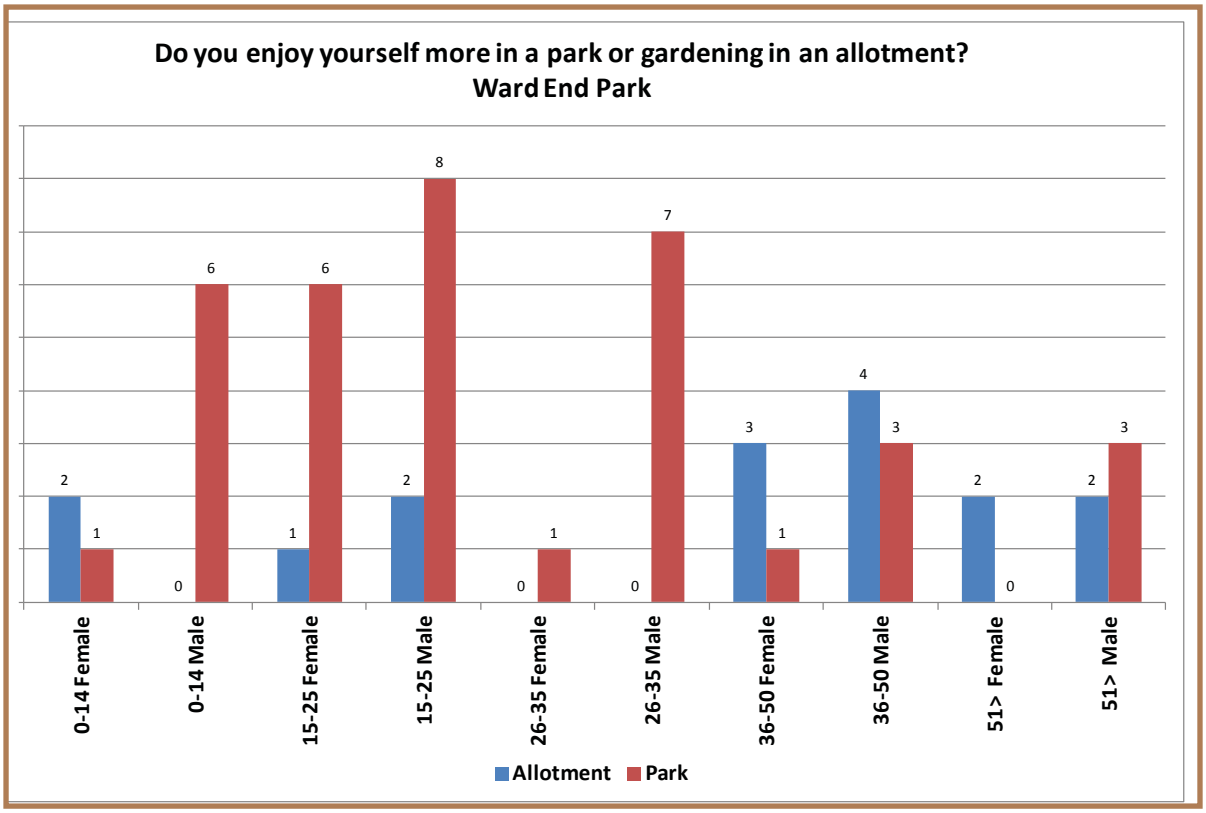

Number of male and female Muslim respondents
Ward End Park
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
female
male
3
6
8
9
1
7
5
6
2
5
19
33
0-14
15-25
26-35
36-50
51>
Total
Age Group

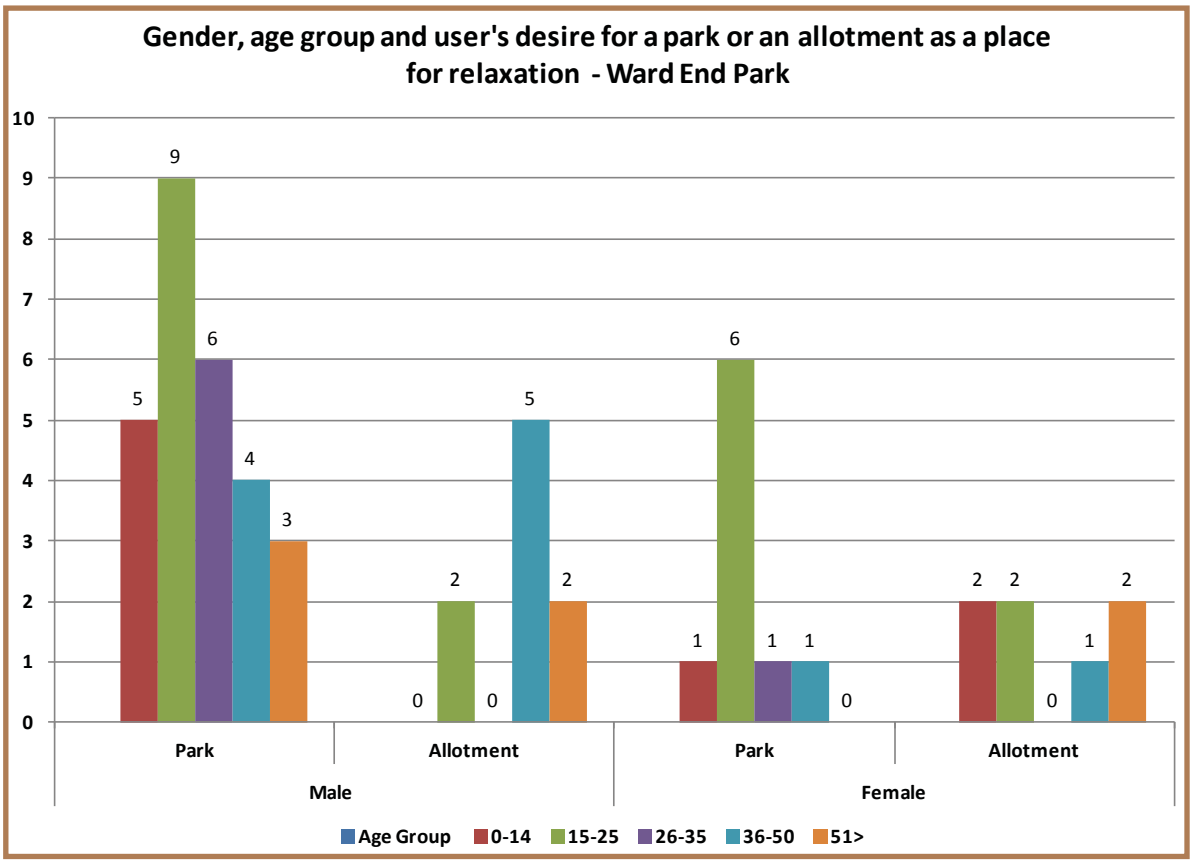

Relationship between gender and park visit in a Muslim community - Ward End Park
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
Female
Male
0
5
0
10
1
2
5
11
2
0
3
3
2
2
2
2
2
0
Today
Yesterday
A few days ago
Last week
A few weeks ago
A Month ago
A few months ago
don't remember
Never

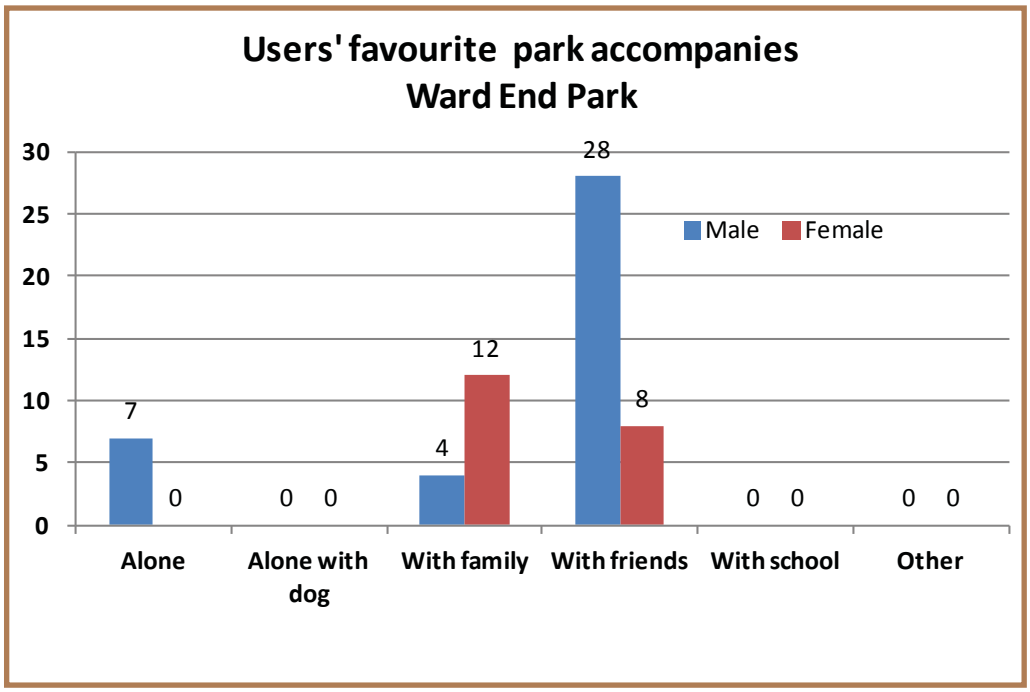

Number of Muslims in relation to their ethnical and cultural identity - Ward End Park
17
9
3
5
1
7
5
2
3
Pakistani
Pakistani/British
British
Indian
British/Indian
Afghani
Bengali
Bengali/British
Kurd

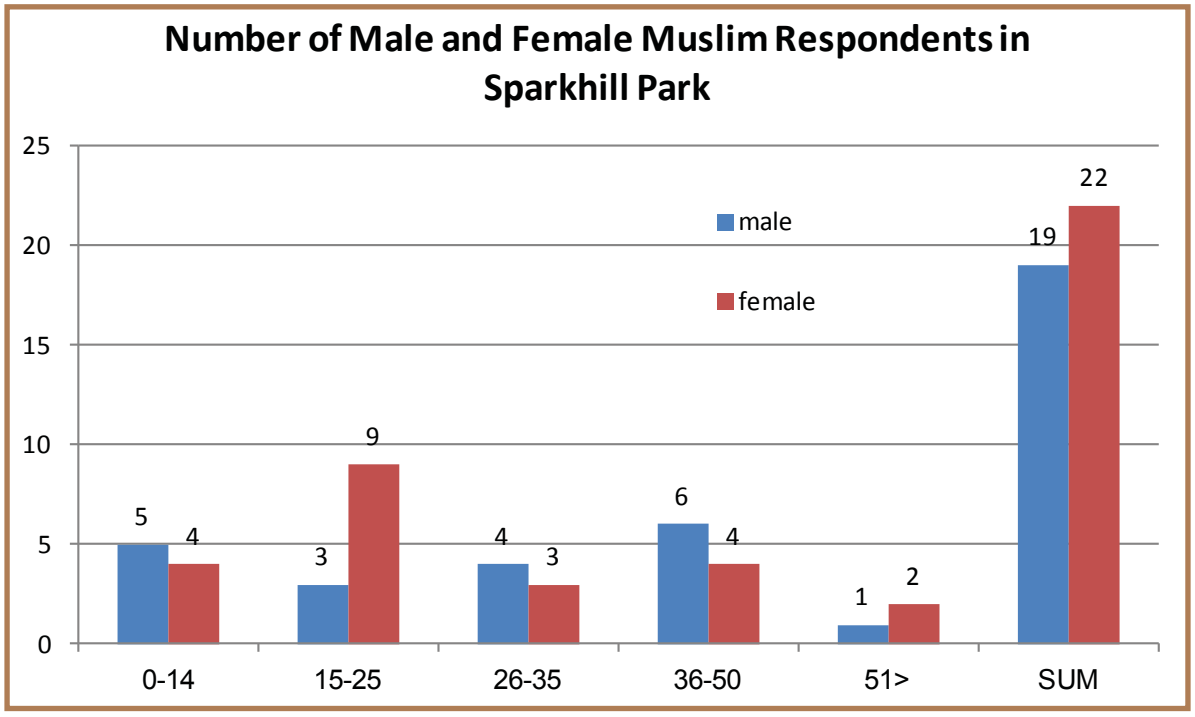

4. When was the last time you visited a park in your neighbourhood?
Ward End Park and Neighbourhood onsite Survey
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
2
3
5
6
6
7
7
8
14
28
Never
A few days ago
Last year
Do not remember
Today
A few months ago
A month ago
A few weeks ago
Yesterday
Last week

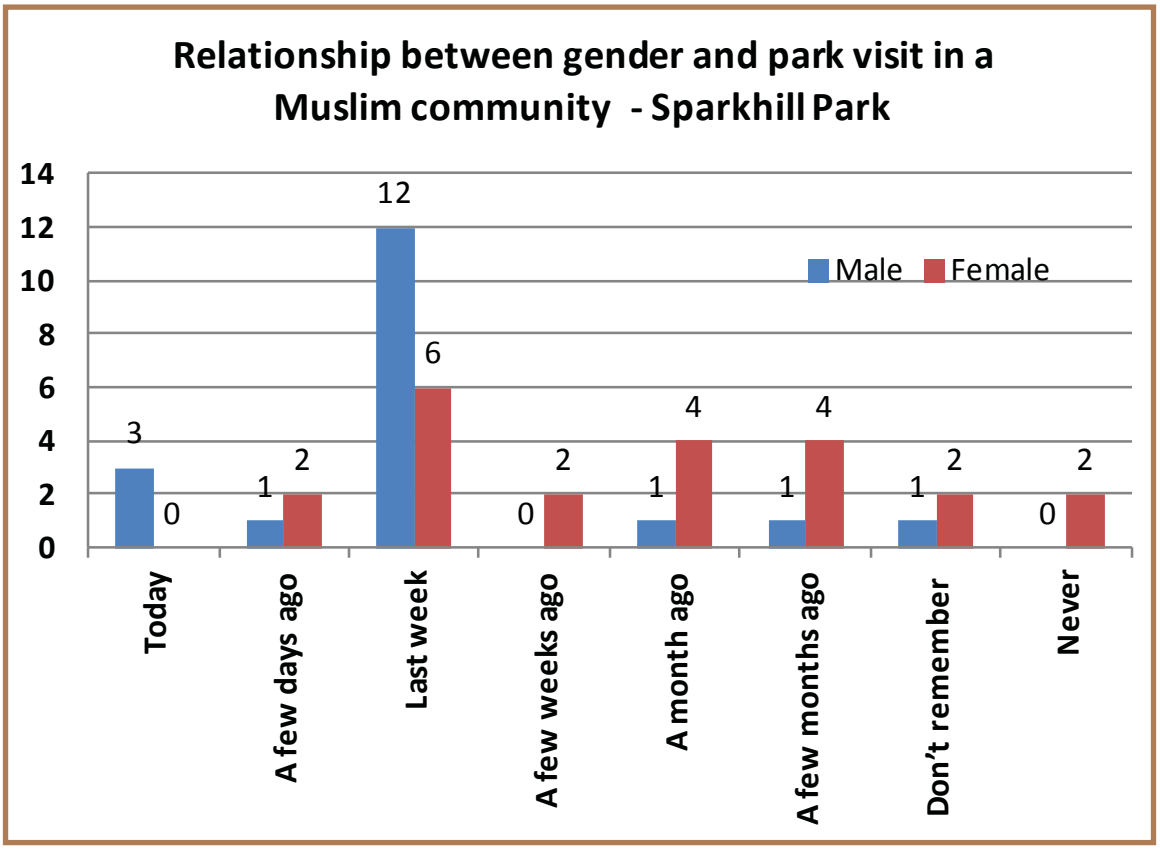

Would you go to your favourite open spaces alone?
Ward End Park
25
20
15
10
5
0
1
20
16
15
Yes (Female)
Yes (Male)
No (Female)
No (Male)

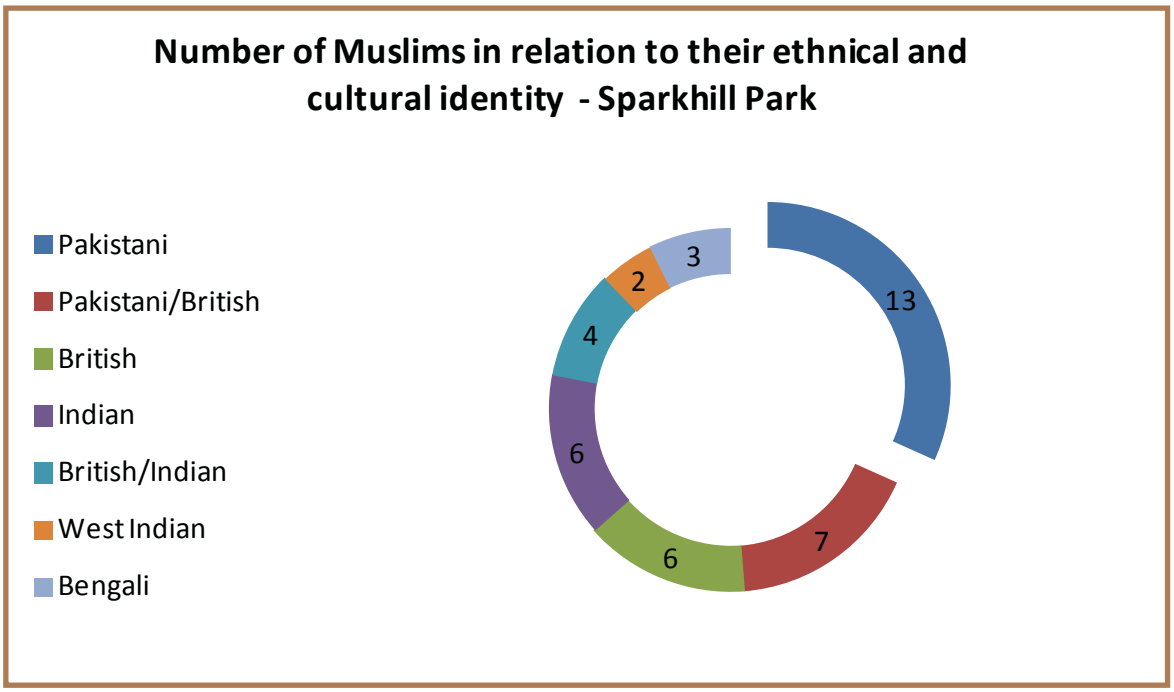

Do you enjoy yourself more in a park or gardening in an allotment?
Ward End Park
2
1
0
6
1
6
2
8
0
1
0
7
3
1
4
3
2
0
2
3
0-14 Female
0-14 Male
15-25 Female
15-25 Male
26-35 Female
26-35 Male
36-50 Female
36-50 Male
51> Female
51> Male
Allotment
Park

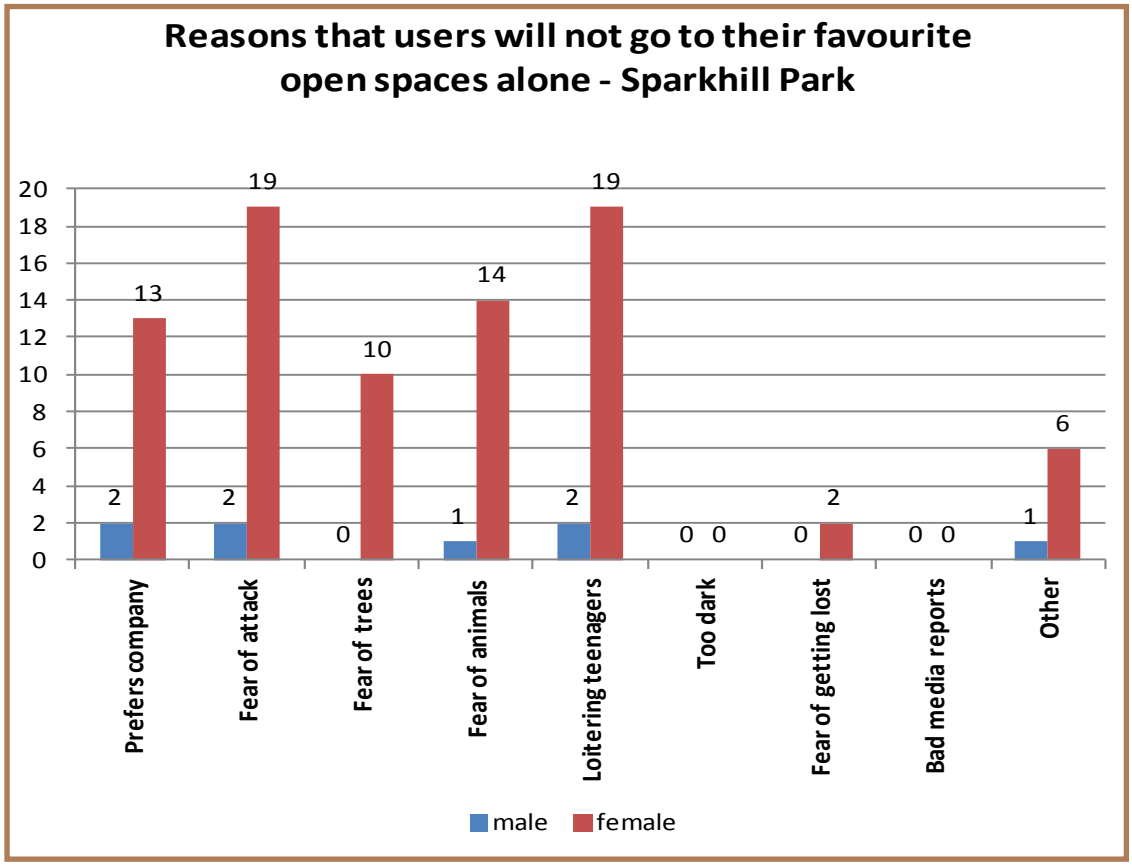

Gender, age group and user's desire for a park or an allotment as a place for relaxation - Ward End Park
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
5
9
6
4
3
0
2
0
5
2
1
6
1
1
0
2
2
0
1
2
Park
Allotment
Park
Allotment
Male
Female
Age Group
0-14
15-25
26-35
36-50
51>

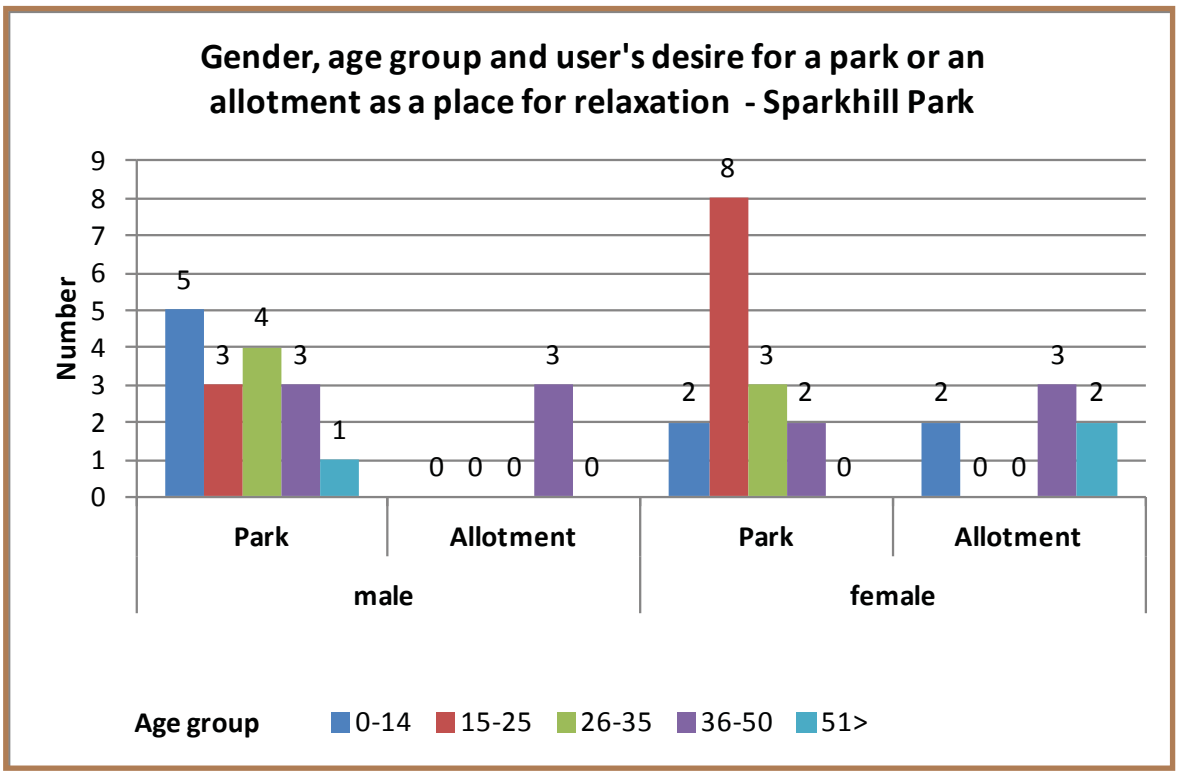

Users' favourite park accompanies Ward End Park
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
7
0
0
0
4
12
28
8
0
0
0
0
Male
Female
Alone
Alone with dog
With family
With friends
With school
Other

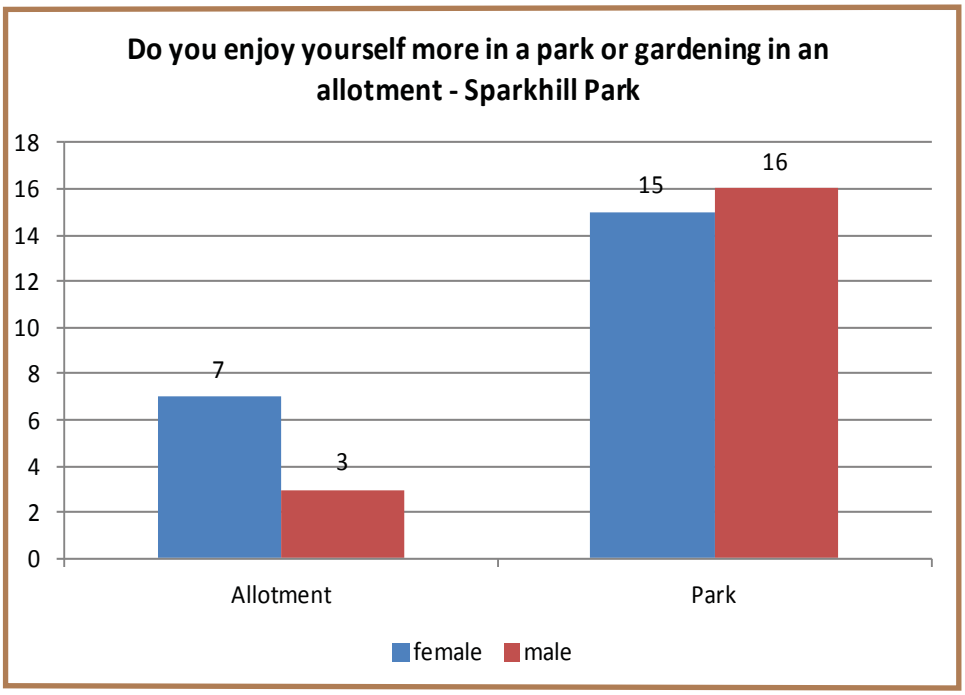

Number of Male and Female Muslim Respondents in Sparkhill Park
25
20
15
10
5
0
male
female
5
4
3
9
4
3
6
4
1
2
19
22
0-14
15-25
26-35
36-50
51>
SUM

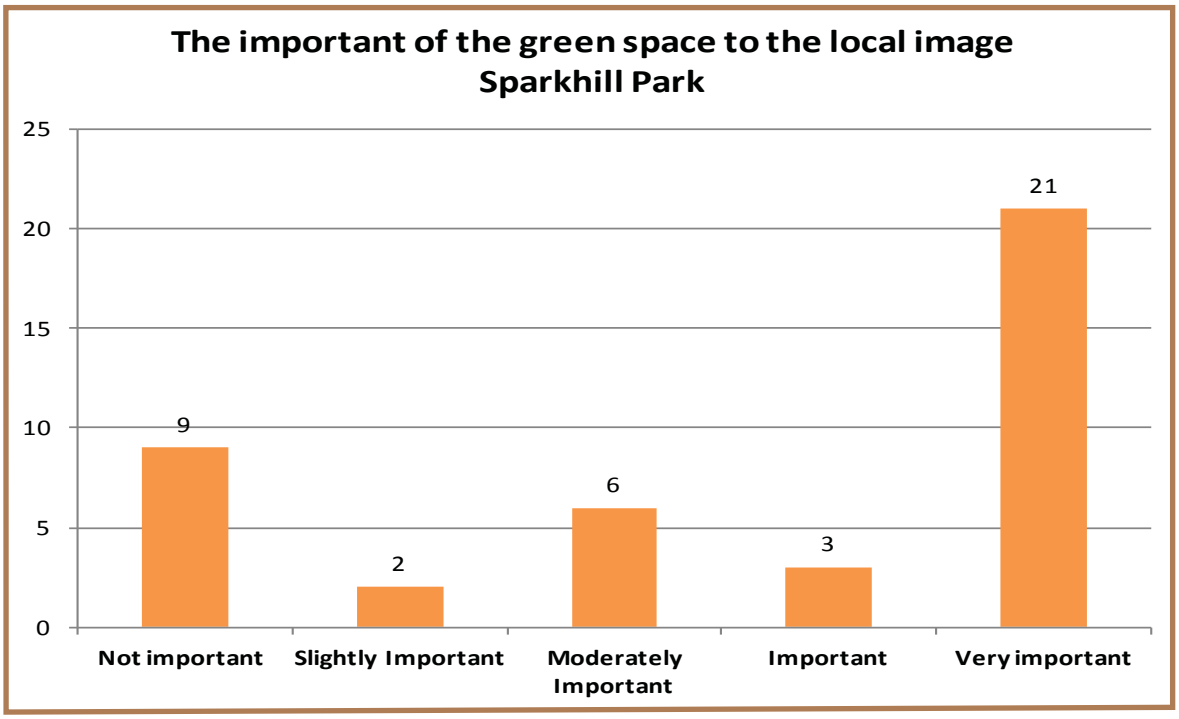

Relationship between gender and park visit in a Muslim community - Sparkhill Park
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
Male
Female
3
0
1
2
12
6
0
2
1
4
1
4
1
2
0
2
Today
A few days ago
Last week
A few weeks ago
A month ago
A few months ago
Don't remember
Never

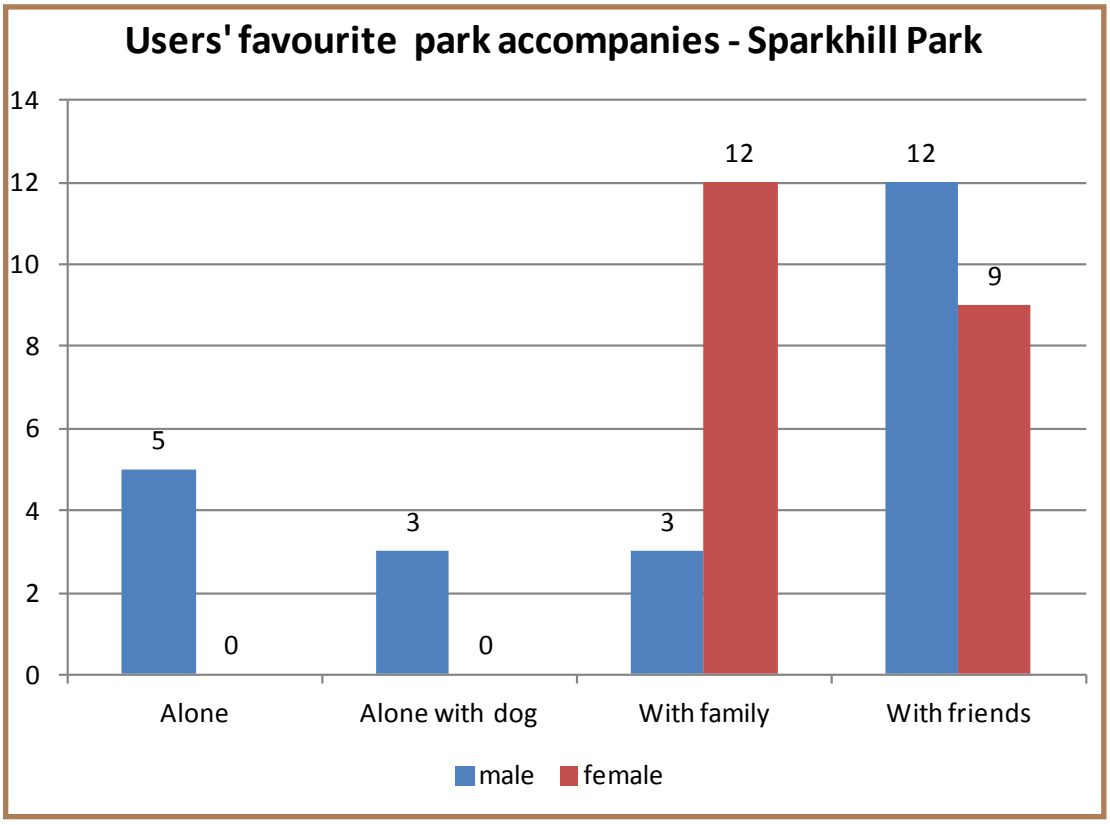

Number of Muslims in relation to their ethnical and cultural identity - Sparkhill Park
Pakistani
Pakistani/British
British
Indian
British/Indian
West Indian
Bengali
13
7
6
6
4
2
3

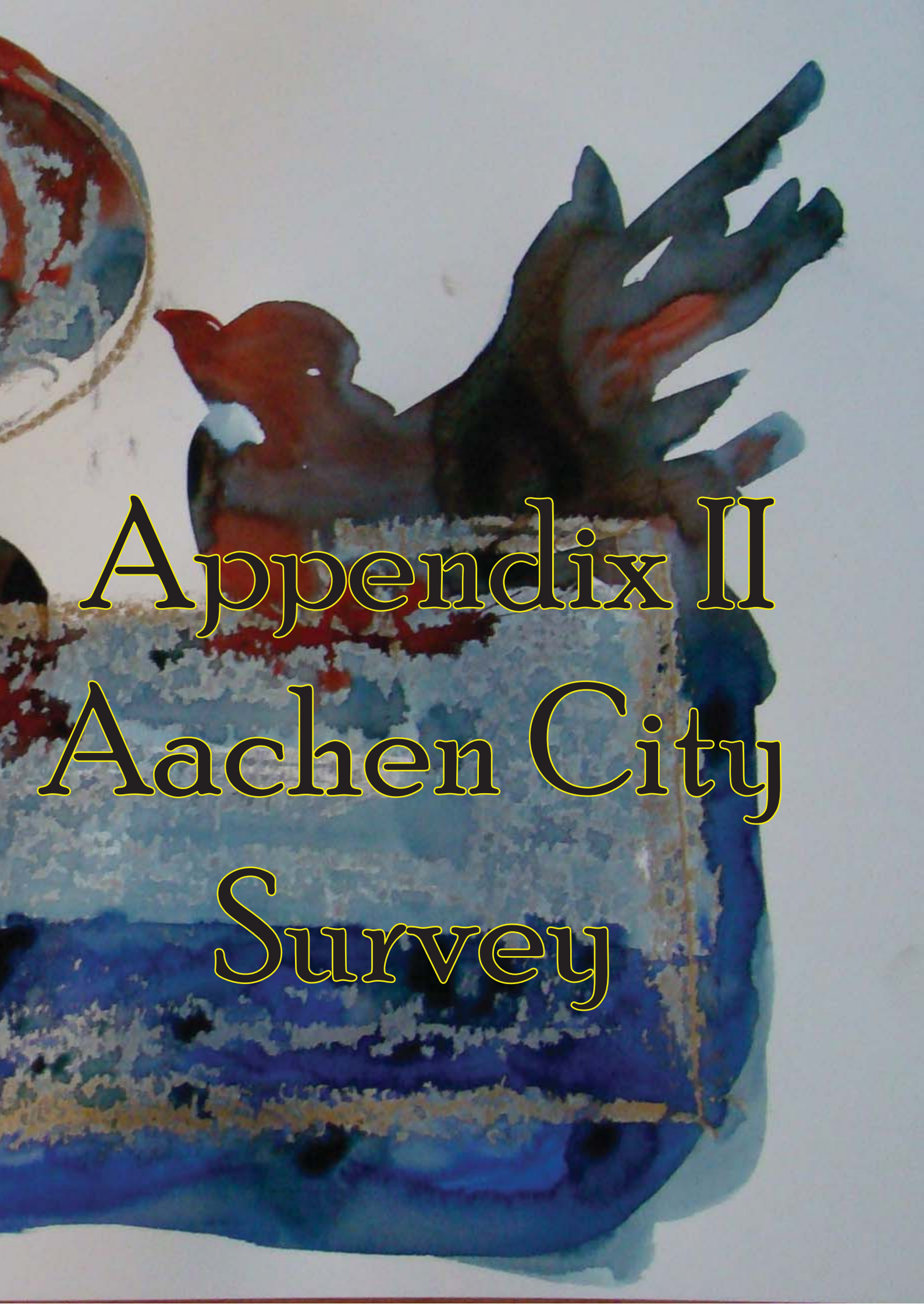

Reasons that users will not go to their favourite open spaces alone - Sparkhill Park
20
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
2
13
2
19
0
10
1
14
2
19
0 0
0
2
0 0
1
6
Prefers company
Fear of attack
Fear of trees
Fear of animals
Loitering teenagers
Too dark
Fear of getting lost
Bad media reports
Other
male
female


Gender, age group and user's desire for a park or an allotment as a place for relaxation - Sparkhill Park
Number
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
5
3
4
3
1
0
0
0
3
0
2
8
3
2
0
2
0
0
3
2
Park
Allotment
Park
Allotment
male
female
Age group
0-14
15-25
26-35
36-50
51>

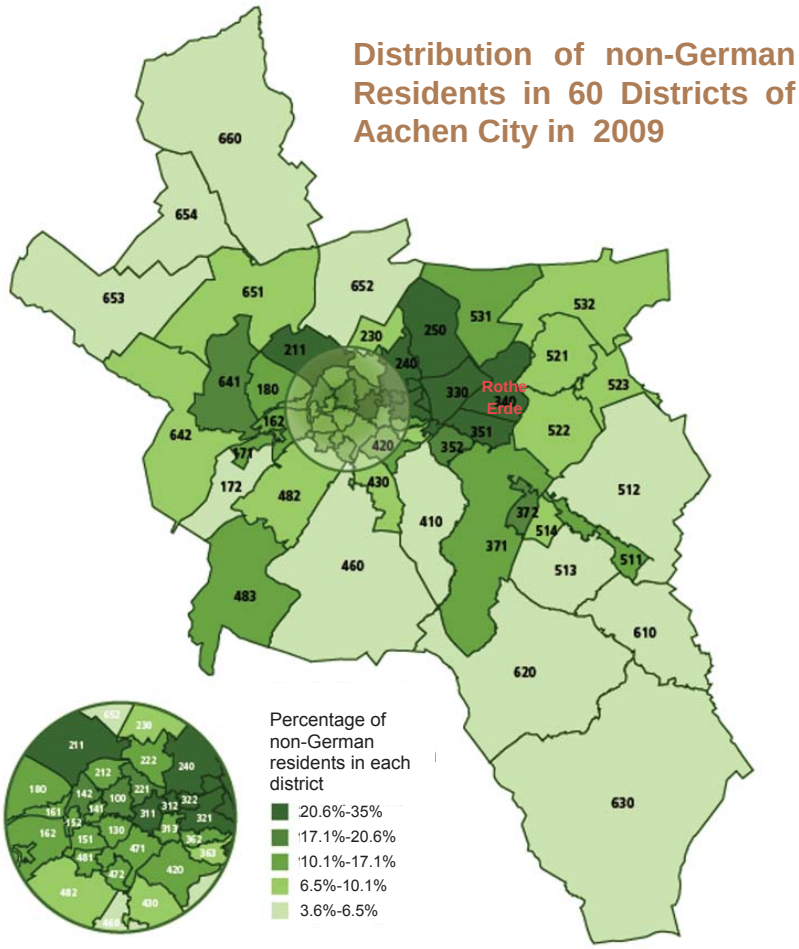

Do you enjoy yourself more in a park or gardening in an allotment - Sparkhill Park
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
7
3
15
16
Allotment
Park
female
male


The important of the green space to the local image Sparkhill Park
25
20
15
10
5
0
9
2
6
3
21
Not important
Slightly Important
Moderately Important
Important
Very important


Users' favourite park accompanies - Sparkhill Park
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
5
0
3
0
3
12
12
9
Alone
Alone with dog
With family
With friends
male
female



Appendix II
Aachen City Survey



Aachen City Districts

100 Markt
130 Theater
141 Untere Jakobstraße
142 Templergraben
151Obere Jakobstraße/ Hubertusstraße
152 Mauerstraße
161 Junkerstraße
162 Vaalser Straße
171 Mittlerer Kronenberg/Rosfeld
172 Neuenhof
180 Hörn
211 Roermonder Straße
212 Ponttor
221 Sandkaulstraße/Peterstraße
222 Monheimsallee
371 Obere Trierer Straße
372 Driescher Hof
410 Beverau
420 Zollernstraße/Dammstraße
430 Burtscheid
460 Steinebrück
471 Bahnhof/Marschiertor
472 Kamper Straße
481 Weberstraße
482 Lütticher-Straße
483 Preuswald
511 Trierer Str./Markt
512 Brand Nord
513 Brand Süd
514 Brander Feld
230 Soerser Weg/Alkuinstraße
240 Untere Jülicher Straße
250 Obere Jülicher Straße
311 Suermondtviertel/Gasborn
312 Kaiserplatz/Rehmviertel
313 Wilhelmstraße
321 Adalbertsteinweg
322 Scheibenstraße/Eifelstraße
330 Panneschopp
340 Rothe Erde
351 Schönforst
352 Altforst
361 Drimbornstraße
362 Oppenhoffallee
363 Bismarckstraße
521 Eilendorf Nord
522 Eilendorf Süd
523 Apolonia
531 Haaren
532 Verlautenheide
610 Kornelimünster
620 Oberforstbach
630 Walheim
641 Kullen
642 Vaalser Quartier/ Steppenberg
651 Laurensberg
652 Soers
653 Orsbach
654 Vetschau
660 Richterich

Plan 4: Distribution of residents who are not originally German and are considered as ausländischen or foreigner, in 2009. Kennedy Park located in Rothe Erde district that is indicated in red with 20.6%-35% non-German residents excluding immigrants with German passports. Map courtesy of Aachen Municipality (Stadt Aachen). Ref. annual report about immigration status in Aachen City, 2011 (Integrationsmonitoring der Stadt Aachen, August 2011).

Plan 5 - Expansion of the Green Fingers according to the Second Development Planning of the City of Aachen, 1957.
red = built forms
white = access roads and hard surfaces
hatched green = grassland
green = tree and shrub
Reference: Aachen - Eine Stadt an der Grenze baut auf. 1957.

Aachen Questionnaire (questions in English and Turkish)

Research topic: Comparison of Muslim Perspective on Park and Green Space Use in Birmingham, United Kingdom and Aachen, Germany (The TU Dortmund Technical University - Faculty of Spatial Planning)
Please answer the following questions:
Lütfen arkadan gelen soruları cevaplayın:

1.Name of the neighbourhood:
Semtin ismi:

2.How old are you?
Kaç yaşındasınız? <14 15-21 22-39 40-59 60>

3.Are you male or female?
Erkek veya bayanmısınız?
Male (erkek) Female (kadın)

4.How would you describe your cultural identity?
(Kültürel hüviyetinizi nasıl tarif edersiniz?)
Muslim Müslüman
Turkish Türk
Deutsche Alman
Both İkisi
Other diğer

5.When was the last time you visited a park in your neighbourhood?
En son ne zaman sizin semtinizde olan bir parka gitiniz?
6.Which park or open spaces do you visit the most often in your neighbourhood?
Sizin semtde olan hangi parka veya meydana en sık gidiyorsunuz?
7.Do you enjoy yourself more in a park or gardening in an allotment and why?
Siz kendinizi nerede daha rahat hissetiyorsunuz, bir parkda veya özel bahçede mi ve neden?
8.How do you get to your favourite park?
En sevdiğiniz parka nasıl ulaşıyorsunuz?
Car (Araba) Walk (yürüyerek) Bicycle (bisiklet) Bus (otobüs) Motorcycle (motosiklet) Other (diğer)

9.How long does it take you to get to your favourite park or open spaces?
En sevdiğiniz parka veya açık alana gitmeniz ne kadar zaman alıyor?
Less than 5mins 5mins
Less than 10mins 10mins
Less than 15mins 15mins20mins
25mins
30mins
more
(Beş dakika altında Beş dakika On dakika altında On dakika Onbeş dakika altında Onbeş dakika Yirmi dakika Yirmibeş dakika Otuz dakika Daha fazla)

10.Who have you go with?
(Kim size eşitlik ediyor?)
Alone (yalnız)
Alone with dog (Yalnız köpekle)
With family (Aile ile)
With friends (arkadaşlarla)
With school (okulla)
Other (diğer)

11.How often do you usually go to your favourite open spaces?
(Genellikle kaç kere en sevdiğiniz açık alana gidiyorsunuz?)
Everyday (Her gün)
More than once a week (Haftada bir defadan fazla)
Once a week (Haftada bir defa)
Less than once a week (Haftada bir defadan az)
more than once a month (Ayda bir defadan fazla)
Once a month (Ayda bir)
Less than once a month (Ayda birden az)
Once every six months (Her altıayda bir)
Once a year (Senede bir)
Less (Daha az)

12. Would you go to your local park alone? (Yörel parka yalnız gidermisiniz?)
Yes evet No hayır

13. Why not?
(Neden hayır?)
Prefers company (eşliği tercih ediyor)

Fear of attack (saldırı korkusu)
Fear of trees (ağaç korkusu)
Fear of animals (hayvan korkusu)
Loitering teenagers (tembel gençler)
Too dark (çok karanlık)
Fear of getting lost (kaybolma korkusu)
Bad media reports (menfi medya haberler)
Other (diğer)

14. How satisfied are you with the appearance and green beauty of your neighbourhood green spaces? Score your response by giving a value between 1 and 5 (score1 =Low, to 5=High)
(Sizin semte olan yeşil alanlarlın görünüşunle ve yeşil güzelliğinle ne kadar memnunsunuz? Cevabinizi bir ve beş arası bir not vererek puanlayın)
Low (az) High (çok)
1 2 3 4 5

15. How do you rate the general quality of your favourite park/open space as an area for relaxation?
(Score 1=Poor, to 5=Very good)
(Sizin en sevdiğiniz parkın veya yeşil alanın istirahat etme imkanını nasıl puanlıyorsunuz?)
(Puan 1 = az, 5 = çok iyi)
Poor = az, Very good = çok iyi
1 2 3 4 5

16. Does anything disturb you while using the open space?
(Bu açık alanı kullanırken sizi rahatsız eden birşey varmı?)

17. How important do you think the green spaces are to the local image?
score1 =Not important, to 5=Very Important
(Ne kadar önemli yeşil alanlarda yerel görüntü sizce? Sizce yeşil alanlarlın yörel görünüme ne kadar önemli?)
Not important (önemli değil) Very important (çok önemli)
1 2 3 4 5

18. How do you rate the general quality of your favourite open space as a refuge from the pace and noise of urban life?
(Sizin en sevdiğiniz parkın veya yeşil alanın kalitesini kentsel yaşamın hız ve gürültü tarafından nasıl puanlıyorsunuz?)

19. What do you use your favourite park/open space for?
(Parkı veya açık alanı ne için kullanıyorsunuz?)
Walking (yürümek)
Walking the dog (Köpekle yürümek)
Playing (oynamak)
Enjoying nature (Doğanın tadını cıkarmak)
Relaxation (dinlenmek)
To keep fit (Formunda kalmak için)
To get away from work (Işten kaçmak için)
To unwind after work (Işten dinlenmek için)
To meet friends (Arkadaşlarla buluşmak için)
Other … (please specify)
(Diğer (lütfen netleştiriniz)

20. How long do you stay in the park/ green space on average? (Genellikle Park veya açık alanda ne kadar kalıyorsunuz?)
Less than 1 hour (Bir saatdan az)
1-2 hours (Bir veya iki saat arası)
2-5 hours (Iki veya beş saat)
More than 5 hours (arası Beş saatdan fazla)

21. Do you have any comment?
(Yorumlarınız varmı?)

Thank you very much for your time and participation in this survey
(Sizin bu soruşturmaya katilmanız ve bana zaman ayırdığınız için çok teşekkür ederim)

Table 18 - Favourite green open spaces from the perspective of a Turkish immigrant in Aachen-Ost	
Age & Gender	**Response**
48f	in a big garden or park I feel better
68f	In my backyard little garden
23m	In both, I think a park is a space for things you can do in the public, for example hanging around with friends, having a short break, playing football or whatever etc. An allotment is more private... here you meet with family or friends and have barbecue, talk and laugh about things etc.
56m	In park
43f	park: there is enough space for everyone to play and enjoy the nature
56m	both me and my family like to go to the park but for special occasions we would like to stay in our back garden and enjoy more because of the privacy we have at home.
22m	Park
22m	Private garden is better
24f	in a private garden because of the size (smaller). Moreover it is created more individual.
56f	in a park because it is open to everybody and it has enough space for everyone.
43f	in a park because it is open to everyone and has space for everyone
56m	I like parks to go there with friends or family but i prefer to use my own garden because here it is private only for me and my family and i can do what I want and don't have to take care for others.
27m	we never had a private garden so I don't know which one is better. I grew up in parks, so I like them.
44m	I like parks to relax during my work-break, but I enjoy myself more in my own allotment
57f	parks, because they are huge and have so much nature to see.

Table 19 - Reasons for not going to the favourite local park alone.

Age & Gender	Response
68f	fear of attack, loitering teenagers
56m	prefer company, fear of attack, loitering teenagers, bad media reports
43f	fear of attack, loitering teenagers, bad media reports
24f	prefers company
56f	prefers company, fear of attack, loitering teenagers, bad media reports
43f	fear of attack, loitering teenagers, bad media reports
57f	prefers company, fear of attack, loitering teenagers, too dark

Table 20 - Descriptive responses from Kennedy Park users about the general quality of their favourite park as a refuge from the pace and noise of urban life.

Age & Gender	Response
48f	It’s not very good but okay.
23m	Very high! The nearest open space is a forest so it’s a perfect place to relax from the noise and smell and stress of the city. Sometimes, if I have a lot of work to do I first have a walk in this forest to free my mind.
56m	Okay, there are playing grounds in the park that boys can use instead of playing in quite streets or pathways around the neighbourhood
43f	It's dirty and noisy sometimes but you can find quiet places to sit and relax away of noise. I love the limestone paving.
56m	It's okay
24f	I think the quality of my favorite open space (it is not in my neighbourhood!) is in general very good. It absorbs the stress created by urban life.
56f	It's okay. There are huge streets around the park but it's still quiet there. But sometimes in summer it is a bit too overcrowded
43f	It's an island of quietness surrounded by a big, dirty and loud city. I love such places
56m	It’s okay
44m	It's perfect because the park has streets around itbut it is still quiet, cause it's cut from the surrounding city by trees.
57f	It's okay. It's sometimes a bit loud because there are many children, but that's life.

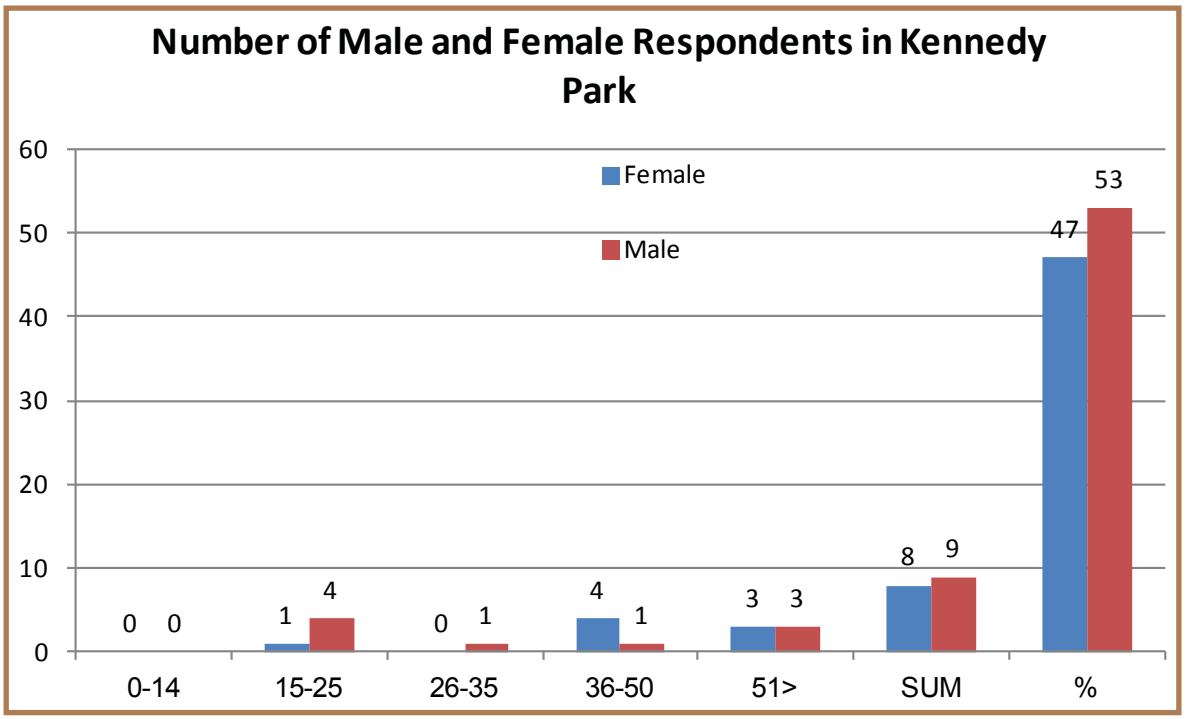
Table 21 - Descriptive responses by Kennedy Park users to question about comfort and expctation

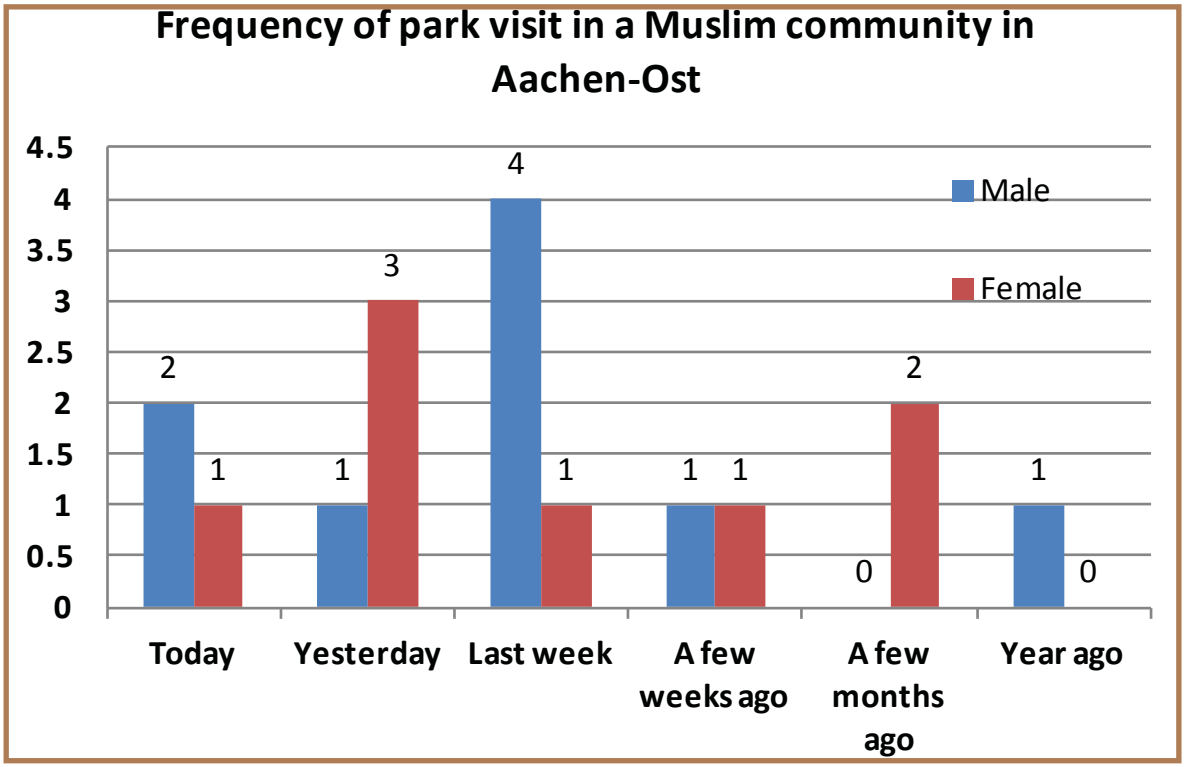
Age & Gender	Response
48f	No
56m	No
43f	No
56m	We need a private corner where we can meet and have a seat with friends. We need a private corner where we can meet and have a seat with friends. After the construction works at the park it's now everywhere open. There is no private, small place, I miss that. I don't need to be there and share everything with everybody.
22m	No
22m	No
42f	not enough benches and a site plan
24f	Maybe a coffee shop to have a refreshing break
56f	No
43f	No
56m	I would like to have some "corners" where you can meet and sit a bit privately. After they changed Kennedypark in recent years they made it open to everywhere totally open. I'm missing a little, hidden place in the park. I don't want to be there and share everything with the others.
27m	No
44m	I miss some more benches
57f	For me it's sometimes too noisy because a lot of children use it. There should be some edges that are more quiet and attractive for adults.

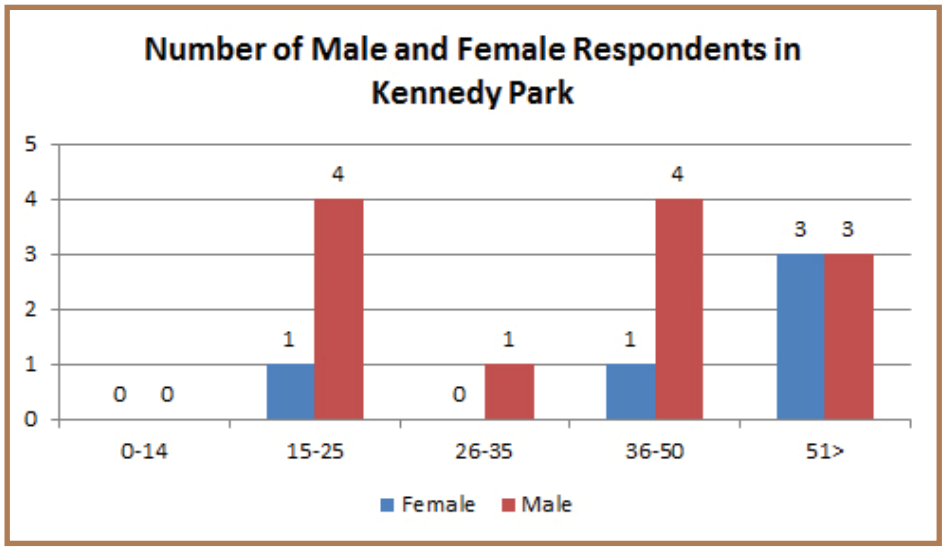
Table 22 - Respondents are asked to define what disturbs them while they are in Kennedy Park.

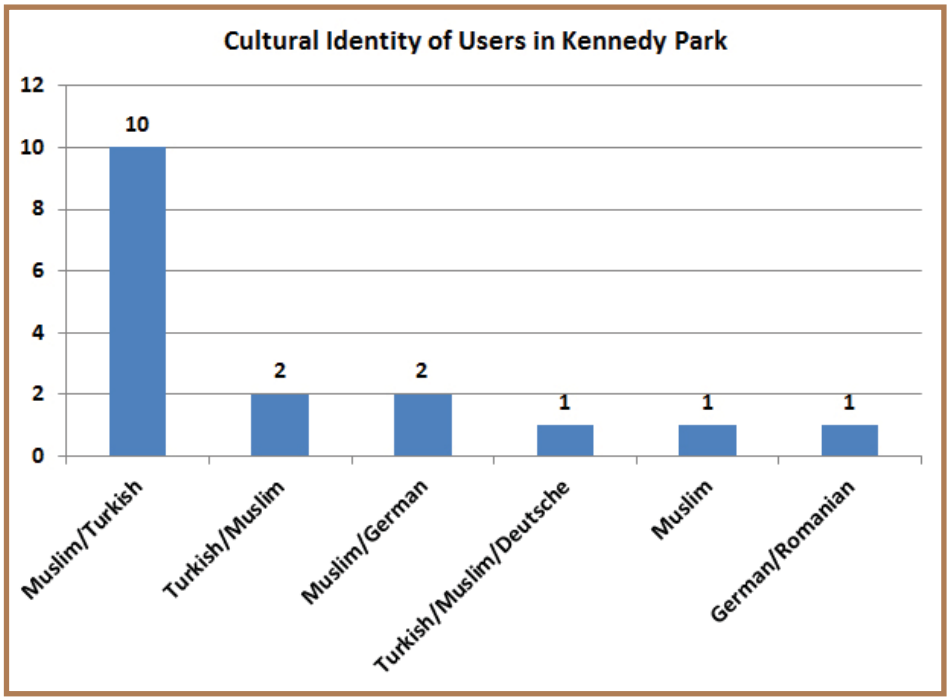
Age & Gender	Response
48f	it is not separated from the road
56m	yes, teenagers are using alcohol and cannabis can easily get to the park during the day, go in at night place.
43f	not during the day but there are rumors that during night time some bad things happen in the park.
56m	No
22m	No
22m	No
42f	No
24f	No
56f	yes the teenagers who drink there and deal with drugs! During the day you can use the park easily but if it gets dark it's a no-go area.
56m	No
27m	there are a lot of police force. We get controlled nearly once a week, like we're criminals. I don't understand why, because I use the park only to meet with friends, like everybody does.
44m	no it's perfect
57f	for me it's sometimes too noisy because a lot of children use it. There should be some edges that are more quiet and attractive for adults.

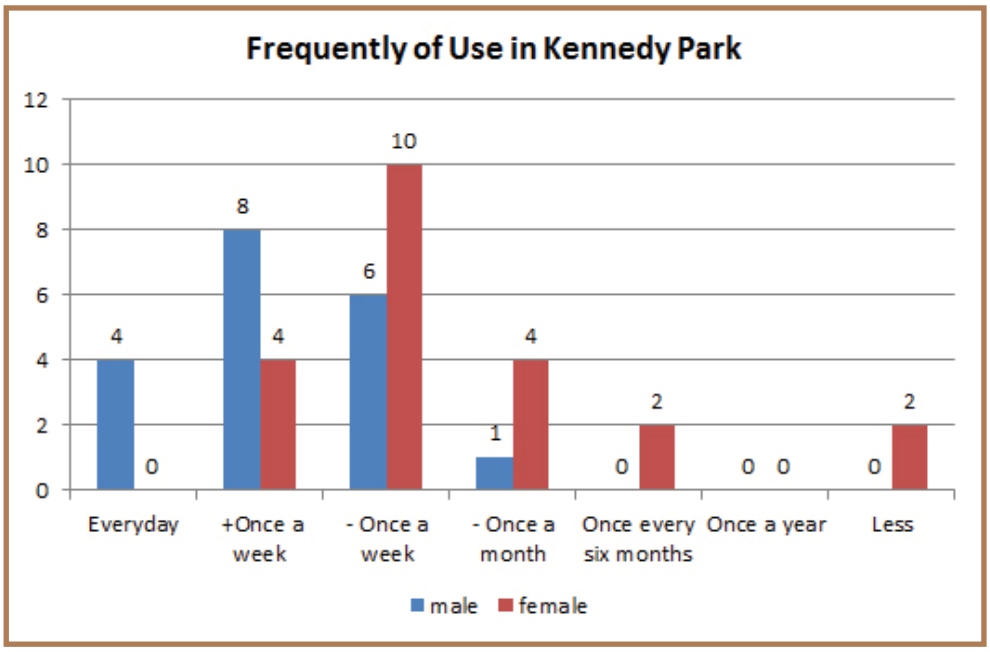
Table 23 - Park users use the Kennedy Park for the following reasons:	
Age & Gender	**Response**
48f	walking, enjoying nature, relaxation, to unwind after work,
56m	walking, enjoying nature, relaxation, to meet friends
43f	walking, relaxation, to unwind after work
56m	walking, enjoying nature, relaxation, to get away from work, to unwind after work, to meet friends
22m	walking, relaxation, to meet friends
24m	enjoying nature, relaxation
22m	walking, relaxation
42f	playing, enjoying nature, relaxation
24f	walking, enjoying nature, relaxation,
56f	walking, enjoying nature, relaxation, to meet friends
43f	walking, relaxation, to meet friends
56m	walking, enjoying nature, relaxation, to get away from work, to unwind after work, to meet friends
27m	walking, walking the dog, playing, relaxation, to keep fit, to get away from work, to unwind after work to meet friends
44m	walking, relaxation, to unwind after work
57f	walking, enjoying nature, relaxation, to get away from work, to unwind after work, to meet friends

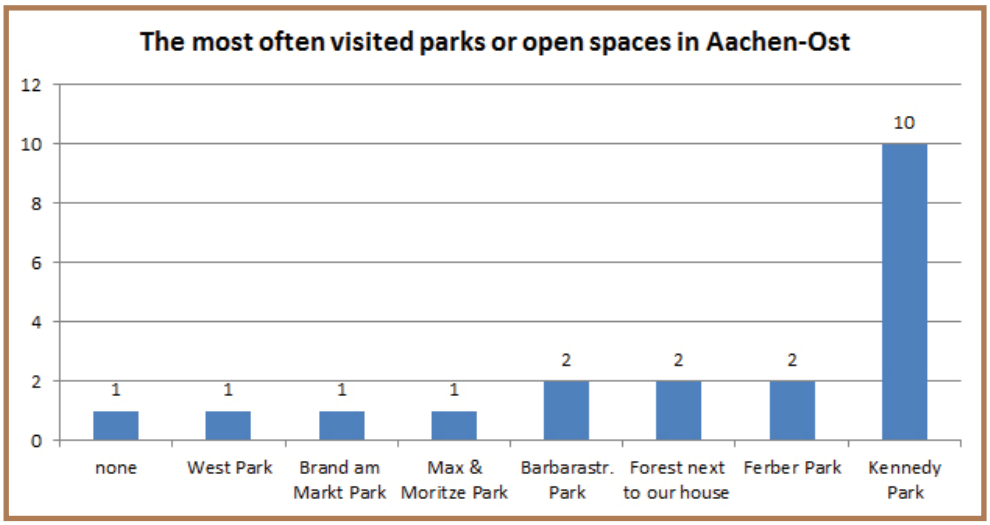

Number of Male and Female Respondents in Kennedy Park
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Female
Male
0 0
1 4
0 1
4 1
3 3
8 9
47 53
0-14
15-25
26-35
36-50
51>
SUM
%

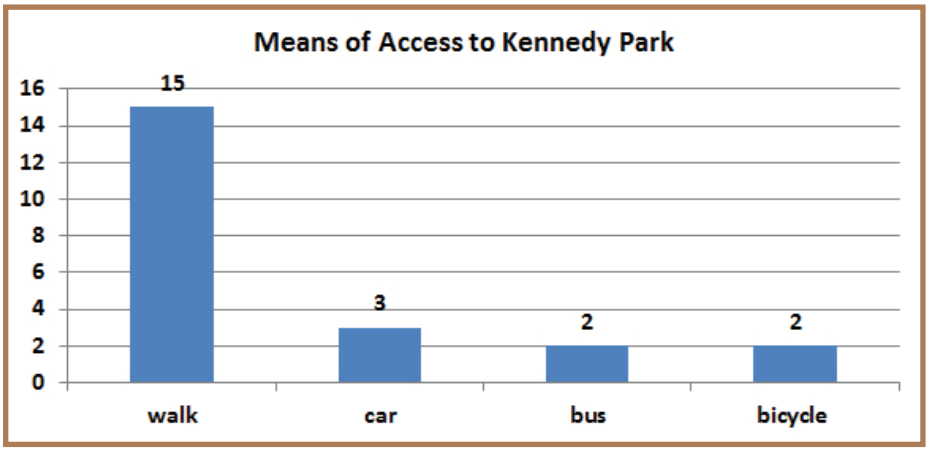

Frequency of park visit in a Muslim community in Aachen-Ost
4.5
4
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
0.5
0
Male
Female
2 1
1 3
4 1
1 1
0 2
1 0
Today
Yesterday
Last week
A few weeks ago
A few months ago
Year ago

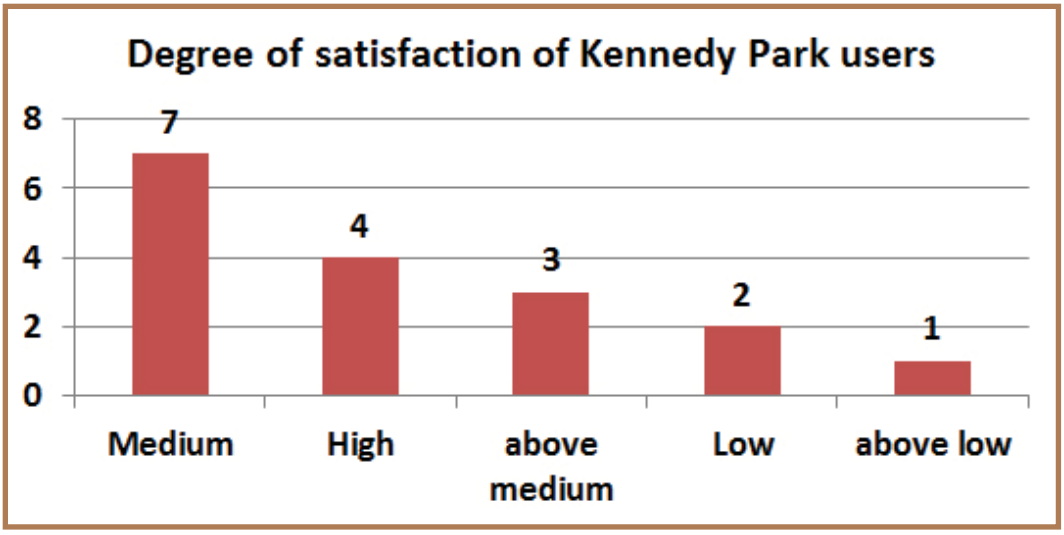

Number of Male and Female Respondents in Kennedy Park
5
4
3
2
1
0
0 0
1 4
0 1
1 4
3 3
0-14
15-25
26-35
36-50
51>
Female
Male

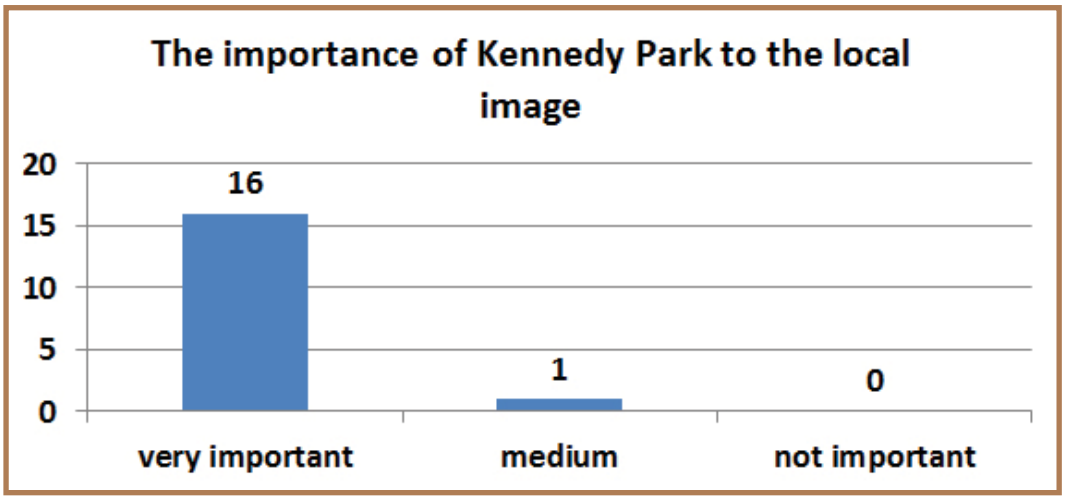

Cultural Identity of Users in Kennedy Park
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
10
2
2
1
1
1
Muslim/Turkish
Turkish/Muslim
Muslim/German
Turkish/Muslim/Deutsche
Muslim
German/Romanian

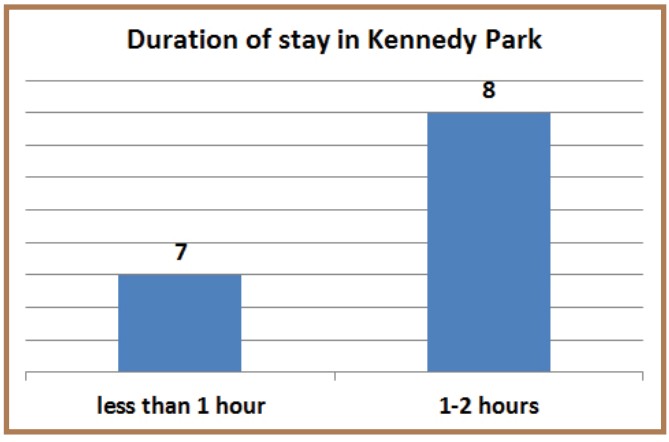

Frequently of Use in Kennedy Park
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
4
0
8
4
6
10
1
4
0
2
0 0
0
2
Everyday
+Once a week
- Once a week
- Once a month
Once every six months
Once a year
Less
male
female

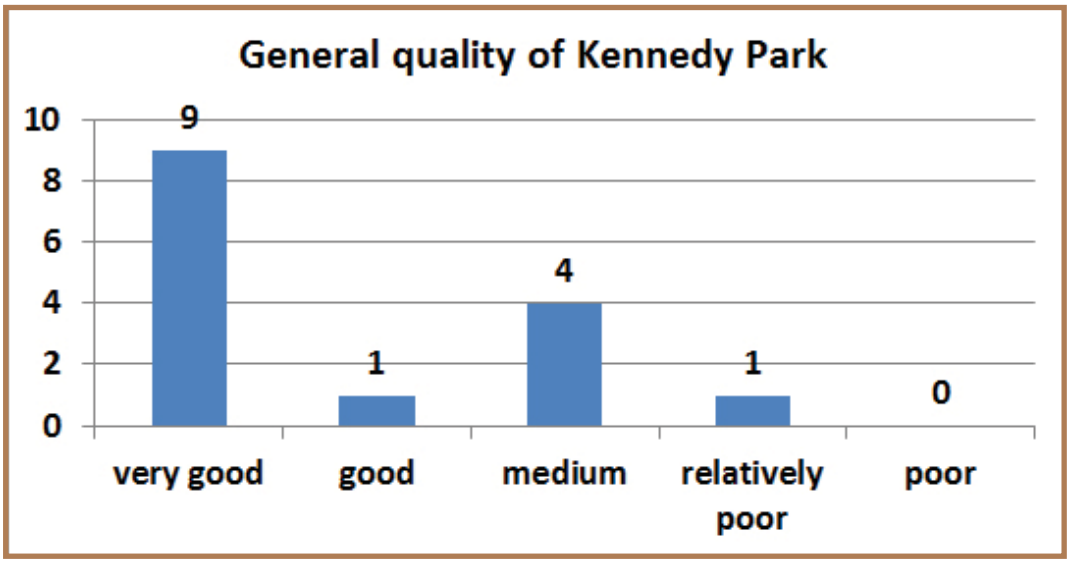

The most often visited parks or open spaces in Aachen-Ost
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
1
1
1
1
2
2
2
10
none
West Park
Brand am Markt Park
Max & Moritze Park
Barbarastr. Park
Forest next to our house
Ferber Park
Kennedy Park

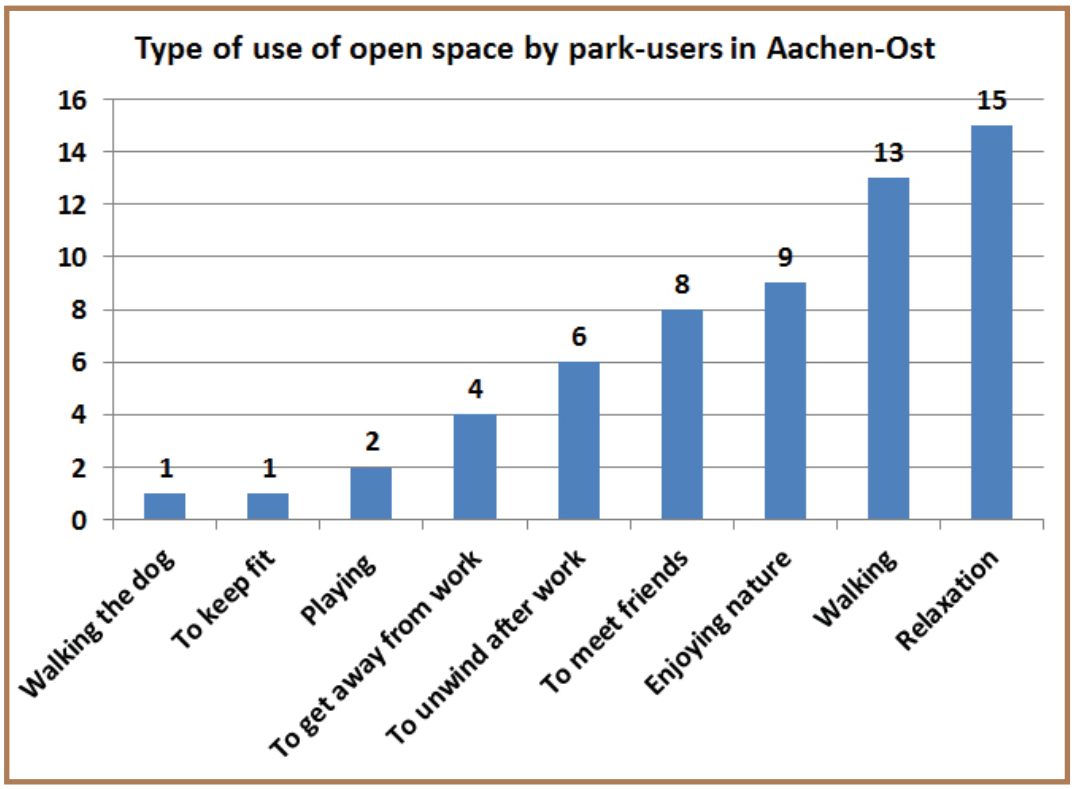

Means of Access to Kennedy Park
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
15
3
2
2
walk
car
bus
bicycle


Degree of satisfaction of Kennedy Park users
8
6
4
2
0
7
4
3
2
1
Medium
High
above medium
Low
above low


The importance of Kennedy Park to the local image
20
15
10
5
0
16
1
0
very important
medium
not important


Duration of stay in Kennedy Park
8
7
less than 1 hour
1-2 hours


General quality of Kennedy Park
10
8
6
4
2
0
9
1
4
1
0
very good
good
medium
relatively poor
poor


Type of use of open space by park-users in Aachen-Ost
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
1
1
2
4
6
8
9
13
15
Walking the dog
To keep fit
Playing
To get away from work
To unwind after work
To meet friends
Enjoying nature
Walking
Relaxation