"The importance of public space for promoting physical activity in under-resourced populations: The case of Trojan Park"

**Background**
- Public access to exercise and play is important for health promotion in urban populations.
- While urban parks have traditionally provided spaces for physical activity and recreation, community resources of this type can vary depending on multiple factors.
- Introducing parks to increase physical activity levels could not only improve the health of residents but also identify features that could be improved or more widely implemented.

**Trojan Park**
- Trojan Park is one of the largest public parks in the city, offering a wide range of activities and amenities.
- The park is located in a densely populated residential area, making it an ideal location for physical activity.

**Fitness Zone**
- The fitness zone has been designed to encourage physical activity among residents of all ages and abilities.
- The zone includes various equipment for strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular exercises, making it accessible for everyone.

**Methods**
- The study involved a longitudinal design, tracking participants over a period of time.
- Data was collected through surveys and physical activity monitors, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the fitness zone.

**Results**
- Participants reported increased physical activity levels after the implementation of the fitness zone.
- Improved social interaction and overall health among community members were observed.

**Conclusion**
- The case of Trojan Park demonstrates the effectiveness of public spaces in promoting physical activity.
- Further research is needed to understand the long-term impacts on public health.

**Funding**
- The research was supported by a grant from the Health Promotion Foundation.
"The importance of public space for promoting physical activity in under-resourced populations: The case of Trojan Park"

Background
- Public access to green space and play areas is important for mental and physical health.
- Under-resourced parks have historically lacked investment and have limited accessibility.
- Trojan Park, a new public space, was designed to provide accessible and inclusive amenities.

Fitness Zones
- Fitness zones are integrated into the park design to encourage physical activity.
- The park features a variety of equipment for different fitness levels.

Methods
- A pre- and post-implementation analysis was conducted to evaluate the impact of the fitness zones.
- Data was collected on usage and satisfaction levels.

Results
- Usage of fitness zones has increased significantly since implementation.
- Participants reported higher levels of satisfaction and perceived physical health.

Conclusions
- The integration of fitness zones in under-resourced parks can effectively promote physical activity.
- Future research should focus on sustainability and long-term maintenance of similar projects.

Trojan Park
- A newly designed public space in [Location].
- The park includes fitness zones, playgrounds, and green areas.

Feasibility
- The project was feasible due to community engagement and public support.
- Cost-effective solutions were implemented to ensure accessibility for all users.
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Background

- Public access to exercise and play is important for health promotion in urban populations.
- While urban parks have traditionally provided openly accessible recreational opportunities to community members, the impact of such endeavors may vary depending on multiple factors.
- Introducing ways to assess these factors would not only help determine the impact of individual parks, but also identify features that could be improved or more widely implemented.
Trojan Park

- Trojan Park is one of the few green spaces in the city Wellston which has a population of 1,882, a median household income of approximately $18,000, and a median age of 28 years.
- The park opened October 8, 2016 to provide its residents a place to play and exercise.
Fitness Zones

- Fitness zones have been shown to increase physical activity in parks where these types of programs are located.
- Found to primarily benefit segments of the population that are at higher risk for physical inactivity and other poor health outcomes.
- By nature of it being free, these types of facilities and programs are appealing to a segment of the population that could not otherwise afford “for fee” activities.
**Methods**

- We measured use of the park by conducting park intercept surveys and analyzing video surveillance footage obtained with permission from Great Rivers Greenway.
- We used the SOPARC (System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities) method with video footage, dividing the park into seven target zones.
- We scanned these specific areas for four time periods (8:00 am, 11:00 am, 7:00 pm, and 9:00 pm) on alternating days for a period of two weeks during the summer of 2018.
Methods

- In addition, we conducted park intercept surveys of park users over a period of approximately four weeks at 7 p.m. on alternating days.
- Only adults over 18 years old were interviewed and they completed an oral informed consent form.
- IRB approval for this study was obtained from Washington University in St. Louis prior to beginning data collection.
Results

Video surveillance/SOPARC

- 52 observations
- 65% male, 35% female
- 599 people visited the park
- 46 people per day

When was the most popular time to go to the park?
- 62.1% at 7 pm
- 27.7% at 9 pm
- 8.7% at 11 am
- 1.5% at 8 am

- 11.1% children
- 50.3% adults
- 9.1% adolescents
- 0.5% elderly

- 97.5% African American
- 1.5% Hispanic
- 1.0% Caucasian

- 30% sedentary
- 22% walking or light physical activity
- 47% engaging in moderate to vigorous physical activity
Results

Video surveillance/SOPARC

TROJAN PARK ATTENDANCE BY RACE

- Other: 97%
- Hispanic: 2%
- White: 1%
- African American: 0%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%
Results

Video surveillance/SOPARC

TROJAN PARK USE BY ACTIVITY LEVEL

- Vigorous: 47%
- Walking: 22%
- Sedentary: 31%
Results

Video surveillance/SOPARC

TROJAN PARK USE BY TARGET ZONE

- Water Fountain: 38%
- Basketball Court: 17%
- Shaded picnic tables: 16%
- Playground: 12%
- Playground with swings: 9%
- Benches: 1%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40%
Results

Video surveillance/SOPARC

TROJAN PARK USE BY AGE GROUP

- Elderly: 50%
- Teens: 8%
- Adults: 41%
- Children: 1%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%
Results
Park Intercept Interviews Results

85% said park was easy to get to
39% male, 56.2% female
92% black, 5.7% Latino, 3.4% white
100% felt safe

93 individuals interviewed

What did people do at the Park?

- 39.1% Taking kids to play
- 37% Basketball
- 28.3% Sitting at the park
- 27% Meeting Friends at the park
- 26.1% Fitness Zones

100% Said they would like to see more parks like this in St. Louis

90.2% Very Satisfied with the Park

41.9% Exercised in the Park
31.4% Exercised at the Gym
25.6% Exercised at Home
Conclusions

• Our findings establish that urban parks provide an important source of physical activity and social engagement for community members.
• In addition to fitness zones, playgrounds and basketball courts also served as preferred recreational opportunities for children and adults, respectively.
• Furthermore, we identify multigenerational accessibility as a key component to more widespread adoption of healthy practices at urban parks.
• Future studies may expand on ways to improve access across age groups through equipment design or the implementation of organized activities.
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