

Rethinking Urban Green Space Quality and Planning Models from Users and Experts' Perspective for Sustainable Development: The Case of Debre Berhan and Debre Markos Cities, Ethiopia

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Abstract : This study analyzed the users' and experts' views on the green space quality and planning models in Debre Berhan (DB) and Debre Markos (DM) cities in Ethiopia. A questionnaire survey was conducted on 350 park users (148 from DB and 202 from DM) to rate the accessibility, size, shape, vegetation cover, social and cultural context, conservation and heritage, community participation, attractiveness, comfort, safety, inclusiveness, and maintenance of green spaces using a Likert scale. A key informant interview was held with 13 experts in DB and 12 in DM. Descriptive statistics and tests of independence of variables using the chi-square test were done. A statistically significant association existed between the perception of green space quality attributes and users' occupation (χ^2 (160, N = 350) = 224.463, $p < 0.001$), age (χ^2 (128, N = 350) = 212.812, $p < 0.001$), gender (χ^2 (32, N = 350) = 68.443, $p < 0.001$), and education level (χ^2 (192, N = 350) = 293.396, $p < 0.001$). 61.7 % of park users were unsatisfied with the quality of urban green spaces. The users perceived dense vegetation cover as "good," with a mean value of 3.41, while the remaining were perceived as "medium with a mean value of 2.62 - 3.32". Only quantitative space standards are practiced as a green space planning model, while other models are unfamiliar and never used in either city. Therefore, experts need to be aware of and practice urban green models during urban planning to ensure that new developments include green spaces to accommodate the community's and the environment's needs.

Keywords : urban green space, quality, users and experts, green space planning models, Ethiopia

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