THE UTILIZATION OF SOCIAL SPACES NEAR SOCCER FIELDS BY

ATTENDEES OF HISPANIC SOCCER LEAGUE MATCHES

IN DALLAS, TEXAS

by

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ABSTRACT

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The University of Texas at Arlington, 2013

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The purpose of this research is to observe and identify the social interactions in pedestrian spaces immediately surrounding soccer fields during Hispanic soccer league matches in Dallas, Texas. The research uses passive observation of spectators at Hispanic soccer league matches in the Dallas area to determine which activities are prevalent and which types of spaces are most commonly used and for what purpose.

Recent immigration has greatly boosted the numbers of Hispanics living in North Central Texas (Price & Whitworth, 2004). This population increase is leading to wide demographic changes where immigrants settle. One of these shifts
is occurring in the athletic world of soccer. Soccer fields are being used by an increasingly diverse population, and this is leading to new uses for existing sports facilities (Sanchez, 2010).

In Hispanic communities, soccer leagues provide more benefits to the participants than just entertainment and recreation. They create third places for people to socialize in a way that is familiar to them and part of their Hispanic culture (Price & Whitworth, 2012). Hispanic visitors to soccer facilities may use the space for their primary leisure activities. In addition to providing space for soccer matches, areas around soccer fields are used for networking, news-sharing, community outreach, and even celebrations of tradition (Price & Whitworth, 2004). Therefore, the spaces around soccer fields are more relevant to everyday life now than ever before.

Despite their importance, soccer fields can be out of reach or difficult to access for many Hispanic communities (Garcia, et. al., 2002). Hispanic soccer players, especially adult males, adapt to spaces not designated for soccer or “jump the fence” to access fields without permission when fields are perceived to be inaccessible through city regulations (Sanchez, 2010). This in turn causes problems for cities trying to maintain order in their parks systems and for players who are removed from the playing fields. This issue contrasts with the cultural importance of these soccer fields to the Hispanic communities.
The data for this study are gathered through observation (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). In addition to noting the conditions and amenities surrounding soccer facilities in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, the observations catalog the behaviors of visitors to these facilities and the spaces they use. This information is useful for sports facility designers in order to develop design guidelines for soccer facilities that better accommodate the increasing Hispanic population.

The study found that the six types of spaces around soccer fields used by those observed were designated seating areas, areas near vehicles, trees, food vendor kiosks, open spaces, and slopes. These spaces facilitated seven behavioral trends that were also observed. These were clustering, lingering, sheltering, mimicking, informing, observing, and playing. This information gives insight into which spaces are used most and for which uses. The findings from the study also led to more questions which are discussed as future research topics.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to examine the use of social spaces by visitors to Hispanic soccer league matches in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area. This specifically applies to the utilization of spaces in the soccer facilities by both soccer players and the friends and families of the players, in order to provide a better understanding of the implications for future design. This study does not focus on the use of the soccer fields themselves, but rather the spaces immediately surrounding them. In order to organize the research objective and research questions, this research utilizes journals on parks and leisure, sociology, cultural studies, medicine, the U.S. Soccer Foundations field design guidelines and the insight gained through personal experience volunteering with Hispanic soccer leagues and Hispanic community outreach with medical clinics.

Data collection is primarily through passive observation as described by Taylor and Bogdan (1998). Sites for observation have been selected by determining which fields are regularly used by Hispanic soccer leagues and at
what times matches and festivities are scheduled. Sites with perceived positive
and negative conditions for Hispanic visitors have been selected and those
conditions have been noted. The results of the observation provide insight into the
activities of visitors to these locations and how compatible the facilities’ design is
for Hispanic soccer leagues.

1.2 Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to study the use of spaces and behavioral
patterns of players, spectators, and other attendees at Hispanic soccer league
games. These activities have been noted through passive observation at the
locations of soccer matches around Dallas, Texas. The research results inform
landscape architects and parks specialists involved in soccer facility design in
order to better accommodate these Hispanic leagues.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the activities of attendees to Hispanic soccer league matches
and how do they relate to the spaces they use?

2. Which areas of the facilities, other than the playing field, are most
highly utilized and how?

3. How do users adapt to the facilities that do not have the amenities they
prefer?
1.4 Terms and Definitions

Active recreation: A mix of uses in a neighborhood park that includes the following facilities or facility types: athletic fields, building or structures for recreational activities, concession, community garden, courses or courts, children's play area, dog play area, or a bike path (San Francisco Recreation and Parks).

Competitive soccer match: A competitive match is one played in official competition, generally with points, prize money or a place in the next round of a cup at stake. It differs to a friendly match, which a team would generally play in preparation for the competitive season. There is little riding on the result of these matches (Coggin, 2013).

Community: A group of people sharing beliefs that allow a communal understanding expressed in language, remembered by tradition, upheld by social norms, and refined by conversation (Atkinson, 2012).

Culture: Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other hand, as conditioning influences upon further action (Hofstede, 1997).
Cultural indicator: An element that gives information about societies, which may have an evaluative purpose involving explicit or implicit normative criteria (Eionet, 2012).

Hispanic: Persons who trace their origin or descent to Central or South America and other Spanish cultures (Passel and Taylor, 2009).

Passive recreation: A mix of uses in a park, undeveloped land or minimally improved lands which do not require a heavily structured environment (San Francisco Recreation and Parks).

Place Centered Observation: Data collected through visual confirmation of the locations of activities being researched. These data are marked on a map of the research site (Madden, 2000).

Soccer league: An alliance of teams playing in a structured format. The team which accrues the most points by the time the final matches have been played will win the league. The team or teams that have the least points may be relegated to the league below. Three points are generally awarded for a victory, one for a draw and none for a loss (Coggin, 2013).

Social role: Behavioral expectations for what a person should do, when occupying a position in a specific social setting (Zurcher, 1983).
Social Space: Any space where people come together to congregate and interact with one another (Dyer and Nqui, 2010).

Third Place: A setting neither at home nor at work that provides a setting for social interaction and relaxation for individuals. They are typically free or inexpensive, highly accessible, welcoming to users, involve regular visitors, and offer food or drink (Soja, 1989).


U13 Field: An official soccer field measuring 50-60 yards wide and 100-110 yards long long (Huddleston & Huddleston, 2013).

U12 Field: An official soccer field measuring 40-55 yards wide and 100-105 yards long long (Huddleston & Huddleston, 2013).

U11 Field: An official soccer field measuring 40-50 yards wide and 70-80 yards long long (Huddleston & Huddleston, 2013).

U10 Field: An official soccer field measuring 40-50 yards wide and 60-70 yards long long (Huddleston & Huddleston, 2013).


1.5 Research Methods

This investigation begins with a literature review of selected refereed sources that describe the social interactions of people at Hispanic soccer league matches and the design of the facilities used by these individuals. The review also includes newspaper articles describing the activities of Hispanic soccer leagues and games in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The field study utilizes qualitative research methods as described by Taylor and Bogdan (1998) in order to document the activities and behavior patterns of attendees at Hispanic soccer league games. The primary tool to gather data is passive observation at the soccer matches. The observation focuses on players, spectators, and individuals engaged in other activities in the area immediately surrounding the soccer fields. In order to record the activities of those observed, two methods are used. The primary method is to take field notes and denote on a park plan where certain behaviors and activities are noticed (Whyte, 1980; Madden, 2000). The secondary method of data collection is to photograph examples of the behaviors recorded. These data are then studied and analyzed to discern user patterns of behavior. This analysis is done through coding and diagrammatic comparison.
1.6 Significance and Limitations of the Research

1.6.1 Significance

The results of this study are potentially of benefit to Hispanic communities that connect through soccer leagues. By observing the behavior of people at these soccer matches, the researcher can offer a list of design considerations for further study. These considerations can result in the improved design of facilities for users.

This study may also benefit city parks and recreation departments. Through a better understanding of design and management preferences for Hispanics, these departments can adapt to these users and reduce facility misuse or use without permission.

1.6.2 Limitations

One limitation was the time frame of the research which did not allow for observation of the activities at these soccer leagues year round. Activities observed may not have been representative of recreation at other times of the year. These limitations were taken into consideration in the interpretation of the results.

Only three sites in Dallas were observed. These were publicly accessible facilities across the city. The results from these observations may have differed
had they been at other locations. A wider study sample would have provided a more representative look.

The study did not use surveys or direct interaction with those observed. This did not allow for confirmation whether the subjects self-identified as Hispanic or not. In this study it was not possible to identify which racial or ethnic groups the subjects belonged to.

One delimitation to this study is the geographic zone in which it is conducted. Results from the study in the Dallas-Fort Worth area may or may not be transferable elsewhere. This stems both from geographic and climate differences and from the possibility of core settlements of immigrants from specific locations (Price & Whitworth, 2004). Additionally, other areas have populations that are more established or newly arrived. These differences in a community’s maturity may also affect the validity of the results when applied elsewhere.

Another delimitation put in place by the researcher is the number of soccer leagues observed. In order to get an in-depth understanding, a smaller number of locations and leagues are studied. While this may reduce some broad applicability in the results, it permits a more in-depth study.
1.7 Summary

As the Hispanic population in North Central Texas has grown, so has its influence on recreation and sports. As more Hispanics arrive, they bring with them a unique culture that ties in heavily with soccer leagues founded by these new communities. This study uses passive observation at Hispanic soccer league matches to document activities of attendees. The results of this study can inform further research into updated design criteria for soccer facilities.

In chapter two of this paper, the author discusses literature related to the topic ranging from previous investigations into Hispanic culture and recreation to the increase in Hispanic population in Texas. They find that Hispanics in general look for places where they can gather as family units, but that men are more likely to seek out spaces where they can interact with other men while women look for spaces where they can interact with each other while watching their children (Sanchez, 2010). One common structuring activity for this is soccer (Price and Whitworth, 2004). These articles demonstrate the relevance of this study to the current social climate and its impact on design criteria.

In chapter three, the methods used to generate new data and the findings are outlined in detail. The data collection methods include site analysis, passive observation, behavior mapping, and photography. The methods used for extracting findings from the data include coding and diagrammatic comparison.
The data obtained are analyzed in chapter four. Three sets of findings were obtained: cultural attributes of those observed, social spaces, and behaviors. Cultural attributes such as clothing, food, and language varied among different cultural groups observed. Six types of spaces around soccer fields used by those observed were designated seating areas, areas near vehicles, trees, food vendor kiosks, open spaces, and slopes. These spaces facilitated seven behavioral trends that were also observed. These were clustering, lingering, sheltering, mimicking, informing, observing, and playing. This information gives insight into which spaces are used most and for which uses.

These findings are then discussed in the conclusion chapter. The behaviors outlined in chapter four are compared to sources from the literature review. As these findings are concluded, the implications of this research for landscape architecture are discussed. Finally, question for future research are examined.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review delineates the rising prominence of Hispanics in the United States and their activities at soccer facilities as reported in previous studies. It includes an overview of the population growth of Hispanics both at a national and a local level that is causing a major demographic change within both the United States and Texas (Arreola, 2004). One form in which this change manifests itself is in recreational sports; namely soccer. Hispanic soccer leagues form an important part of social life, facilitating a third place both for the sport and also for social interactions, community involvement, and sometimes commerce (Price & Whitworth, 2004). These interactions occur between players on the field but to a greater degree between individuals off the field. The cultural significance of amateur Hispanic soccer leagues is unique among soccer leagues in the United States in the wide variety of age groups and attendees they attract (Price and Whitworth; Andrews, 2000). A comparison to the social aspect of American softball leagues gives insight into both their similarities and their
differences (Price & Whitworth, 2004). Understanding how these spaces are used can give landscape architects a deeper knowledge of how to design them.

2.2 Social Spaces

2.2.1 Definition of Social Spaces

Social spaces are places where people come together to interact with one another (Dyer and Ngui, 2010). These spaces are be both physical and virtual, although physical social spaces are associated with greater benefits to the users (Brown, 2013). This description of social spaces leads to the conclusion that almost any space designated for people can be classified as a social space.

2.2.2 Definition of Third Places

Third places, according to Oldenburg (2001) are “settings beyond home and work where people can relax in good company on a regular basis” (p. 2). They attract a crowd of regulars who are familiar with each other and are important in forming a sense of community (Oldenburg, 2001). Another aspect of a third place is its restorative qualities. They provide spaces where the user feels at ease and can relax and unwind in a safe environment (Kaplan et. al., 1998). According to Oldenburg’s (2001) definition of third places and Dyer and Ngui’s (2010) definition of social spaces, third places can be locations for people to relax that are, in turn, made up of smaller social spaces within the setting of the third place.
2.2.2 Soccer Facilities as a Third Place

A function of soccer facilities that rivals even the soccer match itself is their importance as communal third places for Hispanics.

“Indeed, the practice field has become an obligatory place of reunion for all out-migrant paisanos (countrymen). It is the place where dates are made, work obtained, friends located, new arrivals welcomed, and news of the town exchanged … This weekly reunion not only breaks up the routine of work, but it also provides a regular forum for communication and exchange” (Massey, 1986).

Soccer facilities foster bonds that link to heritage and a sense of camaraderie that stems from a team working together and a crowd experiencing the excitement vicariously from the sidelines. This permits all who join to make new friendships, network, and relax together through cheering on a common team and interacting in the spaces around the field (Messeri, 2008). Food and music form an important component of this third place as well. Cultural dishes prepared and sold at makeshift vendor tents are common at these events, as is regional music (Price & Whitworth, 2004).

Certain social spaces around soccer fields play an important role in establishing soccer facilities as third places. Areas near food vendors, especially tables and chairs set up for eating, foment socialization within the space (Price &
Whitworth, 2004). Parking lots also attract people to interact with each other, especially when they can function as a multi-use space such as a platform to polish and exhibit cars (Garcia, et. al., 2002). These spaces draw people to visit and remain there as they socialize with each other.

Sanchez (2010) notes that children also play a role in the search for a third place around soccer fields. Women attending soccer matches search for playgrounds and areas that are safe for their young ones to play in. The presence of amenities such as shade and restrooms near the soccer field were also important in the creation of a third place. The importance of soccer in designating a Hispanic third place is also evident in the activities of Hispanics in parks without soccer fields. Sanchez (2010) observes that open spaces are often adapted by Hispanics in order to play soccer.

Finally, the connections formed around soccer matches transcend activities based around the game itself. Because they attract the Hispanic community as a whole, the facilities most used also serve to host community outreach and festivals (Rhodes, et. al., 2012; Price & Whitworth, 2004). The social structure surrounding Hispanic soccer leagues is so well established that medical outreach teams focusing on sexual education and STD prevention work on-site with participants in these leagues (Rhodes, et. al., 2012). Price and Whitworth (2004) describe cultural festivals spawned from the sports festivities including folk costumes, parades, traditional dances, and even religious
celebrations and remembrance. According to surveys conducted by Mendez (2005), they adapt non-designated open spaces for their own uses more often than any other ethnic group.

2.3 Previous Studies of Hispanics and Soccer

2.3.1 Studies in the United States

In the United States, studies on Hispanics and soccer cover social issues, such as underrepresentation and mistrust of local governing bodies, facing minorities in the nation (Price and Whitworth, 2004; Sanchez, 2010). The points that surface in the studies below include women’s equality, overall usage of parks, and underrepresentation in community leadership resulting in inadequate facility design (Garcia et. al., 2002, Cuadros, 2011). Women’s equality is a social issue related to soccer in Hispanic communities because soccer is one way that Hispanic women in the United States are beginning to establish an identity and status outside of the domain of the home (Cuadros, 2004). The issue of park usage came to light as a result of observations of different racial and ethnic groups in parks. Each group, including Hispanics, has its own preferences and uses it looks for in a park (Sanchez, 2010). Underrepresentation in local communities was noted in all of the studies listed. The relative newness of Hispanic populations in
some communities can lead to the interests of those populations receiving secondary attention next to longer established groups (Price and Whitworth, 2004; Garcia et. al. 2002). The studies are overwhelmingly impacted by the fact that many Hispanic communities in the United States are relatively new and are still in the process of fully establishing themselves.

Price and Whitworth (2004) conducted a study on soccer fields as Latino cultural spaces in the Washington D.C. area. They compared year 2000 US Census Hispanic population data to the number of soccer facilities by zip code. They then found which fields were most heavily used by Hispanic leagues and visited these locations. The researchers used passive observation and one-on-one interviews to report on the social role of these soccer leagues. The study revealed the role of soccer facilities as third places for Hispanic communities. Individuals were observed to engage in conversation and have a “core group” that frequented the facilities and bonded with each other there. The research team reported that attending soccer matches was the only social activity some Hispanic men participated in on a regular basis. Aside from the weekly soccer games, the facilities were also used for tournaments, cultural festivals, and even mobile medical clinics (Price and Whitworth, 2004).

Garcia et. al. did a lateral study in 2002 focusing on state run parks in Los Angeles. The authors compiled previous research into a congruous report on the state of the parks’ soccer facilities. They found that existing parks in Hispanic
areas were not accommodating to Hispanics and did not have soccer facilities. They also found that soccer was considered mainly an “immigrant” sport, exposing participants to prejudice. They also detailed the importance of soccer and the role it plays for the local Hispanic communities. The researchers made design recommendations for future development that included increased multi-use space, shade trees, and picnic areas near soccer fields. They concluded that although soccer games held a high significance for Hispanic communities, visitors also wanted to participate in other activities. As a result, the soccer fields could serve as a focal point of the facility with trails, picnic areas, and shady spots in the surrounding area to accommodate this diversity of visitors (Garcia et. al., 2002).

In 2010, Sanchez conducted participant observation and conversed with Hispanics visiting parks in Boston. The study focused on user activities throughout the parks but included a section on activities near soccer fields. Sanchez focused on the different recreation preferences between men, women, and teenagers. He found that men were primarily interested in organized sports, especially soccer. Women were attracted to sports fields as well, but had a strong preference for facilities that were accommodating to children such as open spaces, playgrounds, and walking trails. Teenagers were found to enjoy open spaces and areas that provided prospect refuge such as trees (Sanchez, 2010).

A 2011 study was conducted by Cuadros. She interviewed players in a female Hispanic soccer league in North Carolina to report on their perspectives of
the role of soccer in their lives and the increasing chances for Hispanic women to play soccer. Cuadros found that it is more difficult for Hispanic women to participate in soccer than it is for Hispanic men because of cultural expectations for women to work at the home and care for the children. Therefore, men traditionally use the soccer fields while women and children use the social spaces. Because many have to put forth a greater effort than men in order to play, women may also pay more attention to the cleanliness of the soccer facilities and produce less litter (Cuadros, 2011).

These studies found that Hispanic communities place a high value on local soccer leagues to organize themselves athletically, politically, and socially. The way these groups use the spaces around soccer fields may differ from majority groups in the United States. They look to the spaces around soccer fields for conversation, relaxation, and community outreach. These spaces are used by whole family groups ranging from children to the elderly. Hispanics using these spaces prefer areas where they can eat and gather in addition to playing (Sanchez, 2010).

2.3.2 Studies in Latin America

Latin American studies provide a different point of view on soccer and social issues. Instead of considering issues facing the United States, these studies
look at the existing commercialization and profitability of soccer in established
groups.

A study in Quito, Ecuador by Díaz and Mantilla in 2008 found that soccer in Latin America is an integral part of the culture and manifests itself in day-to-day life similar to the way American football does in the United States. The study also found that soccer in Latin America is important to constructing the identity of both individuals and entire nations. The sport and the interactions between individual participants and spectators in the spaces surrounding soccer fields create identities and connections for individuals, teams, communities, regions, and countries.

The study concludes that soccer plays an integral part in Hispanic culture and leads to soccer facilities being used for both soccer games and community involvement. The preferences of Hispanics for parks and soccer facilities are sometimes different from what existing facilities in the United States offer. This results in adaptation or “misuse” of facilities. And while Hispanics bring a changing meaning for soccer fields, American culture also changes the new Hispanic communities as evidenced by the surge in Hispanic women’s soccer leagues (Sanchez, 2010; Cuadros, 2011).
2.4 Hispanic Soccer Leagues

2.4.1 Background

According to Price and Whitworth, soccer leagues created by the Hispanic population “are an active expression of cultural identity” (2004 p. 171). Because soccer is seen as one of the primary cultural leisure activities in many Hispanic communities (Messeri, 2008) it becomes even more vitally so for immigrants wishing to maintain and express their home culture (Price & Whitworth, 2004). Soccer teams become a symbol of a culture or a group, and supporters of those teams feel inextricably linked to the teams victories or losses (Díaz and Mantilla, 2008). This passion for soccer and its link to Hispanic heritage bring soccer facilities into focus as places to be designed for cultural importance of a growing segment of the population.

As a result of this heritage pride, Hispanic soccer leagues have surfaced in cities around the nation. Some leagues, such as those in Phoenix, Arizona, have become longstanding features of the community. Other locations that have seen a recent surge in the Hispanic population have less established soccer leagues that are taking a firm hold in the area (Price & Whitworth, 2004). This is taking place in cities such as Birmingham, Alabama and Alexandria, Virginia. These Hispanic soccer leagues make a large impact on culture and parks in the United States, being one example of a “sportive ‘latinoamericanization’ of the U.S. through
soccer practices” (Kummels 2011, p. 854). Price & Whitworth (2004) found in an interview with the president of a Hispanic league in Alexandria, Virginia that soccer leagues provide a basis for a shared sense of community and common ties to a place “back home.” This sense of community has contributed to the recent surge of Hispanic leagues in the United States.

2.4.2 Community Importance

Soccer leagues have a historical significance for many Hispanic communities. During colonial times, Latin American cities and towns were built around a central plaza which, over time, morphed from being a market into a green space. Now that culturally central green space has morphed into the soccer field which, though it may no longer be located in the physical center of a town, serves as a social third space which allows for soccer, festivals, and community outreach (Sanchez, 2010).

Once they move to the United States however, the usage of open space by Hispanics is more limited. Many American communities that place a higher value on other sports, such as American football or baseball, do not provide a high enough number of facilities for soccer, and those existing may be in disrepair (Price & Whitworth, 2004). Byrne (2009) finds that this is a strong deterrent for many Hispanics looking for a gathering place, especially since those born in
Mexico listed park cleanliness as their primary concern in finding a suitable location.

According to interviews conducted by Price and Whitworth (2004), the need for organization, visibility in the community, and suitable locations to play has led to the formation of many Hispanic soccer leagues. They serve as a liaison between local government officials and soccer players, ensuring access to well-maintained playing fields while at the same time enforcing rules for orderly conduct in public facilities (Price & Whitworth, 2004). In fact, in U.S. cities such as Birmingham, Alabama with newly established Hispanic communities soccer leagues are the first Hispanic organizations to form (Garcia, et. al. 2002). They materialize before political or networking groups and take on political, networking, and medical functions in these communities. In Chicago, the implementation of organized Hispanic soccer leagues have actually led to improvements to local fields through volunteer maintenance of the facilities. Increased usage and care have led to more funding to maintain and improve parks containing the increasingly used soccer fields (Stodolska et. al., 2011).

The organization of soccer leagues has also begun to function as a social networking base for many communities (Price & Whitworth, 2004). Far from being just an occasion for athletes to compete with each other, Hispanic soccer matches draw multigenerational crowds to cheer on their team and to spend time
interacting with each other (Gobster, 2002). Price and Whitworth (2004) discovered another strong correlation between community and soccer league. People immigrating from the same region or even the same town will often settle near each other in the United States and use the local soccer league to connect with each other and the people “back home.” Examples of this use of soccer teams or leagues in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area to represent a common regional identity include Liga Briceño, Liga Tlapehuala, and San Rafael Denton (FC Dallas, 2009). Each of these leagues are named for specific regions and towns in Latin America such as Tlapehuala, a town in Guerrero, Mexico. Sanchez (2010) also mentions the role of ancestral heritage in Hispanic soccer leagues. Soccer is a sport of national preference for Mexicans. However, Caribbean Hispanics, such as Puerto Ricans, would often rather play baseball (Sanchez, 2010). This is another way that the sport of soccer is a bonding mechanism for some Hispanics. It provides some differentiation between Spanish-speaking cultures. The social connection related to Hispanic soccer leagues has led to soccer facilities being used as something much more than just a place for athletic competition.
2.5 Participation in Hispanic Soccer Leagues

2.5.1 Male Participation

Male participation can be grouped into two primary age groups though both groups seek to achieve similar social objectives through the soccer leagues. Purdy (2000) found by interviewing soccer players and coaches in Bedford, NY that young men, from their 20s up to their 40s, overwhelmingly attend solely to play soccer on a team and compete. He also found that men in their 40s and older participate more passively at soccer matches, preferring to observe the competition though there are also some leagues exclusively for men forty and older. According to Price and Whitworth (2004), many Hispanic men work up to six or even seven days a week and see soccer matches as their only social outlet available on a regular basis. Undocumented immigrants especially view soccer matches as a safe haven; a place to gather and enjoy each others’ company without attracting much attention from local authorities. It also allows a change of pace from the labor-intensive jobs that many of the players have during the week (Purdy, 2000). Another attractive feature for male Hispanic immigrants is the low cost of participating in these leagues. Annual dues average around $15 per season (Price & Whitworth, 2004). Sanchez (2010) notes that Hispanic men visiting soccer facilities typically do not attend with strictly family-oriented activities in mind. Regardless of whether they participate in the sports contest,
most Hispanic men at soccer tournaments attend specifically with the intention of relaxing during a day off and interacting with other male friends. As a result, they are expected to look for static spaces and places where they can feel at ease.

2.5.2 Female Participation

The social role of women in Hispanic soccer leagues is more complex than the role of men as cultural norms from both Latin and American societies fuse together (Price & Whitworth, 2004; Cuadros, 2011). The traditional role of Hispanic women is family-oriented and passive, according to Sanchez (2010). Hispanic women attending soccer matches look beyond the field itself to find spaces for their children to play, restrooms, and picnicking areas with tables, grills, and water fountains (Sanchez, 2010). Also related to family and children are the concerns of women for perceived safety for themselves and their children around the soccer fields (Arnold & Kimberly, 1998). An especially traditional social role of women in these soccer leagues is to pass on cultural traditions, such as clothing or food unique to the family’s heritage region, and a sense of patrimony for the family’s country and region of origin (Price & Whitworth, 2004).

While women traditionally play a supporting role in Hispanic soccer leagues, there is an increase in the number of women who take part in soccer matches and form women’s leagues. In contrast to the separate leagues for older
and younger males, Hispanic women tend to include all ages wishing to play on their teams. Ages typically range from late teens to early forties (Cuadros, 2011). As with men, women see soccer as an escape from busy day-to-day life with work and a family. Many women who play soccer have children and while they play it is the men who watch both the soccer game and the kids (Cuadros, 2011). Stodolska (2010) also found that women are drawn to playing soccer because it is an affordable pastime. Cuadros (2011) discovered that this new wave of female Hispanic soccer leagues is evidence of American influence on a strong Hispanic tradition. Hispanic women are expected to use spaces for relaxing and watching their children as they play. They may use spaces close to amenities such as restrooms, playgrounds, and picnic areas (Sanchez, 2010).

2.5.3 Youth Participation

Hispanic teenagers have a more complex social role at Hispanic soccer league matches. This is possibly a result of the influence of their American peers (Stodolska, 2011). Teenage boys sometimes play soccer but also enjoy other forms of recreation including baseball, American football, and frisbee. They often attend for more passive recreation such as watching the match and conversing with friends (Sanchez, 2010). According to Price and Whitworth (2004), one appealing aspect of social gathering at soccer matches (even when they are not actually playing or even watching the game) is the ability to congregate without
appearing as an undesirable group. This is in sharp contrast to the unwelcome atmosphere often encountered in other places such as shopping center parking lots (Price & Whitworth, 2004). Finally, modes of access for Hispanic teenagers are also more varied. Stodolska (2011) interviewed Hispanic teenagers and found that they arrive at parks using cars, bicycles, and on foot (Stodolska, 2011).

Participation in soccer leagues can be vital to the social and even economic development of Hispanic youths. Garcia et. al. (2002) found that Hispanic teenagers who participate in soccer have lower crime, drug use, and pregnancy rates.

2.5.4 Conclusion

The studies showed that Hispanics look for areas they consider suitable for the whole family (Sanchez, 2010; Garcia et. al., 2002). Men use static spaces to relax, converse, and watch games and fields to play. Women use areas to relax and let their children play. Young people enjoy spaces on the fringe areas. The studies by Sanchez and Garcia et. al. research how Hispanics use park spaces including soccer fields, but do not focus on soccer facilities specifically. The studies by Price and Whitworth and Cuadros cover the social aspect of soccer facilities but do not consider the influence of design on these activities. The researcher was not able to find any studies specifically related to how Hispanics
use spaces around soccer facilities or how the design of these facilities affects user behavior.

2.6 Hispanic Population Growth

2.6.1 National Growth

In the past decade, the number of Hispanics in the United States has risen dramatically from 35.3 million in 2000 to over 50 million at the time of the 2010 U.S. Census – an increase of forty-three percent (Arreola, 2004). While the greatest percentage growth was in the Southeastern United States, the states with the highest Hispanic populations remain those with already established communities such as Arizona and Nevada (Hispanic, 2011). In addition, two-thirds of U.S. Hispanics are of Mexican heritage, bringing with them a heavy influence of their cultural background (Arreola, 2004). At the time of the 2010 U.S. Census, a full 16.3 percent of Americans self-identified as Hispanic (Hispanic, 2011).

2.6.2 State and Local Growth

Texas has also seen explosive growth in its Hispanic population. While the percentage of the state’s population that self identified as Hispanic in 2000 was 32 percent, well above the national average, that number has increased to 38.1
percent as of 2011 (Sanchez, 2011). During the 2000s, the Hispanic population of Texas grew at an average of 10.9 percent, less than the national average though the state still maintains a Hispanic population percentage much higher than the national rate. This population is expected to reach 18.8 million by 2040, growing by 530 percent. In comparison, the White population of Texas is projected to be 11.5 million in 2040, decreasing from 66 percent of the state’s population in 1980 to 32 percent (Combs, Figure 1.1). More importantly for major Texas cities such as Dallas, 90 percent of the population growth was in urban centers and 65 percent of that growth came from Hispanics moving to and living in major cities (Young & McNeill, 2011). This population increase affects the overall demand with regards to recreation facilities (Price and Whitworth, 2004).

Figure 2.1 Projected Texas Population Growth from 1980 to 2040

(Combs, 2006)
2.7 Current Soccer Facility Design Standards

2.7.1 Soccer-Minded Design

In order to understand the standards in place for current design of soccer facilities, the researcher investigated the resources put forth by the governing bodies on soccer in the United States. These standards include options for types of field turf, lighting, and seating but do not give priority to social space design (Soccer America Magazine, 2007). The list makes a brief mention of playgrounds but does not give consideration to the implementation of multi-use facilities suitable for festivals, picnics, or community outreach. Soccer America Magazine (2007) provides the following list of design elements considered by the US Soccer Foundation:

1. Separation between players and spectators
2. Screening to prevent balls leaving the property
3. Field orientation to minimize sun glare for players
4. Proper irrigation
5. Well-drained field
6. Paved parking lots with sufficient spaces
7. Adequate restroom facilities
8. Proper lighting
9. Shade for players and spectators
2.7.2 Socially-Minded Design

There is little literature about the design of soccer facilities to be used for other social purposes. However, Architecture for Humanity sponsored a design competition for a soccer facility in Somkhele, South Africa that could function as a sports facility and health clinic (Snoonian, 2004). The facility was to serve the area’s first female soccer league and also double as a community AIDS education center for those participating in the league. Soccer-intensive parks in Dallas offer little in terms of spaces that can be used for purposes other than soccer games (City of Dallas Parks and Recreation Department, 2013).

2.8 Comparing Social Spaces in American Softball with Hispanic Soccer Leagues

2.8.1 Relevance of American Softball Leagues to Hispanic Soccer Leagues

American community softball leagues can be compared to Hispanic soccer leagues from a social standpoint (Munch, 2005). Both leagues attract family groups to the games and are associated with a national identity. Examining how Americans treat softball may provide a valuable example with which to compare Hispanic soccer leagues.
2.8.2 Softball Leagues in the United States

American softball leagues were originally started to provide an informal leisure activity for adult men and women (Snyder and Ammons, 1993). This informal aspect has led to a sense of relaxation and enjoyment at softball games throughout the season (Munch, 2005). The presence of comradery, inclusion of family in the league, and the cultural importance of softball and baseball to American culture (Munch, 2005) offer a comparison to soccer leagues for Hispanics.

2.8.3 Softball Player Participation

Snyder and Ammons (1993) conducted surveys and informal interviews with adult softball players in order to learn about the social role of softball in American culture. Adults play in softball leagues for fun, without a high emphasis on the outcome of the game. They also explain that softball may be just one leisure activity out of many for Americans. Another aspect of softball that has become more popular is participation in coed softball leagues. These leagues allow for men and women to participate together instead of dividing players athletically and socially by gender.
2.8.4 Softball Spectator Participation

In 2005, Munch used participant observation throughout a softball season to report on interaction between spectators at a softball league. The researcher found that spectators formed bonds through cheering together in the stands. This provided a commonality to link people though they not have had much else in common. Munch also found that available food and drink facilitated social interactions that fostered personal connections. These spaces play an important role in the social interactions around adult softball games. Places to sit, relax, eat, drink, and converse are highly used by these participants. Nearby areas for children to play are also valued (Munch, 2005).

2.9 Summary

Soccer facilities are used not only for the leagues themselves but also to connect communities, strengthen social bonds, and celebrate a common background. The literature shows that Hispanics are a fast growing demographic, not just in Texas, but across the United States and are projected to grow even more in the future, impacting culture and recreation wherever they settle. This is evident in the uniqueness of Hispanic soccer leagues and the social structure built around them. These social interactions guide Hispanics’ preferences when selecting a location for their soccer matches. The important features of these facilities are good playing fields, eating areas, playgrounds, restrooms, and
comfortable areas for relaxation (Price and Whitworth, 2005; Sanchez, 2010).

This knowledge is useful for designers of recreational spaces because the Hispanic population of the United States is growing at a faster rate than any other ethnic group (Arreola, 2004).
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This investigation utilized qualitative research methods as described by Taylor and Bogdan (1998) in order to study the activities and behavior patterns of attendees at Hispanic soccer league games as they relate to use of space. Taylor and Bogdan’s (1998) research process required flexibility on the part of the researcher to continually adapt the study as more data are obtained. Though the study initially focused solely on soccer fields under jurisdiction of the Dallas Parks and Recreation Department, it grew to include a soccer field at a public middle school that attracted a Hispanic soccer league as well.

3.2 Literature Review

The literature review covered mainly juried articles found in books as well as online databases accessed through the University of Texas at Arlington. The researcher also searched local newspaper records for articles on Hispanic soccer leagues in North Central Texas. The main sources informing the topic were the essay “Soccer and Latino cultural space: metropolitan Washington fútbol leagues”

3.3 Study Window

The study was conducted from March 19 through April 7, 2013. Observations were carried out during afternoons on weekdays and mornings through afternoons on weekends. The researcher spent time at the facilities during soccer games but also when no games were in progress. Weather conditions ranged from cool and cloudy to cold and sunny. Most days were windy, and there were also some days with rain. These conditions were not ideal for the study and may have limited the number of people at the games as well as their activities.

3.4 Site Selection

The sites used in this research are parks and school athletic fields in Dallas. They include Harry Moss Park, Kiest Park, and W.A. Hulcy Middle School (see Figure 3.1). Choosing these three sites allowed a perspective on a
park dedicated solely to athletic soccer fields, a park with baseball alongside soccer fields and open space, and a public school soccer field. Each site was chosen because of varied programming of each individual facility alongside the soccer fields. The researcher selected these sites based on information from the Dallas Parks Master List (Dallas Parks and Recreation Department, 2013) and posters announcing soccer events.

Figure 3.1 Location map of study sites in Dallas, Texas

(Basemap courtesy of Wikipedia user drumguy8800)

Harry Moss Park (see Figure 3.2) is located in North Dallas off Greenville Avenue. It has 4 U14 fields, 2 U13 fields, 2 U11 field, and 2 U10 fields (Section 1.4 Definitions). This permits both adult and youth divisions to play. The soccer fields have lighting, bleachers, and trash cans near the fields though there is no
shade provided for spectators. Other amenities within 200 feet of a soccer field include restrooms, concessions, designated parking, and picnic tables. There are also unpaved trails to the south of the soccer complex.

Figure 3.2 Harry Moss Park (Basemap courtesy of Google, 2013)

Hampton Road. It has 2 U14 fields, 2 U9 fields, and 3 U8 fields. This allows for both adult and kids divisions to play. Amenities to the soccer fields are lighting, bleachers, and trash cans. There are shade trees near the U14 and U8 fields. Other nearby amenities of this site include designated parking though a fence between
the parking and the fields restricts movement between them. Within 200 feet of the soccer fields are baseball and softball fields. A paved trail goes around all of the athletic fields.

D.A. Hulcy Middle School (see Figure 3.4) offers fewer amenities than the city parks. It is off Danieldale Drive in South Dallas. It has 2 U14 fields and also has open space to the south and west of these fields. There are trash cans near the fields but no lighting or bleachers. There is also a portable toilet directly to the

Figure 3.3 Kiest Park (Basemap courtesy of Google, 2013)
east of the fields. Parking is mainly on street. All nearby parking lots are barricaded while the soccer games are in progress.

Figure 3.4 D.A. Hulcy Middle School (Basemap courtesy of Google, 2013)

The amenities at each site within approximately 200 feet of a soccer field were listed. This distance was chosen because 200 feet is the maximum a person with 20/20 vision would be able to recognize the facial features of the soccer players (Loftus and Harley 2004).
## Table 3.5 Features by site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amenities within 200 ft</th>
<th>Harry Moss Park</th>
<th>Kiest Park</th>
<th>Hulcy Middle School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U14 Soccer Field (#)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U13 Soccer Field (#)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U11 Soccer Field (#)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U10 Soccer Field (#)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U9 Soccer Field (#)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U8 Soccer Field (#)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball Fields</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paved Trails</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaved Trails</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Parking Lot</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Street Parking</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seating</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shade</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable Toilet</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic Tables</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concessions</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trash Cans</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5 Research Subjects

Consent was not obtained from the subjects due to the large number of individuals observed. Research subjects included any individuals present at the soccer games visited. No preference was given to either gender or age. Identities of the research subjects were not revealed and all photographs were altered so that the subjects pictured could not be identified.

The researcher was able to identify whether groups of subjects were majority Hispanic or not due to his extensive experience in Spanish language and linguistics. Majority Hispanic groups tend to speak in Spanish to some degree. Some groups may speak only in Spanish. This was the case for most groups observed in this study. Others may speak English and Spanish equally, while others still may speak mostly English and include certain words or phrases in Spanish during normal conversation. While he did not focus on conversations of those observed, the researcher could understand the languages (both Spanish and English) and dialects spoken to the point that he could identify the general region of ancestry of the individuals observed.

3.6 Research Preparation

Before studying the research subjects, the researcher visited the sites in order to conduct an inventory of facility features and amenities as well as to
record the conditions and cleanliness of the locations. The researcher also
developed site plans to record all place centered observations. Behavior mapping
forms were prepared beforehand as well. The researcher identified the behaviors
mentioned in the literature review and listed them on the forms. Blank spaces
were also left in order to be able to record behaviors that had not been expected.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

3.7.1 Passive Observation

On the days of soccer matches, the researcher arrived early to observe the
arrival of participants and the preparation of the facilities for the event. During the
event, observation was carried out across each area used by attendees of the
soccer match. Finally the researcher stayed to watch the behavioral patterns of
visitors as they left the soccer facility. Groups of people were expected to
participate in activities covered in the literature review. During the time in the
field, the researcher took limited notes. Immediately following field observation
more complete notes were recorded in field note format as described by Taylor
and Bogdan (1998).

3.7.2 Place Centered Observations

In addition to recording field notes regarding the observation, the
researcher also made place centered observations as outlined by Whyte (1980)
and Madden (2000). Examples given by these authors are shown in Figure 3.6 and 3.7. The form developed by the researcher derived from these examples and is shown in Figure 3.8. This included making notes on a plan of the site and using a table to record the time, activity, and individual or group using the space. Both stationary and mobile persons were noted, though more detailed observations of stationary subjects were able to be recorded. Special attention was given to individuals who remained in the area near the soccer field, and more detailed observations were made. The behavior map was completed once every fifteen minutes in order to precisely track the behaviors of the subjects. As different activities were encountered, photographs were taken to be studied in greater detail at a later time. The identities of any individuals appearing in the photographs were obscured to protect subject privacy.
Figure 3.5 Sample behavior mapping form (Madden, 2000, p. 102)
Figure 3.6 Sample behavior mapping form (Whyte, 1980, p. 98)
Figure 3.8 Behavior mapping form used in the study
3.8 Data Analysis

3.8.1 Selective Coding

The researcher compared the collected data to the behaviors found in the literature review (Price and Whitworth, 2004; Sanchez, 2010; Cuadros, 2011; Whyte, 1980; Madden, 2000). Price and Whitworth, Sanchez, and Cuadros observed behaviors such as conversing, entertaining, cooking, and playing. Whyte and Madden did not focus on a specific ethnic group or on recreational areas and observed behaviors such as seeking comfortable seating areas, people watching, and conversing. Open coding was used to better understand subject behavior and the use of spaces around the soccer field (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). Whyte’s categories of use (1980) and types of spaces around the soccer fields were also coded. This allowed the data to be understood as a whole as opposed to individual findings (Corbin, 1990). After initial observation showed trends in the data collected, the open coding was refined to be more selective. This allowed for the coding to be more representative of the topic than open coding would have been. Coding elements such as attire were gleaned from the initial open coding and then applied to the analysis in order to better understand the data. The selective coding symbols were derived from the category of table and element they represented. For example, cultural indicator English was listed as “IE” for “Indicator English.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>IE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>IS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Sports</td>
<td>IA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Sports</td>
<td>IM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Cultural</td>
<td>IC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Cultural</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2 Selective coding for cultural identifiers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seating</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawn</td>
<td>WL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moveable Chairs</td>
<td>WC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bleachers</td>
<td>WB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>WV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Comfort</td>
<td>WR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Comfort</td>
<td>WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>WS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shade</td>
<td>WH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>WP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure</td>
<td>WE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees</td>
<td>WT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>WF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>WM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3 Selective coding for places

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posture</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitting</td>
<td>AS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standing</td>
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<td>AL</td>
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<td>Observation</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Game</td>
<td>AG</td>
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<td>Children</td>
<td>AK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversing</td>
<td>AC</td>
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<td>Playing</td>
<td>AP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flirting</td>
<td>AT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell Phone Use</td>
<td>AO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating</td>
<td>AE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking</td>
<td>AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchasing</td>
<td>AM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4 Selective coding for behaviors
3.8.2 Behavior Mapping

On each plan, specific types of spaces were mapped out. The spaces were parking areas, slopes, fences, bleachers, vendors, restrooms, open spaces, shade trees and paths. This was done to see which behaviors took place in which spaces.

The behaviors observed were mapped every fifteen minutes on a plan of the site (Madden, 2000). Colored dots were used to represent individuals in order to plot distribution and locations of groups in addition to the activities coded. Blue dots represented adult men, red dots represented adult women, green dots represented teenage boys, yellow stood for teenage girls, and black dots stood for children under twelve. These behavior maps were contrasted with the spatial maps.

The behavior maps visually depicted where the observed behaviors took place. This was helpful in identifying which areas promoted which behaviors. It also showed which individuals used each space.

3.8.3 Data Comparison

By comparing observations on behavior and place, the researcher took fragmented data and abstracted overall themes in the research (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). This way, trends were established. Prevalent behaviors for different types of spaces were recorded.
3.8.4 Drawing Conclusions

By examining the types of behaviors and their relation to the designed spaces around the soccer fields, the research was able to draw conclusions about the design implications of the findings. These conclusions drew both from the findings and the information gleaned in the literature review. From the conclusions, the researcher was also able to determine areas for future study in order to develop a better understanding of the subject.

3.9 Summary

The purpose of this study was to document the use of social spaces by attendees at Hispanic soccer league matches. Following the guidelines of Taylor and Bogdan (1998), this study investigated these activities at specific locations. The groups of people observed were expected to be primarily Hispanic men, women, and teenagers. During the observation, field notes were taken and behaviors observed were marked on a site plan of the soccer facility. Behaviors were also documented with photography. These observations were then sorted into categories of behavior and described in detail. After determining these behaviors and their relation to the designed spaces around soccer fields, the researcher drew conclusions on the design impacts of this study and what future research could provide a more in-depth understanding of the topic.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to examine the use of social spaces near soccer fields by attendees of Hispanic soccer league matches in Dallas, Texas. Passive observation was used to collect data. This consisted of observing the attendees at these soccer games and taking field notes of their locations. Their use of social spaces, activities, and cultural indicators were also noted. Open coding was first used to analyze the data until trends began to emerge. At this point, selective coding was used to better understand these trends and themes in the data according to Taylor and Bogdan (1998). The researcher then selectively mapped trending behaviors to understand the uses for the spaces around the soccer fields. The findings and analysis are found later in this chapter.
4.2 Findings

4.2.1 Cultural Indicators

During the on-site observations at the soccer games, the researcher noted cultural indicators of the attendees. These indicators were used to determine, when possible, the ethnicity and culture of the groups observed.

The first indicator was language. Two languages were heard at all three sites: Spanish and English. The highest ratio of Spanish speakers were at Hulcy Middle School, while the highest ratio of English speakers were found at Harry Moss Park.

Another cultural indicator noted was the type of clothing worn by those observed. Attendees were seen to wear sports fan attire from both the United States and Mexico. Some men were also seen to wear boots, often with bright or pastel colors and embroidery.

The third indicator was food. Food was sold at Hulcy Middle School and Harry Moss Park. The type of foods at Hulcy Middle School were nachos, tacos, and prepackaged snacks such as Doritos and Spicy Cheetos. The concessions stand at Harry Moss Park sold hot dogs, nachos, and snacks such as Wavy Lay’s and Snickers bars.
4.2.2 Designed Spaces

There were spaces observed at the three study sites before participant observation was conducted. Most of these types of spaces were present in some form or another at all sites. In all, ten spaces were observed:

1. Parking Areas
2. Areas adjacent to Fences
3. Bleachers
4. Slopes
5. Open Space
6. Food Vendors
7. Designated Eating Areas
8. Restrooms
9. Shade Trees
10. Paths

The spaces at each site are shown in the figures on the following pages.
Figure 4.1 Designed spaces at Harry Moss Park
Figure 4.2 Designed Spaces at Kiest Park
Figure 4.3 Designed Spaces at D.A. Hulcy Middle School
4.2.3 *Mapped Behaviors*

The areas where people interacted were mapped and the activities of these groups were recorded. The locations of the individuals observed were marked on satellite images of the sites so that these locations could be compared to the designed spaces located in the previous section. A sample of the mapping can be found in Figure 4.4.
Figure 4.4 Behavior mapping at Hulcy Middle School
4.3 Analysis

4.3.1 Cultural Indicators

After initial analysis, the researcher found that there were indicators of cultural influence on the users of the spaces around the soccer fields studied. The first cultural indicator was language. Groups were found to primarily use one language or the other, though less than twenty percent of the groups encountered used both languages in conversation. The second indicator was clothing. Individuals, especially males, wore sport team-affiliated attire. The majority of sports fan apparel was related to Mexican soccer teams. However, local American sports apparel was also noted on both males and females although to a lesser degree. The last cultural indicator was location. The other two indicators varied in accordance to the area of Dallas studied. In primarily Hispanic areas (U.S. Census, 2010), there was a heavier Mexican influence, while in primarily Caucasian areas there was more influence by United States culture.

The site with the greatest Hispanic cultural indicators was D.A. Hulcy Middle School. All teams were made up of primarily Mexican players, and the attendees were also predominantly Mexican. This was determined by the subjects’ Spanish-language dialect, clothing, and the types of food they ate. The greatest United States cultural indicators were found at Harry Moss Park. There were
mainly Caucasian attendees at this site, though there were also some English-speaking Hispanics. Attendees at soccer games at Kiest Park exhibited both indicators more equally than at the other locations although Hispanic indicators were more prevalent.

Kiest Park and Hulcy Middle School are both located in predominantly Hispanic neighborhoods. Kiest Park is also located in a neighborhood with a higher population density than Hulcy is. Despite this, there are consistently more soccer games and attendees at Hulcy Middle School. The school charges an annual rate for the use of the fields and allows priority to the group that holds the reservation. It does not regulate when the fields are used outside of classtime and permits independent food vendors. Dallas parks and recreation charge hourly for soccer field use and do not give priority to regular users and close the fields during a rain event. Independent food vendors were not observed at Dallas parks.

4.3.2 Primary Trend

These cultural indicators were also indicators of how attendees used the spaces around the soccer fields. The overall trend was that as attendees exhibited more indicators of influence by United States or Mexican culture use of social spaces became polarized. Those exhibiting Mexican cultural indicators tended to attend in larger family groups and use the spaces for watching the game, eating in groups, and conversing casually. Those exhibiting United States cultural
indicators tended to use the spaces for observing the game. Most eating and conversing happened with primary attention still on the game.

4.3.3 Social Spaces

There was also a trend of the types of spaces which were conducive to people interacting with each other. By combining the activity and designed spaces maps, the researcher determined the categories of these social spaces. Some of the designed spaces did not lend themselves to regular interaction between individuals. Others were similar to each other and were combined into one social spaces category. Of the ten designed spaces noted in the pre-observation analysis, there were six social spaces noted:

1. Designated Seating Areas
2. Areas near Vehicles
3. Trees
4. Food Vendor Kiosks
5. Open Spaces
6. Slopes

The use of these spaces was observed to be primarily by Hispanics at the study sites. Comparing these observations to the increase in Hispanic population in Texas suggests that these spaces are used with an increasing frequency. The
usage of these spaces by other ethnic and racial groups was not considered by this study.

4.3.3.1 Designated Seating Areas

These spaces attracted people to cluster around them for the duration of the soccer games. Designated seating areas provided people with arrangements to sit so that all had a clear line-of-sight to the soccer game and garbage receptacles to assist in maintaining cleanliness of the space.

Figure 4.5 Designated seating area
4.3.3.2 Areas near Vehicles

People used areas near vehicles, both parking lots and open spaces, for all of the behaviors observed. When designated seating areas were not present, users sat on their vehicles or on slopes or portable chairs nearby instead of towards the middle of the playing field. This was also a common area for food vendors and restrooms to be located.

![Figure 4.6 Areas near vehicles](image)

4.3.3.4 Food Vendor Kiosks

When food vendors were present, small groups of people would purchase food and drinks in these spaces. It was common for these individuals to linger in these spaces for short periods of time. This was especially true when seating such as picnic tables was provided near the food vendors. Seating would allow for
clusters to form for short durations. One cluster was observed to collectively move from its location near the soccer field to the eating area near the food vendor.

![Figure 4.7 Food vendor kiosk and eating area](image)

4.3.3.5 Open Spaces

Open spaces were popular with users desiring to play and observe the game. These individuals were noted to cluster, mimic, inform, observe, and play in these spaces. These spaces did not typically attract people to remain in place for long periods of time.
4.3.3.6 Slopes

Other spaces to serve for clustering and playing were slopes. Children enjoyed running and playing on them. Adults especially utilized hillsides for clustering when designated seating areas were not available. However, even when there were bleachers some adults still chose to sit on slopes instead.

Figure 4.8 Playing on a slope
4.3.4 Behaviors

The varying observations that reinforce the main trend are broken down into categories. By comparing the activities and behaviors observed, the researcher was able to find seven categories that encompassed the observations. They are:

1. Clustering;
2. Lingering;
3. Sheltering;
4. Mimicking;
5. Informing;
6. Observing;

4.3.4.1 Clustering

The first behavior noted during the observations was clustering. Attendees tended to cluster into smaller groups that in turn clustered around each other to form a larger collection of people. These clusters remained in one place for the duration of the soccer game and dissolved once the game has finished. One overall factor affecting clustering was line of sight. These groups formed in spaces where every member of the cluster could have an equal view of the soccer game. These spaces were found to be on bleachers and, where bleachers were not
available, on slopes adjacent to the field. People were observed to primarily sit when clustering, though standing was also observed, especially among Hispanic men and Caucasian men and women.

Clusters of people with Hispanic cultural indicators consisted of 6 to 10 people. There were between 4 and 12 clusters forming per soccer game. When bleachers were not present, clusters formed on the side of the playing field closer to the vehicular parking. The groups were divided primarily by gender. Men primarily remained in clusters of mostly men. Some of these clusters included one or two women, but they always had a higher concentration of men. Men clustered near the soccer field and leaned on chain link fences close to the fields. There

Figure 4.9 Location of clustering around Hulcy Middle School fields
were also clusters composed mostly of women. These were less static than the male groups, due mostly to children that were also found with these groups. At times, one or two women would separate from the group to accompany a child elsewhere. Teenagers also clustered. These clusters formed near the field of play and from vantage points up to about 200 feet away.

Clusters of people with United States cultural indicators were fewer in number and larger. There were typically 2 or 3 clusters. These were normally on either side of the playing field and did not separate based on gender. There were more men present than women at the soccer games. There were also fewer children that were not directly participating in the game.

Figure 4.10 Clustering around designated seating, bleachers
4.3.4.2 Lingering

Lingering was a behavior similar to clustering though it was more ephemeral in nature. Lingering typically lasted less than 10 minutes. These were groups of 2 to 5 individuals. It occurred near places where there was a secondary attraction for attendees. At the study sites, lingering was observed near food vendors, restrooms, seating areas, and vehicles. Lingering near seating areas occurred with all groups observed to some extent after the games had ended. As members of a cluster would leave, a core group would stay longer and linger behind.

Figure 4.11 Location of lingering around Hulcy Middle School fields
Lingering was more consistent with majority Hispanic attendees. Men did not typically linger. Women would linger around food vendors and vehicles. This was most often a result of accompanying children to the locations. Teenagers were the group most often associated with lingering. Teens lingered near the food vendor stalls (at D.A. Hulcy Middle School) and concessions stands (at Harry Moss Park) after purchasing a snack and near vehicles they had driven. This occurred during the games and after they had finished as well.

*Figure 4.12 Women and children lingering near a food vendor*
Subjects with United States cultural indicators were less likely to linger. Although there was a structural concession stand centrally located at Harry Moss Park, the majority of individuals found there left immediately after making a purchase. Lingering amongst these groups most often occurred near the seating area after the game had concluded.

4.3.4.3 Sheltering

Sheltering was a behavior common at all three sites. This consisted of individuals seeking shelter for comfort and seclusion. The most common space where sheltering occurred was in parking areas. People sat in vehicles to avoid windy or cold weather. This was especially true if the vehicles were parked facing the soccer game in which the subjects were interested. This was noted at all three sites. Sheltering competed with clustering and observing because this behavior often meant leaving a larger cluster and compromising the ability to observe the game in detail.

Subjects with Hispanic cultural indicators sheltered mostly in vehicles within 150 feet of the soccer field. They adapted to the positioning of the vehicle when it was necessary. For example, if an SUV or minivan was facing away from the game, people would open the rear of the vehicle and sit there. This was mostly driven by children wanting to sit in the shelter. Adults found sheltering were 60% women and 40% men. Trees were also popular for sheltering. The only site with
trees present near the soccer fields was Kiest Park. During all games people could be found sheltering under the trees regardless of the weather.

Attendees displaying United States indicators tended to shelter as near to the game as possible. As a result, sheltering in vehicles only occurred if the vehicle was within 80 feet of the soccer field. Other forms of sheltering were observed. Some people took canopies to sit under during a game. One family observed even brought a camping tent on a cold day.

Figure 4.13 Location of sheltering around Hulcy Middle School Fields
Figure 4.14 Using a tent to shelter

Figure 4.15 Sheltering in an SUV
4.3.4.4 Mimicking

Mimicking was a behavior restricted to children at soccer games. It occurred equally amongst children showing both cultural indicators. Children would observe a game from a time and mimic different plays on the field. This behavior took place in open spaces approximately 50 to 200 feet from a soccer game. During halftime, children at predominantly Hispanic games would play on the field, taking turns shooting goals until the games resumed.
4.3.4.5 Informing

Informing was a behavior found occurring simultaneously with any of the previous four behaviors. While interacting with others, subjects would share information with each other. This behavior was more prevalent amongst Hispanics lingering. It was not certain whether this behavior occurred equally during sheltering due to the isolation of these individuals. Informing was also an important part of mimicking as children shared information on how to better play.
4.3.4.6 Observing

Another behavior that occurred in combination with any of those previously mentioned was observing. The main object of focus was the soccer game in progress. This behavior was noted among subjects performing all other behaviors. It was also common for individuals walking to be engaged in observing at the same time. This resulted in a level of distraction high enough that some individuals were seen tripping over objects, running into low hanging objects, and crossing the road without checking for oncoming traffic.

A secondary focus for individuals observing were groups of children. Those most often observing children were adult women. These women were
noted to remain near the field of play but also wished to be within 200 feet of their children.

*Figure 4.19 Location of observing around Hulcy Middle School Fields*

*Figure 4.20 A dog-walker engaged in observing*
4.3.4.7 Playing

Although it mainly occurred directly on the soccer fields, playing was another behavior that varied with cultural indicators. At games whose attendees exhibited primarily Hispanic indicators, playing was noted in available open spaces in addition to the soccer fields. Those playing in the open spaces were mostly children and teenagers, but adult men were also seen. No adult women were observed to be playing in open spaces. On the playing field, soccer players were overwhelmingly male.

![Figure 4.21 Location of open space play around Hulcy Middle School Fields](image)

At the Hulcy Middle School fields the majority of the teams were for adult or teen males. The remainder of the teams were either women or children. In
addition, during the teen girls match some spectators commented on their positive views of the recent formation of a girls’ division. This lay in contrast to the players at Kiest Park, where indicators were more evenly split between Hispanic and American. There were an even number of men’s and children’s teams observed. No women’s soccer teams were noted at Kiest Park. The largest difference was in the players at Harry Moss Park. All soccer games at this site were for children and teenagers. About 60% of the games were for female divisions.

Figure 4.22 A family engaged in open space playing

Playing was also observed in open spaces. This type of play was less organized or regulated than that on the soccer fields. The groups involved in open
space play were also more varied in nature. Families were noted to be involved in playing in open spaces. Groups of children or teenage friends were also observed playing in open spaces. Most of the play in these spaces consisted of loosely formed teams playing soccer or practicing kicking a soccer ball. Other types of play included groups of children playing tag, parents and children flying kites, and small groups of teenagers and children tossing an American football.

4.4 Summary

In this study, the researcher found that certain behaviors were common at Hispanic soccer league matches. The manifestations of these behaviors varied with cultural indicators exhibited by individuals at these games. Behaviors associated with third places were noted more heavily with Hispanics although the spaces around soccer fields were capable of serving as third places for all groups of people observed. Hispanics also were found in spaces with fewer programmatic elements, less evidence of intensive design and more open space for unrestricted activity. As subjects exhibited indicators of greater influence from the United States, preference was given to facilities with more structure in their layout and more amenities at the cost of stricter regulations. These different regulations of the facilities studied attracted varying groups as a result, but the design of each was reflected in the usage of the facilities by the attendees regardless of the regulations.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

In the introduction to this research, issues of the demographic shifts accompanying the increasing Hispanic population were identified. According to sources in the literature review, soccer leagues are a source of recreation, networking, and community support for this new community (Price and Whitworth, 2004; Sanchez, 2010; Garcia et. al., 2002). As a result, the uses for spaces around soccer fields are changing (Garcia et. al., 2002).

Through the review of literature by Price and Whitworth (2004), Sanchez (2010), Garcia et. al. (2002), and Cuadros (2011), the activities of Hispanics around soccer fields in the United States were explored. Price and Whitworth (2004), as well as Sanchez (2010), found that men participate in soccer leagues as a primary form of recreation, while Cuadros (2004) and Garcia et. al. (2002) found that women attend these soccer league matches as a social function and also watch over their children at these events. Cuadros (2004) also discovered that women are joining soccer leagues in increasing numbers. These activities were
noted for men, women, and teenagers before any field observations occurred. Through passive observation and behavior mapping, seven behaviors were identified in the pedestrian spaces around soccer fields. These behaviors are listed in the next section under 5.2.1.

This discussion reviews the research questions and lists the findings for each one. A summary of the findings is given. Then design and policy implications of the findings are discussed. The importance of these findings to the field of landscape architecture is summarized, and related future research is proposed.

5.2 Summary of Findings

5.2.1 Which areas of the facilities, other than the playing field, are most highly utilized and why?

The spaces around the soccer facilities were used by all ethnicities observed in the research. There were no spaces the Hispanics were noted to use that were exclusive to Hispanics. There were 6 spaces classified around the playing field that were highly utilized:

1. **Designated Seating Areas**: These spaces around bleachers attracted people to cluster around them for the duration of the soccer games. Designated seating areas provided people with arrangements to sit so that all had a
clear line-of-sight to the soccer game and garbage receptacles to assist in maintaining cleanliness of the space. These spaces attracted people of all ethnic groups observed.

2. **Areas near Vehicles**: People used areas near vehicles, both parking lots and open spaces, for all of the behaviors observed. When designated seating areas were not present, users sat near the location of their vehicles instead of towards the middle edge of the playing field. This was also a common area for food vendors and restrooms to be located.

3. **Trees**: Spaces beneath trees were utilized for sheltering. Trees provided shelter from the sun and wind. This created a more favorable micro-climate for individuals sheltering under them. While they did not attract the majority of users, small groups would remain in these spaces. The most common users of spaces near trees were teenagers.

4. **Food Vendor Kiosks**: When food vendors were present, small groups of people would purchase food and drinks in these spaces. Temporary picnic tables were present during soccer tournaments. These encouraged people to linger around the vendor kiosks for longer periods of time. However, these tables were not provided during regularly scheduled games. It was common for these individuals to linger in these spaces for short periods of time.
5. **Open Spaces:** Open spaces were popular with users desiring to play and observe the game. These individuals were noted to cluster, mimic, inform, observe, and play in these spaces. They did not typically attract people to linger.

6. **Slopes:** Other spaces to serve for clustering and playing were slopes. Children enjoyed running and playing on them. Adults especially utilized hillsides for clustering when designated seating areas were not available. However, even when there were bleachers some adults still chose to sit on slopes.

5.2.2 **What are the activities of attendees to Hispanic soccer league matches that relate to the landscape and designed spaces?**

The researcher observed that the activities of attendees to Hispanic soccer games are similar to the activities of non-Hispanic attendees. However, they differ in frequency and intensity. There were seven behaviors found as follows:

1. **Clustering:** Attendees studied were observed to gather in separate groups as opposed to all joining together as one whole group. These clusters typically remained intact for the duration of the game. Some members left the cluster at different times, but they normally returned later on. Members of a cluster conversed, but they mainly observed the soccer games. People clustered because of commonalities. These commonalities included
cheering for the same team, similarities in age (especially for teenagers),
being of the same gender (particularly for adult Hispanic men), and
arriving in the same vehicle.

Clusters formed near designated seating areas and slopes. At all the
games, clusters divided themselves by team over any other factor.
Hispanics also formed clusters based on age and gender. This supported
the observations by Sanchez (2010) that Hispanic men stick together in
parks, while women stay in groups and watch their children. Non-
Hispanics were observed to give this less attention and favored forming
larger clusters of all genders and ages.

2. **Lingering:** Study subjects were observed to form groups smaller than
clusters around areas of particular attraction such as food vendors or
vehicles. They lingered around these areas for less than 10 minutes, but
during this time were engaged in conversation with others who were also
lingering.

Lingering was noted at all events observed. Hispanics were observed to
linger primarily near food vendors, restrooms, and vehicles. Children often
were a causal factor in lingering, by requesting food, needing to use the
restroom, or having toys in the vehicle. Non-Hispanics attendees were
noted to linger near vehicles, under trees, and near bleachers after a game
had ended. Children were a factor in lingering near vehicles, but lingering
in other spaces seemed to be primarily as a result of adults wanting to converse with each other. Madden (2000) noted similar behaviors in public plazas with individuals stopping to converse around spaces with shade, seat walls, and street corners. Sanchez (2010) reported on women watching and spending time with their children. This could have been lingering behavior although Sanchez (2010) did not label it as such. One form of lingering not covered in the literature review was that of Hispanic adult men with their children. The previous studies made note of women watching over children and men grouping themselves together. While this was prevalent in this investigation, men were also seen watching children and accompanying them to various spaces around the soccer facility such as food vendor kiosks or restrooms.

3. **Sheltering:** A common behavior seen in those studied was sheltering. These individuals either did not associate themselves with a cluster of people or they left at some point to seek shelter. They most often did this in groups of 2 or 3 for a sense of protection from the elements or a sense of privacy. The most common place for sheltering was in a parking vehicle, but the behavior was also observed near trees or artificial shade structures. Whyte (1980) discovered a similar behavior in New Yorkers looking for protected places to sit. These individuals remained in place for
varying amounts of time, but Whyte noted that a sheltered place was important for individuals selecting a place to rest.

4. **Mimicking**: Mimicking was observed only in children. Those engaged in this behavior would observe the game and attempt to imitate moves they had seen soccer players perform. This behavior took place in open spaces immediately surrounding the soccer fields and within 200 feet of the children’s parents. No information directly linked to mimicking was found. However, Sanchez (2010) made mention of children playing in open spaces in parks. Some of this play could have been mimicking plays from a nearby soccer game. Price and Whitworth (2004) made mention that Hispanic soccer leagues can serve as ways for parents to pass along cultural information to their children. The learning by watching and mimicking soccer plays could be considered passing along information regarding a sport that is culturally significant to Hispanics (Garcia et. al., 2002).

5. **Informing**: Informing was a behavior seen in conjunction with those four previously described. It consisted of individuals sharing information and ideas. The most often activity that spurred informing was lingering. In passive observation, it was noted that topics of discussion were upcoming soccer events, job opportunities, local colleges and universities, cooking tips, sports teams, local news and politics, and news from Mexico. These
were conversations overheard while the researcher made observations. This was possible due to the researcher’s Spanish language expertise and previous degree in Spanish. Price and Whitworth (2004) observed this sharing of information at the Hispanic soccer league games they visited as well. They found that the soccer facilities became outdoor forums for people to discuss community events, issues, and opportunities. Some of this was observed. However, the cultural celebrations and festivals mentioned by Price and Whitworth (2004) and Garcia et. al. (2002) were not observed in this research.

6. **Observing:** Observing was also a typical behavior for individuals clustering, lingering, sheltering, or mimicking. Those noted to be observing desired a clear line-of-sight to the activity to be observed. This was most often the soccer game, but it also included children playing. Whyte (1980) noted that observing was a popular activity for people in public plazas. Madden (1980) listed places for “people watching” as important for public spaces.

7. **Playing:** This activity was most prevalent on the soccer fields, but was also noted in nearby open spaces. Those playing were often the object of observation by those around the spaces where playing occurred. Those playing on designated soccer fields were of the same gender and age group. In open spaces, these factors were less important in determining
who played together. In these cases, while gender and age group
commonalities were a reason for people to play together, family units
consisting of members of different ages and genders also played together.
Some of the playing in open spaces was done as a spectacle for others to
watch, while others played without anyone else watching. Sanchez (2010)
noted playing in a variety of types of spaces including sports fields and
open spaces. He also observed playing on playgrounds, on rocks, near
streams, and in picnic areas. These spaces were not present where this
study was carried out but it is likely that they would have also been used
for playing.

5.2.3 How do users adapt to the facilities that do not have the amenities they
prefer?

The availability or lack of desired qualities in a particular location
attracted or discouraged groups from using that facility. The most common issue
for Hispanic soccer leagues was not a presence or lack of amenities but rather
restrictions (such as weather-related closings and prohibition of independent food
vendors) and rental costs associated with city parks (Dallas Parks and Recreation, 2013). User adaptations included bringing chairs or other objects to sit on when
bleachers were not available. When food vendors were not allowed to set up
stalls, mobile vendors using bicycles and vans were observed.
5.3 Cultural Sensitivity

The main issue gathered from these findings was cultural sensitivity. According to the observations, facilities seemed to be designed along standards that do not account for the uses sought by Hispanics in the area. These soccer complexes offer spaces designed exclusively for regulated soccer games, but do not regularly include open spaces and areas for group gatherings. Current regulations for city soccer facilities make the facilities difficult to access on a regular schedule during wetter times of the year (Dallas Parks and Recreation, 2013). Fields around the facilities observed were all designated for athletic play and multi-use open spaces were not common. Policies in place to maintain the facilities also make them less accessible to users. Fields are closed when rain or clouds are in the forecast, and independent food vendors are not permitted (Dallas Parks and Recreation).

Design-related changes could include two classes of soccer fields: one that is meticulously maintained and regulated and another that is maintained to a less strict degree, requiring less money for upkeep and being more affordable for groups to reserve. The more expensive fields could attract larger soccer leagues, while the more affordable fields could attract smaller leagues or more spontaneous users. These two types of fields could be at different locations since each type could attract different groups of users. Locating pavilions, picnic areas,
and playgrounds near these areas could attract the Hispanic family groups observed in this study. Open, multi-use fields could also be implemented and utilized in less structured facilities.

Policy changes allowing larger festivitites and independent vendors would facilitate the third space atmosphere that many Hispanics may look for. By looking at the user preferences of Hispanics, future designs and facility regulations can reflect the growing Hispanic population and promote a mutual respect between users and park administrators.

5.4 Implications for Landscape Architecture

Landscape architects design soccer facilities and ancillary spaces. The results of this study can impact the way this design is approached. Well-maintained soccer fields are important to all users. Other spaces that the study suggests may improve the facilities for Hispanics include eating areas near the playing fields, playgrounds for children, and sheltered places that do not block views but also provide a place for people to sit and feel secure. Open spaces next to soccer fields would provide areas for children to mimic the plays they observe on the soccer field. These elements are already present in many parks in Dallas, but are less common at city soccer facilities (Dallas Parks and Recreation, 2013). Effective design for soccer facilities requires spaces that are familiar and comfortable to non-Hispanic users but are also welcoming to Hispanics. Keeping
this in mind, landscape architects can design spaces that address relevant issues as demographics of an area change.

These soccer facilities are increasingly being used for more than just playing and watching soccer games. They are used as third spaces for people to interact and share ideas and information. By adapting design criteria for public third spaces, such as plazas, to soccer facilities, landscape architects can encourage the use of these facilities as social spaces, making them an integral part of the community for public events and celebrations.

There are also policy-related implications of this study. Current regulation of city soccer fields discourages use by Hispanic users by restricting the access to the fields. These restrictions are beneficial to keeping the fields in good condition but make them less dependable for use as social spaces and as a primary location for regular active recreation. Parks and recreation officials can increase communication with local Hispanic community leaders to discuss how policies can better reflect the increasing Hispanic population.

5.5 Future Research

This research addressed the use of spaces around soccer fields during Hispanic soccer league games at selected venues. It took place at a time when the Hispanic population of Dallas was growing at a rate much higher than the overall
population as revealed by the literature review. The study itself uncovered questions that could be considered for future research.

5.5.1 As the number of native-born Hispanics increases, will their use of social spaces around soccer fields shift?

Hispanics coming to the United States are settling in regions with existing Hispanic populations and regions without established populations. The children of these immigrants attend schools in the United States and are exposed to the culture and society of North Central Texas. There is evidence of Anglo-American influence on Hispanic leagues with an increase of women playing soccer (Cuadros, 2011). Over time there could be additional influences that lead to a change in how Hispanics use soccer facilities as opposed to how they use them today.

5.5.2 How does the citizenship status of Hispanic soccer players affect their participation in local soccer leagues?

The issue of citizenship and the “legal residency” of Hispanic immigrants in the United States has been one that has changed over the last two decades and continues to change. Undocumented immigrants wishing to avoid the local authorities may avoid English language soccer leagues and city-run soccer facilities. Certain areas of the city known for a greater police presence may
discourage these individuals from any activities they feel may draw attention to themselves. Undocumented individuals may also use facilities in a different manner if they do not wish to draw attention to themselves. They may use open spaces to play soccer instead of reserving fields or may prefer informal soccer games as opposed to forming a registered league. Research into the effects of the legal status of Hispanic immigrants on the way they participate in local soccer leagues could give insight into how to promote integration of these leagues into established soccer leagues, if that is the desired end, and/or how to accommodate each group.

5.5.3 Do players in Hispanic soccer leagues wish to join with soccer league players without the same ethnic associations?

Another question raised by this research is whether Hispanic leagues eventually combine with leagues of players of other ethnicities. No literature describing this was found. However, established communities of Hispanics born in the United States may wish to participate with other ethnic groups in the community. One way they may do this would be to integrate into a soccer league that is not primarily composed of Hispanics. Another form of integration could be the inclusion of non-Hispanics in the existing Hispanic soccer league. Interviews and surveys of leaders and participants in local soccer leagues, both Hispanic and
non-Hispanic, could reveal information on whether there is integration of these leagues and, if there is, to what extent it occurs.

5.5.4 What are the impacts of soccer facilities on the local community?

Soccer facilities may attract users from outside the surrounding neighborhood. This may lead to mixing of different racial, ethnic, social, or economic groups. This may encourage people who would use the facilities to move to a nearby area. It also may be a deterrent to those who do not wish to use the soccer fields or who do not wish for people to be playing soccer in or near their neighborhoods. This could, in turn, affect property values which may rise or fall in accordance to any neighborhood demographic changes. A study of these effects could inform local planners of the possible ramifications of certain planning decisions.

5.5.5 What sort of funding can be provided for the maintenance of local soccer facilities?

Traditionally, city parks are funded through local governments. However, in the wake of the Great Recession public-private partnership as well as privately run parks are becoming more popular (Hayward, 2012). Additional ways to support soccer facilities financially could lead to more community involvement and better conditions at soccer facilities.
5.5.6 Which type of housing would be best to locate near soccer facilities?

Soccer facilities may attract residents from the immediate vicinity, but they may also bring in users from outside the community. Those who live away from the facility may only do so because the type of housing they favor is not present near where they play. At the same time, those who live near the soccer fields may or may not enjoy the presence of a soccer facility near their residences. Further research may reveal which type of housing is the best to locate near these soccer facilities.

5.5.7 Is there a more appropriate setting for families to sit while watching soccer?

The designated seating areas found around soccer fields only consisted of bleachers. These are effective for allowing people to sit in a configuration that provides views for all seated spectators. However, bleachers may not be the best setting for families to sit while watching soccer. Picnic tables may also serve as appropriate seating near a playing field. A future study could investigate different types of seating to find which is the best for families.
5.5.8 How do the study findings for behaviors in soccer facilities compare to behaviors around other sports facilities?

This study focused on the activities of Hispanics near soccer fields. The behaviors observed could be similar to behaviors around other types of sports facilities such as American football or baseball fields, running tracks, or basketball courts. Indoor soccer facilities could also provoke behaviors that would be either similar or different to those encountered in this study. Future research could reveal how unique or ubiquitous these findings are.

5.5.9 How are city soccer facilities in Latin American countries designed?

The literature review revealed that there is a commercial emphasis placed on soccer similar to the emphasis related to American football or basketball in the United States. There was no information found on the design of local soccer facilities in Latin America. A study and inventory of such facilities would inform how Hispanics use them and what they expect in their countries of origin. Knowing the expectations for soccer facilities in Latin America would bring into perspective what Hispanics entering the United States are accustomed to and could also inform designers on what they hope to find in this country.
5.5.10 *How do other racial or ethnic groups use the soccer facilities?*

This study focused on majority Hispanic groups and reported on how they used the social spaces around soccer fields. It did not look at how other ethnic groups might use those same spaces or which spaces they may use instead of soccer facilities. A survey of other ethnic and racial groups would give better insight into overall facility design in multicultural communities.

5.5.11 *What are the attitudes of Hispanics to various soccer facilities in their community?*

This investigation relied on observations in order to document the way Hispanics use social spaces around soccer fields. It did not utilize surveys and interviews to get in-depth information on what these individuals think about the spaces they are using. The research also did not consider what their preferences for an ideal facility would be. Questions regarding the attitudes of Hispanic towards soccer facilities would not need to be exclusively on issues of social spaces and design. Policy-related issues are also of interest. From a regulatory standpoint, it would be beneficial to know how Hispanics view the system for reserving fields and the restriction on outside food vendors. Further study could yield more detailed information to confirm or challenge the observations from this research. A series of studies such as this could contribute and build up a body of knowledge regarding Hispanics and their use of spaces around soccer fields.
5.5.12 How do Hispanics use social spaces around soccer facilities during other times of the year?

This study was limited to a short period of time during the spring season. The behaviors observed could be different during summer, fall, or winter. A similar study to this one conducted at different times of the year could provide information on year-round use. A similar question is that of location. In other geographic regions there may be different types of space used. Spaces similar to those here may be used differently. An example of this would be the concept of sheltering under trees in a place such as Arizona where trees are less common or in a place such as North Carolina where they are more plentiful.

5.5.13 What can design do to influence the behavior of those attending Hispanic soccer league games?

The social spaces used by Hispanics and their behaviors in these spaces were examined in this research. However, the role of design in influencing these behaviors would be a step in advancing this line of research. The role of trees versus shade structures or grassed slopes versus stairs in influencing the behavior of those in attendance at Hispanics soccer league games could give a deeper understand of how design elements can influence the behavior and satisfaction of the visitors to soccer facilities.
5.5.14 How can placemaking occur in soccer facilities?

Soccer facilities are important locations for many Hispanics as well as other groups that regularly spend time there (Price and Whitworth, 2004; Messeri, 2008). It may be possible for a community to engage the spaces around the facilities in such a way that they become spaces for many different types of activities in addition to soccer. This sort of behavior was described by Price and Whitworth (2004) in the literature review. Design and planning could facilitate this sort of activity by locating the proper elements in the community and on the site. Future research could better identify what these elements are and how they could be used to promote placemaking around soccer facilities.

5.6 Conclusion

These topics of future research could improve the knowledge regarding design and regulation of soccer facilities in the Texas in the face of an increasing Hispanic population. This knowledge could lead to facilities that are welcoming to both Hispanic and non-Hispanic patrons and provide a sense of multiculturally-aware design in communities across the state.
APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL LETTER
Institutional Review Board
Notification of Exemption

March 19, 2013

Blake Samper
Dr. David Hopman
School of Architecture
Box 19108

Protocol Number: 2013-0514

Protocol Title:  The Utilization of Social Spaces Near Soccer Fields by Attendees of Hispanic Soccer League Matches in Dallas, Texas

Type of Review: Exemption Determination

The UT Arlington Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chair, or designee, has reviewed the above referenced study and found that it qualified for exemption under the federal guidelines for the protection of human subjects as referenced at Title 45 Part 46.101(b)(2):

- Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
  (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, either directly or through identifiers linked to the subject; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation

You are therefore authorized to begin your research as of March 19, 2013.

Pursuant to Title 45 CFR 46.103(b)(4)(iii), investigators are required to, “promptly report to the IRB any proposed changes in the research activity, and to ensure that such changes in approved research, during the period for which IRB approval has already been given, are not initiated without prior IRB review and approval except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject.” Please be advised that as the principal investigator, you are required to report local adverse (unanticipated) events to the Office of Research Administration; Regulatory Services within 24 hours of the occurrence or upon acknowledgement of the occurrence.

All investigators and key personnel identified in the protocol must have documented Human Subject Protection (HSP) Training on file with this office. Completion certificates are valid for 2 years from completion date.
REFERENCES


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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Blake Samper was born in Deland, Florida and grew up in Birmingham, Alabama where he often played pick-up soccer games and was involved in a local Boy Scout Troop where he earned the rank of Eagle Scout. He went on to receive his Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 2009. He lived abroad for a year, teaching English at a language school in Jaén, Spain. Upon his return in 2010, he relocated to Dallas, Texas for a Master of Landscape Architecture degree. He enjoys camping, traveling, and line dancing. He hopes to someday return to Spain to do design work there.