

# Towards place-making in urban planning through participatory action research

**W.J. Strydom**  
**21757747**  
**B.Art et Scien. (Planning)**

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Supervisor: Ms. K. Puren

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Dedicated to the participants of the Local Space Global Place project,  
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## LANGUAGE EDITING



Director: CME Terblanche - BA (Pol Sc), BA Hons (Eng), MA (Eng), TEFL

22 Strydom Street  
Baillie Park, 2531

Tel 082 821 3083  
cumlaudelanguage@gmail.com

### **DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING**

I, Christina Maria Etrechia Terblanche, hereby declare that I edited the  
dissertation entitled:

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action research**

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study. No changes were permanently affected and were left to the  
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Regards,

CME Terblanche

Cum Laude Language Practitioners (CC)

SATI reg nr: 1001066

PEG registered

## **ABSTRACT**

Space is different from place, as space becomes place when endowed with meaning and values. Space is therefore not a neutral backdrop for people's lives, but intertwined with their daily lives. Before attempting to create place, the particular space first has to be understood. Place-making (transformation from space to place) refers to the empowering process during which inhabitants of a setting tend to represent, renovate and upgrade their physical surroundings. This process includes the views and opinions of direct site users in terms of decision-making.

This participatory process relates to an open, accountable process during which individuals and groups can exchange views and influence decision-making processes. In previous bureaucratic, top-down planning practices ('Blueprint' planning theory) the involvement of participants within decision making was limited. Therefore, a communicative turn towards a 'bottom-up' process was needed, including affected role-players by communicating and negotiating any developmental decisions. Planning is an important change agent in addressing social and economic inequality by means of inclusive planning processes, especially in South Africa with its recent transition to democracy and post-apartheid reconstruction aims. There is currently an emphasis on the need to examine particular ways in which practices of participation in development play out in concrete situations. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a research method that proactively aims to develop equal distribution of power in terms of decision making by embracing values such as empowerment, social justice and equity, collaborative relationships, mutual learning and respect towards diverse opinions. Constant reflection and self-reflection within a participatory informed study is used to benefit the decision making process to create change. Change implies the promotion of the physical and positive social transformation. This research describes how PAR is used as a method in the place-making process to create change in a community that had previously been subjected to forced removals.

The research context includes an existing open space (previously utilised as a dumping site) in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, South Africa, and surrounding land owners who interact with the site daily. A qualitative research approach was appropriate in this case as the research was carried out in a natural context where no extraneous influences occur and the research focused on obtaining in-depth understanding of a process rather than focusing on presenting evidence in quantifiable terms.

While the planning procedure followed included numerous phases - Focus group 1, Focus group 2, Collaborative Design Workshop and Focus group3 (see Annexure B for Focus group questions) - the primary aim of this dissertation is to explore the process of place-making in planning by using PAR. Secondary aims include: (i) *the understanding of the concept of place-making*, (ii) *giving an overview of theoretical paradigms in planning*, (iii) *to develop guidelines for using PAR in a planning process*, and (iv) *to develop planning guidelines for the process of place-making*. Findings reveal that experienced change can be described as threefold. Levels of change included: (i) *the physical level (Transforming the space physically (beautification and upgrade))*, (ii) *the social level (Transforming the community socially)*, and (iii) *the psychological level (Transforming the community psychologically)*. During the experiencing of change, PAR values were unlocked progressively by the place-making process, which included empowerment, collaborative relationships and mutual learning. In later stages of the research, the PAR values of respect towards diversity and social justice and equity were revealed.

Based on the above, the study offers planning recommendations by means of the development of guidelines for a place-making process. These guidelines (as informed by PAR), refer to (i) Phase 1 - *Gaining community entrance*, (ii) Phase 2 - *Conceptualising the space*, (iii) Phase 3 - *Establishing partnerships*, (iv) Phase 4 - *Transforming space to place*, (v) Phase 5 - *Implementation* and, (vi) Phase 6 - *Monitoring/Reflection*. When following these recommended guidelines with regard to a place-making process, research challenges should be taken into consideration. These challenges relate to the time-consuming nature of place-making, as well as the necessary flexibility regarding the context of the research. Furthermore, financial resources should be seen as important when attempting to transform space into place. Therefore, these planning recommendations should be seen as a guideline and not a fixed master-plan.

**Keywords:** Place-making, Participatory action research (PAR), decision making, empowerment, qualitative research, community engagement, Urban and Regional Planning.

## OPSOMMING

Ruimte verskil van plek, aangesien ruimte plek word wanneer dit met betekenis en waardes verryk word. Ruimte is daarom nie bloot 'n neutrale agtergrond waarteen mense hulle lewens leef nie, maar is eerder vervleg met hulle daaglikse lewens. Voordat plek geskep kan word, moet die betrokke ruimte eers verstaan word. Plekskepping (transformasie van ruimte na plek) verwys na die bemagtigingsproses waartydens inwoners van 'n area hulle fisiese omgewing verteenwoordig, renoveer en opknep. Hierdie proses sluit die sienings en opinies van direkte terreingebruikers by besluitneming in.

Hierdie deelnemende proses hou verband met 'n oop, aanspreeklike proses waartydens individue en groepe hulle sienings kan uitruil om sodoende die besluitnemingsproses te beïnvloed. In die vorige burokratiese, van-bo-na-onder beplanningspraktyke ('Bloudruk' beplanningsteorie) was die betrokkenheid van deelnemers in besluitneming beperk. Dit het 'n skuif na 'n 'van-onder-na-bo' benadering genoodsaak, sodat die rolspelers wat geraak word ingesluit kan word by die kommunikasie en onderhandeling rakende ontwikkelingsbesluite. Beplanning is 'n belangrike agent van verandering wanneer sosiale en ekonomiese ongelykheid aangespreek moet word deur middel van inklusiewe beplanningsprosesse, veral in Suid-Afrika met sy onlangse oorgang na demokrasie en post-apartheid rekonstruksiedoelwitte. Daar is tans groot klem op die nood om spesifieke maniere te ondersoek waarop deelname in ontwikkeling in konkrete situasies beslag kan vind. Deelnemende Aksienavorsing (DA) is 'n navorsingsmetode wat proaktief poog om gelyke verspreiding van mag met betrekking tot besluitneming daar te stel deur waardes soos bemagtiging, maatskaplike geregtigheid, gelykheid, samewerkende verhoudinge, onderlinge leer en respek vir uiteenlopende sienings te bevorder. Deurlopende refleksie en self-ondersoek word binne 'n deelnemende studie gebruik om die besluitnemingsproses van hulp te wees en sodoende verandering te bring. Verandering impliseer die bevordering van die fisiese en positiewe sosiale transformasie. Hierdie navorsing beskryf hoe DA gebruik is as 'n metode gedurende die plekskeppingsproses om verandering te bring in 'n gemeenskap wat voorheen aan verpligte verwydering onderhewig was.

Die navorsingskonteks betrek 'n bestaande oop ruimte (voorheen gebruik as stortingsterrein) in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, Suid-Afrika, en die omliggende grondeienaars wat daagliks met die terrein omgaan. 'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering was toepaslik in hierdie geval, aangesien die navorsing uitgevoer is in 'n natuurlike konteks met geen irrelevante invloede wat daarop inspeel nie. Die navorsing was verder gefokus daarop om 'n grondige begrip van 'n proses te kry, eerder as wat dit gefokus het op kwantifiseerbare bewyse.

Die beplanningsprosedure het verskeie fases ingesluit – Fokusgroep 1, Fokusgroep 2, Samewerkende Ontwerpswerkswinkel en Fokusgroep 3. Dit in ag genome, is die primêre doelstelling van die skripsie om die proses van plekskepping deur beplanning en die gebruik van DA te ondersoek. Sekondêre doelstellings sluit in: (i) *die verstaan van die konsep van plekskepping*, (ii) *die verskaffing van 'n oorsig oor teoretiese paradigmas in beplanning*, (iii) *om riglyne vir die gebruik van DA as deel van 'n beplanningsproses daar te stel*, en om (iv) *beplanningsriglyne vir die proses van plekskepping daar te stel*. Die bevindinge toon dat die waargenome verandering as drievoudig beskryf kan word. Vlakke van verandering het die volgende ingesluit: (i) *die fisiese vlak (transformasie van die fisiese spasie (versiering en opgradering)*, (ii) *die sosiale vlak (Sosiale transformasie van die gemeenskap)*, en (iii) *die sielkundige vlak (Sielkundige verandering van die gemeenskap)*. Gedurende die verandering is DA waardes toenemend ontsluit deur die plekskeppingsproses, insluitende bemagtiging, samewerkende verhoudings en wedersydse leer. In later stadiums van die navorsings in DA waardes soos respek vir diversiteit en maatskaplike geregtigheid en gelykheid na vore gebring.

Gebaseer op die bostaande bied die studie beplanningsaanbevelings deur middel van die ontwikkeling van riglyne vir 'n plekskeppingsproses. Hierdie riglyne (soos deur DA ingelig) verwys na (i) Fase 1 – *Verkryging van toegang tot die gemeenskap*, (ii) Fase 2 – *Konseptualisering van die ruimte*, (iii) Fase 3 – *Vestiging van vennootskappe*, (iv) Fase 4 – *Transformasie van ruimte na plek*, (v) Fase 5 – *Implementering* en (vi) Fase 6 – *Monitering/Oordenking*. Wanneer hierdie voorgestelde riglyne met betrekking tot die plekskeppingsproses gevolg word, moet die struikelblokke ook in aanmerking geneem word. Hierdie struikelblokke het te make met die tydrowende aard van plekskepping, asook die nodige buigbaarheid met betrekking tot die navorsingskonteks. Verder moet finansiële hulpbronne as belangrik beskou word wanneer 'n ruimte in plek omskep moet word. Gevolglik kan die beplanningsaanbevelings slegs gesien word as 'n riglyn en nie 'n vaste meesterplan nie.

**Sleutelwoorde:** Plekskepping, Deelnemende Aksienavorsing (DA), besluitneming, bemagtiging, kwalitatiewe navorsing, gemeenskapsverbintenis, Stad- en streeksbeplanning.

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# CHAPTER 1 CONTEXTUALISING THE RESEARCH

## 1.1 Introduction

The modernist history of planning with its bureaucratic decision making processes was, until recently, based on a technocratic approach to the planning and design of human settlements (Siyongwana & Mayekiso, 2011:142). This modernist approach to planning and designing urban space was mainly based on functional, technical considerations and objective scientific methods, while human experience was of little or no importance (Haumann, 2011:55). This approach furthermore overruled the goals of democracy as lay people were regarded as having a “lack of knowledge” and were therefore not included in decision making processes. Community involvement received little if any attention (Gilmore, 2013:93) within this approach. Ever since, it became a fundamental principle in democracy to actively involve the community directly and indirectly when making decisions concerning their environment (Holmes, 2011). Involving people in decision making gives communities a feeling of ownership and responsibility towards their environment as their needs and desires are addressed (Eden, 1996:184). Planning in this sense started to move towards a people-driven process that aims to empower participants in terms of decision making (Cash & Swatuk, 2011:53). Planning is thus regarded as an important tool to enhance democracy (Alexander, 2008:7), while social and economic inequality is believed to be addressed through inclusive planning processes (Cash & Swatuk, 2011:55).

In South Africa, planning is viewed as an important change agent to implement government’s people-centred approach in settlement making (South African Presidency, n.a.:2; CSIR Chapter 2, 2005:1) to restore the disruptive effects of the Apartheid regime. This people-centred approach implies the need to use participatory methods and processes in the making (planning and design) of urban space. In reaction to the previous Apartheid regime, where participants experienced limited opportunities for participation (Siyongwana & Mayekiso, 2011:143), post-apartheid governments started to look for opportunities to create social integration and equitable growth through community involvement as it is believed to ultimately improve the quality of life of communities (Lipietz, 2008:135). The involvement of people in planning and designing the spaces in which they live seems to be an important point of departure for settlement-making, especially in South Africa.

One of the physical characteristics of the South African urban landscape that resulted from of an overemphasis on a technical, functional dimension in planning and design is the creation of

homogenous characterless urban spaces with little concern for the natural environment (Robinson, 2011:295; Dewar & Uytendogaardt, 1991). When places change because of social and political fluctuations, environmental change or low maintenance, places are at risk of losing their “sense of place” (Sinwell, 2011:359). Due to Apartheid legislation such as the Group Areas Act no 41 of 1950 (Maharaj, 1997:142) that enforced separate development based on racial grounds, numerous South African communities were relocated to isolated, homogeneous residential environments, characterised by a lack of quality open spaces.

Public open spaces are particularly important in low income residential environments due to high residential densities and limited access to open spaces. Open spaces play a significant role in the social lives of communities living in these settlements (Moor & Rowland, 2006). Public places are understood in terms of the activities that are practiced in these areas, as well as the people that use these spaces (Al-Bishawi & Ghadban, 2011:74) and are conceptualised in terms of physical dimensions, social relations, symbolic meanings and subjective human experience of space (Schofield & Szymanski, 2011). In essence, open spaces are of value for a community, as these areas serve as a social structuring device, enhance aesthetic experiences, perform formal and informal recreation purposes and enhance “sense of place” within a community (Reuther & Dewar, 2006; Sinwell, 2011). Open spaces seem to form the heart of communities’ social lives.

As spaces are not mere backdrops to people’s lives, but *places* endowed with meaning and value (Tuan, 1979), space affects the quality of life and sense of pride of inhabitants (Cho *et al.*, 2011:393). *Place-making* is considered an empowering process during which people renovate, maintain and represent the places in which they live (Schneekloth & Shibley, 1995). Place-making entails a diverse approach to the planning, design and management of space that incorporates subjective experience, symbolic meanings and physical attributes of space (Silberberg *et al.*, 2013:34). Incorporating physical dimensions of urban space refers to planning and designing the visual and aesthetic image of places. Incorporating symbolic meanings implies sentimental, traditional and/or emotional value, while including subjective experience implies that the way people relate to and feel about a place (also refer to as their sense of place) is acknowledged. Apart from these dimensions, the process of place-making unlocks relational and social dynamics as various role-players are constantly involved in the process and work cooperatively (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch, 2013:146).

Place-making seems to be complex, but necessary as point of departure in South African settlement planning and design. While place-making is a theory (Gilmore, 2013:93) it is not divorced from practice and it should therefore include appropriate methods and techniques that

optimise the pro-active involvement of people in decision making. Participatory Action Research (from here onwards referred to as PAR) is a method that could possibly be of value for place-making in planning as PAR is an empowering process that is based on creating a platform for active participation of communities in decision making and aims to empower communities and create social change (Kalliola, 2009:293).

## **1.2 Background to the study**

This study forms part of a joint initiative initiated by Urban and Regional Planning at the North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa. The project seeks to transform local existing open spaces into vibrant public places in response to the global move towards place-making. This umbrella project is referred to as the Local Space Global Place (LSGP) project. Role players in this project include students from three academic disciplines (urban planning, urban ecology and creative arts education), the Tlokwe Local Municipality, non-governmental organisations such as the Tlokwe Chamber of Commerce, the private sector and the community. The rationale for this project is embedded in the need for quality public places in South African communities and the need for more participatory oriented approaches to the planning and design of these places. Against this background, this study focuses on the latter by exploring PAR as a possible method to inform place-making.

## **1.3 Problem statement**

Although the communicative planning theory suggests democratic participation (Fainstein, 2005:229), referring to the inclusion of all role players in decision making, the situation in the real world practice tends to differ. This difference between practice and theory creates a gap in literature, as the theory is well informed, but with limited guidelines for practical use (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Limited guidelines means that practice ultimately fails to improve people's quality of life. History suggests that ever since the Industrial Revolution planners had attempted to enhance this quality of life without regard for the empowerment of inhabitants (Jensen, 1993:135). The lack of public inclusion and participant empowerment is particularly noticeable in the South African context (Siyongwana & Mayekiso, 2011:142).

Place-making in planning is furthermore vague in terms of successful empowerment (Gilmore, 2013:93). This statement suggests that methods and legislation seem inadequate when attempting to promote the vision of empowerment within a place-making process (Martin, 2003:744). This creates a need for planning methods that can better the ideals of place-making and ultimately enhance people's quality of life in a real world environment. Considering this

inclusion of participants within the decision making process, PAR is found to be particularly useful, as it strives to actively involve all participants (Schneekloth & Shibley, 1995:156). This involvement benefits the research as it attempts to empower participants to create physical and social change within their direct environment (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:431).

## **1.4 Aims and objectives of the study**

### **1.4.1 Aim**

The primary aim of the research is to explore the process of place-making in planning by using PAR. The secondary aims of this study that serve as an extension of this primary goal are set out in the following section.

### **1.4.2 Secondary aims**

The secondary aims are:

- (i) to understand the concept of place-making theoretically by exploring concepts such as space and place, as well as to understand it empirically by transforming a local public space;
- (ii) to give an overview of theoretical planning paradigm shifts to contextualise community involvement within planning and design as foundation for place-making;
- (iii) understand the role of PAR in spatial planning; and
- (iv) to develop planning guidelines for the process of place-making based on PAR.

## **1.5 Research questions**

As this is a qualitative study, research questions are formulated rather than stating a hypothesis.

The **main** research question is: *How can Participatory Action Research inform place-making in urban planning in a local community where an open space is transformed into a public place?*

**Secondary** research questions include:

- (i) What does the place-making process entail?

- (ii) How can PAR be used to increase the involvement of a community in decision making?, and
- (iii) What are the benefits of using PAR when transforming a space into a place?

### 1.6 Research context and site

A local public space of 1000m<sup>2</sup> located in Ikageng, Tlokwe Municipality (Potchefstroom), in the North West province of South Africa (see figure 1.1), forms the focus of this study. Ikageng was established as former township of Potchefstroom.

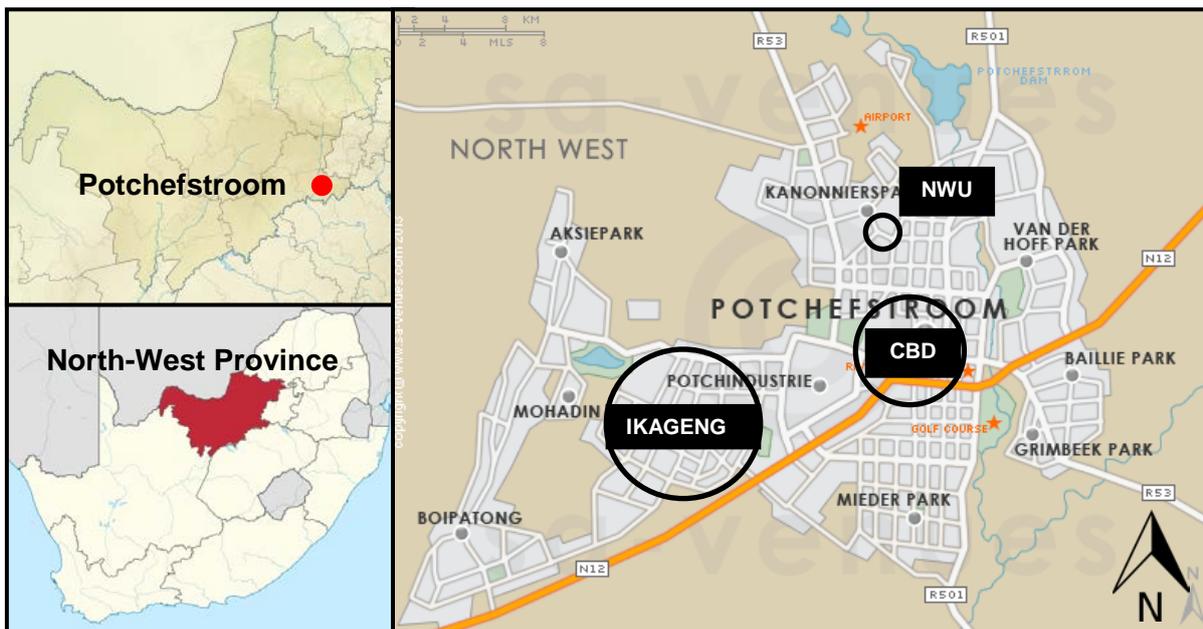


Figure 3-1: Map of Potchefstroom, North-West, South-Africa.

(Source: SA-Venues, 2014)

The community was forcefully removed under the Group Areas Act (Act no 41 of 1950) from the Makweteng area (currently known as the suburb of Potchefstroom town named Miederpark). The research site was identified as an area of concern by the community (through the Ward Committee) because it was poorly maintained. There have been numerous requests from the community's side to government to upgrade the area so that it could be used as a safe space, especially for the children in the area.



Figure 3-2: The research site before commencement of the research project.

(Source: Author, 2014)

## **1.7 Research design**

This section of the chapter includes an overview of the proposed research design. Refer to chapter 5 for an in-depth description of the research design.

### **1.7.1 Research approach**

A qualitative research approach is best suited for research about place-making because it focuses on understanding socially related concerns, which are in general formulated in words rather than numbers for data analysis (Thomas, 2003). This approach is appropriate for this research as the research acknowledges that realities and meanings are context bound (Nagy & Viney, 1994; Berg, 2007:19). It will also allow for meaningful and holistic understanding of embedded experiences (Klunklin & Greenwood, 2006) that occur spontaneously in participants' natural settings where no extraneous influences occur. It furthermore allows for optimising involvement of people in a non-discriminative environment where people feel comfortable to take part.

### 1.7.2 Overarching methodology

PAR was used as the overarching research methodology. This process involves practitioners in the research process from the initial design of the project, through data gathering and analysis, to conclusions and actions arising from the research. It is a powerful methodology for advancing scientific knowledge, as well as achieving practical objectives (Whyte, 1989:367). It is useful for this research as the method focuses on problem solving as it aims to resolve specific issues in a specific setting (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008; Khan *et al.*, 2013:163; Winkler, 2013:223). It is furthermore appropriate as it is believed to create a platform for social change by empowering communities to actively take part in decision making (Brydon-Miller *et al.*, 2003:21).

### 1.7.3 Methods

Data were generated from:

- **Three focus groups** held at different stages throughout the research process. Focus groups refer to a group of people from a certain community who interact to share some common viewpoints, characteristics or interests (Grønkjær *et al.*, 2011:16). The aims of the focus groups included: (Focus group 1, twenty participants) (i) *to understand the community's experience and perception of the physical environment*, (ii) *to capture their social needs with regard to the research site*, and (iii) *to discuss the way forward*, (Focus group 2, eleven participants) (i) *to examine participants' experience of the process by reflecting on the past months since the first focus group*, (ii) *defining expectations of participants with regard to the process* and (Focus group 3, nine participants) (i) *examining participants' feelings and experiences with regard to the research process*, and (ii) *change that were created during the process* (see Annexure B for Focus group questions).
- **A collaborative planning/design workshop** where the researcher facilitated a process during which participants (eleven community members) discussed, negotiated and formulated concept ideas and a plan for transforming the space to a place.

All data were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Content analysis was used to analyse the data and arrange it into themes that relate to the focus of the research, while the data was interpreted by using the theoretical constructs that informed the study.

## 1.8 Chapter summary

Given the overarching nature of this study, the best way to discuss the content and motivation of the individual chapters is to provide a brief summary by means of Table 1.

**Table 3-1: Structure of the dissertation**

	<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Motivation</b>
<b>Section 1: Introduction</b>	Chapter 1: Contextualising the research	This chapter provides the introduction and background to the study. From this, the problem statement, aims and research questions are derived, while a short description of the chosen research design is given.	This chapter contextualises the study in order to (i) orientate the reader towards the focus of the study, and (ii) provide the motivation for the study.
<b>Section B: Theoretical foundation</b>	Chapter 2: Space, place and place-making: A guide through the maze	Different approaches to space and place are explored in this chapter. Interpretations from mathematics, geography, planning and design are included. The chapter ends with a discussion of place-making (the focus of this study), which includes the importance of place-making, its challenges in terms of implementation, and steps to implement it.	This chapter serves as a guide to various theoretical interpretations of space, as well as the interpretation that informed this study. It is necessary to distinguish between concepts such as <i>space</i> and <i>place</i> as these concepts are sometimes conflated and not always made explicit in planning research. Understanding these concepts is important to understand place-making.
	Chapter 3: Towards a participatory	An overview of the development of planning theory is presented in this chapter. Various modernistic and post-modernistic models are used to structure	The main idea behind this chapter is to illustrate how theoretical planning paradigms moved towards a more participatory nature where people are active role players in

	approach in planning	the discussion on how paradigm shifts took place from a blueprint, technical approach to planning towards the communicative planning paradigm in which a socio-political and inclusionary approach is followed.	shaping the spaces in which they live based on consensus of various role players.
<i>Section C: Empirical research</i>	Chapter 4: Participatory Action Research (PAR)	PAR is rooted within Action Research (AR), following a participatory approach towards decision making, using collaboration as a corner stone. This participatory approach entails the inclusion of all the role players involved. Furthermore, this is a cyclic process mainly focussing on the collaboration and reflection of participants.	The main reason for including a full chapter about PAR is that the method is not readily known in planning circles. The chapter furthermore serves as an important link between the theoretical section and empirical section of this dissertation as PAR forms the framework to guide the research process followed.
	Chapter 5: Research design	A typical research design chapter describes the method used in this study. This description includes the followed methodology: contextualisation of research site, brief discussion of participants, means of data gathering, analysis and interpretation.	This chapter serves as a platform to illustrate the scientific nature of the research in order to generate the findings.
	Chapter 6: Findings	In this chapter the findings that were generated from the research conducted are described in terms of themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data. Discussions of the findings are	This main aim of the findings chapter is to merge theory and practice in terms of place-making and planning.

<b>Section D: Recommendations and conclusion remarks</b>		included in relation to the theory.	
	Chapter 7: Towards place-making in planning: Recommendations	This chapter concludes the study by formulating recommendations for the process of place-making using a PAR method. It includes generic and specific planning proposals for conducting place-making in a South African context.	The motivation of the chapter is to provide a framework for the use of PAR in other contexts for the process of place-making.
	Chapter 8: Synthesis and conclusion	This chapter consists of a separate synthesis for each chapter, as well as a short discussion of how the research questions have been answered in the study. The conclusion of the study includes the multi-levelled nature of PAR.	The purpose of this chapter is to provide a main conclusion of the study in terms of how PAR can inform place-making in planning.

(Source: Author's own construction, 2014)

## **CHAPTER 2 SPACE, PLACE AND PLACE-MAKING: A GUIDE THROUGH THE MAZE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Space in planning entails more than being a neutral backdrop of people's everyday lives (Cho *et al.*, 2011:393). Space becomes place when endowed with meaning (Thrift, 2003:95). Meaning refers to the value that a place has for people and why and how such a place becomes memorable. Place is therefore different from space, but simultaneously intertwined with it. Place includes physical, social and symbolic aspects (Schofield & Szymanski, 2011).

Before attempting to change space, one has to first understand it (Cho *et al.*, 2011:393) to fully grasp the meaning of place. Various authors have contributed on how to conceptualise space, each with a different opinion. This chapter first and foremost focuses on the conceptualisation of what space is according to the most notable authors. Various perspectives on space are discussed, including a mathematical, geographical and design view of space. Thereafter, place is discussed to differentiate between space and place as related but different concepts.

Lastly, place-making is discussed as it entails the process during which space is transformed to place. This discussion includes a definition of place-making, as well as reference to its importance, challenges with regard to place-making and guidelines for place-making. As space, place and place-making form the theoretical building blocks of this study, the main aim of the chapter is to offer a guide through this maze of related but contradicting concepts.

### **2.2 Space**

Space is often considered a complex concept. Numerous theorists have debated it and have dedicated a great deal of time in order to grasp its meaning (Madanipour, 1996:03). Space is mostly viewed as interdependent in terms of its relation to humans. This interdependent nature of space describes the mutual beneficial interaction between people and their environment. Thus, space is directly influenced by the activity of space users (Al-Bishawi & Ghadban, 2011:73). There are different approaches to and theories on space in accordance

with the use of the space (Madanipour, 1996:3). While some authors see space as exact, others seem to view it as abstract. It is thus necessary to distinguish between these different theories of space and to explain them.

### **2.2.1 Theories of space**

Theories with regard to space are not only restricted to planners and designers. Numerous disciplines, such as mathematics, philosophy, psychology and sociology informed theories on space. In terms of spatial disciplines, geographers, planners and architects have long been fascinated by the phenomenon of space and its role in society. Due to the complexity and diversity of views on space, various points of departure, such as the mathematical perspective, geographical perspective and design-based views on space, are discussed to grasp its multi-faceted nature.

#### **2.2.1.1 Space as absolute**

- James M. Blaut (1961): *Mathematical views on space*

Blaut (1961:2) refers to space as absolute and describes space as a distinct, empirical object and physical in terms of its existence. Space, according to this theory, is constant. This consistency entails that space is concrete in terms of its tangible, solid nature (Ek, 2006:55). According to this absolute view of space, space is something that is objective and limited by the effects of activity on the space (as according to Einstein for example). However, absolute space is a dimension that focuses on the character of objects in terms of their relationship to one another (Gregory, 1998:74). The relationship between objects is the reason why absolute space is often known as contextual space (Blaut, 1961:3), as it considers the physical manner in which this space is created (space seen as container with objects within it). This mentioned physical facet entails that the objects within the space have limited to no effect on the space itself (Ek, 2006:57). According to this view, a three-dimensional character is ascribed to space, suggesting that the intangible facet is non-existing, ultimately leaving absolute space as being universal (duplicable) (Blaut, 1961:4; Gregory, 1998:79).

### 2.2.1.2 Space as relational

- Mazúr and Urbánek (1983): *Geographical views on space*

Mazúr and Urbánek describe space as emptiness (1983:139). Although related to the view of Einstein (relational space), this view is more geographic in nature. Space is a fundamental concept within geography, as it is found in almost any work within this discipline. Mazúr and Urbánek (1983:140) suggest that an understanding of the spatial organisation is important in any science. Due to various viewpoints of space (especially relational and absolute space in this instance), misunderstandings in terms of theory and methodology is inevitable (Mazúr & Urbánek, 1983:140). Space, according to these geographers, refers to a synergic system that allows for the consideration of the totality of the landscape (Stankoviansky, 2012:145). However, emptiness in this instance refers to the absence of objects within a container (total landscape). Objects are obtained from a certain interrelation of elements, leading to the development of a geographical structure. In accordance with this creation of structure, geographical space fails to develop unless a linkage can be found with the synergic system (Mazúr & Urbánek, 1983:143). This linkage is strengthened or weakened over time, as the bond can increase or reduce.

- Albert Einstein (1905): *Mathematical view of space*

A key author on space is Albert Einstein (1905:50) with his mathematical view of space as relational. Relational space is experienced as variable, which entails that space is able to change in accordance with the time and process it utilises (Hugget & Hofer, 2006). With regard to the inclusion of time within his theory, Einstein refers to space as four-dimensional (Einstein, 1905:50). This acknowledgment of time makes the theory of relational space abstract (Rynasiewicz, 1996:283). Rather than a 'container' with certain objects, Einstein suggests that space is inherently the objects within a 'container'. Thus, the objects within the 'container' determine the function of the space, as the objects are viewed as equally important. This relational theory of space is often described as subjective, as the activity defines the usage of the space together with the perceptions of the users (Earman *et al.*, 1977). Activities refer to the social events or societal interaction in creating the space. Thus, Einstein states in his theory that space is created by a society and is unique with regard to each setting (Einstein, 1905:50; Rynasiewicz, 1996:285).

- James Walsh (2009): *Geographical view on space*

According to Walsh (2009:95), space is a fixed container, which includes dynamic behavioural interactions (Richardson *et al.*, 2005:63). Interaction in this instance is observable and analysed in terms of its relation to positivism (Walsh, 2009:96). In more recent studies, the emphasis of space relies on its ability to be structured in terms of a more relational view of space (Walsh, 2009:100). A relational view of space, according to Walsh, relates to the fact that space is produced and reproduced on a continuous basis. This production of space is realised by the socio-spatial relationship found within a society (e.g. culture, social, political and economic relations).

Furthermore, Walsh suggests that space is territorial in terms of the representation of functionality (Richardson *et al.*, 2005:63). Functionality in this case refers to the representation of space with regard to awareness of its existence, accessibility, distance between various spaces, as well as a consensus among space-users in terms of its protection and well-being (especially the protection of cultural and heritage landscapes found within a society) (Fry & Hovelynck, 2010:145). Walsh argued that this territoriality shifted the short-term absolutist view of space to a more dynamic and long-term process constructed by social events. Thus, Walsh's view transformed from an absolute approach to a relational approach towards space (Walsh, 2009:105).

### **2.2.1.3 Space as social**

- Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift (2000): *Geographical view on space*

Within geography, space is seen as the fundamental element of the geographical bias (Crang & Thrift, 2000:181). This statement suggests that space is earth-bound due to its character, defined by human interaction and social processes (Crang & Thrift, 2000:183). Social processes relate to the specific social structure found within a society. According to this view, space is created by means of the social activity established within this area (Löw, 2008:25). Space does not necessary impose a certain action (e.g. fear experienced when using a walkway/pedestrian tunnel) as a tendency is often to presume an atmosphere when observing a setting. Considering this presumed social nature of space, its power to evoke specific social dynamics need to be understand (Thrift, 2004).

According to Nigel Thrift (2003:95), space entails more than an everyday backdrop to humans in terms of their social activity. Subsequently, it is the conceptualisation of challenges (politics, religion, language etc.) within a society regarding their means of activities - interaction and communication (Crang & Thrift, 2000:185). These societal activities ultimately lead the space towards a durable (alternatively sustainable) outcome.

#### **2.2.1.4 Space as physical**

- Camillo Sitte (1886): *Planning and design view on space*

Camillo Sitte (1843-1903) played an influential role within planning in terms of urban shape, organisation and regulations found in Europe (Adshead, 1930:87). Sitte's contribution in general entails a few principles in terms of the arrangement of space (Sitte, 1886:135): (i) *Aesthetics*, (ii) *Irregular designs* and (iii) *Accessibility* (Sitte, 1986:256). Although he proposed more than these three principles, these contributions are highly applicable in terms of space shaping (Lévy, 2008)

##### **(i) Aesthetics**

Sitte focussed a great deal of attention on aesthetic principles. He conducted an analysis that explored the aesthetic sensitivity of a setting, rather than the importance of the historical circumstances that initially contributed to the shape of the space (Lévy, 2008:31). An argument of Sitte suggests that space is used on a daily basis by present users and should thus be designed according to their needs and aesthetic desires ().

##### **(ii) Irregular design**

Furthermore, Sitte motivates the use of irregularity in terms of a design, organising the spatial setting in a more organic manner that refrains from previous symmetrical concepts in terms of design (Lévy, 2008:33).

### **(iii) Accessibility**

The refrainment of the isolated placement of monuments and churches encouraged Sitte to explore the idea of accessibility (Adshead, 1930:87). He argues that architects and town planners should move towards a more accessible solution in terms of the placement of the built environment within a space (Lévy, 2008). Planners should thus focus on the macro-area instead of focussing on small designs. In short, Sitte fears that urbanism may fail to explore the artistic components of a space, focussing attention on mere technical activities and function related to the setting, in the end defining the shape of the space (Adshead, 1930:88).

- Rob Krier (1979): *Planning and design view of space*

Krier (1979:15) suggests that the original meaning of space should be recovered. This rediscovering in terms of the meaning of a space refers to the judgement-free observance of the area (Nascimento & Marteleto, 2008:401). Judgement-free suggests that the meaning of a space should not be established by aesthetic values. Krier (1979:16) motivates his statement of space in terms of a physical space approach. This approach considers the physically bound character due to the connection of the area with various elements (Madanipour, 1996). Elements connecting the physical space include the external facets of the area (description of different types of spaces found between building in an urban landscape, as well as other locations) (Nascimento & Marteleto, 2008:405).

#### **2.2.1.5 Space as mental**

- Bernard Tschumi (1990): *Planning and design view on space*

Tschumi (1990) considers the representation of mental versus real space. Mental space refers to an intellectual interpretation of space, together with the reasoning of its function. In order to grasp the meaning of this concept, rational thinking is required (Tschumi, 1996). Rational thinking entails the domination of sensory aspects, focusing on the understanding of function and activity within the space (Tellioğlu & Wagner, 2001:176). Opposed to mental space, real space is a sensory approach, grasping the aesthetic experience of a place. This sensuous event is used to dominate rational thinking (contrast with mental space) to understand the sensory qualities of a setting (Madanipour, 1996). Tschumi (1990) suggests the use of real space rather than mental space, as experience of a space according to his view, affects the manner in which an area is reasoned and interpreted (McGregor, 2006:71).

Within the discipline of architecture, this surrealist approach towards space describes the manner in which a space is observed rather than understood in terms of its function (McGregor, 2006:75).

#### **2.2.1.6 Space as differential**

- Henri Lefebvre (1991) *Philosophical view on space*

Lefebvre (1991:52) describes absolute space as an overruled approach, governed by the elitists of a society in order to build their sphere of religion, politics and economy. Absolute space conflicted with social activity shifts towards homogeneity informed by the fact that a singular movement is found within a space, causing it to be one-dimensional due to its limited diversity (Lefebvre, 1991:432). This view of space further motivates the refrainment of any association with politics, history and the environment. Thus, a further shift towards a more differential space was necessary to accommodate differences found within a setting. Differential space entails that a more diverse approach is followed, allowing more heterogeneous activities within an area (Lefebvre, 1991:435). Thus, a multi-dimensional space is created by means of better social movement within it. Furthermore, differential space considers social activities that define the function of the space (e.g. politics, religion, natural environment etc.) (Schmidt & Németh, 2010:453).

Lefebvre (1991:328) distinguishes between three types of space: (i) *Conceived space*, (ii) *Perceived space* and (iii) *Lived space*.

##### **(i) Conceived space**

Being both a distant and powerful approach to space, conceived space is experienced from a hierarchical point of view, which entails that character in terms of the space were established by experts and urban planners (Lefebvre, 1991). This conceived space refers to the manner in which it is represented. Representation according to Lefebvre relates to the conceptualisation by planners, scientists and socialists. This space dominates the view of an area as it tends to describe the signs in terms of verbal systems – an intellectually understood way to explain it. Soon Lefebvre explored a second approach towards space, which was thought to be more appropriate when shaping a society (Lefebvre, 1991).

## **(ii) Perceived space**

While still part of a hierarchical process, perceived space is an approach shaped by a certain routine practice within a society (Brenner, 1997:135). Space-shaping in this approach is determined by the dominating society figures according to their set of rules and values, which are believed to be mutual. In attempting to contradict these rules and values, Lefebvre suggests that a close association needs to be established with regard to daily interaction and realities found within an urban environment (Schmidt & Németh, 2010:453). Thus, perceived space includes the manner in which spatial practice is arranged and organised within a setting. The third approach towards space embodies a more utopian view (Brenner, 1997:135).

## **(iii) Lived space**

Lived space can be described in short as the distinctive moments lived with a space (non-verbal manner in which space is represented) (Madanipour, 1996:17). This utopian view of space describes the softer side of a community, emphasising the more cultural facets of a society. Space is shaped by imagination, memories and moments kept alive and accessible by distinctive arts and literature (Brenner, 1997:135). Although this philosophical approach might be ideal for any society, the approach of perceived space became more dominant (Brenner, 1997:135).

Lefebvre (1991:421) argues that space is concrete, meaning that certain subjects can be found within space, determining the value associated to a setting by the society (Graham & Healy, 1999:626; Lefebvre, 1991). In his writings, Lefebvre further argues that a city mainly consists of social space, meaning that space is socially produced (Brenner, 1997:135). Thus, space should not only be seen as mere containers in which social relations take place, but also as part of social production processes of perception, usage and acquisitions (Schmidt & Németh, 2010:453).

### **2.2.2 Synopsis of authors on space**

Numerous authors informed the understanding of the concept of space. These authors constructed views towards space from various disciplines. Disciplines include the field of

mathematics, geography, and planning and design. Viewpoints of space transformed from being absolute (exact) to a more flexible concept (socially constructed).

Initially, space defined as exact and absolute. Exact implies that consideration was given to the physical, visual and aesthetic values found within a space with regard to the viewpoints of planners and designers (e.g. Blaut, Sitte and Krier). Opposed to this fixed view of space, authors (including Einstein, Mazúr and Urbánek, and Walsh) began to view space as relational with regard to objects found within the setting. Crang and Thrift further describe space as socially constructed – social behaviour determine the space. There is a progression in these statements of space. Space ceases to be viewed as exact and isolated from human interaction (space influenced by behaviour of inhabitants). Therefore, a closer relation is found between people and their physical environment.

At a later stage, space transformed from a physical constructivist view to a social constructivist view according to Lefebvre. This viewpoint is more differential, as it suggests a multi-faceted and dynamic view of space.

**Table 3-2: Synopses of authors' views of space**

	<b>Key thinkers</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core idea</b>
<b>Absolute and physical space</b>	Blaut (1961)	Mathematical view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Space physically exist</li> <li>- Constant, concrete, objective, three-dimensional and universal</li> </ul>
	Sitte (1889)	Planning and design view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visual artistic organisation of space</li> <li>- Focus on aesthetics, irregular design and accessibility</li> </ul>
	Krier (1979)	Planning and design view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recovery of original meaning of space</li> <li>- Limited judgement of value (Aesthetic criteria)</li> <li>- Space is physically bound</li> </ul>
	Tschumi (1990)	Planning and design view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Surrealist approach</li> <li>- Space is observed rather than understood</li> <li>- Space as mental</li> </ul>

Relational space	Einstein (1905)	Mathematical view	- Seen as objects within a container - Space experienced as variable, four-dimensional and abstract
	Mazúr and Urbánek (1983)	Geographical view	- Fundamental concept in geography - Space is emptiness - Synergic system considering the whole environment - Space is dynamic
	Walsh (2009)	Geographical view	- Space seen as territorial with regard to the protection of heritage and culture sites - Thus, space is constructed by means of dynamic behavioural flows
Social space	Crang and Thrift (2000)	Geographical view	- Fundamental concept in geography - Space is more than an everyday backdrop of a society (Social activities)
Differential space	Lefebvre (1991)	Philosophical view on space	- Multi-dimensional approach - Space defined by social activity - Three types of space: Conceived-, perceived- and lived space

(Adapted from Madanipour, 1996)

## 2.3 Place

### 2.3.1 Theories of place

#### 2.3.1.1 Geographical views on place

- Yi-Fu Tuan (1977): Place as meaningful

Within the field of humanistic geography, Tuan (1979:387) suggests that place is more than a mere location in terms of geography. Place is seen as a special entity with profound history and meaning (combination of special intrinsic values). According to Tuan (1979:388), these special values add value to a place as it encompasses the experiences and needs of people. Therefore, this perspective on place is based on subjective human experiences of place observers, creating an attraction to the place (Tuan, 1977).

Place, at its core, is a combination of various concepts, as it is found to be abstract, subjective and quantifiable in terms of spatial elements (Tuan, 1979:389). In correlation with space, place is considered to be equally important when understanding geography. Tuan (1991:686) further describes the movement of space from a certain location to another, creating a certain attachment to the place (Madanipour, 1996:23).

Space and place is an interdependent notion and should not be viewed in isolation (Tuan, 1991:689). The refrainment of an isolated view entails that the observer should understand the temporary insinuation of space together with the physical nature of place. In order to best understand the concept of space and place, a coherent view should be gathered, experiencing these interrelated concepts as a whole (Tuan, 1977).

- Doreen Massey (1994): Place as diverse

Place, according to Massey, refrains from having a singular identity, as it strives to encompass diversity in terms of the various dimensions found within a place (Madanipour, 1996:24). Dimensions used to create a sense of place refer to economic, social and/or environmental facets, affecting the space and thus creating place (which is found to be memorable). Furthermore, as opposed to space, place is a 'living' process with limited regard for a certain time-frame. This statement refers to the character of place as timeless, created in terms of subjective human experience. As place is a subjective experience, it is difficult to define definite boundaries for place – complex in terms of a mental enclosure, explaining the beginning and end of place (Massey, 1994). The study of Massey's work gives a geographical perspective on place, as it includes earth-bound as well as intangible concepts related to space, ultimately describing place as a subjective human experience (Massey, 1995 and 2003).

### **2.3.1.2 Planning and design views on place**

- Ali Madanipour (1996): Place as social construct

According to Madanipour (1996:23), place is seen as part of the spatial organisation of a setting. This statement relates to the fact that place is space, embodied with meaning, offering the place with a unique character (Healey *et al.*, 2003:71). Place is socially constructed, as it is occupied by humans. Human interaction within a place defines the subjective experience found when observing the area. Furthermore, place is value-loaded,

as certain intangible characteristics is felt and cause the setting to be memorable (Madanipour & Hull, 2001). A sense of security and stability is a characteristic that defines a place, having a certain biological effect on the emotional state of the site-user. Madanipour (1996:24) describes the manner in which space is providing a site with freedom and movement, while place – as opposed to space - restrict the area in terms of limitations. Limitations revolve around subjective, fourth-dimensional (inclusion of intangible characteristics) facets of a place. Place is often known to enclose a space, loading it with value, and proclaiming a certain fixed identity (Madanipour, 2006:179). This identity is related to the space, revealing a distinctive lack in terms of the dynamic dimension. The challenge of dynamism relates to the creation of place due to social relationships found within it (Madanipour, 2006:179). Thus, place is often described as timeless, bound by a certain character, and experienced in a subjective manner. This allows the site-user to experience the diversity (heterogeneous character) within a particular space, as it is in relation with the larger context (Madanipour & Hull, 2001; Healey *et al.*, 2003:71).

- Patsy Healey: Place as social construct

Healey mainly focuses on the quality of place, as a 'utopian' view in terms of social science is followed (Healey, 2004:45). A utopian view by means of the consideration of collaborative approaches is the way forward in terms of planning (Healey, 2004). Healey further describes the inclusion of place quality in terms of the communicative turn in planning as inevitable. Quality of place refers to the non-duplicable nature of a place in terms of its setting and social environment. The lack of quality places according to this view is often found as places are fragmented and displaced due to societal 'rules' and regulations in terms of the organisation of space. Especially in lower income settings, quality places are limited due to a lack of social resources (Massey, 1994). Along with territorial behaviour in terms of place, this further limits the meaning and value of a setting. Subsequently, territorial place refers to the manner in which a 'special' site is protected (Healey, 2004:46). As spatial organisation often refers to the manner in which different locations are interrelated, place is the activities and functions that reveal certain subjective experiences observed within a distinct area (Healey, 2003). Furthermore, the nature of place is difficult to grasp, as it is a combination of various processes (e.g. social, economic and environmental flows) relating to the quality and uniqueness of the particular place. According to Healey, place is understood as a social construction, generated by associated meanings in terms of the social context (e.g. functionality, intersections, nodes and location) (Thrift, 1996).

## 2.4 Space versus place

Space, according to the mentioned views, is absolute, relational, social, physical, mental, real, abstract or differential (Madanipour, 1996). This relation to space entails that space is seen overall as the manner in which lives are expressed within a certain set of surroundings daily. Space becomes place when endowed with value and meaning (Cho *et al.*, 2011:393).

Seen as concrete, space is static, with limited regard for intangible characteristics. The focus is on the fact that it is physically observable. Meanwhile, place is more abstract, as it included the intangible characteristics that encompasses a subjective human experience, while space is more objective. This correlates with the three-dimensional characteristic of space, observing the physical facets of an environment (visual, touch and smell), while place is four-dimensional with regard to an inherited value associated with a setting (certain personal meanings).

**Table 3-3: Comparison of space and place**

Space	Place
Concrete	Abstract
Objective	Subjective
Three-dimensional	Four-dimensional
Homogeneous	Heterogeneous
Duplicable	Unique
Value-free	Value-laden
Uniformity; singular identity	Multi-identity; Diversity

(Adapted from various Authors: Tuan, 1977; Madanipour, 1996, and Healey, 2004:46)

In terms of identity, space tends to be homogeneous, as it is uniform in terms of its existence. This characteristic is in relation with the fact that space has a singular identity that can be duplicated within another setting. Subsequently, place is heterogeneous, has it allows for a diverse identity, contributing to its value-laden character. Thus, place is unique, as it is impossible to create the same sense of place within another setting.

Space ceases to be regarded as a neutral backdrop of the lives of inhabitants of a setting. This statement suggests that space includes more than its physical nature. Space is

constructed by means of the context in which people live, including the social, political and visual environment (socially constructed). Therefore, the development of place is more important to planners than the mere creation of space. This process through which place is developed is the focus of the following chapter.

## **2.5 Place-making**

Place-making is an empowering process, which is used to shape an environment by facilitating social interaction and ultimately promoting inhabitants' quality of life (Silberberg *et al.*, 2013:2). This process is specifically useful when teaching people to represent their daily lives and creating physical change (Lepofsky & Fraser, 2003:128). An environment is shaped when value is added that is representative of inhabitants and their aspiration (often socially constructed). These aspirations of inhabitants imply the manner in which interaction with regard to other societal members and their direct surroundings is obtained. This representation of inhabitants living in an environment leads to beautification, which ultimately contributes to the uplifting of their quality of life (Friedmann, 2010:149).

Furthermore, place-making focuses on the creation of a place, using cultural values associated with a setting. These cultural values are usually an inherited part of the community that is used to define their unique character (Schofield & Szymanski, 2011). Characteristics involved with this process include music, art, story-telling etc., with the goal of promoting humanity within a place. Using this creative tradition of place-making, a certain sense of belonging is produced, causing members of a society to feel proud about their surrounding environment (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010:05). General challenges with regard to the process of creating a sense of belonging within a community includes racism, gender inequalities, unequal distribution of power etc. – all of which are known to cause social challenges within a setting (Madanipour, 2006:174).

For a place-making process to be a success, the true authentic nature of a place needs to be explored, enhancing the ideals of a democratic society (Jivén & Larkham, 2003:69). Capturing these authentic characteristics is the ultimate goal of the place-making tradition. When understanding the cultural diversity of a setting, one should be able to initiate a sense of cultural belonging and accommodating differences within a society (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010:05).

### **2.5.1 Four constructs of place-making**

Often described as complex, certain building blocks are established to grasp an understanding of place-making. Place-making involves four constructs: (i) *visual aspects*, (ii) *place-making as a product* (ii) *place-making as a process* and (iii) *incorporation of meanings* (Arefi & Triantafillou, 2005:81).

#### **2.5.1.1 Visual aspects**

Various disciplines make use of the visual aspects, including architects and urban planners. While following this tradition, professionals enable themselves to utilise the visual assets found within a setting. The main aim of visual aspects is to create visual excitement for the observer within a place (Jarvis, 1980:55). Excitement is created by means of building heights, scale, proportion, edges etc., all contributing to the physical appearance of a place (Lynch, 1960). Although these aspects allow for aesthetic value, experts and professionals in some cases create a place without representing the community of the place, leading to an ultimate failure (Lynch, 1991, Boyer, 1996). Experts in some cases explore techniques that involve the comparison of different places, urban edges, analyses and contrasting proportions in order to gain an understanding of the intrinsic values of a place (Cullen, 1971). The downfall of these techniques lies in the manner in which information is gathered in terms of the capturing of less tangible and intangible assets of a place, as this method only allows for the exploration of physical elements and its inhabitants to identify, relate and become attach to the specific place (Jerde, 1999).

#### **2.5.1.2 Place-making as a product**

A following construct describes place-making as a product. This perception revolves around the idea of the creation of place in accordance with a fixed plan (Arefi & Triantafillou, 2005:81). Disciplines following this outcomes-based approach towards place-making include architects and planners (Madanipour, 2006:174). This production orientated approach to place-making focuses on the ideas of the specific client (aspiration of single client). Due to its client specific nature, place-making in this sense is bound to a predetermined period of time (Jerde, 1999). Therefore this view incorporates the aspiration (making of existing or new place) to ultimately create the end-product (Silberberg *et al.*, 2013:2). However, this

construct fails to involve surrounding inhabitants of the proposed area to be developed (Boyer, 1996; Jarvis, 1980:55).

### **2.5.1.3 Place-making as a process**

The lack of involvement of influenced inhabitants caused the process of place-making to evolve from production-orientated to process-orientated (Arefi & Triantafillou, 2005:82). This shift implies that place-making transformed from a fixed plan (client-specific practice) towards a more process-orientated approach (involvement of various stakeholders). The process-orientated view of place-making refers to this process as being informed by various phases. These phases include the involvement of stakeholders (source of funding and intellectual resources). Place-making as a process is complicated - it strives to include social and cultural characteristics found within a place (Silberberg *et al.*, 2013:2). Furthermore, this process informed by phases is time-consuming due to the consideration of various stakeholders' opinions. Due to the time-consuming characteristic of place-making as a process, constant reflection is practiced. This reflection leads to the connection of ideas, establishing a more structured process of place-making. Ultimately, the lesson learnt during this process is to integrate various resources and role-players to gather a better understanding of place-making as a process (Cho *et al.*, 2011:393).

### **2.5.1.4 Incorporation of meanings**

When attempting to gain an understanding of place-making, one realises a certain sense of place found within a place. Before attempting to change space to place, the context of the proposed area needs to be understood (Arefi & Triantafillou, 2005:83). The incorporation of meaning within place-making includes the deeper spiritual connection of inhabitants with their surroundings, adding intrinsic value to the space, and ultimately creates a place (Hague & Jenkins, 2005:58). Ultimately, people living within this place, strives to enhance their quality of life by promoting the place in which they live (Norberg-Schulz, 1980). Creativity is necessary in order to consider the associated meaning of a place with regard to the uniqueness of the context (Day, 2004; Jivén & Larkham, 2003:71). Therefore, place-making includes these unique values of a place as it contributes to the overall meaning and memorable aspect of the area to observers.

## 2.5.2 Importance of place-making

The importance of place-making revolves around the fact that if a place is familiar to its inhabitants, it leads to deep rooted experienced feelings associated with the place involved (Schneekloth & Shibley, 1995). A setting that is familiar to its inhabitants has the potential to develop an intense relationship between people and the particular place. This relationship is often repositioned when change is experienced within this place, if this change – in some cases negative – continues the place is at risk of decreasing in value and inherited meaning (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010:05). Still there is high potential to create change, protect and reorganise a place, even though an area experiences certain amounts of tension. Thus, each community should strive to explore manners in which they can overcome social and emotional barriers. Social and emotional barriers (e.g. political fluctuations) should be overcome in order to learn from the experience. This learning from previous and current challenges ultimately empowers communities (as a societal group) to identify and find solutions with regard to the process of place-making (Silberberg *et al.*, 2013:34).

Furthermore, place-making is seen as an important tool to enhance democracy within a society (Lepofsky & Fraser, 2003:133). This relates to the fact that this is an inclusive process in which space is transformed to place (Arefi, 1999:187). Historical bureaucratic approaches to this transformation (development from space to place) often relied on professional knowledge instead of the consideration of intrinsic meaning. Thus, empowerment in this case unlocks these intrinsic values associated with a place (Cho *et al.*, 2011:393), promoting the ideals of place-making. Therefore, place-making is seen as an important democratic tool that motivates the establishment of collaborative partnerships.

Place-making has the ability to teach a group to collaboratively strive towards a mutual goal (Norberg-Schulz, 1980). This implies that members of a society should share power relations to involve all parties of the process of place-making (Schneekloth & Shibley, 1995). If the process of place-making fails to involve and share power among all participants, the outcome may be a homogeneous design (Jivén & Larkham, 2003:69). Therefore, the importance of place-making includes the formation of collaborative relationships to provide various stakeholder involvements.

### **2.5.3 Challenges for implementation**

The process of place-making involves particular challenges when implementing the process. These include (i) the complexity of *collaborative partnerships*, (ii) *distrust of the community*, (iii) *shortage of financial resources*, (iv) *regulatory challenges*, (v) *sustainability and maintenance*, (vi) *displacement and alienation of surroundings* and (vii) *measuring the performance level*.

#### **2.5.3.1 The complexity of collaborative partnerships**

The creation of collaborative relationships with a community proves to be more complex than initially thought, as each community has its own history and character (Montgomery, 1998:94). Cultural differences and backgrounds (within a society) are related to this character. The character of a society acts as a corner stone of the inherited meaning, contributing to the uniqueness of the place. Differences are found to be a barrier in terms of co-operative partnership in the case where disrespect towards diversity is noticed. Thus, the manner in which a community is approached establishes the level of trust and collaboration they will provide during the process of place-making (Silberberg *et al.*, 2013:34).

#### **2.5.3.2 Distrust by the community**

Each community is built according to a specific level of territoriality, thus establishing the manner in which they will react to the ideas and concepts of place-makers (Jivén & Larkham, 2003:69). If distrust against place-makers exists, a shift is needed to promote the level of trust found within a specific community (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010:05). In some cases, members of a community experience scepticism towards a place-making process, and the community leader of the society needs to be convinced and assured that the process will be equally beneficial for both the community and the place-makers (Montgomery, 1998:94).

#### **2.5.3.3 Shortage of financial resources**

Apart from the fact that a place-making process is a lengthy process that is costly, a lack of adequate financial resources to implement place-making is detrimental to the overall success of a place-making process. Lack of implementation funds results in the decreasing

number of investors in the area. This poses as a threat to the overall success of the place-making process (Lepofsky & Fraser, 2003:138). Thus, various methods of accumulating the necessary funding for implementation should be considered as part of place-making.

#### **2.5.3.4 Regulatory challenges**

Place-making in general strives to promote the manner in which a community relates, represents and renovates their daily surroundings (Silberberg *et al.*, 2013:2). Their needs and desires are evident from the manner in which they represent their setting (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010:05). In the contemporary post-modern society, this is often difficult, as each community is different. These differences lead to the fact that it is almost impossible to work in accordance to a master plan set up by experts. Thus, a certain set framework of regulatory information often leads to the failure of a place-making process, as this in effect binds the process to a previously set plan for a place. By promoting the participation of a community, their genuine aspirations can be reflected within their daily environment (Montgomery, 1998:94).

#### **2.5.3.5 Sustainability and maintenance**

A place should encompass social, economic and environmental realities in order to promote sustainability (Røe, 2014). However, the creation of place should be constructed in such a manner that sustainability is a primary goal (Silberberg *et al.*, 2013:11). Sustainability in this instance refers to the place as being self-maintained or with limited maintenance (Arefi, 1999). Within this process, the maintenance of a place can often be challenging, as it should be on a regular and long-term basis (Røe, 2014:503). In some cases where a lack of maintenance is discovered, the place-making process proved a failure. Thus, a structure should be conceptualised to assure maintenance (Madanipour, 2006:175).

#### **2.5.3.6 Displacement and alienation of surroundings**

When a place-making process fails to inform a community, especially those affected by the change of surroundings, the alienation of inhabitants is a possibility (Arefi, 1999:182). Place-makers should refrain from practices that cause community members to feel a lack of belonging. In some cases, inhabitants feel forced to leave their community and establish

themselves in an environment to which they can relate better (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch, 2013:146). This undesirable outcome can be prevented when a participatory process is followed, allowing community members to be actively involved during all the steps of decision-making. Community participation within a place-making process reduces the sense of alienation experienced by communities (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010:06).

#### **2.5.3.7 Measuring the performance level**

In a place-making process developing a method of measuring the level of performance (quality of place) is often challenging (Talen & Ellis, 2004:16). Due to the fact that each process is different in accordance with its societal members, the creation of a set criterion is difficult. Thus, all phases of the place-making process should be documented in order to reflect on the process (Silberberg *et al.*, 2013:34).

While the above challenges can be detrimental to the success of place-making, there are criteria to follow to ensure its success. Markusen and Gadwa (2010) suggest that three steps can be followed to ensure successful place-making.

#### **2.5.4 Three steps for successful place-making**

When conducting a place-making process, there are three steps that can be followed to reach a successful outcome. These place-making steps include (i) *creative facilitator*, (ii) *conceptualisation of place-identity*, and (iii) *supportive role players* (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010:6).

##### **2.5.4.1 Creative facilitator**

As the place earmarked for intervention first has to be identified, the facilitator is the person responsible for the initial step of the process (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch, 2013:146). This person should be creative with a unique vision of the process, together with the drive to succeed.

#### **2.5.4.2 Conceptualisation of place-identity**

Place-identity refers to the individual perception of a place when the area is observed (personal experience). This identity of a place is connected to a certain attachment to the area due to some symbolic meaning (Hague & Jenkins, 2005:58). This symbolic meaning leads to certain unique characteristics that define a place. These characteristics that are found to be unique to the setting should be conceptualised during the initial stages of the place-making process (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch, 2013:146). Unique characteristics can include inherited resources, history, culture and potential aesthetic values of a space (Schofield & Szymanski, 2011). Conceptualising the unique identity of a place helps place-makers understand the space that they desire to change into a place (Hague & Jenkins, 2005:58).

#### **2.5.4.3 Supportive role players**

Building partnerships with various sectors, levels of local government and different missions, allows for the process of place-making to create relationships with different cultural leaders and improved public participation (Røe, 2014:503). The formation of strong bonds with various stakeholders promotes the level of support and improves the potential to reach success (Lepofsky & Fraser, 2003:138).

When the public is supportive and willing - ideas, experiences and reflections in terms of the process can be shared, increasing the possibility of success of such a place-making effort (Røe, 2014:503). Public participation plays a vital role in gaining support from the public (Hague & Jenkins, 2005:62). This step includes the local government, as they play an important role within a society. In terms of finance, the private sector supports the process of place-making by providing investments that provides the process with an opportunity to be implemented (Hague & Jenkins, 2005:60). Without these financial resources, the process should explore other options to obtain finance.

Thus, by following these steps of success, one should be able to create a place in which pride can be restored and inhabitants of a setting can represent their area, using unique inherited characteristics, allowing them to experience a more liveable environment (Arefi, 1999).

Place-making refers to the multi-dimensional process during which inhabitants of an area tend to understand, reconstruct and improve their daily environment (Schneekloth & Shibley, 1995). The inhabitants aim to ultimately empower themselves with the necessary knowledge to act on their specific needs, especially those who are in direct contact with the space on a daily base. The main goal is to create a certain sense of belonging within members of the community to 'make' a place. As previously mentioned, place is space endowed with unique meaning and values, which entails that places cannot be duplicated (Silberberg *et al.*, 2013:34). These underlying meanings associated with a place attract certain feelings and activities including entertainment, pleasure, reflective emotions and respect for cultural diversity. In general, place-making explores the interaction between humans, their surroundings as well as different individuals when visiting a specific setting (Markusen& Gadwa, 2010:07).

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Space is an objectively observed uniform setting that can be duplicated. This concept is described by means of mathematical-, geographical- and planning/design perspectives by various authors. Furthermore, space is understood by means of different views (e.g. relational, absolute, physical, social, real, mental, abstract and differential views) paving the way towards grasping the concept of place. As discussed within this chapter, place is space with loaded meaning, adding value to the setting. Place is observed by means of subjective human experience. This concept includes facets of aesthetic qualities, being more production-orientated, focused on processes and ultimately being seen as meaningful. These components reveal reasons for the complex nature of place-making. Place-making refers to the manner in which a society tends to represent, reproduce and renovate their daily surroundings. Ultimately, the importance of this chapter is the inclusion of participants within a setting on each level of the place-making process, in order to create an authentic, unique place in which the society can experience a strong sense of belonging and pride.

Public participation is found to be important within place-making, as it provides for an inclusive view of the perspectives of societal members using and observing a place. In the next chapter, the main idea is to illustrate how theoretical planning paradigms moved

towards a more participatory nature where people are actively role-players in shaping the spaces in which they live based on consensus of various role-players.

# CHAPTER 3 PLANNING THEORY: TOWARDS A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

## 3.1 Introduction

Planning theory can be conceptualised as the combination of attributes, including the segments of reality that describes the building blocks and functionalities of theory (Allmendinger, 2002:01). Friedmann (2008) defines planning theory as a systematic approach that reports on the planning practices exercised within a certain city or region. He (Friedmann, 2008:249) further suggests that planning does not necessarily have to be defined. Planning theory can be seen as a multi-faceted part of the planning process – suggesting a combination of different worldviews - as it not only exists in a dynamic state, but also allows opportunity for necessary action. Theory thus informs and motivates planners to contribute to uplifting their physical environment and involving the local inhabitants of potential change within their midst (March, 2010:109). Middleton (1987:09) views the town or city as humankind's greatest collaborative achievement. According to Gunder (2010:301), each human settlement possesses a defined physical form and function inherently part of the process of planning. Planning is a process that includes the systematic and continued use of diverse knowledge and predictions in terms of urban development (Harris, 2000:309). Planning and decision making processes with regard to urban development should have a participatory nature, meaning that all members should be informed and involved (Hague & Jenkins, 2005:53). Participation should be part of the planning system in society. Planning in this case means involves processes set by local governments to optimise public and private sector involvement. Participation in planning processes has not always been a priority in planning as illustrated by the development of planning theory.

This chapter seeks to give an overview of how planning theory has changed over time towards a more inclusive approach. Various planning paradigms are chronologically discussed in the chapter, including Blueprint-, Systems-, Advocacy- and Communicative planning theory. With the discussion of each paradigm special attention is paid to the interface between the role players, such as the planner as expert, government as decision maker, and the public to illustrate how the involvement and role of the public increased over time while the role of planners as experts decreased.

### *Planning history*

In order to grasp the theory of planning, the history of planning through the ages should be considered. This entails the growth from decision making from a top-down to a bottom-up approach in which participation of the public plays an integral role. In the early years of planning, Sir Ebenezer Howard proposed his Garden Cities model in which he strived to provide a solution for undesirable living circumstances and quality of life during the Industrial Revolution in London (Allmendinger, Chapman & Chapman, 1999:91). He suggested that less dense cities should be created in which the benefits of both the city and the countryside should be combined. Each of these cities was supposed to be self-sufficient entities (Hall, 1996). He suggested that other cities have to be developed after a certain population density had been reached by the initial city, following the same model. This model soon became popular under town planners and designers and became a blueprint for guiding urban and regional development. The state pronounced the idea of blueprint planning as a solution in terms of progressing communities in London (Allmendinger, Chapman & Chapman, 1999:91).

Even though the idea of the Garden city model was to promote freedom and co-operation (LeGates & Stout, 2011), participation in terms of the decision making process was limited. According to Friedman and Garner (1970:51), the Industrial Expansion Act (1968) set certain objectives that were conceptualised to promote efficiency in terms of profitability. However, it entailed that a blueprint plan should be compiled and adhered to in order to achieve maximised financial benefits in terms of development. This act implies that decision making should remain with government and main stakeholders, further limiting the level of participation of the public as the government's power was at stake if the public was involved in the decisions with regard to planning. Planning is thus formally rooted in a top-down and bureaucratic system.

### *Planning Paradigms*

Paradigm shifts are important for the survival of a society. The bureaucratic nature of initial planning theory made such paradigm shifts inevitable. Although there were more micro-shifts in terms of planning theory, the four paradigm shifts that proved most prominent in planning include: (i) *Blueprint planning theory*, (ii) *Systems planning theory*, (iii) *Advocacy planning theory* and (iv) *Communicative planning theory*. The following section will provide more insight on each paradigm as this chapter will further explore the (a) role of the government,

(b) role of planners, (c) role of public as well as the (d) interface between the government, planners and public in planning.

### **3.2 The first paradigm: Planning as a blueprint model**

Faludi (1973:131) describes blueprint planning as an approach in which planning agencies operate programmes in order to reach certain fixed outcomes. Blueprint planning is thus connected to an approach that accomplishes certain fixed end-state plans, also known as master plans (Lane, 2005:288).

#### **3.2.1 Theoretical content**

When exploring the work of Ebenezer Howard and Patrick Geddes (Hall, 1996) it is discovered that these two thinkers, are mostly connected with influential writings on planning theory, especially in the initial stage known as “blueprint” planning. Howard lived in a rapidly growing, industrialised urban environment in London and was the founder of the Garden City model. As previously stated, this model strived to decentralise the industrial area, developing a new town around decentralised parts. Howard’s vision for this model was to create a healthy, viable environment that ought to be integrated with employment opportunities. Thus, his concept was to integrate the assets of both town and country in a single development (Lane, 2005:287). Figure 3.1 shows that the initial idea behind the Garden City concept was to encompass both the benefits of town (e.g. opportunities, social entertainment and better financial support) and the country (e.g. aesthetic quality, fresh air and affordable housing). Supposedly, these benefits of town and country are merged in order to create an ideal, self-efficient Garden City (Town: Country combination).



Furthermore, Howard had the vision of a 'Social City' (see figure 3.2) in which transport systems (railways) are used to enhance integration and accessibility. These transport systems would supposedly connect settlements in order to provide opportunities in terms of employment and social interaction. Settlements were limited with regard to population size (32, 000 people) and had to develop a following Garden City. Therefore, accessibility was needed to better opportunities for inhabitants of a Garden City.

The influential work done by Geddes (1918) was dramatic and persistent at the same time, while it could be related to specific methodology and scale of planning. Focusing on scale, Geddes (1918) strived to explore certain settlement patterns (by means of human and environmental characteristics). He suggested that this exploration should contain not only the town, but also the entire region (Meller, 2005). Thus, Geddes suggested a blueprint and became the pioneer of regional planning.

### **3.2.1.1 Role of government in Blueprint planning**

State planners enforced this bureaucratic view of blueprint planning. During this approach the government had all the power, leaving no room for participation. Thus, a common consensus between planners and the government was important to command and control social processes in society (Lane, 2005:288).

### **3.2.1.2 Role of planners in Blueprint planning**

At the core of blueprint planning, the planner is seen as an expert with clear knowledge in terms of the study area. According to Taylor (1999:78), planners judge a certain setting in terms of its physical surroundings and aesthetic attributes. Thus, planners within this paradigm focussed on the design and physical end product of the area, rather than the convenience (Faludi, 1973:173; Healy, 2006: 8). Planners assume with certainty that the variables for each setting will be similar, as they pursue the idea that planning will fail unless an agreement can be reached with regard to certain objects and fixed outcomes (Lane, 2005:288).

Healy (2006:8) argued that the role of the blueprint planner is a managerial agent of a product – relating to the work of Clavel *et al.* (1980:348) – focusing on the physical shape and form as well as the morphology and spatial arrangement of the urban region. A planner in this paradigm thus had a fixed vision in terms of the future design and outcome of a settlement. Therefore, this paradigm contributes to the formation of a hierarchy - guiding the design, social processes and preferred action – exercising transformation from the top of the decision making ladder (Sandercock, 1998:87-88).

### 3.2.1.3 Role of the public in blueprint planning

As previously mentioned, the bureaucratic nature of blueprint planning limited the level of participation, as decision making was left primarily in the hands of planners and the government (Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:253). Within this hierarchy, participation was limited and was often used as a tool to manipulate public opinion, which was at the bottom of the decision making “ladder” (Arnstein, 1969). Participants within this paradigm were controlled and received limited opportunities to give their opinion in terms of development, as transformative components were forced upon them (Healy, 2006:09).

### 3.2.2 The interface between government, planners and the public in blueprint planning

While the public had limited access with regard to the decision making process, the government had the ultimate power within the blueprint planning theory.

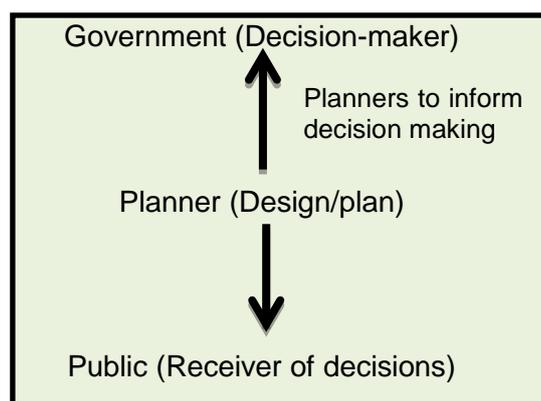


Figure 3-3: Interface between government, planners and the public (Blueprint planning theory)

(Source: Own construction of literature)

This ultimate power was often exploited, as the government had the decisive power. Planners were experts, responsible for the design of the proposed fixed plan, reporting on progress of the design on a frequent base to the government. Thus, the government controlled potential development without consent or permission from relevant stakeholders, communal members or planners in terms of the decision making process (see figure 3.3).

### **3.2.3 Critique on blueprint planning theory**

The bureaucratic nature of the blueprint planning theory in its end causes this paradigm to fail, as this hierarchical viewpoint serves as a reason for unrests within a society. As planners within this paradigm set certain objectives in terms of the outcome, they fail to include the environment, economic and social atmosphere of the setting. Implementing such objectives and guidelines requires a high level of control as Flyvbjerg (2001) states the fact that this requirement is the fundamental reason for failure. Due to the inability of planners within the blueprint planning theory to change or edit the proposed “master plan”, was an ultimate reason for failure, as limited regard were given in terms of site-specific political beliefs. (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000:907; Flyvbjerg, 2001:98). Due to failures experienced within the blueprint planning paradigm, an extension of the paradigm was needed in response to the dynamic nature of cities (Allmendinger, 2002:44).

### **3.3 The second paradigm: Systems planning theory**

As a counter-act, systems planning were developed from the more traditional paradigm known as blueprint planning theory. Contrary to the static view of cities according to the blueprint paradigm, Taylor (1998:59) mentioned cities as urban structures within a system, rather than a large designed object. Thus, the town was now seen as a “live” process, containing multiple functions and activities. The systems planning theory views cities and regions as ever-changing in terms of specific dynamic sections with complex interconnections found within this system (Allmendinger, 2002:44). Thus, this planning theory acts as an extension of the previous blueprint planning theory, as it changed from product-orientated to process-orientated in order to consider the complex nature of the city.

### 3.3.1 Theoretical content

Systems planner pioneer, Van Bertalanffy (Friedman, 1996:11), (a biologist) explored the need for a society to utilise systems in order to interact. This utilisation included the help of a manager (e.g. expert, facilitator, and moderator). The planner was still seen as an expert, joining with relevant expertise to develop a set of systems to understand the complexity of a city.

In 1960, the view-point of planning changed, as it evolved from blueprint planning, into systems planning. According to Ratcliffe (1981:117), the aim of town planning within the system view is to analyse the dynamic dimensions within the process of planning. The appearance of these systems is associated with the prediction of outcomes in terms of planning models (Allmendinger, 2002:44; Friedman, 1996:11). Thus, systems planning theory aims to control, monitor and a level of organisation with regard to the distribution of space (Taylor, 1998:43, 59, 62; Allmendinger, 2002:46). Although this paradigm is an extension of the blueprint planning theory, planning according to this theory is more strategic than static, as it aims to create a long-term solution with regard to the conceptualisation of challenges (Taylor, 1998:43).

This theory promotes social relations, as it informed systems of interrelated activities, meaning that this theory found itself in a constant state of change (Allmendinger, 2002:44; Taylor, 1998:62-63). Jane Jacobs (1961) criticised the manner in which town planning was conducted, as it forced certain characteristics on the city, supported by ideas of the human society. She also questions the viability of Garden Cities, originated by Sir Ebenezer Howard. Jacobs' study seeks to find reasons for decisions made by planners, as well as the unfair, unequal decision making process practised by the previously mentioned bourgeoisie (Jacobs, 1964:250). Furthermore, as a layperson, Jacobs strived to highlight the utter importance of social spaces where people are seen as a small-scaled, charming group of people, rather than the terrifying larger-scaled groups that is often found in larger cities (Hague & Jenkins, 2005:188). Thus, this inspired some notions in terms of planning in order to create various systems interrelated, in order to provide for different societal function of a city.

### **3.3.1.1 Role of government in systems planning theory**

In the systems planning theory, the local government remains the key role player in terms of decision making. Concerns in terms of power cause the government to avoid the inclusion of the public in the decision making process. The government sees public involvement as a threat, as resistance of the public may lead to political fortune loss. Thus, the final decision still remains with the government.

### **3.3.1.2 Role of planner in systems planning theory**

Planners within this paradigm conduct analyses and comply with the role as systems analysts (Taylor, 1999). Due to a shared consensus, planners now develop a structured plan, planning action and in its end creating a partnership with the local government and private sector which were caused by the redistribution of power. This approach to planning allows planners to be rigorously analytical regarding certain “scientific methods” to obtain a level of control by designing complex dynamic systems (Hague & Jenkins, 2005:78).

According to Faludi (1982:19), the planner was seen as part of an organisational board, observing the environment with its inhabitants to develop and discover an outcome for certain challenges. Thus, the planner needed to consider the character of a society, as it proved to be more complex than was initially thought (Paris, 1982:20). The need of other relevant expertise became increasingly important, as the city was now seen as a dynamic system (e.g. transportation systems and social systems) (Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:104). This paved the way for including experts from other disciplines. In order to organise the various complex systems in towns and cities, planners felt the need for collaboration.

As planners play the role of a technical expert, collaboration with other expertise was regarded as important to design creative solutions as counter-act to challenges (Ratcliffe, 1981:116). Planners in this sense became more flexible in terms of their vision and the way they guided development - with the help of other experts (Taylor, 1999).

### 3.3.1.3 Role of public in systems planning theory

Ultimately, this paradigm strives to include only activists who will fall under the local government (Ratcliffe, 1981). This group of activists are expected to resolve conflict among members of the society by accommodating their ideas, but suppressing opposition parties in terms of decision making (Fagence, 1977:106). When the group decides on the level of compromise in terms of the plan, the design is implemented. In some cases the needs and desires of the community are postponed until the decision is cancelled, or until the community violently protest against the choice.

### 3.3.2 The interface between government, planners and the public in systems planning

As the systems planning theory is seen as an extension of the blueprint planning system, decision making still remain primarily at the government.

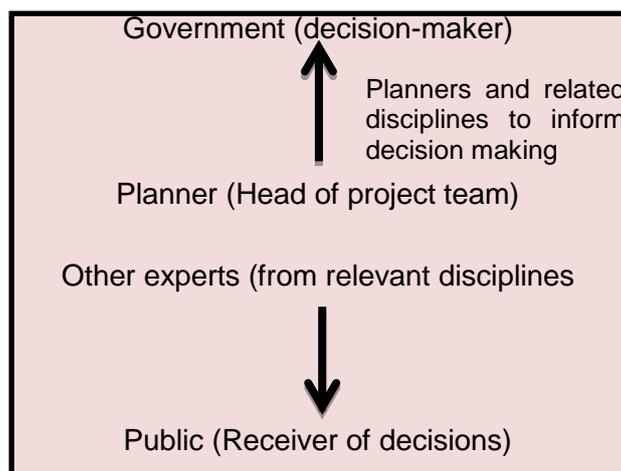


Figure 3-4: Interface between government, planners and the public (Systems planning theory)

(Source: Own construction of literature)

The paradigm shift is understood as a movement from a product-orientated approach to planning, towards a process-orientated approach. Planners are seen as technical experts and heads of the design project, which collaborate with other relevant disciplines to design certain systems. These systems are used in order to organise the local society. Thus, the

local society remains the receiver of decisions instead of being part of the decision making process (see figure 3.4).

### **3.3.3 Critique on systems planning theory**

This paradigm refrained to the consideration of disadvantaged groups' interests, as it only gave attention to the government, planners and relevant disciplines (expertise) (Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:32). In some cases, the society feel disregarded in terms of involvement and protest against decisions made by the government (Cambell & Fainstein, 1998:9). According to Ratcliffe (1981:268), the main criticism of the systems planning theory is that it is experienced as a flexible, ineffective decision making process that excludes public participants. Political, social, and economic influences received limited consideration in spite of the dynamic realities of a city. (Ratcliffe, 1981:265; Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:32)

This often resulted in ill-planned, still bureaucratic societies, failing to include participants. Due to unrests in Europe, a third paradigm shift was needed in terms of planning theory. The systems planning theory decreased in popularity, as the loss of local government's political fortune and power became inevitable.

### **3.4 The third paradigm: Advocacy planning theory**

Previously discussed, the systems planning theory became more flexible in terms of its vision, but still embraced a proposed fixed action. Although this theory was considering societal members by means of accommodating their ideas, this was still as top-down approach in terms of decision making (Ratcliffe, 1981:265; Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:32). Therefore, a shift towards a more democratic theory was necessary. This implies that participants within a planning process needs to be more involved. The discussion of this paradigm strives to acknowledge the level of participation although still separated by professional knowledge with regard to decision making (Hendler, 1999:60).

### **3.4.1 Theoretical content**

As the late 1960`s approached, certain key aspects led to the need for a third paradigm shift. Hall (1996) discovers the reason for this change of viewpoint as aftershocks of the Vietnam War (Vietnam Solidarity Campaign) and the student protests in the United Kingdom. These protests led to the establishment of the *Radical Student Alliance* in 1966 (Weinberg & Walker, 1969:77). This alliance implied the freedom of speech with regard to social occurrences in this specific period of time (Halsey & Marks, 1968:117). This civil-rights movement led to the widely distrust growing in people`s minds in terms of experts especially on the field of town planning. Another key factor in terms of this pioneer view-point for the communicative planning theory came to terms as the systems planning theory came under discussion. This theory (systems planning) was believed to be a cover-up for local governments to dictate planning in whichever manner suited them best (Halsey & Marks, 1968:120). Thus, the legitimacy of military-based paradigm was questioned.

Peter Hall (1996) described advocacy planning theory as a theory that strived for the practicing of a bottom-up approach to planning. This approach entailed that the community of a settlement should also partake in the decision making process, by the help of the planner. Planning was now seen as meaningful worth regards to the political processes, as it was previously in a state of neglect. Advocacy planning (Davidoff, 1965) tend to integrate the interests of disadvantaged groups` within the pluralistic society (Hendler, 1999:60)

#### **3.4.1.1 Role of government in advocacy planning theory**

In a democratic society, the role of the government needs to decrease in importance. The government in the advocacy planning should include the society within the decision making process instead of excluding. This entails more than mere admission of societal members to raise their opinions, but emphasise the need for the society to be involved. Thus, the role of the government changed in terms of public involvement. (Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:32)

### **3.4.1.2 Role of planner in advocacy planning theory**

In contrast with blueprint and systems planning theories, planners in the advocacy paradigm realised that a planner should not be seen as a professional expert (Hendler, 1999:60). Based on institutional conflict, this American structure included values of democracy, pluralism and legitimacy. By decreasing the role of the planner on the one side, had an empowering effect on the other side, as the planner now received more responsibilities than before. Responsibilities refer to the exercised activities of previous government officials (Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:16). The planner was also now seen as a non-official informer and catalyst, which were used to facilitate debates and in its end promote decision making. Thus, the role of the planner is to represent the interests of disadvantaged groups (Hendler, 1999:60), leading to the liberal decision making revolving around the idea of a consensus on substantial matters (Campbell & Fainstein, 1998:11).

### **3.4.1.3 Role of the public in advocacy planning theory**

Decision making played an integral role as part of this paradigm. Friend and Jessop (1977:53) wrote on this subject in their book "Local Government and Strategic Choice" in which they suggests that there are certain actors in planning with certain perceptions on regulations which controlled the level of participation as this was a decision-centred approach to planning. Faludi (1978:34) in some cases accept the Marxist view of control centred view of planning, as he and other authors, proof to be unwillingly to apply to goals of public participation. Advocacy planning, however, see participation as important, as it complies with the view of decision-control planning.

According to this view, planning does not focus all attention on knowledge of the object nor to the control of power, but uses existing knowledge and given power as starting point. These powers are gained by negotiation. Negotiation entails that the planner should communicate with at least one of the parties before planning decisions can be made. Thus, this democratic interaction revolves in the generation of "new" knowledge. Friend and Jessop (1977:110-111) argued that the community can only provide useful information and assistance to decision making, if the knowledge they share is relevant (Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:97). Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones (2002:110) explores the relationship between planners and the community in terms of collaboration. Collaboration is facilitated by means of the combination of interests that are represented by the facilitation of participation

(Albrechts & Mandelbaum, 2005:82). Interests according to this view includes accountability and empowerment and is generally described as a more efficient paradigm than those of blueprint and systems planning theories, as it strives to overcome bureaucracy by refraining to exercises involving unequal distribution of power and technocratic criteria.

### 3.4.2 The interface between government, planners and the public in advocacy planning theory

Healy (2003a:240) suggested that different interests had to be taken into account when designing and developing an urban structure. In some cases, the planner needs to make the policies in terms of planning acceptable for both the community and the local government to inform both aspects of legitimate planning theory (Albrechts & Mandelbaum, 2005:82). Thus, in order to prevent opposition of the local authority and policy-makers, planners need to reach a consensus with them to promote equality within decision making (Friend & Jessop, 1977:110-111).

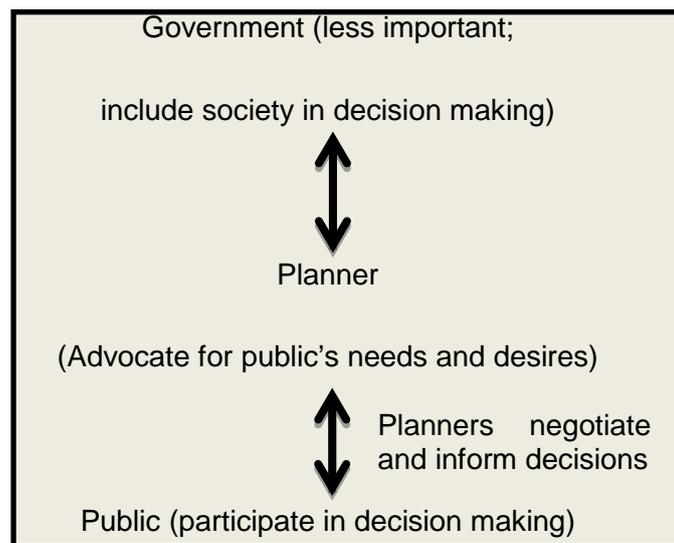


Figure 3-5: Interface between government, planners and the public (Advocacy planning theory)

(Source: Own construction of literature)

Planners need to reduce in importance for the aim of enhancing decision making process and the facilitation of public participation as well as the action exercised in order to comply with publicly agreed goals (Hendler, 1999:60).

Davidoff (1965) referred to the role of the planner as part of a philosophy that assumes that certain institutional arrangements should be complied with to reach maximised efficiency (Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:45)

### **3.4.3 Critique on advocacy planning theory**

Due to a more recent “communicative turn” the principles of advocacy planning were seen as a base for communicative planning theory, as advocacy planning can be criticised by its inability to promote efficient communication and collaboration in the decision making process (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:110). Writers’ express concerns in terms of the lack of “voice” of participants, as they can still be influenced by power distribution and political viewpoints. In influential research conducted by Davidoff (1965) and other authors (Lindblom, 1959; Etzioni, 1973), the whole concept of comprehensive planning is shaken due to the questioning of the idea of a single planning method and process. The durability is questioned as authors criticise the process in which planners focus on certain concerns including functionality, land-use challenges and technological issues within the advocacy planning theory, as they start to question the level of equality found in this paradigm.

The dependence on personal knowledge also acts as a challenge, as planners tend to return to bureaucratic decision making, relating back to the old-fashioned blueprint planning theory (Albrechts & Mandelbaum, 2005:82). Thus, an urgent shift had to be made in order to keep democracy within an urban society. According to a Marxist view (Hendler, 1999:286), advocacy planning theory creates uncertain feelings regarding participation as it requires high levels of class relationships that have to be informed by revolutionary social approaches to succeed, but which in some cases lead to the exploitation of participants (Campbell & Fainstein, 1998:11). This exploitation in its end leads to the injustice act of planners in order to gain information for the use of decision making and personal beneficiary purposes, shaking the roots of a democratic society (Hendler, 1999)

### **3.5 The fourth paradigm: communicative planning theory**

Although the advocacy planning theory promoted the establishment of democracy in terms of the decision making process, decisions still failed to be communicated and reasoned with participants. Planners still tend to rely on professional knowledge when making decisions

(Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:110). A communicative turn in terms of planning theory was necessary in order to promote participation. The communicative planning theory will be discussed in the following paragraphs. This discussion relies on the change towards a more interpersonal and inclusive process. This process suggests that consensus should be reached amongst all involved role players in terms of the preferred action (Taylor, 1999:339).

### **3.5.1 Theoretical content**

A recent shift towards planning came about due to the critique and outdated trends of advocacy planning theory. Campbell and Fainstein (1998:12) wrote about the changing role of the planner in terms of a communicator instead of a facilitator. As this is quite a young field, reaction was given to the lack of focus on public interest in previous theories. As the society shifted towards democracy, the need came along to have a more negotiated approach towards planning theory in which the outcome can be bargained on order to keep all role players involved, active and satisfied with the progress of the planning process (Bengs, 2005:06). Creating opportunities for the members of the community, ultimately leads to empowerment, progressing into an improved sense of responsibility towards the society's direct surroundings, due to the meaningful use of participation (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:26).

Thus, a new paradigm towards planning theory was born, known as the communicative planning theory (Taylor, 1999:339). Based on theories illustrated by pioneer thinker, Jürgen Habermas, collaboration is incredibly important as this is used in order to build a consensus of the made decision (Forester, 1987, 1989, 1993, 1999; Healy, 1993, 1996, 1997; Innes, 1995; Booher & Innes, 2002:221). Hague and Jenkins (2005:53) defines communicative planning theory as an interactive approach towards decision making which inclusively seek to reach a consensus as fundamental reason for action – were the transformation of a society in terms of democracy is crucial (Booher & Innes, 2002:221).

The building of consensus needs a facilitator who can communicate in an effective manner with the participants in the process of data generation in terms of the collaborating members' values, experiences and feelings when striving to reach a meaningful decision.

Patsy Healy (1997a) conceptualised some core ideas concerning the communicative planning theory. In this discovery, it is found that (i) the understanding of knowledge in its end, explores the social construction together with the application of practical reason and scientific knowledge are found to be equally important (Healy, 1992:143). Also, (ii) distinguishing between certain diverse forms of development and communication becomes increasingly important. (iii) The recognition of important native social contexts, as well as (iv) the conceptualisation of diverse needs and desires become necessary when attempting to empower participants. (v) Policy-makers and other role players need to be informed in terms of their level of ownership in order to provide knowledge and reason. Ultimately, (vi) a shift is required regarding the generation of mutual consensus - moving away from old-fashioned competitive interest bargaining methods towards a more collaborative approach. In its end, (vii) this paradigm strives to inform all role players of the connection between theory and reality, by actively involving planning in everyday lives (Taylor, 1999:339). These seven core ideas of the communicative planning theory can be described as the basis of this planning paradigm (Harris, 1999:102; Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:26; Healy, 1997a).

Theorists of this paradigm - especially key thinkers (i) *Habermas* and (ii) *Foucault* – explored the uses of knowledge to inform the communicative planning theory (Bengs, 2005:07).

### **3.5.1.1 *Habermas` view on communicative planning theory***

Habermas focused on understanding conflicting opinions in terms of the modern society highlighting the bureaucratic, depersonalised and formal notion in which modern societies dominate segments of societal members` lives (Bengs, 2005:06, Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:16; Ritzer, 2008:437).

The communicative turn, according to Habermas` theory of communicative action, provided a more philosophical view of planning (Flyvbjerg, 2001:89). This view revolves around the interpersonal role of planners as communicators - instead of the previous, autonomous and systematic thinkers (Campbell & Fainstein, 1996:11). Furthermore, this view motivated the participation of the public by means of interactive involvement with regard to the social and political environment any society.

Discovering this deliberative argumentative approach towards planning – which included theoretical and practical aspects – provided a planning process to simultaneously reflect on the process and improve on previous bureaucratic methods of decision making (Albrechts & Mandelbaum, 2005:247). Main critique on Habermas` work found his contribution to be difficult, inaccessible and abstract - often misunderstood and misinterpreted (Taylor, 1998:23).

### **3.5.1.2 Foucault`s view on communicative planning theory**

Michel Foucault`s work can often be associated with the “dark side of planning” – as it refer to the oppressive nature of planning (power imbalances) which obstructs the reaching of consensus among involved stakeholders (Gerring, 2001:111). Foucauldian planning history mainly focuses on the redistribution of power, as this aspect attempts to control the society, by setting certain regulations and legislation in order to eliminate power imbalances (Patsy Healy, 2003:106; Hillier & Healy, 2010:142). In work conducted by Fischler (2000) he suggest “little things” that contribute to the improvement of planning by working on the world-view of the Foucauldian planning history, which entails that planning processes should be regulated (Davoudi & Pendlebury, 2010:632). This view is found everywhere, as the poor seem to get poorer and living conditions worsen every day (Campbell & Fainstein, 1996:237; Hillier & Healy, 2010:255). Even though regulations are seen as the “dark side of planning”, the Foucauldian notion strives to justify planning by learning from previous, more bureaucratically rooted mistakes in order to build a better future with the attention on freedom (Ashenden & Owen, 1999:101; Gerring, 2001:111; Hillier & Healy, 2010:142).

### **3.5.1.3 Comparison between the views of Habermas and Foucault**

When comparing the work of Habermas and Foucault, it is important to note that both of these pioneer thinkers are working from a political frame of mind (Flyvbjerg, 2001:98). Habermas` work proves insightful in terms of the understanding of political ideas, but fails to grasp the actual day-to-day processes of politics. Foucault, on the other hand, proves to understand the notion of realpolitik, but fails to understand the general ideals of the process (Davoudi & Pendlebury, 2010:634). Habermas follows a more rational approach and criticises Foucault`s work to be more relativistic. Foucault also differs from Habermas, as he suggests that dualism can be limited (or avoided) by the use of contextualism (Lane, 2005:296).

**Table 3-1: Comparison of Habermas' and Foucault's view on communicative planning theory**

	<b>Habermas</b>	<b>Foucault</b>
<b>Point of departure:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Philosophical view on planning</li> <li>- Planning seen as argumentative</li> <li>- Rational approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dark side of planning</li> <li>- Understanding of realpolitik</li> <li>- Contextualistic approach</li> </ul>
<b>Aim:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding conflicting opinions of a modern society (Bureaucratic, depersonalised notion of societies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limitation of contrasting views (dualism)</li> <li>- Redistribution of power</li> <li>- Freedom</li> </ul>
<b>Role of planner:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communicator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing a set of regulations.</li> </ul>
<b>Public participation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interactive involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bottom-up approach</li> <li>- Equal and democratic</li> </ul>
<b>Contribution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Involvement of public</li> <li>- Reflection on decision making process (Critical reflection)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regulation of planning processes</li> <li>- Strive to deliver the society from bureaucracy</li> </ul>
<b>Critique:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complex</li> <li>- Inaccessible</li> <li>- Abstract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fails to understand general procedural ideas (systems followed to conduct planning)</li> <li>- Fail to understand critical reflection</li> <li>- Often defined as confusing</li> </ul>

(Adapted from Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000:907; Flyvbjerg, 2001:98, Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:16; Davoudi & Pendlebury, 2010:634)

In later writings, Foucault rejects the use of both relativism (knowledge exist in relation to the society's culture and background) and foundationalism (justification of statements according to basic beliefs) by grounding his work within contextualism (emphasise the importance of the research context). Foucault states that the law fails to give the necessary guarantee of freedom, equality and democracy (Albrechts & Mandelbaum, 2005:248). Ashenden and Owen (1999:101) discovered that the work of Habermas and Foucault as the discussion and questioning of power, modernity, ethics, democracy, reason and social action. Habermas conceptualised the idea of critical reflection while Foucault only discovered parts of this (critical reflection) notion (Kelly, 1994; Ashenden, 1999:102).

In terms of decision making, both Habermas and Foucault suggest a “bottom-up” approach (with careful regard to politics) towards a more moralist framework. Foucault is a “bottom-up” thinker in terms of planning and participation (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000:907; Flyvbjerg, 2001:98).

#### 3.5.1.3.1 Role of government in communicative planning theory

Within the communicative planning theory, the role of the government is conceptualised by Healy (1999:111) as a managerial body. This implies that the government works in collaboration with planners, private and public sectors, but manage and organise the manner in which the decisions are made and the development occur (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:26).

#### 3.5.1.3.2 Role of planner in communicative planning theory

Within this paradigm, planners facilitate the discussion by focusing on shared knowledge of participants by taking their interactions and relationships into account. Thus, planners not only rely on their own studied knowledge in terms of the predetermined outcome as they use to do (Hillier & Healy, 2010:255). Planner should gather an understanding of the experienced challenges by analysing communication methods and manners as well as their own response towards these proposed methods. Negotiating the outcome is another important part of the process, as planners now possess the important role of a mediator in order to attend to the needs of all role players, resulting in the best defined solution (Bengs, 2005:06; Davoudi & Pendlebury, 2010:632; Lane, 2005:295).

In order to deal with this possible decrease within social structure, the communicative planner should (i) criticise any party which attempt to exploit participants in terms of research or financial benefits, and should (ii) adhere to the ideals of democracy and (iii) always focus on both the concepts of public interests and political communities within the researched area.

### 3.5.1.3.3 Role of the public in communicative planning theory

The communicative planning theory tends to give more credit to diversity – cultural, political, race, gender etc. – in order to reach an informed, negotiated decision. All interested parties are included in the discussion, providing them the opportunity to share their hopes, dreams, ideas, experiences and feelings actively to give more insight regarding the communal concern within a community (Bengs, 2005:07).

Participation are also recognised as a political tool in terms of decision making, as it strive to bargain for the most suitable solution in terms of challenges provided by the government.

### 3.5.2 The interface between government, planners and the public in advocacy planning theory

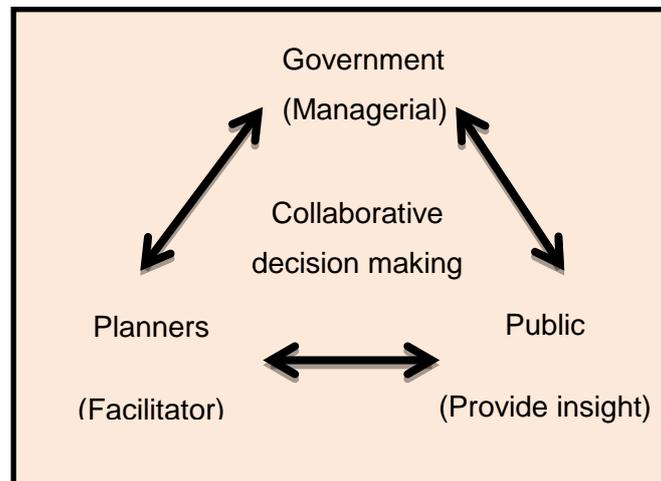


Figure 3-6: Interface between government, planners and the public (Communicative planning theory)

(Source: Own construction of literature)

Decision making within this paradigm focus on the discussion and debating of change within the process of planning, working collaboratively by means of participation when planning a shared future (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000:347). The government plays a managerial role in order to organise the process, the planner communicate and negotiate any development with both the government and the public. Furthermore, the public are part of the decision making process, providing insight of experienced issues, or concerns in terms of the development (Davoudi & Pendlebury, 2010:624).

As noted by Huxley and Yiftachel (2000:336) the process of public participation is to gather a mutual understanding of the world-views of participants to provide them with the necessary knowledge to empower them. This gathering of knowledge entails the use of inter-subjective knowledge in order to understand the society's background, considering the nature of made decisions and feelings towards certain subjects (Lane, 2005:295). After all the needs and desires are conceptualised and the planner now have a better understanding of the feelings and experiences of participants, the decision making process, which involve all of the role players, can be initiated (Davoudi & Pendlebury, 2010:632).

### **3.5.3 Critique on communicative planning theory**

Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger (1998) express their concerns regarding communicative planning theory, on the assumptions made by this theory that participants will maintain a positive attitude and open mind regarding the process in terms of the sharing of knowledge (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000:908). Fainstein (2000:455) describes the communicative planning theory as vulnerable, as it claims to promote diversity, openness, accessibility and freedom while conveniently lack to discuss the risking of moral values as economic and social aspects within the community are unconsidered. Some writers criticise the role of planners as they search for a subject of discussion, but fail to connect the discussion to a certain object (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000:907; Fainstein, 2000:455). Thus, the planner is still in the "lime-light" giving him/her a certain amount of power and elitism, leaving the participants (objects) with their initial concern (Albrechts & Mandelbaum, 2005:256; Flyvbjerg, 2001:100).

### **3.6 Understanding the paradigms**

The overview of planning theory illustrated the numerous transformations of planning as different and contrasting paradigms developed. It is especially the interface of the role players in planning (government, planners and the public) that changed significantly (Lane, 2005:288).

In the beginning of 1945, theorists and planners felt the need to build a theory due to post-war activities. The decision was made to develop a "blueprint" for planning, which were

initiated by Howard (Sandercock, 1998:87-88). This blueprint planning approach included the predetermination of a fixed view in terms of the outcome of a planning process. Within this approach, planning were conceptualised by means of top-down decision making, which revolved around the fixed view of action (Faludi, 1973:173). Participation related to this predetermined view, focussed on the manipulation of participants by using a bureaucratic movement – following a hierarchical system – in reaching their proposed outcome (Healy, 2006:08). Thus, the dominant figure in terms of decision making relied on only the government as it was conducted by state planners (Hall, 1996). In order to reach this suggested outcome, a general consensus had to be reached and understood in terms of the process (Faludi, 1973:173).

As the blueprint planning paradigm was criticised and became out-dated, a more flexible version was necessary. Systems planning theory was born in 1960, and conceptualised planning theory, by means of a top-down approach, but with the accommodation of segments of the society. In other words, only certain groups and individuals had a voice when it came to the decision making process. Within this paradigm, the planner was viewed as a technical expert, who conducted various tests and analyses (Ratcliffe, 1981:116). Participation in this technical paradigm entailed that only elements of the society were taken into account for instance those representatives who had power in the decision making process (Cambell & Fainstein, 1998:09). In order to reach the predetermined action, a collaborative relationship had to be established between the government, public and private sectors (see *Table 3.2*). When reaching the outcome, consensus between all involved parties need to be reached in order to build a mutual understanding of the process (Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:32). As time passed, the need raised to include disadvantaged groups in the process of decision making. The advocacy planning theory developed in the late 1960`s as counter-act to previous out-dated versions of planning theory (Ratcliffe, 1981:116; Cambell & Fainstein, 1998:09).

Within the advocacy planning theory, planning was experienced as the process in which planners' facilitated action, by means of certain publicly agreed goals (Healy, McDougall & Thomas, 1982:32). The role of the planner thus became one of a representative of the community. He/she have no elite position in terms of specialist knowledge in order to reach a decision (Hall, 1996). As planners strive to refrain from bureaucratic behaviour, power had to be redistributed among all role players. Still the dependant to knowledge, caused planners to

see participation as only an assistant within the gathering of knowledge in order to reach a decision.

**Table 3-2: Comparison of paradigms**

	<b>Content</b>	<b>Role of government</b>	<b>Role of planner</b>	<b>Role of public</b>
<b>Blueprint planning (1945)</b>	<p>Master plan using zoning regulations.</p> <p>Predetermined idea of outcome.</p> <p>Top-down approach.</p>	Government dominated	<p>Planner seen as expert.</p> <p>Conducted by state planner.</p>	Bureaucratic system used to limit and manipulate participation
<b>Systems planning (1960)</b>	<p>Vision is flexible but with a fixed action in mind.</p> <p>Top-down approach with the inclusion of the accommodation of societal ideas.</p>	Collaboration between government and private sector	Planners are seen as technical experts working with relevant expertise	Bureaucratic system used to limit and manipulate participation
<b>Advocacy planning (late 1960's)</b>	<p>Promotion of democracy</p> <p>The involvement of all-role players but still a distinction in terms of professional knowledge in terms of decision making</p>	Collaboration and in some cases competing with interesting parties.	<p>Role of the planner is to represent the interests of disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Planners have no superior expertise but should still possess a level of specialist knowledge</p> <p>Planners facilitate action concerning publicly agreed visions.</p>	<p>Participation are more accessible as it attempts to refrain from bureaucratic behaviour in terms of power</p> <p>Community only provide assistant native knowledge in terms of decision making.</p>
<b>Communicative planning (1970+)</b>	<p>Achieving shared values, understanding of feelings towards agreed planning decisions.</p> <p>Interpersonal and inclusive in the process of reaching a consensus in terms of the foundation of action.</p>	<p>Sharing of power.</p> <p>Negotiation bodies.</p>	<p>Planner seen as communicator.</p> <p>Protecting the views of participants</p> <p>Mediated between interests groups and members affected by decision making</p>	Regardless of outcome, discursive participatory is necessary in order to make the best decision, benefitting all related parties

(Hague & Jenkins, 2005:78; Harris, 1999:102; Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:26; Healy, 1997a)

Advocacy planning also attempts to promote democracy by working collaboratively in terms of decision making – by competing decisions with all other interesting parties (see *Table 3.2*). This involvement of all role players gives for a more diverse understanding of planning, but in some cases brings the distinction by means of professional knowledge about when reaching a decision on the action (Hall, 1996). As advocacy planning theory were the pioneer of participative planning approaches, planners still tend to return to bureaucratic methods, as they relied too strongly on the power of knowledge (Hendler, 1999:60). Another turn in planning theory came about as Habermas and Foucault`s work influenced planning. A somewhat more communicative turn had to be conceptualised (Harris, 1999:102; Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:26; Healy, 1997a).

Communicative planning theory has the idea to share values, understanding and feelings regarding the planning process and related decisions, especially as these relate to participants (Harris, 1999:102). This paradigm has the ideal that planners are seen as facilitators, listening to the needs and desires of a community. They strive to protect the community`s opinions by mediating interest groups and affected individuals in terms of the decision reached. Regardless of the outcome, participation is seen as important within this theory, as discursive participation plays an integral role (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:26). This decision should benefit all role players equally, including the community, to comply with the vision of democracy (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000:907; Flyvbjerg, 2001:98). Dominant attributes of this paradigm seeks to negotiate the best possible solution by sharing opinions and power with all role players involved with the process (see *Table 3.2*). Interpersonal and inclusive relationships are the core aspects of this theory as the theory provides the basis for a consensus in terms of the action that`s going to be followed (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000:907; Flyvbjerg, 2001:101).

### **3.7 Concluding remarks**

When looking at planning in terms of the past century, one can see that certain differences came about related to the physical aspects of the planning process. Many philosophers had various differences and similarities in terms of their concerns and ideas on how planning should be conducted. Ideas moved from a super bureaucratic approach (blueprint planning theory) towards a more diverse freedom motivated approach known as communicative planning theory. A direct correlation can be seen when looking at the political state of a

country and the approaches to planning that are followed. This chapter explored the role of the government, planner and public thoroughly, which allows the reader to gain an understanding of the shift that occurred in planning theory. This shift suggests the movement from top-down to bottom-up approaches.

Planners often return to the comfort zone of bureaucracy, as this attribute gave them a certain image of elitism in some way. They have trouble with participation, and in some cases prefer to design from an external position, only relying on expert knowledge. In order for planners to achieve success and comply with the needs and desires of a local community, they need to consider the basics of the communicative planning theory. Thus, a decision on the best possible solution in terms of the involvement of all role players should be made. In some cases, the planner should only be a facilitator of the process, listening to concerns and giving advice in terms of the general decision. Ultimately, the modern planner should tend to empower the community by assisting them and communicating their feelings to other role players, thus the importance of public participation, increasingly becomes stronger. As a participatory approach towards planning is suggested, the use of Participatory Action Research (PAR) is found to be appropriate for this study as this methodology allows participants to be an active part of the decision making process. The following chapter highlights the uses of PAR in terms of public participation and the manner in which it should be mutually beneficent.

## CHAPTER 4 PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (PAR)

### 4.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 2, place-making is a process that strives to empower local members of the community to change their daily physical surroundings to become meaningful (Schneekloth & Shibley, 1995). As part of the bureaucratic history of South Africa, in which stark economic and social realities still prevail (Siyongwana & Mayekiso, 2011:143), place-making is a valuable theoretical concept to contribute to the empowerment of previously marginalised communities in decision-making processes with regard to their spatial environment. Authors Trickett and Espino (2004:02) emphasise the importance of selecting planning methods to increase people's participation in decision-making (Trickett & Espino, 2004:02).

Participatory Action Research (referred to as PAR) is a methodological framework with similar goals as place-making by striving to promote empowerment as one of its core values (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010:5). According to Steyn *et al.* (2013:2) PAR criticises practices that involve top-down approaches. This methodology may be valuable to explore in spatial planning in a newly democratic South Africa in order to develop more inclusive decision-making processes. PAR thus seems to be applicable for spatial planning as an instrument to enhance democracy.

PAR is regarded as complex because it aims towards understanding and changing the social world (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:431). Understanding and change in this sense implies a collaborative process (Kalliola, 2009:293) based upon the involvement of all role players to empower people with knowledge and understanding to create change. However, ultimate change resides in the restoration of pride within a community (David & Sutton, 2004:29). Because PAR is not well known in planning research, especially in the South African context, the inclusion of a complete chapter on this topic is necessary.

PAR is rooted in Action Research (referred to as AR), a well-known social science method that is becoming increasingly popular (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). In order to explore PAR, this chapter will first focus on AR as its foundations. The chapter will further explore AR and

PAR in a comparative manner as these concepts are related but differ in terms of values, assumptions, praxis, benefits and risks. The discussion of PAR will include principles of PAR, types, values created through PAR and the role of the researcher and participants during the PAR process.

## **4.2 Action Research: the roots of Participatory Action Research**

PAR as a research paradigm is rooted within AR (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008:425). It is therefore important to understand AR before PAR can be discussed. AR is therefore explored in the following sections.

### **4.2.1 Origin and background of AR**

Kurt Lewin, described AR in 1944 as research that studies the conditions and effects of social action and research (Mouton, 2001:63). AR is fundamentally rooted in the aim to create social change. One of the prerequisites for social change is to include all role players within the problem solving and knowledge generation process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:29). According to Greenwood, D. J., and Levin (2007) role players from different academic and non-academic disciplines should be included in the process of AR. Including various role players implies that AR is a dynamic research process in which various view-points that revolves around a mutual topic, caused for a more reliable outcome (Rodriguez & Brown, 2009). AR is a scientific research process that strives to reach an outcome that is meaningful, valid, reliable and repeatable when conducted by other researchers and role players. In this sense AR is research that aims to create a better more just society. Furthermore, AR is known as the *Northern* tradition, as it is mostly applicable within developed countries.

#### **4.2.1.1 The Northern tradition**

The Northern tradition developed in America in 1940 by Kurt Lewin, who discovered the need for a new type of research considering social change. AR is regarded as the Northern Tradition, as it suggests that researchers and participants should be co-partners within any academic study. The Northern tradition is mostly practiced in developed countries (Europe,

New Zealand, Australia, the United States and Canada) as it allows for non-discriminative action in terms of collaboration and decision-making.

The Northern tradition mainly focuses on the praxis of collaborative relationships and consensus among all role players (Greenwood & Levin, 2007).

#### **4.2.1.2 Application of AR within the Northern Tradition**

European studies conducted in 1997, discovered the use of children and youth to generate creative ideas when working in collaboration. Horelli (1997:105) mentions the use of collaborative methods when working with children as part of an innovative process in which consensus can be reached in terms of the development of an urban environment. The study was conducted within a Developed Country, by means of the use of participants from both poor and affluent backgrounds. Consensus was reached using a non-discriminative approach in terms of races, age, gender, class and ethnicity. This study initiated the development of AR as an equal collaborative process in the Northern hemisphere.

#### **4.2.2 Definition of AR**

While there are numerous definitions for AR, a few of the important definitions are mentioned in the following section.

##### **4.2.2.1 AR in the 1940's:**

- John Collier (1945)

The oldest definition of AR is discovered as part of John Collier's (1945) work in which AR is described as self-sufficient and focussed upon local culture and language with regard to the community's needs while conducting research in a non-directive manner. The core concepts used to define AR here include the idea of mutual interest in terms of research, collaboration within the community and the involvement of different disciplines.

- Kurt Lewin (1946)

Kurt Lewin defined AR as a process or spiral of steps, each forming part of a circle of planning, action and the findings of facts about the outcome of actions. In addition to this Lewin defined AR as the planning of a process that incorporates both the knowledge of “insiders” and “outsiders” - meaning that both local and academic knowledge should be used, when solving complex situations. This trans-disciplinary approach to problem solution focused on social change as the main outcome of the process.

#### **4.2.2.2 AR in the 1980's:**

- Kemmis and McTaggart (1988)

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988:01), AR can be defined as a collaborative and self-reflective process that involves participants found within a certain social setting in which all strive to improve their daily lives and its surroundings. Participants attempt to understand their social settings by means of their own knowledge and practices with the help of an Action Researcher (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010:644).

- Whyte (1989)

Whyte (1989) suggests that AR is the discovery of problem-solving of mutual issues within a community, by fully engaging with community members. AR is here defined as meaningful research with researchers who are inherently part of the change process in finding solutions for their own problems, ultimately finding the best solution for the research context/study area.

#### **4.2.2.3 AR in the 1990's:**

- Hart and Bond (1995):

In 1995, social researchers Hart and Bond (1995) defined AR as an educative process in which individuals are part of social relations within a community. AR is an educative process because it explores and emphasis issues/problems of a specific setting, while aiming to solve these problems by future interventions. Social relationships are viewed as important in creating change during the AR process, as improvement and a high level of involvement are the main concerns (Hart & Brand, 1995).

#### 4.2.2.4 AR post 2000's:

- Bryman (2001)

Bryman (2001:275) also defined AR in terms of relationships and emphasised the importance of the collaboration between “client” and “researcher”. In this relationship the researcher becomes part of the study field, which allows him/her to gather native knowledge and an understanding of subjective human experience within a specific context (Fisher, Prabhu & McDougall, 2007:18).

- Reason and Bradbury (2006)

Reasons and Bradbury (2006) implies the idea of a partnership, in which AR is defined as a democratic, participatory process that discovers the link between practice and theory, action and reflection and collaborative ideas to provide solutions to concerns that involved citizens.

By studying the definitions of AR over the decades (1945- present) it is clear that some core ideas remained consistent. These include: (i) *collaboration*; (ii) *the use of trans-disciplinary knowledge to solve problems*; and (iii) *the creation of social change within communities*. Apart from these concepts that remained consistent, progress can also be noticed in terms of the definitions (refer to Table 4.1). While AR focused from the outset on participant's importance in research by including lay knowledge to create change, it is not until recently that the idea of equal partnership between researchers and participants was emphasised. In the mid 1990's, Hart and Bond (1995) highlighted the lack of personal connection of researchers and participants. Bryman (2001) confirms that a researcher should build a close relationship with the study area and with the participants.

The collaborative, cyclical and dynamic nature of AR suggests a method that is not distinct from practicality but a process that is implemented. Principles for the application or implementation of AR in practice are necessary to integrate AR as social science within practical action.

**Table 4-1: AR: Progress in definitions**

1940+	1980+	1990+	2000+
<p>Incorporation of “insider” and “outsider” knowledge. (Lewin, 1946)</p> <p>Non-directive (Collier, 1945)</p>	<p>Participants use <u>own</u> knowledge while researchers assist them. (Kemmis &amp; McTaggart 1988)</p> <p>Researchers become inherent part of the process. (Whyte 1989)</p>	<p>Building social relationships: Between researcher and participant; between participant and wider community (Hart &amp; Bond 1995)</p>	<p>Researcher becomes part of the study field (Bryman 2001)</p> <p>Equal partnership starts to develop (Reason &amp; Bradbury 2006)</p>

(Adapted from various authors, Collier, 1945; Lewin, 1946; Hart & Bond, 1995; Bryman, 2001; Reason & Bradbury, 2006)

### 4.2.3 Principles of AR

While numerous authors have defined AR differently over time, there seems to be various principles that inform the application of AR. A synthesis from authors such as Collier (1945), Lewin (1946), Hart and Bond (1995), Bryman (2001) and Reason and Bradbury (2006) culminated in seven principles that underlie AR: (i)collaborative relationships, (ii)*trans-disciplinary knowledge*, (iii)*creating change*, (iv)*mutual learning*, (v)*uniqueness of context*, (vi)*integration of action and research* and (vii)*reflection*. These principles are the basic constructs of AR.

#### (i) Collaborative relationships in AR

Reason and Bradbury (2001) refer to AR as research *with* participants, rather than research *on* participants. This implies a collaborative approach towards research during which mutual support and encouragement can be expected while conducting AR (Seale *et al.*, 2013:484). When working in a collaborative manner, all role players experience self-development, as they contribute to the research during the formation of partnerships (Denscombe, 2010:128).

Collaboration involves the creation of partnerships that may vary within different studies with diverse combinations of role players. In terms of power distribution, all participants should be seen as equal, leading to the shared ownership in terms of the process (Gomm, 2004: 293). When establishing a collaborative partnership between researchers and participants, trust is created, and this in turn leads to more trustworthy findings (Seale *et al.*, 2013:484).

**(ii) Trans-disciplinary knowledge in AR**

A trans-disciplinary (see Figure 4.1) approach integrates academic researchers of different non-related disciplines (disciplines with contrasting research paradigms, e.g. natural sciences, social sciences, creative art and humanities) and non-academic participants (e.g. community members, managers, stake-holders) to solve a common research goal (Pohl & Hirsch, 2007).

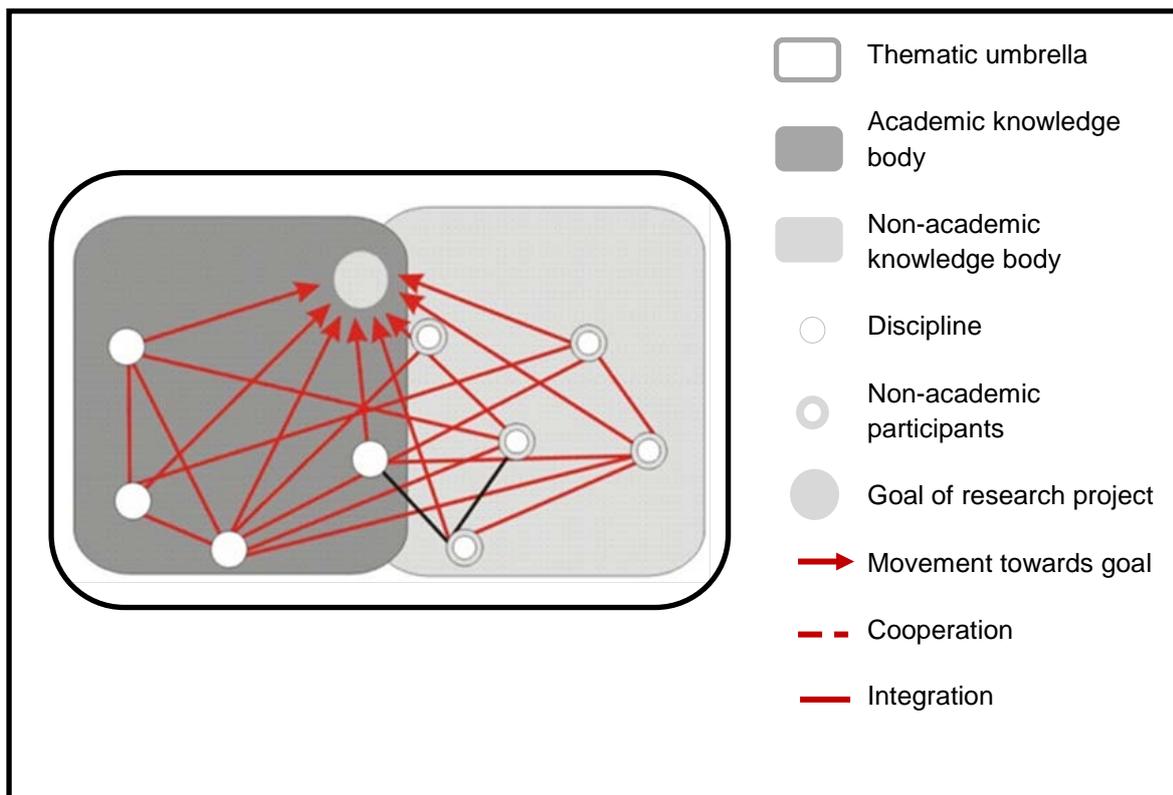


Figure 4-1: Trans-disciplinary Research

(Adapted from: Fry *et al.*, 2007)

This approach combines interdisciplinary with a participatory approach and results in new integrative theory and knowledge among science and society (Fry *et al.*, 2007).

### **(iii) Creating change in AR**

AR is a cyclic process through which social change is the outcome. If change is not created, the process should be repeated. Therefore AR is a process that is ongoing (Denscombe, 2010:129). Social change is promoted by means of the engagement of participants in the process on a personal level, leading them to solve their own problems (Patton, 2002:221). Thus, by teaching them how to react on challenges, the research will ultimately empower participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:23).

### **(iv) Mutual learning in AR**

AR requires the researcher's physical, emotional, intellectual and psychological strengths, as the consideration of these characteristics allows for participants to learn from researchers and to learn researchers in return certain native knowledge (Seale *et al.* 2013:483). As this research focuses on conducting research on participants for participants, each cycle of the process allows for role players to gain new knowledge, shared beliefs, commitments and hopes (McNiff, 2013:24). Therefore, both participants and researchers learn from the process, as they share their perspectives in terms of a mutual concern.

### **(v) Uniqueness of context in AR**

McNiff (2013:11) describes the core starting point of an AR study as the exploration of human nature. By human nature, the author refers to the morals and values found within a certain setting. Given the fact that societies differ in terms of worldviews, methods of thinking, political structures and backgrounds communities are not consistent and should not be assumed to be uniform (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010:647). Thus, when conducting AR, one needs to keep the historical, political and ideological milieu of the research context in mind, as this may vary in different settings. By gaining an understanding of the research context, the researcher grasps the inherited social character of a setting. This social character often implies the inherited knowledge as well as the level of collaboration among societal members (Denscombe, 2010:128).

#### **(vi) Integrating action and research in AR**

The word AR, which consist of two words, *action* and *research*, implies the integration of both concepts in terms of the study itself and way forward or implementation (Patton, 2002:220). Integration in this sense implies that the generation of data, participants and their surroundings, as well as the analysis and interpretation of data are all holistically woven together rather than forming separated steps (Reason & Bradbury, 2006).

#### **(vii) Reflection in AR**

Reflection is an important concept when conducting this kind of research. According to Seale *et al.* (2013:482) the process of reflection is crucial, as it allows for participants and researchers to reflect on challenges, providing support and encouragement for future stages of the research (McNiff, 2013:24). This principle allows participants to receive feedback on the progress of the process. In order to embody social change, frequent reflection is necessary with regard to the empowerment of participating members as well as the establishment of trust between researchers and participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:28-30).

### **4.2.4 AR typology**

AR can be divided into three types: (i) *Technical* type, (ii) *Practical* type and; (iii) *Emancipatory* type. Key thinkers with regard to the typology of AR includes, Grundy (1987), McKernan (1991:16-27), Holter and Schwartz-Barcott (1993:301) and Berg (2007:230).

#### **4.2.4.1 The Technical type**

The technical type is also referred to as the scientific or collaborative type. It is found to have a functional theoretical framework that is established beforehand and bound to a specific short-term period (McKernan, 1996:16).

**Table 4-2: Typology of AR**

Type	Aim	Movement	Characteristics	Critique
(i) <i>Technical type</i>	Change a current situation on a more <b>effective and efficient</b> manner. - Technical solution finding	Reflection-in-action	- Functional - Short term - Technical	- Too individualistic - Little to no regard to facilitating structures (Isolation of researcher)
(ii) <i>Practical type</i>	- Enhance <b>professionalism</b> of researcher by focussing on their <b>informed judgement</b> . - Practical solution finding	Reflection-on-action	- Understanding and interpreting of social situations - Political enterprise - Practical	- Individualistic -Lack of precision due to flexibility
(iii) <i>Emancipatory type</i>	- Development of <b>participants` worldview</b> in terms of <b>illegitimate structures</b> and <b>interpersonal constraints</b> , limiting their <b>autonomy and freedom</b> (Illegitimate constraints: Repression, domination and control ) - <b>Empowerment</b>	- Move towards conscious freedom, autonomy and social justice - Critical and self-critical reflection on action.	- Collaborative activity - On-going process -Political driven - Emancipatory - Responsive nature	- Utopian - Too controlling and prescriptive - Naive in terms of consensus within a group situation - Subjective

Adapted from McKernan, (1996:15-27) and Brydon-Miller *et al.*,2003:21

The main aim of this type is to test specific intervention strategies with the use of scientific methods to provide solutions (McKernan, 1991:17). The idea is to capture challenges and changing it by means of a more effective and efficient manner than before. Ultimately, relying on technical knowledge is used to generate a preferred outcome in terms of the planning process (Grundy, 1987). While the process is implemented, reflection is done individually during the course of the action thus, resulting in the term *reflection-in-action*. Within this type of AR, the researcher discusses his/her findings with the practitioner, who

communicate the proposed idea with the researched group (Berg, 2007:231; Brydon-Miller *et al.*,2003:22).

Relationships established within this type are only found between researcher and practitioner. The researcher thus plays the role of both collaborator and facilitator, while the practitioner provides certain knowledge for the researcher. This type is criticised mainly on the fact that it is too individualistic, leaving no room for empowerment of participation in the decision-making process, leading to the isolation of researchers, giving them a sense of ultimate power while freedom and autonomy of participants are limited (Brydon-Miller *et al.*,2003:23).

#### **4.2.4.2 The Practical type**

The practical type – also known as mutual collaborative or deliberate mode – is described in terms of a process during which the researcher and practitioner collaboratively discuss challenges, underlying causes, and possible future interventions (Holter & Schwartz-Barcott, 1993:301). This type of AR focuses on the informed judgement of the researcher, promoting the researcher's status to a more professional role compare to the other role players (Brydon-Miller *et al.*,2003). Furthermore, this type can be characterised by its understanding and interpreting of certain social situations, finding solutions by focussing on the practical application of information in terms of the process (Holter & Schwartz-Barcott, 1993:302).

The practical AR type is a more flexible design than the technical type due to its political driven character as it is more concerned about empowerment of stakeholders working under the practitioner (Berg, 2007:232). Practitioners tend to reflect on their own work and change, moving towards a *reflection-on-action* movement that takes place after the process has been implemented, leaving the risk that strong individualism can be seen as a disadvantage of this research type (Grundy, 1987:154; McKernan, 1996:17). Soon the need was established to involve all role players on more stages of the decision-making process (Brydon-Miller *et al.*,2003:25).

#### **4.2.4.3 The Emancipatory type**

The last type of AR known as the emancipation mode – also called enhancing or critical science mode – aims to integrate practise and theory in terms of problem solving, experience and change (Grundy, 1987:154).

Emancipatory AR wish to abolish illegitimate constraints known as repression, domination and control over participants by motivating collaborative activities (Berg, 2007:232). While attempting to improve social justice - with regard to the political atmosphere of a research setting - this type strives to empower participants during this on-going process. In order to empower participants, constant critical reflection on the process and self-reflection on action is required, leading to the sharing of results and experiences of all stages of research involved (McNiff, 2013:23).

In other words, emancipatory research refers to the research conducted with the aim of benefiting disadvantaged groups. This type of research attempts to assist practitioners in understanding collective consciousness by developing specific social critique (Holter & Schwartz-Barcott, 1993). It attempts to question the legitimacy of previous types of AR which gave little to no attention to the freedom and autonomy of participants and other stakeholders (McNiff, 2013:74).

Unfortunately, this type of research is sometimes criticised as being naive in terms of assumptions made by researchers (Holter & Schwartz-Barcott, 1993). Assumptions include the idea of consensus among all role players within a group as well as the notion of collaboration expected within such groups. In some cases, this type of AR can also be seen as utopian, as it expect unrealistic outcomes in terms of the process which often leads to subjective concepts in terms of the results of such research (McKernan, 1996:25). Subjective concepts can be established due to the nature of such research, which can often be described as prescriptive and controlling. This is in contrast with its view of striving autonomy and freedom (Brydon-Miller *et al.*,2003:21).

When exploring the three types of AR, the *technical*- and *practical* types (see Table 4.2) are not as empowering as the third type as the researcher in the technical and practical types is viewed as the ultimate source of knowledge and not an equal partner of the participants, as prescribed by the *emancipatory* type (Grundy, 1987:154). This eventually led to a stronger emphasis on power and the need for all-stakeholder involvement as extremely important (Berg, 2007:231-233).

Academic research within this type (emancipatory) - especially in South Africa (Berg, 2007) - should refrain from the previous ivory tower of bureaucratic knowledge used as ultimate resort and should rather be informed by emancipation, which strives to integrate practice and theory (McNiff, 2013:74). This implies that the role of the researcher and participants within the AR process became more close and equal that what was emphasised in the earlier developments and applications of AR.

#### **4.2.5 Role of the researcher in AR**

An AR researcher works in collaboration with community participants, which implies forming a collaborative partnership with local community members. Collaborative partnerships among researchers, stakeholders and community members are necessary in order to provide insight into the research context and solutions. The role of the researcher in these partnerships is not as an external observer (Grundy, 1987:154), but rather an active participant in the research process. Researchers should therefore move towards a more holistic approach, including a broader exploration of social and economic dynamics of a community to gain an understanding of the world-view of participants (McNiff, 2013:74). Close interaction among role players is important for researchers to work collaboratively with local community members to find suitable future intervention strategies. (Berg, 2007:230).

#### **4.2.6 Role of participants in AR**

According to Berg (2007), participants should share a common interest or concern in order to partake in the research. Participation needs to be voluntary as this provides a more insightful background on the context. Spontaneous discussion of issues or circumstances will be necessary to access local lay knowledge.

This role of participants as active partners in the research process implies that research should be conducted in such a manner that participants can relate with the concerns mentioned without making quality judgements about the discussed elements (Berg, 2007:228). Contextual information about historical and inherited knowledge is useful as part of the research. This emphasises that participants should be active role players in the process, constantly reaching consensus by working collaborative and conducting critical self-reflection as well as the sharing of reflection on experiences and knowledge gained with other role players. However collaboration can also have inherent challenges, as participants often feel dissatisfactory in terms of the extent to which they have autonomy and freedom in the process (McNiff, 2013:74). This paved the way towards the need for an equal role of participants in the research process.

Out of AR a more progressive and bottom-up method was developed, namely Participatory Action Research (PAR). However, while PAR in its most fundamental form is an offspring of AR, the PAR process is much more complex than simply adding “Participatory” to the word “Action Research” (Kalliola, 2009:293-294).

### **4.3 Participatory Action Research (PAR)**

In the previous section AR was explored which allowed for insightful knowledge in terms of the background of PAR (Gilbert, 2008:105-106). By discovering the challenges of AR (namely unequal collaboration; participants’ reluctance to expert knowledge and the unequal distribution of social justice), the need for a more equal collaborative approach developed where participants play a more prominent role. When attempting to empower a community, the lack of strong collaboration may lead to failure as consensus among all role players is inevitable. If consensus fails to be reached, participation may decline, returning to outdated bureaucratic methods of decision-making (Berg, 2007:233). Thus, the active involvement of all role players should be the primary focus when making decisions (Kalliola, 2009:293-294). Collaboration forms the core of PAR. The following section will elaborate on the development of this collaboration focus as the main aspect of PAR.

PAR in essence involves pro-active participation in which participants join in discussions (sharing ideas and experiences) to find solutions for their own problems, leading to equal partnerships among all role players in the process. According to Cohen *et al.* (2011:348) PAR became popular due to its advocacy of emancipation and empowerment in the establishment of social change within a society.

PAR is a dynamic process in which some radical transformations can be expected (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008). This dynamic process is cyclical in nature and entails a give and take relationship in terms of knowledge generation and sharing (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

#### **4.3.1 Origin and background of PAR**

The origin of PAR can be referred to as the southern tradition as it is best useful in oppressed, developing countries (Reason & Bradbury, 2006:3).

##### **4.3.1.1 The Southern tradition**

The Southern tradition developed in developing countries Latin America in 1960 and refer to the use of PAR (AR used in Northern tradition), as it considers the experiential studies of oppressed societal members. Thus this tradition focuses on improving the lives of societal members by means of empowerment, involvement and the gathering of collaborative knowledge. Contributions of Paulo Freire (1970) and Fals Borda and Rahman are part of the *southern* tradition. Emerging from the Marxist tradition, which implies that instead of generating an understanding of the world as we know it, the Southern tradition focuses strongly on change, and this should be promoted within the society (Reason & Bradbury, 2006:03). This change implies emancipation from the previous dependence on expert knowledge above practice, and seeks to promote the lives of previous marginalised groups by empowering them with local inherited knowledge to fight their daily challenges within their society and structures of oppression that prevent them from experiencing freedom (Freire, 1970:47). The Southern tradition is mostly practiced in developing countries (e.g. Latin America, Asia and Africa) as it allows for bottom-up action in order to empower participants within the process.

#### **4.3.1.2 Application of PAR within the Southern Tradition**

Winkler (2013:225) discovered within her study - conducted in two informal settlements, situated in Gugulethu, Cape Town – that PAR in some cases, does not benefit all the role players. Limitations prevented students to be fully equipped with the necessary resources in order to facilitate collaborative relationships (Winkler, 2013:226).

This research will be particularly interesting as it focus on participation. In a modern society, the use of public participation is crucial, as it allows all role players to join in the decision-making process. Rooting within its bureaucratic nature, South Africa is in need of this type of research, as it will give a certain voice to previous, oppressed inhabitants (Bank, 2011). The main idea of PAR is to empower local members of the community in order to explore possible intervention strategies for daily mutual challenges (Winkler, 2013:225). Within this research, this facet will be the essence of the study towards the changing of space to place. Using PAR will allow for this empowering cycle, collaboratively gathering knowledge and learning lessons, while respecting all role players` cultural background and diversity (Kidd & Krall, 2005:187). Thus, PAR is found to be more appropriate for this study, as it provide the research with more participation and collaborative decision-making Winkler (2013:226).

#### **4.3.2 Definition of PAR**

Numerous definitions exist for PAR of which the most important definitions will be highlighted in the following section.

##### **4.3.2.1 PAR in the 1980's**

- Whyte (1989)

Whyte (1989:368) defines PAR as a people-centred approach that focuses on advanced scientific knowledge and creating solutions for practical challenges. Within this definition, PAR is controlled neither by the client (participant), nor by the professional (researcher), but neither is out of control. Professionals and clients work together defining the main challenges, gathering data, analysis and action phases of the process – using appropriate tools in terms of research.

- McTaggart (1989)

Within PAR, participation should be seen as more than mere involvement. Participants should be part of authentic participation, which refers to including of people as the focus of the inquiry, research method, data collection and analysis (McTaggart, 1997). As found in some values conceptualised by McTaggart (1989), PAR generally seeks to improve social practice by changing it. This change can only be established if the community are self-critical, requiring people to explore their own experiences on an objective manner.

Within this definition PAR allows participants to generate their own evidential records of practice, theory and critical reflection in order to provide reason for their decisions to other interested parties (McTaggart, 1997).

#### **4.3.2.2 PAR in the 1990's**

- Reason (1994)

The creation of knowledge and action can be experienced as directly useful when working with a group of people (e.g. research in adult education and socio-political action). Leading to the aim to empower people in a second and deeper levelled sense - through the process of construction and understanding towards their own knowledge. Knowledge implies the understanding of complex situations in which their society are monopolised in terms of production and utilisation of native wisdom for the benefits of their community (Reason, 1994:328 cited in Crabtree and Miller, 1999:269).

- Reason (1998)

Berg (2007:223) suggests that PAR is a research field that is developed by combining different intellectual traditions. In definition, PAR can be described as a self-reflective, knowledge gathering process in which participants learn about themselves, others and their particular surroundings. This movement aims to connect inhabitants of a setting in order to improve collaboration, reflection, experience and participation (Reason, 1998 cited in Berg, 2007:223).

### 4.3.2.3 PAR post 2000's

- Babbie (2013)

Babbie (2013:341) describes PAR as an approach to social science that entails the study of people, where control is given to participants. This control refers to the purpose and preferred procedures conducted in the research, which is used as counter reaction to the previous bureaucratic view that researchers are superior in the hierarchical process of those they study. PAR strives to promote action and knowledge by means of an integrated cyclic and participatory process. This process attempts to steer exploration and unmasking of manner in which traditional dominant ideologies and systems shaped and oppressed thinking and proposed action Babbie (2013:342). Ultimately, this process aims to create intervention strategies in order to liberate previously disadvantaged groups from forces of poverty, oppression, repression and power imbalances Babbie (2013).

**Table 4-3: PAR: Progress in definitions**

1980+	1990+	2000+
Process controlled by both researchers and participants (McTaggart, 1989; Whyte, 1989)	Participants empowered to rely on <u>own</u> knowledge (Reason 1994)  Building of social relationships:  Between researchers of various disciplines; researcher and participants and between participants (Reason 1998)	Process controlled by participants – bottom-up approach. Revealing of social justice and equity; previously oppressed empowered to control the process (Babbie 2013).

(Adapted from Whyte 1989; McTaggart 1989; Reason 1994; 1998; Babbie 2013)

Thus, PAR is a process that actively involves all role players in which various participants discuss the same concern from different viewpoints (Fals-Borda & Rahman, as cited by Reason, 1998). While AR also emphasis this collaboration, PAR gives more prominence to empowerment of participants by allowing them to be more prominent and equal in the decision-making process. Consistency in terms of the definitions includes (i) *collaboration*, (ii) *empowerment of participants*, (iii) *trans-disciplinary knowledge*.

When comparing AR (see Table 4.1) and PAR (see Table 4.3) the main difference in terms of the process is highlighted by the level of collaboration (Whyte, 1989). In AR, the involvement of participants is motivated, with the aim of learning from the process (Hart & Bond, 1995). PAR in general is more people-orientated, as the definition changed towards a more participant-controlled process that involves all role players (Babbie, 2013). Thus, a move towards a more trans-disciplinary process is noticed. Although AR strive to integrate social science and practical action, collaboration and empowerment is suggested with the use of a PAR methodology (Bryman, 2001).

### **4.3.3 Principles of PAR**

A synthesis of authors such as Fals-Borda, 1991; Reason, 1994; Babbie and Mouton, 2008; Ozanne and Saatcioglu, 2008; and Kalliola, 2009 indicates that PAR is characterised by certain broad principles including (i) *collaborative relationship*, (ii) *trans-disciplinary knowledge*, (iii) *creating change*, (iv) *mutual respect*, (v) *empowerment* and (vi) *democracy*. These principles are subsequently discussed in more detail.

#### **4.3.3.1 Collaborative relationship in PAR**

As this principle is built on a social basis, collaboration is possibly the most important characteristic of PAR, as this notion gives opportunity for a partnership between change agents and participants during the process (Kalliola, 2009:298). This collaborative process can be divided in phases including the conceptualisation, planning, implementing and monitoring, conclusion, and feedback on results, frequent reflection sessions, future interventions, assessment and the validation of data generated. Collaboration is the foundation for all of these phases (Ozanne and Saatcioglu, 2008).

#### **4.3.3.2 Trans-disciplinary knowledge in PAR**

PAR aims to promote and enhance this local wisdom in combination with academic knowledge in order to find solutions for practical problems. Local generated knowledge refers to the wisdom, common sense and expertise of the participants in a certain setting

(Ornelas *et al.*, 2012:05). This information is of integral value to researchers, as it is used to discover the traditions and respects of the inhabitants (Trickett & Espino, 2004:11) and provide insight perspective for researchers on the concern raised (Akorn, 2011:122). Academic knowledge refers to professional expert knowledge within each individual discipline.

#### **4.3.3.3 Creating change in PAR**

The role of the researcher in PAR can be easily defined as an agent for transformation, whose core goal is to initiate, facilitate and on a later stage, implement emancipatory change (Akorn, 2011:122). Democratic partnerships with settings inhabitants are crucial when generating native knowledge (Trickett & Espino, 2004:11). PAR finds itself discovering wider forms of research, as action can be initiated, planned and created (Halkatti, Purushothaman & Brook, 2003:149).

#### **4.3.3.4 Mutual respect in PAR**

Respect for participants' culture and traditions are crucial for the success of this PAR process, as local interests should be kept in mind and intervened with research. Gathering information on the aspect of mutual respect provides for a better insight for both the participants' and the researchers (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:314; Ornelas *et al.*, 2012:05). In order to enhance collaboration within a PAR process, all role players should have respect for opinions and ideas of other. Therefore, all opinions should be considered and discussed.

#### **4.3.3.5 Empowerment in PAR**

PAR seeks to empower participants with the use of their inherited knowledge in order to enhance their social and physical environment. According to Babbie and Mouton (2008:322) PAR focus on the principle of empowerment, especially when working with previously oppressed groups. The PAR method not only focuses on research, but also wants to enhance social justice and community transformation within the study area (McNiff, 2013:74). Emancipation and learning are some of the ways in which PAR strives to empower a community (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008).

Emancipation in itself means that participants should be liberated by conducting regular self-reflection and overall revision of actions suggested by the transformation process. According to Reason (1994:329) most PAR projects focus on freedom and democracy, causing the process sometimes to be part of a political liberation movement. Fals-Borda (1991) mentions that learning is an important part of the empowerment process within PAR, as this aspect relies on continuous learning and develops an ongoing bond with the research (Ozanne & Saatcioglu, 2008).

#### **4.3.3.6 Democracy in PAR**

A democratic foundation implies that equality should be strived by the government with corresponding legislation that includes a non-discriminative approach towards decision-making (Bank, 2011). In a democratic foundation, the academic division between researchers and societal members is reduced. In such a democratic context, participants are seen as valuable partners and not mere objects of research. Thus, by establishing this mutual democratic context, the sharing of power creates a platform for equity and commitment (Trickett & Espino, 2004:11).

#### **4.3.4 PAR Typology**

While PAR is a cyclic process with limited guarantee for success, there exists typology to follow a meaningful process. Gilbert (2008:105-106) divides a PAR process in three types (i) *People-orientated*, (ii) *Power-orientated*, and (iii) *Practical-orientated* as summarised in the Table 4.4.

**Table 4-4: Typology of PAR**

	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Anticipated areas of change</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>(i) People-orientated</b>	People-centred process  Action-orientated	Achieving change  Research conducted by participants about themselves, for themselves	Participants actively inform and direct research	Used when researching cultural sensitive topics (e.g. disadvantaged communities)
<b>(ii) Power-orientated</b>	Research as counter reaction to power imbalances	Empowering participants	Participants role: Equal partners in the process	Hierarchical power relationships
<b>(iii) Practical-orientated</b>	Theory and practice are equally inseparable and iterative	Promotion of lives of disadvantaged (marginalised) groups	Change from academic (or theoretical) knowledge to applied practice.	Explicitly informed by political milieu and set of value

Source: Adapted from Gilbert (2008:105-106)

#### **4.3.4.1 People-orientated PAR**

This PAR type refers to the process of PAR as being people-centred, focusing on the fact that research are conducted on participants, by local members of the community for themselves. This element is found to be action-orientated, as it searches for previously marginalised participants to be actively involved during all stages of research by informing and directing all decisions made. In response to the focus on disadvantaged groups - Nelson *et al.* (1998) suggested that certain structures needed to be conceptualised and implemented in order to create a central vehicle for communication. This vehicle is used to guide the development, ensure collaboration and decrease participatory challenges. Challenges within a PAR process refer to the exploration of often sensitive topics related to a society. As each society differ from one another, this can often pose as a challenge due to its non-homogenous nature, - often found in disadvantaged communities- causing researchers to continue with their study without a predetermined expectation in terms of the outcome.

#### **4.3.4.2 Power-orientated PAR**

This form of research were created in reaction towards traditional formal models (bureaucratic-based research) found within education at first but, were soon noted to be useful in feminist research as well sociology (Gilbert, 2008:105). The uneven distribution of power and social inequalities also played a role in the creation of this research process, as research strive to deal with challenges concerning hierarchical power relationships (McNiff, 2013:74).

The importance of empowerment also became part of the PAR history. This included the establishing of partnerships and qualities associated with the formation of connections with inhabitants of the research area. Ornelas *et al.* (2012) suggests that a focus should be placed on communities with disabilities, disadvantages and the inability to generate social integration.

#### **4.3.4.3 Practical-orientated PAR**

While discovering the praxis of PAR, one should note that the inseparable nature of practice and theory plays an integral role within this type of PAR. Thus, it is important that both of these aspects should be acknowledged when finding facts, information and experiences (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:431). Researchers should refrain from focusing on simply one of the aspects, as this iterative process requires that research be repeated often to validate the knowledge gained (O'Leary, 2014:174). This practice is used to improve the lives of societal members, by changing academic knowledge into applied practice, ultimately promoting social circumstances within a community. Thus, explaining the reason for research conducted within a marginalised (disadvantaged) community. Working within a disadvantaged group can often lead to challenges, as the political stance found within this community can lead to the failure of the research (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:314).

When keeping the main elements established within PAR in mind, Ornelas *et al.* (2012:08) states that PAR uses new technologies and science in order to gather information for organisational purposes within a community. However, Trickett and Ryerson (2004) found that the main goal is not the data-gathering steps, but the collaborative management of a study (Trickett & Ryerson, 2004).

While the three types have subtle differences, PAR in general aims to integrate some of the focuses of all the PAR types. PAR focuses on the empowerment of people, while distributing power in society but with the aim to create change and implement community needs in practice. Clearly distinguishing between these types is perhaps not the best way forward, but rather to integrate the best of what all three the types have to offer in order to ensure the best outcome. While working collaboratively, PAR does not only create visible change e.g. change in the physical environment but unlocks intangible values in communities. These values will now be discussed.

#### 4.3.5 Values of PAR

PAR is believed to unlock intrinsic values in communities (Schneider, 2012:153). At first, authors such as Ochocka, Janzen and Nelson (2002) and Nelson *et al.* (1998) identified four values including (i) *empowerment*, (ii) *social justice and equity*, (iii) *collaborative relationships* and (iv) *mutual learning*. Later, authors such as Ochocka, Moorlag and Janzen (2010) and Winkler (2013) added a fifth value namely (iv) *respect*.

**Table 4-5: PAR Values**

Author:	Year	Value:				
		Empowerment	Social justice and equity	Collaborative Relationships	Mutual Learning	Respect
Nelson <i>et al.</i>	1998	▪	▪	▪	▪	
Ochocka <i>et al.</i>	2002	▪	▪	▪	▪	
Ochocka <i>et al.</i>	2010	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
Winkler	2013	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪

Source: Nelson *et al.*, 1998; Ochocka *et al.*, 2002; Ochocka *et al.*, 2010 and Winkler, 2013.

These five PAR values form criteria to measure the success of the outcome of the PAR process (Ochocka, Moorlag & Jazen, 2010; Ochocka, Janzen & Nelson, 2002; Kidd & Krall, 2005). (See Table 4.5)

A description of each of these values is given in the section underneath.

#### **4.3.5.1 Empowerment in PAR**

Empowerment not only refers to the sense of personal power, but also the deeper essence of positive change within the lives of individual community members. These values also emphasise the promotion of knowledge gathering, which will ultimately empower community members with the ability and right to share certain opinions in their community in terms of a mutual issue (Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Ochocka, Moorlog & Janzen, 2010:04). True collaboration assist participants to experience change in terms of stronger self-esteem, self-assurance, better control, voice and improved skills (Ochocka, Moorlag & Janzen, 2010; Baum, McDougall & Smith, 2006:855; Kidd & Krall, 2005:187).

#### **4.3.5.2 Social justice and equity in PAR**

Social justice and equity describes the manner in which participants experience the liberation from systems that used to oppress them. In this instance, PAR enables participants to explore and discover challenges that have a direct effect on their daily lives and allows them to act upon these challenges (Kidd & Krall, 2005:187). The focus of this value is to find an immediate solution in terms of experienced challenged in order to motivate change within themselves as well as their surroundings (Greenwood and Levin, 2007). This value allows participants to learn how to address and use power structures in order to discover their core need and challenges in order to understand the background of their experienced feelings (Kalliola, 2009:294). Discovering these elementary reasons for challenges, participants can now change the level of oppression they experienced in the past (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Ginwright, 2008).

#### **4.3.5.3 Collaborative relationships in PAR**

The third value namely collaborative relationships is found within a community which share and accept knowledge of other people, partaking and conducting research about them for themselves (Sherwood, 2010:133). This includes the collaboration and contribution of all role players, frequently corresponding on feelings in order to test the validity of the study. Discussing ideas and concerns are crucially important, as this aspect provides for a supportive dimension in terms of the research, which involves listening and hearing other members` ideas and concerns (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999; McTaggart, 1989).

This discussion of mentioned concerns motivates participants to actively partake in the process of decision-making, leading them to acknowledge, hear and respond to opinions shared by all other role players (Sherwood & Kendall, 2013:86). Thus, this value embraces the promotion of communication as it can be used to share power related to the decision-making process (Ochocka, Janzen & Nelson, 2002; Ginwright, 2008).

#### **4.3.5.4 Mutual learning in PAR**

In contrast to previous traditional views of knowledge, the fourth PAR value – Mutual learning – allows for all role players (researchers, community members, stakeholder etc.) to gather knowledge on an on-going basis. As the native wisdom of the community are important, respect should be given to all types of information shared and received (Ochocka, Janzen & Nelson, 2002; Winkler, 2013). Expectations are part of the learning process, as all role players gain an understanding towards the general needs, desires and outcome (Sherwood, 2010:133; Greenwood and Levin, 2007). Researchers learn to refrain from the predetermination of outcome expectations, whilst including the ideas of the specific community (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999). Thus, this process should be a collective learning experience for all partaking role players (Ochocka, Janzen and Nelson, 2002; Kidd and Krall, 2005:187).

#### **4.3.5.5 Respect in PAR**

In some cases, power distribution and respect can be described as certain traditional roles, embodied power, control over others and situations as well as the authority to make decisions. Freedom on the other hand refers to the power to make certain decisions in terms of personal, family related or community-based with the necessary respect to others (Gustafson & Iluebbey, 2013; Ginwright, 2008). When working with a culturally diverse group respect is even more important - especially when the research includes sensitive topics (Baum, McDougall & Smith, 2006; Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

When discussing these five values of PAR, the general idea is to establish awareness, respective behaviour and consideration for the diversity within the group. Especially in a

South African context – given the pre-1994 history of bureaucratic practices – researchers within PAR should embrace these values (Winkler 2013). Embracing and allowing these values to unlock during the PAR process implies certain characteristics of the researcher as well as participants. The roles of these two partners are now further discussed.

#### **4.3.6 Role of the researcher in PAR**

Ruano mentions in Whyte (1991:211) that the role of the researcher within the process of PAR primarily is that of a facilitator. This facilitating role is threefold as it includes (i) *facilitation of the general process*, (ii) *enhancement of communication* and (iii) *unlocking of knowledge generation* (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:315-316).

##### **4.3.6.1 Facilitating the general process**

The researcher guides the process of understanding and interpreting the concerns of both parties. Other responsibilities of the researcher include the organisation of logistics, monitoring and interpreting of the findings (Whyte, 1991:212; Babbie & Mouton, 2008:315).

##### **4.3.6.2 Communication**

Within the process of PAR, the researcher tends to be responsible for the facilitation of communication. This entails the arrangement of frequent opportunities for the communication of process related concerns/ideas (Winkler, 2013). Secondly, the researcher should create a platform for discussion in order to ensure the quality of communication. This platform include a spontaneous setting in which participants receive the opportunity to share opinions and ideas in terms of a mutual concern (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:213). Furthermore, the researcher should provide linkage between all involved role players (Whyte, 1991:213).

##### **4.3.6.3 Knowledge generation**

Within PAR, the role of researcher as knowledge generator is ultimately important. Whyte (1991:213) refers to the researcher as a facilitator with professional knowledge. This facilitating role of the researcher is used in order to unlock knowledge of participants, which

are native in terms of the context. This knowledge can only be obtained if the researcher focuses on the participants, motivating spontaneous discussions that are useful in terms of research (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:316). While leading the discussion, the researcher's role is to conceptualise topics of importance, still viewing the process as holistic (considering various opinions of participants). After this discussion, the thorough analyses of these gathered knowledge is necessary allowing the researcher to generate an interpretation of the data. Reflection on the gathered data is an inevitable part of the process, as this will allow for researcher to further act holistically. When this data analysis and interpretation is finalised, the generated themes need to be discussed with participants in order to validate the outcome (Kidd & Krall, 2005:187). The researcher should facilitate this action of reflection and provide feedback to participants. Therefore, the researcher is seen as facilitator in order to lead the process of knowledge generation (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:431).

#### **4.3.7 Role of participants in PAR**

The role of participants within PAR involves (i) *active involvement*, (ii) *shared responsibility* and (iii) *respect for diversity*.

##### **4.3.7.1 Active involvement**

The participants of a PAR process needs are “co-researchers” and their roles need to be accordingly with different manners of participation – relating to the amount of involvement of societal members (Rahnema, 1990:211).

For participants, the word “collaboration” means that the research is conducted by them, giving them a certain sense of ownership over the project (Babbie & Mouton, 2008). Collaboration are often seen as the most important facet of PAR projects, as this promote democracy, empowerment, mutual respect, involvement, discovering of local knowledge and planning of implementation and monitoring steps (Chesler, 1991:762).

#### **4.3.7.2 Shared responsibility**

The role of shared responsibility is suggested by Babbie and Mouton (2008:317). Participants contributing to research have the responsibility to join in discussions spontaneously. Each participant should share his or her own opinion related to a mutual concern. Subsequently, the responsibility of participants is to respect the opinion of other participants. Ultimately, a consensus needs to be reached in a PAR process. This process of knowledge gathering can often be complex, as participants may have strong individual opinions a collaborative approach needs to be followed still respecting the views of other (Fals-Borda, 1991:05). Therefore, this shared responsibility refers to the fact that a spontaneous discussion in terms of native knowledge – free of judgement - needs to be practiced by participants.

#### **4.3.7.3 Respect for diversity**

The process of PAR can potentially be challenging due to its application within a cross-cultural setting. Disrespect among different cultures and diversity, may lead to meaningless results with limited credibility. Mistrust can be created among participants towards researchers in the case were respect is not practiced (Damos, 2014).

Diversity is more than mere differences among participants and researchers. One should not assume that norms and values are homogenous, as community and individual agendas influence the success of collaboration and the research process (Trickett & Espino, 2004:02; Damos, 2014).

According to David and Sutton (2004:29) participants within a PAR process, should share a common interest or concern towards a certain topic, but with different viewpoints. Viewpoints on age, gender, religion, race or political views may be diverse (Fals-Borda, 1991:05). These different aspects lead to a more insightful background of the shared concern. Respect for culture and sensitivity towards other participants and role players is important, as this attribute will allow discussions to happen spontaneously without fear of judgement.

This role of the researcher and participants as described above are more that of an n equal partnership. The roles and interaction between the two partners (researcher and participants) is complex and various challenges may arise of which the researcher should take cognisance. The following challenges remain the most important ones to overcome.

#### **4.4 Challenges of PAR**

Challenges with regard to PAR include: (i) *time consuming process*, (ii) *subjectivity of PAR*, (iii) *unpredictable nature of PAR* and (iv) *limited guarantee for successful change*.

##### **4.4.1 Time consuming process**

A PAR process is a time-consuming type of research, requiring a great deal of labour and academic knowledge. Researchers conducting research often struggle to find their point of departure in terms of their study (Chesler, 1991:757).

##### **4.4.2 Subjectivity of PAR**

A PAR process values the use of objectivity. Unfortunately with the closer bond established between researchers and the researched this objective view, turns into subjective (Allison & Rootman, 1996). Although decision-making should include all role players, researchers can sometimes steer the outcome with regard to personal experiences, risking the validity of the research (Trickett & Espino, 2004:02). In order to overcome this matter, scientific principles should still be adhered to, even in difficult situations were a strong bias and subjective feelings are developed in terms of the research setting's participants (Chesler, 1991:757).

##### **4.4.3 Unpredictable nature of PAR**

The process of PAR can often be described as unpredictable. This challenge entails that researcher should refrain from predetermined outcome expectations. As each context and community is unique, the phases of the process will vary in each different. The manner in which participants volunteer to participate fluctuates from setting to setting. Therefore, the researcher should consider the social atmosphere of the research area (Trickett & Espino,

2004:02). Unforeseen social events need to be considered (e.g. funerals, weddings, political unrest etc.) as limited control over these activities is experienced by both researchers and participants. In order to overcome this challenge, persistence and dedication to the research is ultimately important (Damos, 2014).

#### **4.4.4 Limited guarantee for successful change**

As PAR is mostly practiced in within the Southern tradition – focusing on previously marginalised groups – there is often limited guarantee for success in terms of the process (Winkler, 2013:226). This limited success relate to the previous (and current) exploitation of participants in terms of research. Exploitation refers to the use of participants for the gathering of data without realised outcome and tangible benefit (Damos, 2014). Participants of oppressed groups in most cases tend to be sceptical towards research - as such processes create empty expectations. Subsequently, participants tend to lose interest in the research and may cause the research to be unsuccessful (Kalliola, 2009:294). Therefore, limited guarantee for success is a challenge when conduction a PAR process. In order to increase this guarantee, transparency and frequent feedback is inevitable for the success of such a process (Winkler, 2013:226).

#### **4.5 Integration of core ideas**

##### **4.5.1 AR versus PAR**

Throughout the exploration of these methods, certain characteristics seem to prove that these two are not inseparable. Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006:431) emphasises the differences between them (Elden & Chisholm, 1993). Slight differences within the history of these approaches are observable, however remarkable changes are found when exploring the outcome of each (Fals-Borda, 1988:85). Main differences between AR and PAR include differences with regard to (i) *Value*, (ii) *Assumptions*, (iii) *Praxis*, (iv) *Benefits* and (v) *Risks*.

**Table 4-6: Differences between AR and PAR**

	AR	PAR
<b>(i) Values</b>	Promotion of self-determination within participants, but excludes the distribution of justice. Concerned with only individuals, not communities.	Promotion of balance between self-determination within participants and social justice. Concerned with individuals and communities.
<b>(ii) Assumptions</b>	Scientific based in terms of knowledge  Good society and daily living are based on value-free liberalism and individual merit.	Promotes evidential knowledge through the formation of collaborative relationships.  Focus on mutual learning, responsibility and relieve of oppression.
<b>(iii) Praxis</b>	Challenges conceptualised in asocial and deficit-oriented terms.  Reactive social interactions.	Challenges conceptualised in terms of interpersonal and social oppression.  Intervention strategies strive to change individuals and social structures within a society.
<b>(iv) Benefits</b>	Preservation of values concerning individuality and freedom.	Emancipation of all individual members of the community and the promoted sense of community.
<b>(v) Risks</b>	Victim blaming and unexpressed support towards oppressing social systems.  Irrelevant solutions in terms of real-world challenges	Contradiction of individuality and sacrifice of unique personal characteristics for the greater good of the community  Solutions may not be generated immediately.

Source: Adapted from Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006:431)

#### 4.5.1.1 Values

In a society obsessed with domination with regard to capitalist ideologies of individual success, AR differs from PAR as it attempts to develop research with the goal to benefit

individual members of the research, without regard to the community (Camarota & Fine, 2008; Ginwright, 2008). However, self-determination within participants is motivated leading to the uneven distribution of power causing further imbalances within a community. In contrast with AR, PAR focus on both individuals and the community as a whole, leading to the more balanced social justice. PAR insists on the involvement of communal participation in order to generate knowledge that will be the property of all interested parties (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:431). Assumptions are often made in terms of these two approaches.

#### **4.5.1.2 Assumptions**

Based on scientific and interpretive assumed knowledge, AR strives to create a society and everyday life of members based on value-free liberalism and promotion in terms of achievements (Elden & Chishol, 1993). PAR on the other hand wishes to create evidential knowledge while forming a bond of collaboration among all role players (Sherwood, 2010:133). This collaborative approach suggests that mutual learning, sense of responsibility and the unmasking of structures that previously oppressed interested groups (Argyris & Schön, 1991:85).

#### **4.5.1.3 Praxis**

The main difference found among AR and PAR with regard to practices include the manner in which these approaches conceptualise challenges. AR focus on defining challenges on an asocial manner, limiting any social interaction, relying only on the shortages found within the researched area (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:67). Only social interaction is found when a reaction is necessary in order to benefit the research (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:431). PAR focus on the conduction of research among previous and current disadvantaged groups, which suffers stark realities with regard to unequal interpersonal and social control practiced upon them (Bryman, 2001:275).

#### **4.5.1.4 Benefits**

As previously mentioned, PAR strives to empower previously marginalised groups, leading to the emancipating of all individual members of a community, establishing a better sense of community among them (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:432). This is in contrast to the more

traditional AR approach, which is beneficial when preserving certain values related to freedom and autonomy (Whyte, 1991).

#### **4.5.1.5 Risks**

Within a PAR approach, certain unique characteristics of individual participants are often endangered, as this denies individuality in order to promote the community as a whole (Trickett & Espino, 2004:02). AR on the other hand could be subject to victim blaming – referring to the accusation of individual benefitted members, if failed – and even the silent, unexpressed support towards more oppressive social systems intentionally or unintentionally. Due to its more individualistic nature, AR often provides irrelevant intervention strategies with regard to the real-world experienced challenges. In contrast with AR, PAR is not always able to generate a viable intervention strategy immediately as it seeks to understand the experienced challenges beyond context.

#### **4.5.2 Northern versus Southern traditions**

Although these traditions or views are similar in focus, the Northern tradition (conducted in developed world countries) strives for collaboration between societal members with various worldviews, and, promoting the manner in which decision-making is attempted, distinctive differences are noted. While the Southern tradition (especially a developing world country e.g. South Africa) search to overcome barriers of previous social inequalities (Winkler, 2013:225). The Northern tradition is best associated with AR, as it allows for concerns of individuals rather than communities. AR strives for collaborative relationships to be created beyond discriminative behaviour (e.g. ethical, class, cultural, religious etc. inequalities). Whilst the Southern tradition focus on the empowerment of previously oppressed groups and is best associated with the use of a PAR process (Trickett & Espino, 2004:11).

#### **4.6 Concluding Remarks**

AR is mostly used within the Northern tradition (refer to developed countries in which co-partnerships can be built between researcher and participant). Within AR, the researcher

becomes part of the study field, which allows for the establishment of equal partnerships between researcher and participant. This equal partnership emphasise the mutual benefit in terms of knowledge generation. Knowledge implies to the incorporation of trans-disciplinary knowledge (combination of various unrelated academic and non-academic disciplines). AR consists of three types: (i) *Technical type* (Technical solution finding on current concerns), (ii) *Practical type* (Informed judgement considering professionalism); and (iii) *Emancipatory type* (empowerment of participants). AR paved the way for the development of PAR, as PAR is rooted within this methodology.

PAR is particularly useful within the Southern tradition, as it specifically focus on the empowerment of previously oppressed groups. Therefore, PAR is mostly used in developing countries and follow a bottom-up approach in terms of decision-making (Participant controlled process). Furthermore, PAR consists out of three types: (i) *People-orientated* (Actions influenced by the involvement of societal groups) (ii) *Power-orientated* (Better distribution of power); and (iii) *Practical-orientated* (Equal importance of practice and theory). Researchers within PAR create a platform for social and physical change by promoting and motivating spontaneous idea-sharing and discussions with participants in terms of a mutual concern. During these discussions, important knowledge is unlocked - gaining a better understanding of the study field, participants and local inherited knowledge.

Particularly with regard to South Africa – considering the bureaucratic history of unequal power distribution and disregard of opinions of oppressed groups – PAR is appropriate, as this country is a young democracy. PAR creates a platform for the empowerment and social change, which directly links with the ideals of place-making. The process of place-making is therefore informed by the development of valuable PAR guidelines. Especially within this Master's Degree study, PAR guides the manner in which the empirical study is conducted. Therefore, the next chapter describes the research design, as it was informed by the guidelines of PAR.

## CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH DESIGN

### 5.1 Introduction

Maxwell (2013:2) suggests that a successful research design is composed of various components with a mutual goal. This particular research focuses on place-making as an empowering process. The previous chapter suggests PAR as a suitable method to create empowerment of communities in the process of place-making. PAR was suggested as a possible way to enhance democracy in spatial planning as all role players collaborate in decision-making in order to create change with regard to empowerment. Within PAR, empowerment is especially important as it focus on previously disadvantaged groups. Change in PAR is created by encouraging participants and researchers to use small scaled projects, with small groups (McTaggart, 1989) driven in a bottom-up way. The research design was therefore developed to allow for optimal and close collaboration between the researcher and the participants.

This type of research does not aim to be representative but rather explore a process in-depth. Research in this case is rather qualitative than quantitative in nature - a qualitative approach is thus chosen as point of departure. When deciding on a qualitative research design (as in this case), the design should preferably be flexible rather than fixed (Robson, 2011; Maxwell, 2013:3). For this study, the research design is structured to answer the following research questions: The primary aim is to explore the process of place-making in planning by using PAR as point of departure. Secondary research aims include (i) *The understanding of place-making by exploring theoretical concepts such as space and place*, (ii) *To give an overview of theoretical paradigm shifts in order to contextualise community involvement within planning and design*, (iii) *To explore if and how PAR can inform the process of place-making*; and (iv) *To develop planning guidelines for the process of place-making*. The research design can be considered as a type of framework that is created to seek answers to the research questions.

With the above in mind, this chapter is structured around the following broad sections: (i) the background of the research project (which form part of a larger on-going research project at the North-West University), (ii) a description of the research context (including the location, context of the research setting and spatial characteristics), (iii) the profile of the research

participants, (iv) the research approach, (v) the methodology used in the study, and lastly, (vi) aspects such as the establishment of trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

## **5.2 Background of the research project**

The research for this study forms part of a larger research project, referred to as the Local Space Global Place (LSGP) project. It started in 2012 as a joint initiative between three academic disciplines at the North-West University (Urban and Regional planning, Botany and Creative Arts), the government sector (Tlokwe local municipality), various private sector role players and community members of Ikageng. The LSGP project is an umbrella project that uses a trans-disciplinary approach (see chapter 4) to empower communities to change communal open spaces to viable public places that restores pride and sense of belonging in communities.

The rationale for the LSGP project is seated in its striving towards changing the post-apartheid South African landscape through spatial planning and design. Post-apartheid planning is viewed as an important tool to implement government's people-centred approach to settlement making in South Africa (South African Presidency, n.a.: 2; CSIR Chapter 2, 2005: 1). Apartheid planning practices were largely based on a bureaucratic top-down approach (derived from modern town planning) and include spatial fragmentation based on racial grounds. One of the spatial consequences of Apartheid planning included forced removals and relocations of ethnic groups to characterless homogeneous residential environments with a lack of quality open spaces (Bank, 2011). The LSGP project focuses on the revival of existing lost spaces in local communities in order to create lively public places for communities by following a bottom-up process. This Masters study contains the pilot study of the LSGP project as a basis to explore place-making in spatial planning and design.

## **5.3 Research context**

### **5.3.1 Research site**

The research context is Ikageng, located in Tlokwe Municipality (Potchefstroom), in the North West province of South Africa (see figure 5.1). Ikageng was established as former township of Potchefstroom. The community was forcefully removed under the Group Areas

Act (Act no 41 of 1950) from the Makweteng area (currently known as the suburb Miederpark). The name Ikageng, when directly translated from Northern Sotho, means “we built for ourselves” (Raper, 1989:608). Ikageng is located in a defined zone for upgrading (SDF 2008) which emphasises the need for urban revitalisation within this area.

The particular research site that forms the pilot study of the LSQP project and the focus of this research is located on the corner of Letsi- and Kereke Street and is approximately 1000m<sup>2</sup> in size. Although the site functions as an open space it is technically part of a road reserve. (see photographs of the site in figure 5.2, taken in 2013 before the commencement of the research). This site is located in a formally developed residential area in close proximity to Lekele Street. According to the Spatial Development Framework (Tlokwe Local Municipality, 2008:29) of the Tlokwe Municipality, Lekele Street is a third class classified road which suggests that this is a major arterial road, linking different suburbs or areas. Thus, it is the main circulation route that connects Ikageng to Potchefstroom Central Business District.

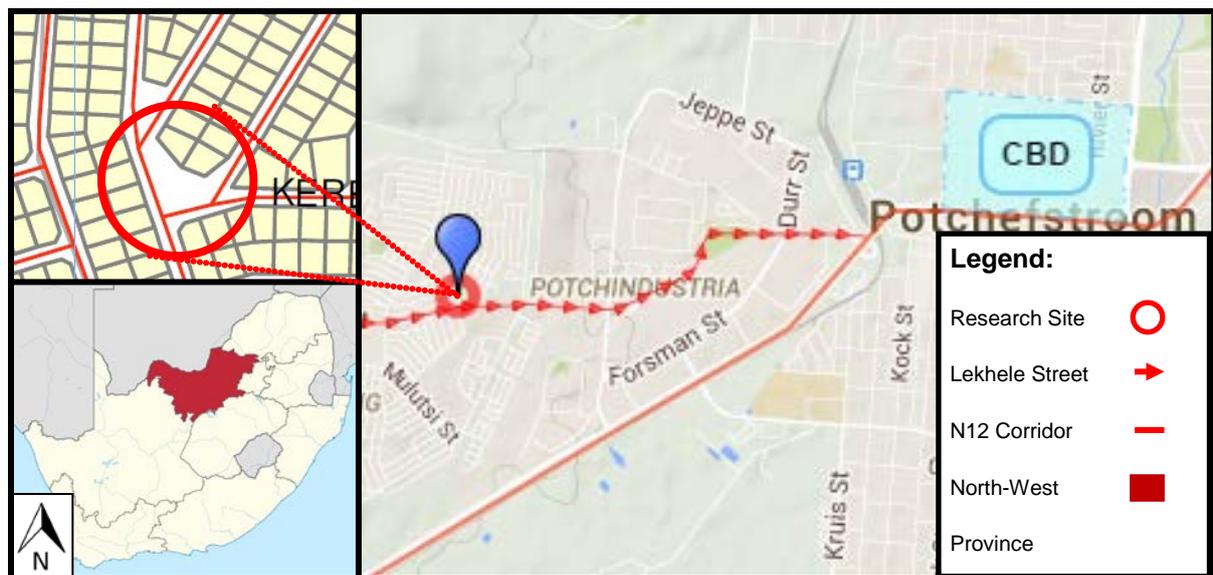


Figure 5-1: Location of the research site

(Source: SA Venues, 2014)



Figure 5-2: The research site before commencement of the research

(Source: Photograph taken by researcher)

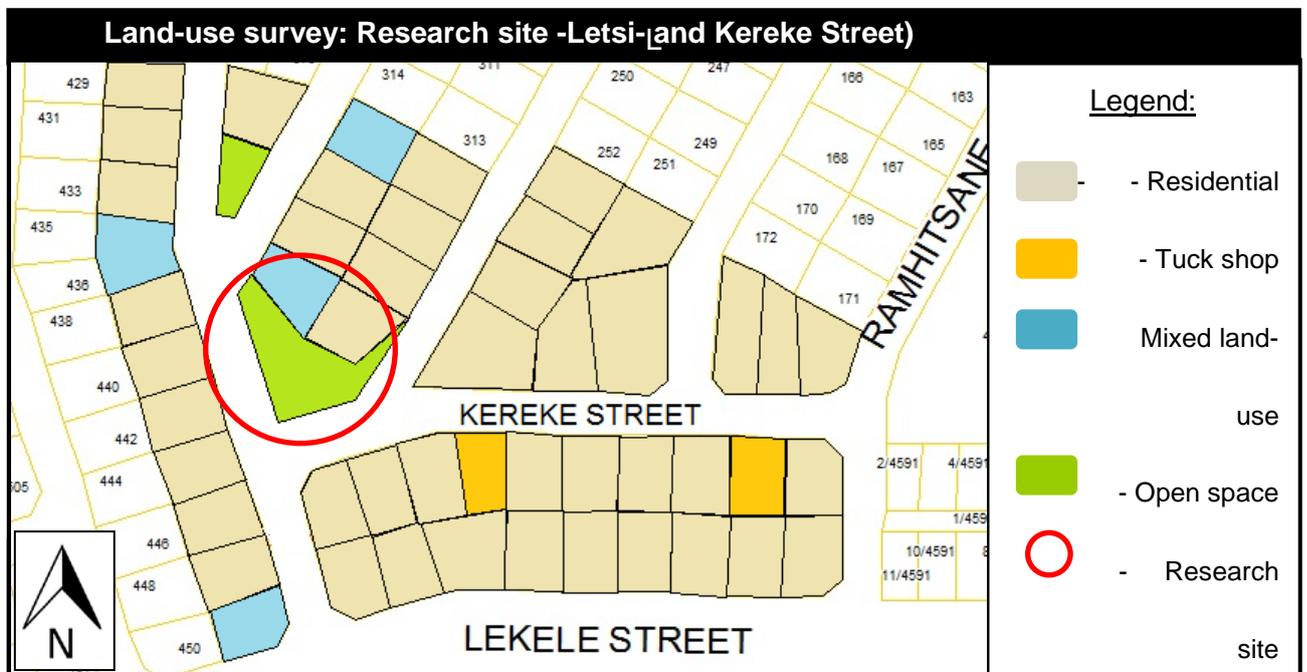


Figure 5-3: Land-use survey of the study area

(Own construction of research area)

This particular site was identified by the Ward Committee as a possible area to transform within Ikageng due to long standing maintenance problems. It is clear from photographs taken that the site is not well maintained; grass not cut and littering that occurs (see figures 5.2).



Figure 5-4: Photographs of a tuck shop (left) and shebeen (right)

(Source: Author, 2014)

Although the area is a residential area (see Figure 5.3), surrounding land-uses tend towards a mixed land-use area containing “shebeens”, tuck shops and a church (see figure 5.4).

### 5.3.2 Motivation of research setting

The choice of this particular site is motivated by discussing the following topics: (i) *the importance of open spaces especially in lower income communities*, and (ii) *the state of open spaces in the larger research context (Tlokwe Municipality)*

#### 5.3.2.1 Importance of open spaces in low income communities

Open spaces have important roles to play in society. As mentioned by Tidball and Krasny (in Wals, 2007:183), a society with a history of socio-economic inequalities, experiences challenges with regard to quality of life. Restoring this quality of life within a society is linked in many studies to the role of open spaces. Studies conducted by authors such as Ulrich, 1984; Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989; Taylor *et al.*, 1998 and Wells, 2000, share similar findings

with regard to the positive influence of open spaces. The role of open spaces in these studies include a decrease in domestic violence (Taylor *et al.*, 1998), stress relieve (Ulrich, 1984) as well as beneficial cognitive and psychological development for adults and children (Wells, 2000). Furthermore, green open spaces are for instance linked to a sense of safety, together with the restoration of pride in communities (Kuo & Sullivan, 2001).

Open spaces are particularly important in South African settlements and play a significant role as building blocks in the social lives of low income residential environments due to high residential densities and limited access to open spaces (Moor and Rowland, 2006). These public spaces form the heart of communities' social lives and are often used on a daily basis.

#### **5.3.2.2 State of open spaces in Tlokwe Municipality and need for upgrade**

Informal settlements in South Africa currently experience a lack of quality open spaces for social interaction (May, 2000:37). In spite of the transition within government and legislation, the “after-shocks” of Apartheid are still evident (Gugler, 2004:350; Borraine *et al.*, 2006:278). Lower income groups are increasingly occupying informal settlements, distant from economic opportunities (May, 2000:38) that are situated in undesirable, monotonous settings with no quality public places. Although the situation is poor in informal settlements, the state of open spaces is extended to formal settlements.

According to the Environment Management Framework (EMF) of the municipality of Tlokwe (NW DACERD, 2009:32) open spaces are fragmented and limited throughout the municipal area, due to uncontrolled development. Fragmented open spaces are deteriorated due to a lack of management and maintenance. Unfortunately, grasslands (open spaces) are often found on valuable land, and tend to lose their function as public places. Currently 66% of open spaces (grasslands) within the municipality experience the need for rehabilitation and revitalisation. Thus, this is an opportunity for the development of ecologically functional open spaces, promoting the creation of ecosystem services (NW DACERD, 2009).

The Spatial Development framework (SDF) of the municipality of Tlokwe, indicates that the quality of open spaces within this municipality is a priority for upgrade (Tlokwe Local

Municipality, 2008:07). As part of the *Municipal Open Space System (MOSS)*, the aim for the municipality is to develop a set of interconnected parks, quality open spaces especially for areas dedicated for functional, recreational, environmental and historical purposes (Tlokwe Local Municipality, 2008:59).

#### **5.4 Research participants**

The selection of the participants to take part in the research was based on (i) *their location*, in close proximity to the research site, (ii) *their interaction with the site* on a daily basis and (iii) *their ability to communicate verbally well*. The research initially started out with a larger group of participants who were invited for an open-ended discussion of the site and the research intended (also refer to section A on the first focus group discussion). This initial group of participants included twenty community members between the ages of twenty-five and sixty, all living in close proximity of the site.

A smaller group of dedicated participants indicated they are interested to become actively involved in the research on a longer term. This second group of participants consist of eleven community members living around the site who formed the core research group. Five of the participants are male and six female and the ages are between twenty-nine and sixty years. Of these participants three are home owners while seven live with family and one participant rents a house. Most of the participants (nine community members) have been living here for more than ten years while only two members have been living here for a period between three and five years. The participants are Setswana, but are all fluent in English and understand limited Afrikaans.

#### **5.5 Research Design**

##### **5.5.1 Point of Departure: A qualitative research approach**

Barbour (2007:xii) defines qualitative research as a study that involves the researcher in a direct manner – other than in a quantitative study where the researcher refrains from subjectivity and consideration of participants. The role of a researcher in this type of research involves the discovering of experiences, social interactions and documentaries that are gathered within their natural settings without extraneous influences (Hague & Jenkins,

2005). Researchers in this type of research refrain from setting up presuppositions in terms of the outcome of such research. Concepts and ideas are discovered while doing research in order to capture the essence of the study area (Barbour, 2007: ii; Berg, 1995:23). In this case, it was important to conduct research from the “core” of the study area (Denscombe, 2010:163) by understanding participants’ viewpoints and experiences with regard to the site and the process followed in depth. As such, the researcher and participants formed a close collaborative partnership for the duration of the study.

According to the above, the importance of collaboration is a second main aspect of this study. Collaboration is important in a qualitative study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:210 cited by Berg, 1995:25) because it allows the researcher to mediate data to participants and create a platform for a deeper level of conversation. In this research collaboration of various stakeholders, especially the community as the core stakeholder was essential as it supports the communicative paradigm in planning theory, one of the underlying theories of this research.

In this type of qualitative study where close collaboration takes place between the researcher and the participants, Denscombe’s (2007:247) suggestion to give attention to words and images, rather than numbers seems to be fundamental. By focussing on words, the underlying descriptions associated with words are essential to conducting successful research. This type of qualitative study follows a holistic perspective that rather works with small than large-scale studies – as this assures better quality of outcome (Miles & Huberman 1994; Berg 1995:26; Rossman & Marshall 2006; Denscombe, 2010:109 & Maxwell 2012). This is why working with a core group of participants consisting of 11 members was more important than working with a larger community. The qualitative research approach informed the choice of methodology and methods for data collection in this study – this framework will be discussed in the sections to follow.

### **5.5.2 Methodological framework: Participatory Action Research (PAR)**

As this research strives to empower participants through place-making, the use of Participatory Action Research (PAR) was found to be best suited for this study. As PAR is

comprehensively discussed in the previous chapter, only brief and relative aspects are discussed here.

As noted from the discussion in Chapter 4, Participatory Action Research (PAR) can be expressed as research that includes all role players within a collaborative process. This collaborative process allows participants as well as researchers to share and gain collective knowledge on the specific study area (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Whyte (1989:368) views PAR as a people-centred approach that uses both the insight of researcher and participant in order to create solutions. The collaborative and people-centred nature of PAR is perhaps necessary when focussing on a South African context, as this type of research is democratic, meaning that both participants and researchers should be viewed equal (Steyn *et al.*, 2013:02) and thus different from past planning research and practice.

Although PAR in this research tend to be more in line with the third type of PAR (as discussed in Chapter 4 – section 4.3.4) namely the practical type, a more holistic and integrated type of PAR is used in this study. The study links with the first type (People oriented PAR) by considering the viewpoints of participants, as they actively inform and direct the research. This type of PAR is especially useful when applied within the context of previously disadvantaged groups. Secondly, the study links with the second type of PAR (Power oriented PAR) in the sense that this type focus on power imbalances. This type of PAR provides counter reaction towards previous bureaucratic practices of power distribution in terms of decision-making. Lastly it is practical oriented which allow for theory and practice of PAR to be merged. As theory and practice are equally inseparable and interactive, this implies that marginalised groups are empowered in order to change their surroundings of their daily lives. Using PAR as a methodological framework implies that the basic principles of PAR (collaborative relationship, trans-disciplinary knowledge, creating change, mutual respect, empowerment and democracy) are used as overarching guiding principles during the research process that was followed.

- **Collaborative relationship** – Formation of social connections between researchers and participants, as well as between participants. This connection promotes trust and causes participants to join in discussions spontaneously.

- **Trans-disciplinary knowledge** - This research incorporates non-related academic disciplines (Urban and Regional planning, Botany and Creative Arts) as well as non-academic partners (Community, Government and private sector)
- **Creating change** – Researchers strived to create change by means of initiating the process. After this initiation, a platform was created where participants could actively and spontaneously conceptualise a mutual concern. After this concern was conceptualised, a collaborative effort was practiced in order to design a final concept. At a later stage this concept was implemented, ultimately creating change in terms of social and physical facets of participants within the community of Ikageng.
- **Mutual respect** – All opinions was regarded as valuable and contributed to the final concept. Furthermore, local interest was incorporated into the research by including the ideas of all role players.
- **Empowerment** – The use of inherited knowledge contributed to the enhancement of social and physical environments within the studied community of Ikageng. By learning about their own community and working collaboratively towards a common goal enhanced empowerment of these participants.
- **Democracy** – Decision-making relied within the hands of all involved role players. Therefore, this inclusion promoted democracy in this specific study.

Based on the above, the criteria to select appropriate research methods were based on the fact that the methods had to allow the researcher to make in-depth sense of the research context and allowed optimal and pro-active participation of the participants.

### 5.5.3 Research Methods:

The researcher refrained from methods of data generation that include the pre-determination or/and manipulation of data due to the inductive and flexible nature of this type of research. Thus, data generation was conducted in a manner that allows for discussions and participation to occur on a voluntary base in terms of a mutual concern (Vivar *et al.*, 2007:68). Research methods were chosen to allow for an open and accountable process in which participants could participate pro-actively.

#### 5.5.3.1 Data generation

Data was generated by two methods: (a) *focus groups* and (b) a *collaborative design workshop*.

## Focus group discussions

Focus groups refer to a group of people who interact within a certain community, sharing some common viewpoints, characteristics or interests (Barbour, 2007:02-03 and Grønkjær *et al.*, 2011:16). When brought together by a moderator, researcher or facilitator, the goal of a focus group is to gain certain knowledge in terms of a specific site or focussed issue (Denscombe 2010:169 and Rodriguez *et al.*, 2011:400). A shared interest is found among participants of focus groups while the facilitators (the researchers in this case) aim to set a permissive and nurturing environment to allow interaction and discussion of different dimensions in order to reach a consensus (Denscombe 2010:169, Grønkjær *et al.*, 2011:16 and Bryman, 2012:105). Typically, the practise of a focus group discussion should repeat several times in order to discover similarities and differences in terms of patterns in perceptions (Berg, 1995:69; Barbour, 2007:03 and Rodriguez *et al.*, 2011:400). In this case three focus groups were conducted at different times throughout the research process.

- A first focus group was conducted on 20 February 2013 on the site (see Annexure B for Focus group questions). An open invitation to participate in this focus group was distributed to inhabitants of the area (Ward 6). Invitations were distributed by the Ward Committee members. This initial focus group included twenty members of the community. The aims of the first focus group were (i) *to understand the participants experience and perception of the physical environment*, (ii) *capturing their social needs with regard to the research site* and to (iii) *discuss the way forward*.



Figure 5-5: On-site focus group

(Source: Author, 2014)

- A second focus group was conducted five months later on 20 July 2013 and included eleven participants who formed the core group of participating members (see Annexure B for Focus group questions). This follow-up focus group aimed to generate data in terms of participant's (i) *experience of the process by reflecting on the past months since the first focus group*, (ii) *defining expectations of participants with regard to the process*.



Figure 5-6: Focus group 2

(Source: Author, 2014)

- The third focus group was held on 3 February 2014 (see Annexure B for Focus group questions). The overall aim of this focus group was to reflect on the overall process up until this time as experienced by both participants and researchers experience of the process (nine contributors).



Figure 5-7: Focus group 3

(Source: Author, 2014)

Thus, data was generated on (i) *feelings and experiences* with regard to the research process and (ii) *change that were created during the process*. All focus group discussions were verbatim transcribed (see Annexure C for full verbatim transcriptions) and video recorded for the purpose of data analysis.

### Collaborative design workshop

After the initial focus group discussion, a collaborative design workshop (including eleven participants) was conducted to conceptualise how the physical space could be transformed into a place for the community.

According to Reason and Bradbury (2008:274) a collaborative design workshop can only be successful when interactive teamwork is followed. Interactive teamwork is firstly based on proactive collaboration in which a better outcome is achieved by the group than what is possible by individual effort (Kvan, 2000: 410). During such a collaborative workshop, individuals share ideas based on a mutual concern and in a joint effort to solve problems. The importance of a shared goal with regard to a collaborative process is inevitable in order to reach a successful outcome (Zuber-Skerritt, 1996:22; Reason and Bradbury, 2008:164). Secondly, it is important to note that the attention of participants is of crucial importance, and should be consequent as well as available throughout the workshop (Miller, 2003:13). This emphasise the role of the facilitator (in this case the researcher) as being pro-active throughout the workshop.

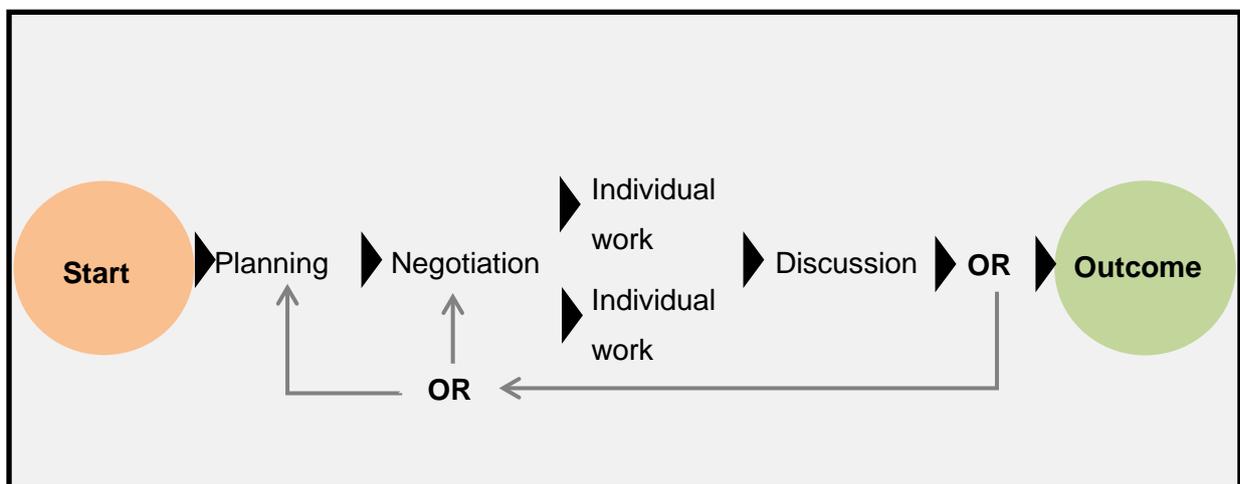


Figure 5-8: Collaboration model

(Adapted from Kvan, 2000:412)

Kvan's (2000:412) collaborative model was used to serve as a guideline to facilitate the design workshop. This model consists of various steps to be followed including the start-up,

the planning, negotiations, individual input, a collaborative discussion and reaching an outcome (Figure 5.6). This process is dynamic in nature and not a linear process as some of the steps may be repeated at certain stages.

While the model was used as the guiding model to facilitate the planning/design process, the order of the steps were changed as followed:

(i) Start: During this initial stage group members develop a plan for collaboration that includes a mutual goal for the workshop. The mutual goal for this workshop was to develop a suitable design and plan for the research site.

(ii) Individual input: This phase was used as preparation stage for the follow-up negotiation phase held during the formal workshop. Participants were given a *design kit* consisting of a base map, drawing sheets and pens with the assignment of drawing how they envision the future of the site. The aim here was to create the opportunity for each participant to work on his or her own specific ideas and concepts. In this way they could apply their own local knowledge in terms of the planning/design process.

(iii) Negotiations: Individual plans/ideas drawn by participants was put up on a wall during the collaborative design workshop in order to discern the most important planning and design elements/aspects to inform the concept plan. This individual work were discussed and evaluated in a collaborative manner in order to obtain group consensus of what the plan/design should consist of. Apart from community participants, as the core planning/design group, other stakeholders (government officials, an urban ecologist and urban planner – some of them part of the overall research team) who formed an outer group of stakeholders and participate by giving input on the practical issues of the participant's ideas.

The negotiation phase lasted for three hours as obtaining consensus is a time-consuming process. Thus, it is a cyclic process in which all involved role players are seen as equal in terms of the decision-making and reaching design consensus. During the second part of this phase participants had to use the planning/design elements that were negotiated to apply it to a collaborative concept design, drawn by one of the participants.



Figure 5-9: Collaborative design workshop

(Source: Author, 2014)

(iv) Discussion: When the concept design was conceptualised, a discussion took place by the participants together with the researchers and outer panel of experts to reflect on the plan/design. The concept plan/design was given back to the participants to discuss with the wider community or other role players and adjust if necessary.

(v) Finalisation/reaching an outcome: This implies that professional input on the design is considered and post-design consensus is achieved in terms of all role players (see figure 5.9). During this stage the participants' concept was circulated to various stakeholders for final input (engineers, an urban ecologist, government officials responsible for the maintenance of parks as well as the Ward Committee). A final plan for transforming the space to a place for the community was formulated and signed by the community members living around the site.

**Table 5-1: Application of collaboration model in this study**

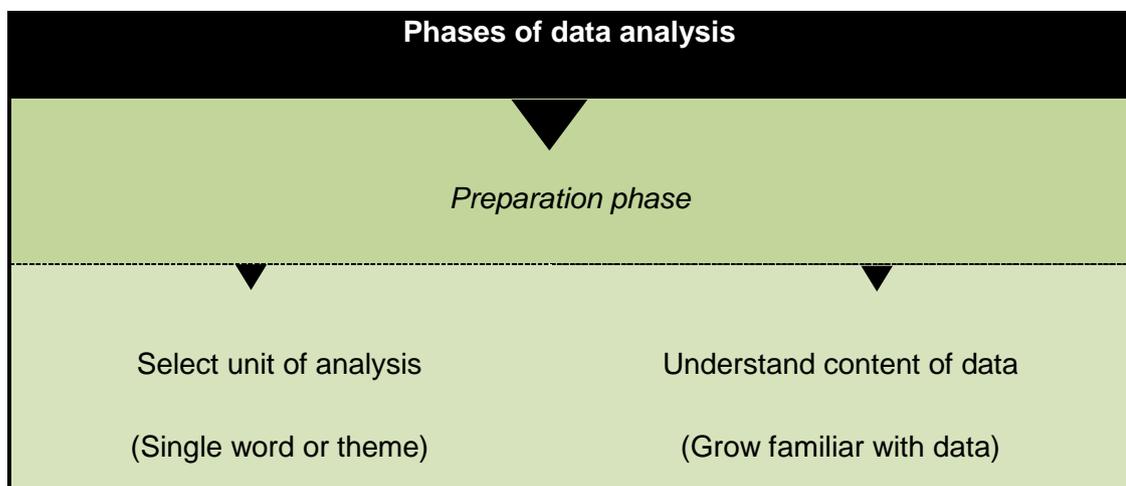
	Collaboration model	Application in this study
Start	Initiate concern conceptualisation	Opening of collaborative design workshop. Discuss the main reason for the need for this workshop and the programme.
Individual input	Participants act as individual experts in terms of their own perspectives.	Individual drawings and ideas, depicting their specific future ideas to transform the site.

<i>Negotiation</i>	Sharing of ideas and consensus building	Constant reflection on process of the workshop. Consensus among all role players.
<i>Discussion</i>	Evaluation of various inputs of all involved role players. Consensus should be built.	Discussion joint drawing by all participants. Building consensus and idea sharing with regard to every drawing.  After discussion, professional input is given by experts, reaching a consensus in terms of the final design.
<i>Finalisation</i>	Finalisation of preferred outcome. Reflection on process and post-design consensus.	Consensus in terms of final design, possible implementation strategy and post-design reflection.

(Adapted from Kvan 2000 & Miller, 2003)

### 5.5.3.2 Data analysis and interpretation

All data generated for the study was analysed by using inductive content analysis. According to Elo and Kyngäs (2008:108) inductive content analysis is used in a situation where previous knowledge in terms of the background or phenomenon is uncertain. Categories in an inductive content analysis process are derived from the data that is generated from tape-recordings/video recordings and verbatim transcriptions. When conducting inductive content analysis, three phases need to be followed: (a) *preparation phase* (b) *organising of data* and (c) *reporting of outcome* as depicted in Figure 5.10



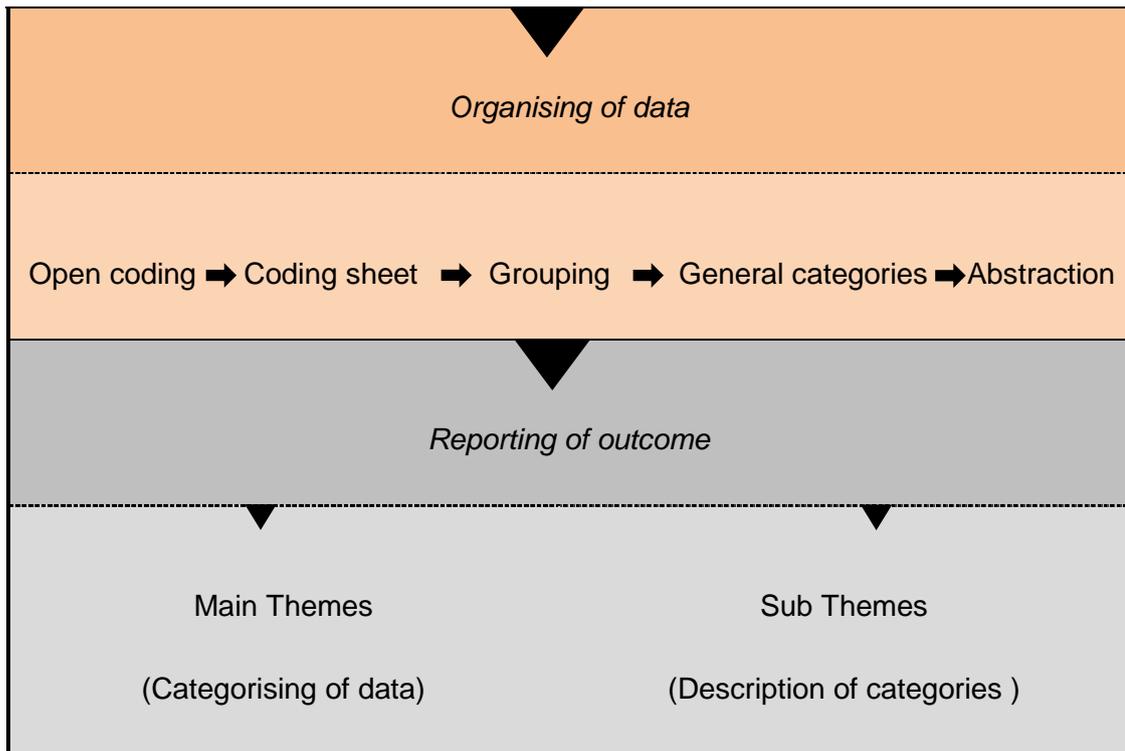


Figure 5-10: Phases of data analysis

(Adapted from Backman & Kyngäs, 1998; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008:110 & Elo *et al.*, 2014:33)

(a) Preparation phase

The transcribed recordings generated during the focus group, was read thoroughly and repeatedly in order to start the preparation phase (Holmes, 2011). The researcher needs to define certain units of analysis (see fig. 6.8) – ranging from a single word to a theme (Backman and Kyngäs, 1998). When selecting the unit of analysis it is important that the decided unit should be relevant to the detail and considerations of the data generated. After deciding on the unit, the researcher should grasp an understanding towards the data (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004:107). During this phase of understanding, several questions had to be kept in mind: *Why? What is happening? Where is this taking place? When did this happen?* After reading through the transcribed text several times, the researcher should be able to immerse in the data, allowing for certain categories to emerge from the data (Elo *et al.*, 2014:34). Categories are not able to be shaped if the researcher fails to be familiar with the content.

## (b) Organising of data

The organisation process includes the use of open coding, creation of general categories and abstraction (see fig. 5.8). Open coding refers to the process in which notes and headings are written in the text while reading through the transcribed data - the number of headings is unlimited (Elo *et al.*, 2014:36). After the content of the data is studied thoroughly, the written headings should be collected in a 'coding sheet' (Berg, 1995:69). Within this coding sheet, the data is in a state where it should be grouped in order to understand the collected information. The classification of data is a complex process where the researcher needs to arrange the data in such a manner that it should 'belong' under certain categories (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004:108 & Elo and Kyngäs, 2007:111). When formulating these categories, the researcher should be able to decide on the placement of data under relevant categories. When this categorising process is completed, the data needs to be abstracted (Backman and Kyngäs, 1998). Abstraction is a generalisation process in which each category is named according to defined characteristics. Sub-categories are formulated at this stage in accordance with relevant content. When the abstraction process is completed, the report of outcome is possible (Elo *et al.*, 2014:40).

## (c) Reporting of outcome

According to Backman and Kyngäs (1998) the reporting phase of data content analysis is often prone to be complex. Challenges involved with this process usually revolve around the fact that the process - especially when an inductive content analysis was followed - is difficult to describe, due to its number of various stages. With regard to general facts, reporting the outcome in a detailed manner is highly possible. Challenges increase when more of the researcher's insight has been used during the data analysis process, as this is often difficult to describe in words (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004, Elo and Kyngäs, 2008:113). The findings included main themes and sub-themes, constructed from categories and under-categories (discussed in Chapter 6).

### **5.5.4 Trustworthiness**

Thomas (2003) describes the strength of qualitative research as the ability to provide insight into the complex nature of textual reflection on mutual concerns of the inhabitants of a setting. Qualitative methods strive to understand an area means of indefinite attributes, such

as social traditions and standards, ethnicity, gender, poverty and the preferred social system. Qualitative research considers these social attributes found within a setting and is useful when obtaining specific information with regard to the culture (e.g. opinions, behaviour, social norms of the specific society) (Cohen & Manion, 2000).

Within this study, triangulation is considered in order to gain trustworthiness. Triangulation refers to a powerful technique which focuses on using multiple (two or more) sources in order to validate the data (Denzin, 2006). Multiple sources refer to the use of cross verification - the application and combination of various research methods – in order to obtain an accurate outcome. O'Donoghue and Punch (2003) define triangulation as a method that is used to cross-check the gathered information in order to gain a trustworthy and accurate understanding of the generated data (Cohen & Manion, 2000).

Triangulation was used by gathering data on more than one method. Focus groups were used in which participants spontaneously shared their opinions in terms of a mutual concern or topic (Grønkjær *et al.*, 2011:16). These opinions were transcribed, analysed and interpreted, ultimately developing a set of themes and subthemes. After themes were conceptualised, the outcome were “checked” with members of the community (Member checking). Member checking refer to informant feedback in order to validate the accuracy of generated data with participants (Barbour, 2001:1115). During these individual sessions with participants, the validity of the themes was verified. In another data gathering session, a collaborative design workshop was conducted in which participants could discuss their individual concepts by means of drawings. A collaborative discussion was conducted in which participants could agree on themes for the design as obtained by the discussion of individual sketches. Afterwards, validity and trustworthiness was obtained by the drawing a collaborative design in which all role players had input. Thus, this research used various methods of validating the gathered data, ultimately using triangulation as a tool to establish trustworthiness of this qualitative research (Tracy, 2010:844).

### **5.5.5 Ethical aspects**

PAR researchers often focus intensely on ethical aspects of the research because researchers work in such a close relationship with participants (Holloway & Wheeler,

1995:223). As power is shared in following this research method, researchers should obtain a certain distance in terms of the participants, but still be in the position to create bonds.

The first way in which ethics were addressed in this study was by obtaining written consent from all the participants. Informed consent is used in qualitative research as a way to apply to ethical standards and considerations with regard to the involved participants (Eysenbach & Till, 2001:1103). The informed consent forms (see example in Annexure A) explained the purpose of the research to participants, stated that the research is voluntary (Holloway & Wheeler, 1995:223) and ensured that data will be kept anonymous (Reason & Bradbury, 2008:563).

A second way in which researchers can illustrate ethical responsibility was to provide regular feedback on the process, leading to an open partnership (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011:390; Zuber-Skerritt, 1996:16; Bryman, 2012:68). In qualitative research, the researcher should conceptualise and understand anticipated challenges, confronting them with ethical solutions and ultimately eliminating any possible ethical concerns (Ramos, 1989:58).

The above mentioned ethical considerations were discussed with participants before commencing with the research.

## **5.6 Concluding Remarks**

This small scale bottom-up research process was developed against the background of a larger umbrella project (the LSGP project) that was initiated by the North-West University (Potchefstroom) that aims to transform local open spaces to vibrant open places for communities. This particular study forms the pilot study of this larger research project.

The research design for this pilot study is informed by Participatory Action Research (PAR) as overarching methodology. PAR was chosen as the appropriate method because it is

based on active participation of communities in decision-making and aims to empower communities and create social change. PAR as a methodology relates to the place-making process (as discussed in Chapter 2) during which spaces are transformed to places by adding meaning and values. Research of this nature is informed by a qualitative approach as this approach allows for an in-depth understanding of the process of place-making in a specific context and specific community. The research was designed to allow maximum collaboration between the researcher and participants and therefore use a small number of participants with which a close partnership could be developed. For this reason methods such as focus groups (reflective in nature) and a collaborative design workshop was chosen as ways to generate rich data.

With regard to the analysis and interpretation of generated data, inductive content analysis was decided upon, as content analysis focus on words and ideas from which theoretical themes could emerge spontaneously from the data in a bottom-up manner. The analysis is structured according to three phases (i) *preparation of data*, (ii) *organising of data* and (iii) *reporting of outcome*.

The research design formed the most important guiding post for conducting the research and aimed to generate rich and thick data that could culminate in findings that relate to the process of place-making and the aims and principles of PAR. The research findings are presented in the following chapter and discussed for each of the phases of the research process that was followed.

## CHAPTER 6 FINDINGS

### 6.1 Introduction

In order to describe the process of place-making, this study discusses a process during which it was aimed to transform and open space to a viable public places by using Participatory Action Research as the overarching method. Previous chapters described the theoretical corner stones used to inform this research, namely the theoretical view on place as something endowed with meaning and value, and place-making as an empowering process during which people are actively involved in shaping the spaces in which they live (Chapter 2). Another theoretical building block (highlighted in Chapter 3) revolves around the pro-active inclusion of communities in decision making as suggested by the communicative turn in planning theory, especially Foucault's idea of the importance of acknowledging power in consensus building. The theoretical corner stones are used to understand place-making and guide the research process as developed in Chapter 6 (Research Design).

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the findings that emerged from the research process followed as discussed in the previous chapter. Furthermore, his Chapter ultimately aims to bring together the theory and practice of place-making as conducted in the research context of Ikageng, Potchefstroom as well as to reflect on how PAR set the stage for change in this community.

The research findings include descriptions and discussions of the theoretical themes that emerged spontaneously from the (i) three *focus groups* and (ii) a *collaborative design workshop*. Transcriptions of the focus groups and the process of the workshop conducted with participants were analysed to generate these themes.

### 6.2 Focus Group 1: Themes and sub-themes

Main themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data are summarised in the Table 6.1 below. Themes include the participants' conceptualisation of the open space in their neighbourhood in terms of (i) *physical dimensions* (ii) *social relations* and (iii) *intervention strategies* for the future.

**6.2.1 Main theme 1: *Physical dimensions* (Sub-themes: lack of maintenance and unsafeness of the area) (refer to Table 6.1)**

**Table 6-1: Participants’ conceptualisation of the research site: Physical dimensions**

Main themes	Sub-themes	Quotes from the participants
<i>(i) Physical dimensions</i>	Low maintenance	<p><i>“... not grass... .. who’s going to cut the grass?”</i></p> <p><i>“... this site was a dump site... they used to throw babies here... new-born babies....dogs...cats...everything .....dogs...cats...everything...it smells...”</i></p> <p><i>“They (government) decided it to be a park which didn’t really succeed because eventually it ended up like this and again, again they started to throw things here”</i></p>
	Unsafeness	<p><i>“... it is dangerous here... because there are broken glasses are here, they bring the bottles and everything, they throw everything here.”</i></p> <p><i>“Our biggest concern here... on this site... neh... it’s our health...” and “Its problematic because when it rains neh, you cannot even open your front door or windows because of mosquitoes and all that.”</i></p> <p><i>“...the children are playing... in the street... they’re playing ball in the street... and the car can chase them... anytime...” and “... when the children have the... their own space to play... there won’t be any accident...”</i></p>

(Source: Strydom and Puren, 2013)

Participants primarily described the research site in terms of physical dimensions. The physical dimensions were expressed by means of reference to the maintenance and unsafeness of the space. Low maintenance and unsafeness were expressed as major concerns that should be addressed. Participants considered maintenance and safety as interrelated issues. The dumping of bottles, a current problem on the site, resulted in broken

glass that created an unsafe area for walking and playing. Low maintenance was also expressed as a future concern, especially with regard to the vegetation on the site, such as the grass patches that cover the ground area of the site. One participant stated: “... *not grass... .. who’s going to cut the grass?*” The grass cover is regarded a health issue for the community: “*Our biggest concern here... on this site... it’s our health...*” and “*It’s problematic because when it rains you cannot even open your front door or windows because of mosquitoes and all that.*” According to the participants, unsafeness was further acerbated by the fact that the space was not suitable for children to play. This results in children playing in the streets surrounding the open space: “*...the children are playing... in the street... they’re playing ball in the street... and the car can chase them... anytime...*” and “*... when the children have the... their own space to play... there won’t be any accident...*” Participants perceived maintenance and safety as physical characteristics of the site that posed challenges that should be addressed.

**6.2.2 Main theme 2: Social Relations (Sub-themes: neighbourliness, territoriality, feelings of being disregard) (refer to Table 6.2)**

**Table 6-2: Participants’ conceptualisation of the research site: Social relations**

Main themes	Sub-themes	Quotes from the participants
(ii) Social relations	Feeling of neighbourliness among the community	<p><i>“The neighbourhood is friendly, everybody is friendly, they know each other,....they greet each other”</i></p> <p><i>“Most of us here, we know each other”</i></p> <p><i>“... they don’t have problems here... eh... in this area... because... uhm...if one is not... uhm... present at his or her house... uhm... the other person is always willing to be on the look-out...uhm... for the other person’s property...”</i></p>

	Territoriality with regard to the open space	<p><i>"..... if you're a stranger here... we can see that"</i></p> <p><i>"... sometimes is other guys... who stays outside our neighbourhood... they, they just come... and make their things... you know? But, last time, we grab them... they run away..."</i></p> <p><i>"We are actually fighting with the people who are throwing things here."</i></p>
	Feelings of disregard from local government	<p><i>"... he said to the council... to let us... to clean here... they didn't answer us... never answer us..."</i></p> <p><i>"maybe... if you can be our mouthpiece...especially...eh...with the council...because I think...this problem...they come from a long way..."</i></p>

(Source: Strydom and Puren, 2013)

Apart from negative perceptions with regard to the physical environment, participants referred to the social relationships between community members living in the area as an asset. A strong feeling of neighbourliness exists as members of the community know each other, look out for one another and protect one another. One participant stated *"...you'll be surprised that eh...eh... most of us here... around... we know each other"* while another confirmed *"... the neighbourhood... is... is friendly... everybody is friendly... we know each other... we greet each... you know...? It's like... there is nothing that would happen to your house if you're not here... Cause' I believe somebody... is at the back-up of it... we are looking after each other... here...."*. This neighbourliness seems to create a strong "insider" bond among community members living around the open space. Strong social relations among community members also create certain volatile relations for example between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. Community members living close to the site revealed territorial behaviour pertaining to the research site that culminates in conflict with outsiders as one of the participants stated: *"...if you're a stranger here... we can see that..."* while another participant said: *"... sometimes is other guys... who stays outside our neighbourhood... they, they just come... and make their things... you know? But, last time, we grab them... they run*

away...”. Another stated: *“We are actually fighting with the people who are throwing things here.”* Neighbourliness and territoriality are strong assets that hold together the community who live around this site and create a sense of ownership.

Participants also expressed volatile relations with regard to local government, as they feel disregarded by government when concerns are raised about the site. As one participant commented: *“... he (referring to another participant who sent a letter to government) said to the council... to let us... clean here... they didn’t answer us... never answer us...”*. This was possibly why participants expressed the need for someone (in this case the researchers) to act as a voice at local government on their behalf *“maybe...if you can be our mouthpiece...especially...eh...with the council...because I think...this problem...they come from a long way...”*

### 6.2.3 Main Theme 3: *Intervention strategies* (Sub-themes: physical intervention, social intervention and economic intervention) (refer to table 6.3)

**Table 6-3: Participants’ conceptualisation of the research site: Intervention strategies**

Main themes	Sub-themes	Quotes from the participants
(iii) <i>Intervention strategies</i>	Physical intervention (upgrade and beautification)	<i>“like to have the, the place made beautiful...and smart...uhm... so that when you walk in... you want to be part of the area...”</i>  <i>“...paving and then under the trees... there must be like chairs and tables... if I come from the shop...eh... I bought a cool drink... I can just sit there and drink it... and then next to that... that, that space... there’s ... dust bin... I can throw the bottle in...”</i>
	Social intervention (community involvement)	<i>“Maybe we can volunteer ourselves by uhm... paintings and... do the paintings... and paving... we can help... each other by doing that... anybody who knows that... we</i>

		<p><i>can do it... all of us...</i></p> <p><i>“...I can give them a hand... you know... as they can make it look like, I can give them a hand... anything they can do here... I’ll give my best...”</i></p>
	<p>Economic intervention (creation of employment)</p>	<p><i>“they must use our locals here, people who are not working...they must make use of them... ..”</i></p> <p><i>“People...that are not...uhm...going...unemployed...should be...uhm...called up on and uhm... work on this area uhm... with the help of council”</i></p>

(Source: Strydom and Puren, 2013)

Future ideas for the site were formulated as intervention strategies and included primarily physical intervention such as the upgrading and beautification of the site, as stated in the following quotes: *“She’d like to have the, the place made beautiful...and smart...uhm... so that when you walk in... you want to be part of the area...”* and *“...to upgrade this... uhm... field... for a... for a near future... and for the people living here...”* and *“...to beautify this place...”*. Upgrade and beautification for participants include physical elements such as that the site remains as a park, developed into a child-friendly area (for example a play space), and incorporates security (for example fencing), paving, seating areas, trees and dustbins. One participant described her idea as: *“...paving and then under the trees... there must be like chairs and tables... if I come from the shop...eh... I bought a cool drink... I can just sit there and drink it... and then next to that... that, that space... there’s ... dust bin... I can throw the bottle in...”*

Social intervention relates to participants seeing their role in the physical upgrade and beautification as proactive and voluntarily involvement as stated for example: *“Maybe we can volunteer ourselves by uhm... paintings and... do the paintings... and paving... we can help... each other by doing that... anybody who knows that... we can do it... all of us...”*. The participants expressed the idea of voluntary collaborative partnership and they came across as eager to help with the implementation of the physical upgrade and beautification: *“...if... eh... there are some people who come here... with them... with some materials who come and build something here... I can give them a hand... you know... as they can make it*

*look like, I can give them a hand... anything they can do here... I'll give my best...". Although participants did not mention involvement in the maintenance of the site, statements that refer to continuous long-term involvement with the site imply it: "I am going to be very much involved and lifetime involvement because, I have three boys... one is ten... other one is four... so... if it's a park here... I... have to make sure that... it's safe for them (referring to children)..."*

A third sub-theme that emerged as an intervention strategy for the research site included economic intervention as stated by the wish to create economic upliftment in the area. In order to provide employment opportunities, participants suggested that local skills should be implemented *"People...that are not...uhm...going...unemployed...should be...uhm...called up on and uhm... work on this area uhm... with the help of council"* and *"...they must use our locals here, people who are not working...they must make use of them... to beautify this place..."*. While intervention strategies mainly revolve around physical intervention it is clear that physical intervention was suggested here as a means to achieve larger social and economic ends.

#### **6.2.4 Discussion: Focus group 1**

The first phase of the research confirmed theoretical approaches to space as being more than a neutral backdrop for people's lives. Space is intertwined with people's daily lives and involves both physical form and social relations between people (Madanipour, 1996:3). In this study the physical form induces feelings of dissatisfaction among the community members due to aesthetic qualities that are lacking (e.g. the prevalence of low maintenance) which creates concerns with regard to the health and safety of the community. It is further suggested here that the physical environment affects social relations between people. Crang and Thrift (2000) suggested that space is social and not only physical as space has the capacity to strengthen or challenge social relations. This particular space contributed to the creation of volatile and hostile relations between insiders (the community living around and close to the site) and outsiders (people from outside this neighbourhood and not familiar to this community). Dissatisfaction with the physical space and attempts to communicate this to government eventually resulted in community members feeling disregarded by local government as their needs were not acknowledged or addressed. This communicative planning theory, as described by Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones (2002:110), considers

public interest and is relevant in this case due to the lack of communication. These particular community members felt a disregard from the local government because they were not involved in decision making with regard to this space.

This strong sense of ownership and responsibility that exists among community members with regard to the open space resulted in territorial behaviour, especially by community members living directly around the open space who interact with the space on a regular basis (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010:5). As this research is based on an inclusive process of reaching consensus, participants are directly involved with regard to all current and future stages of the planning and decision making (Taylor, 1999:339). Ultimately, the principles of place-making is useful at this stage as this is an empowering process in which inhabitants strive towards shaping and renovating their own surrounding physical environment (Jivén & Larkham, 2003:69). The process of transformation of physical spaces by people themselves often causes social change, as it empowers people as suggested by the theory of PAR.

The research indicated that places do not only involve physical form, but also the way communities are created and interact with one another (Schneekloth & Shibley, 1995). Place consists of more than physical aspects (objects and activities) and extends to the people using the space (Al-Bishawi & Ghadban, 2011:74). Social relationships are embedded in the physical environment, as suggested by Madanipour (1996:23). People can therefore not be separated from the environment (e.g. open spaces) that is planned or designed for them. In this way, physical space is endowed with meaning and becomes place, as suggested by Tuan (1979).

This study further supports Madanipour's view (1996:23) that because places are not mere physical products, they cannot be created from the outside (e.g. by planners and designers). Places are unique and context bound and intertwined with the community that uses them. Communities can provide valuable insight into the socio-spatial relations underlying the formation of place (Healey, 2004:45). Simultaneously, communities can disclose valuable information to planners and designers with regard to challenges (maintenance, volatile relations with outsiders and local government) and assets (neighbourliness, and territoriality) that can be used to transform spaces to places (Thrift, 1996). Following a participatory approach as point of departure when public places are planned, designed, transformed or

upgraded proved in this instance to be informative for the process of place-making (Carmona *et al.*, 2010:07).

### 6.3 Focus Group 2: Themes and sub-themes

Main themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data are summarised in Table 6.2 below. Themes include the participants' feelings regarding the process in terms of (i) *experience of the process* and (ii) *expectations of the process*.

#### 6.3.1 Main theme 1: *Experience of the process* (Sub-themes: positive feelings in terms of the process e.g. excitement, happiness and appreciation)

**Table 6-4: Participants' experience and expectations in terms of the process: Main theme 1**

Main themes	Sub-themes	Quotes from the participants
(i) <i>Experience of the process</i>	Positive feelings in terms of the process (e.g. excitement, happiness and appreciation)	<p><i>"she`s excited"</i></p> <p><i>"...since you [researchers] arrived, people [community members] became exited"</i></p> <p><i>"So they are happy about... about what's going to happen..."</i></p> <p><i>"I am, very happy about it..."</i></p> <p><i>"Thank you... this initiative... that you're [researchers] undertaking... is... very important to us [community members]..."</i></p> <p><i>I felt good... `cause I ask myself... are these people angels? Or what? ... So I must be happy..."</i></p>

(Adapted from Strydom and Puren, 2014)

Participants described their experience in terms of the process as positive. These positive feelings were described as excitement, happiness and appreciation. Excitement relates to

the participants' enthusiasm for change – including the overall upgrade of the area to create a quality public place; *“she`s excited because... that... that site... [to lay some paving... chairs in there for the children...]”*. This excitement about future intervention was further expressed in terms of the concept that professional expert advice will assist them in terms of upgrade, but also the idea of help in the area as they commented that: *“...since you [researchers] arrived, people [the community members] became exited [and concerned that maybe... the security will be very good... for the teenagers...]”*

Secondly, the sub-theme, in terms of positive feelings regarding the process, included happiness. The idea of happiness was emphasised by the participants' fulfilment of the process because they were pro-actively involved in the process as stated by *“So they are happy about... about what's going to happen...”* and *“I am, very happy about it... on this...”* This notion of happiness leads to the overall appreciation of participants towards the researchers for making them partners in the planning/design process.

The following quote supports that participants feel grateful towards the research process as one participant thanked the researchers spontaneously: *“Thank you... what I want to say is just... that... this initiative... that you're [researchers] undertaking... Is... very important to us [the community members]...”* and *“I'm impressed with you guys...[researchers] after our first meeting... I felt good... `cause I ask myself... are these people angels? Or what? ... So I must be happy...”*

**6.3.2 Main theme 2: *Expectations of the process* (Sub-themes: Involvement of different stakeholders, establishment of learning opportunities and concerns with regard to physical change)**

**Table 6-5: Participants' experience and expectations in terms of the process: Main theme 2**

Main themes	Sub-themes	Quotes from the participants
<i>(ii) <u>Expectations of the process</u></i>	Involvement of different stakeholders	<p><i>"... we want... we want something there... but we... can't make it on our own..."</i></p> <p><i>"...this is our [the community members]... our plans... some of us have different plans... we want this place to look like this [the plan]..."</i></p> <p><i>"...engage the Potchefstroom University... to take on the park place..."</i></p> <p><i>"I think it's important... to... to have... our ward councillor... must be involved in that... so he can help us with...with... the councils....."</i></p> <p><i>" We [community members] must go to the companies around... in Potchefstroom..."</i></p>
	Establishment of learning opportunities	<p><i>"...for the children to play... and learn... something... while their playing... like... stop signs... road works... and... pedestrian crossing... and how to use the road..."</i></p>
	Concerns with regard to implementation	<p><i>"... we want to make this place thing beautiful, but we don't have the resources to make it happen... how we want to..."</i></p> <p><i>"... we are struggling to... you know... to get that place to be very nice..... where is the money going to come from?"</i></p>

(Adapted from Strydom and Puren, 2014)

The sub-theme that emerged from the expectations of participants in terms of the process indicated the importance of involving of different stakeholders. Stakeholders in this process included the community, local government, the University and the private sector. Participants realised that the community cannot conduct such a process on their own and that transforming this space to a place was something that should be based on partnerships : *“... we want... we want something there... but we... can` t make it on our own... but you... since you arrived, people became exited...”* and *“...this is our [the community members]... our plans... some of us have different plans... we want this place to look like this [the plan]...”* The first partner they suggested should be involved is the University and thus the research team, who can give support and advice: *“...engage the Potchefstroom University... to take on the park place...”* . A second important role player (or partner) was the government. A participant stated that: *“I think it’s important... to... to have... our ward councillor... must be involved in that... so he can help us with...with... know about... the councils.....”* and *“... we can go and say to the council... eh... we want this place to look like this.”* They realised the role of structures such as ward councillors in presenting them at the local government level.

Other stakeholders were further motivated by participants due to economic considerations as suggested by their proposal to include the private sector: *“we can just say to the media [inform media in terms of the need for funding and engagement]... We [responsible community member] must go through the companies around... in Potchefstroom... Some we know and some we even don’t knows [engagement with private sector in terms of a partnership]...”*

Another expectation was with regard to the possible learning opportunities the space can create in the future especially for children to learn. One participant suggested that the space could be transformed into a place where children could learn road safety: *“...for the children to play... and learn... something... while their playing... like... stop signs... road works... and... Pedestrian crossing... and how to use the road...”* This was supported by another participant who stated: *“I mean... using the word learning.. I mean... when you implement some other resources... within the site there... the young ones will learn and be aware from the street...”*

Although the overall reflection on the process was positive, concerns were also mentioned in terms of the implementation and physical change. The concern for funding was expressed

as a main concern, as they have all the ideas, but do not have the necessary financial resources to implement them, as reflected in the statement: “... *we want to make this place thing beautiful, but we don't have the resources to make it happen... how we want to...*” and another participant who said “... *we are struggling to... you know... to get that place to be very nice..... where is the money going to come from?*”

### **6.3.3 Discussion: Focus group 2**

Focus group 2 was informed by planning theory. Suggested by March (2010:109) planning theory – especially the communicative planning theory - relate to the involvement of participants in the process of physical uplifting of their daily surroundings. This stage of research unveiled a more power-orientated typology of PAR as participants are involved and seen as equal partners within the research (McNiff, 2013:74). Therefore, the empowerment of participants was seen as important to break with previous bureaucratic practices in terms of power distribution (Gilbert, 2008:105).

Two main themes emerged from the data and revolved around participants: (i) *experience of the process*; and (ii) *expectations of the process*. Experience of the process refers to the positive feelings of participants, including excitement, happiness and appreciation. These attitudes stimulate the unblocking of social relationships when considering PAR values (Sherwood, 2010:133).

The following main theme considers a set of expectations of participants in terms of the process. Participants expected the involvement of various stakeholders and this was seen as positive, revealing the participants' realisation of the need for collaboration, together with the opportunity to learn from this partnership (Ochocka, Janzen & Nelson, 2002). Learning not only implies the formation of partnerships, but also the expectation to educate themselves with the prospect of developing skills. The learning of skills together with the formation of collaborative partnerships paves the way for the empowerment of involved participants (Sherwood & Kendall, 2013:86). However, concerns with regard to the implementation are noted, unveiling the studied challenges when following a PAR methodology. A specific challenge includes the lack of financial resources, relating to the theoretical study of PAR. Empowerment was accomplished as participants discussed and

questioned ideas on obtaining these resources, ultimately exploring various options for solutions (Ochocka, Moorlog & Janzen, 2010:4).

Findings of Focus group 2 can be understood by considering the principles of place-making. Within this stage of research, collaborative partnerships were established, as participants connected on a social level. Furthermore, this partnership has the potential to expand in terms of involvement, as participants strive to include various stakeholders in the process, revealing further characteristics of place-making (Schneekloth & Shibley, 1995). Ultimately, these partnerships of collaboration and active stakeholder involvement provided support for the community, correlating with the nature of place-making.

Therefore focus group 2 can be briefly summarised with reference to the evident progression as PAR values started to be unlocked. The anticipated functional and physical change of the site started to create a platform for change in terms of PAR values such as relationship formation, respect, learning and empowerment. Participants realised the importance of stakeholder participation. A sense of empowerment surfaced as participants started to generate own solutions (e.g. approach companies for funding). They realised the potential for the facilitation of learning through change of the physical space. While PAR values started to emerge during the process, trust in the realisation of physical change remains a concern for participants due to financial uncertainty.

#### **6.4 Collaborative design workshop: Primary and secondary planning/design elements**

Primary design elements that emerged from the collaborative design workshop included (i) *built* and (ii) *natural* elements consisting of various secondary design elements to be implemented as solutions (outcomes) for the community's needs in terms of the transformation of the research site to a vibrant public place.

Individual sketches (Stage 2: *Individual input* phase – refer to Chapter 5.5.3.1) – as discussed by participants – mostly reveal the need for enclosure (e.g. poles with chains or painted tyres), with consideration of an access road to the electricity box found on the site.

Subsequently, sketches revealed the need for footpaths with the purpose of educational learning opportunities. This entails that children should come to terms with road and traffic awareness while using the site. Furthermore, a focus point is suggested by some of the sketches and discussions, as participants feel the need to use this as orientation point within the site. Together with this focal point, sketches reveal the need for street furnishing (e.g. benches and tables) accompanied by rubbish bins – the aim of providing facilities for adult site users. These proposed intervention strategies can be categorised as built elements within the design.

In terms of natural elements, sketches unveiled the need for shade, as most of the individual designs included trees. This element indicates that participants strive to promote the natural environment of the site. Furthermore, the need for ground cover is promoted in individual designs, as most sketches reveal limited grass, and mostly used brown natural ground cover. This indicates that there were concerns with regard to the maintenance of a newly established lawn. In terms of beautification, participants reveal the desire for flowers and plants by means of their designs.



Figure 6-1: Examples of participant's drawings

See complete examples in Annexure D (Source: Individual sketches drawn by participants)

As part of a negotiation process (Stage 3: *Negotiation* phase - refer to Chapter 5.5.3.1), these individual sketches (Figure 6.1) revealed some generic design elements. Using a collaborative effort, themes were obtained by communicating all options and opinions in terms of the proposed planning and design elements (Stage 4: *Discussion* phase - refer to Chapter 5.5.3.1). By formulating mutually agreed primary and secondary planning/design

elements, consensus was reached among all involved role players in terms of the physical design (Stage 5: *Finalisation* phase - refer to Chapter 5.5.3.1) of the site (see table 6.6 and 6.7 for negotiated planning/design elements).

#### 6.4.1 Main planning/design element 1: *Built elements*

**Table 6-6: Physical planning/design elements of Collaborative Design Workshop: Built element**

Main design element 1	Planning/ Design elements (derived from negotiations/discussions)	Detail design solutions (outcome)
Built elements	Enclosure/edge	Coloured tyres to define the space – painted by community members
	Paths	Access path for maintenance to existing electricity box  Curved foot path to provide safe walking area to be utilised for road safety education for children
	Furniture	Large tree, paving and seating area for relaxation and watching over children playing  Seats (benches); litter bins, play apparatus for children; small traffic signs for children to learn road safety

(Author's own construction of findings, 2014)

The individual input discussed collectively culminate in a set of planning/design elements to be used to transform the physical space in terms of the participants' needs and aspirations into a vibrant public place that address the physical issues that emerged from the first focus group (see table 6.6). In terms of the maintenance issue, the outcome/solution was seen as the use of paths (e.g. access path for maintenance on the electricity box, walking areas for site-users etc.) and furniture (e.g. placing of litter bins). In order to address the safety issues of the area the community members proposed that a child friendly play space be developed that consists of an enclosure (defining the play space for children), focal point (used by adults to supervise children while playing) and furniture (e.g. seats/benches for site-users to supervise children; play apparatus included to keep children off the street and educate them with regard to traffic awareness in a safe environment).

In terms of social relationships defined in the first focus group, the territoriality feature of the participants' is expressed by a physical boundary that defines the space. Tyres painted by the community members are used to enclose the area, providing a sense of ownership of the space. Because neighbourliness is an asset of this specific community, design elements for informal socialising are proposed – this includes informal seating spaces on the area where benches are provided under shade (trees).

While the third finding namely feelings of disregard cannot explicitly be addressed by physical planning and design elements, this theme is addressed by the collaborative process that is followed – giving the participants' a voice in transforming the space themselves without government interfering or a top-down design process.

#### 6.4.2 Main planning/design element 2: *Natural elements*

**Table 6-7: Physical planning/design elements of Collaborative Design Workshop: Natural elements**

Main design element 2	Planning/Design elements (derived from negotiations/discussions)	Detail design solutions (outcome)
Natural elements	Trees	Keep existing trees (five trees) Plant new trees for shade (indigenous native species)
	Ground cover	Leave and maintain existing natural grass areas instead of lawn that needs maintenance
	Flowers	Plant flowers that is indigenous for aesthetic enhancement purposes
		Educating children on the growth and maintenance of flora within a natural setting.

(Author's own construction of findings, 2014)

In terms of natural elements, participants individually expressed that the current environmental assets (e.g. trees and grass) should be encompassed within the design. When transforming space to place, the design should include aesthetic aspects that contribute to the beautification of the site (Sitte, 1889; Krier, 1979) such as the aesthetic organisation of space. This correlates with the aim of beautification and upgrade as conceptualised by participants during the first focus group. Therefore, the solution in terms of the beautification concern is to keep the remaining five trees, but further enhance the natural environment by including additional indigenous trees. Relating to the concern in terms of maintenance issues (especially regarding ground cover) the proposed outcome was to keep existing grass, with minor maintenance consequences. Participants negotiated the idea of refraining from planting additional lawn. Further beautification relates to the planting of flowers, promoting the aesthetics of the site and educating children on growth and maintenance (e.g. watering of plants and the use of creative compost) of the natural elements.

This findings at this stage forms part of the consensus building during the individual and discussion stage - Stage 4 (Discussion) and 5 (Finalisation) as mentioned in Chapter 5, indicated in the collaborative model in figure 5.9. The negotiation stage (stage 3) culminated in the development of a consensus-based plan/design – from concept design to a final plan/design. The development of this collaborative plan/design is illustrated in the figure underneath (Figure 6.2).

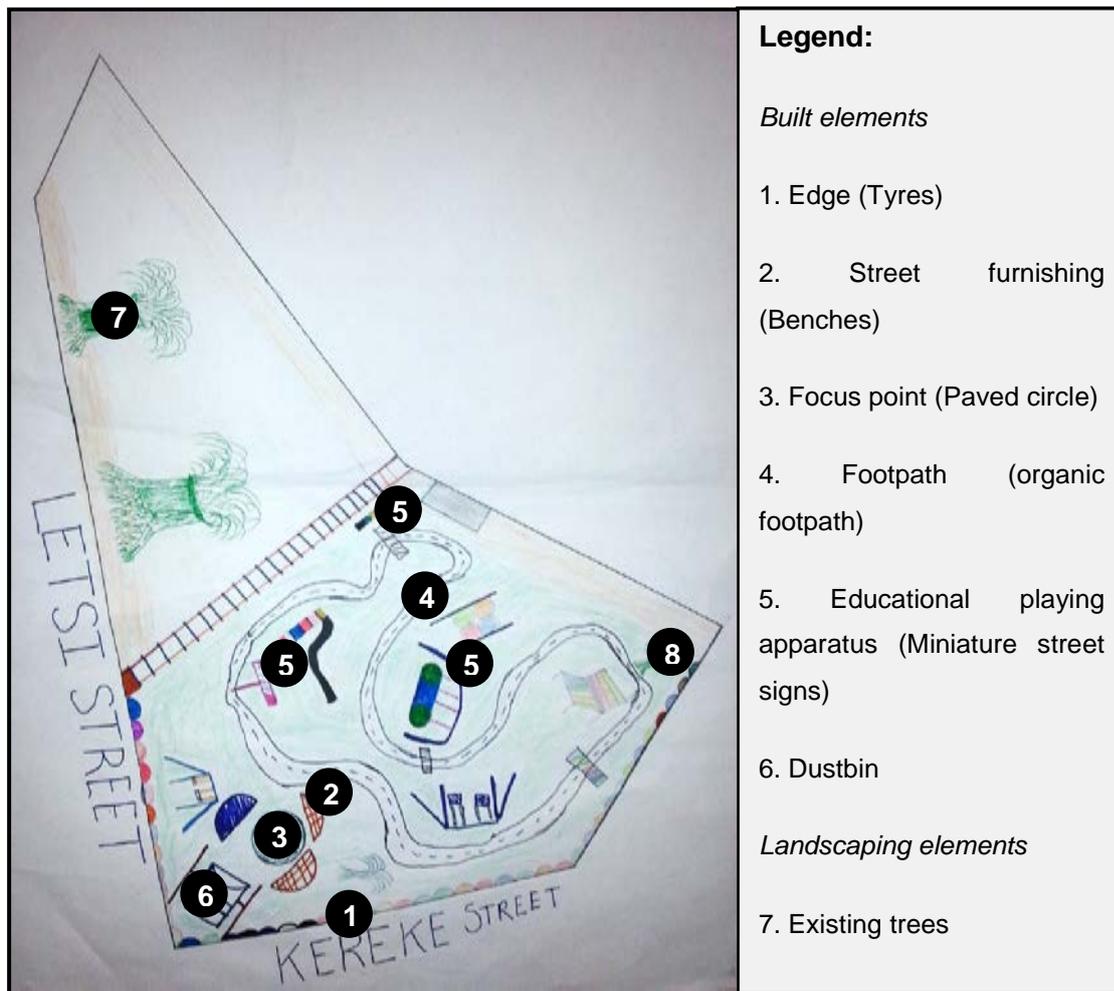


Figure 6-2: Concept design 1: Collaborative community input (Photograph of participants' concept)

(Sketch of participants' concept)

Concept design 1 was generated by the participants' during a workshop and is a combination of the various design elements proposed by the individual design and a joint effort.



Figure 6-3: Concept design 2: Stakeholder input

(Source: Sketch drawn by stakeholders)

Concept design 2 (see figure 6.3) was generated after negotiations with outside stakeholders. stakeholder input involves the following: (i) *professionals from the NWU and private sector* (an Urban planner and designer, an urban ecologist, Director of Community Engagement, students) (ii) *government officials* (town planning, engineering, legal advisor, Department of Parks and Recreations, the Ward Committee and Councillor)

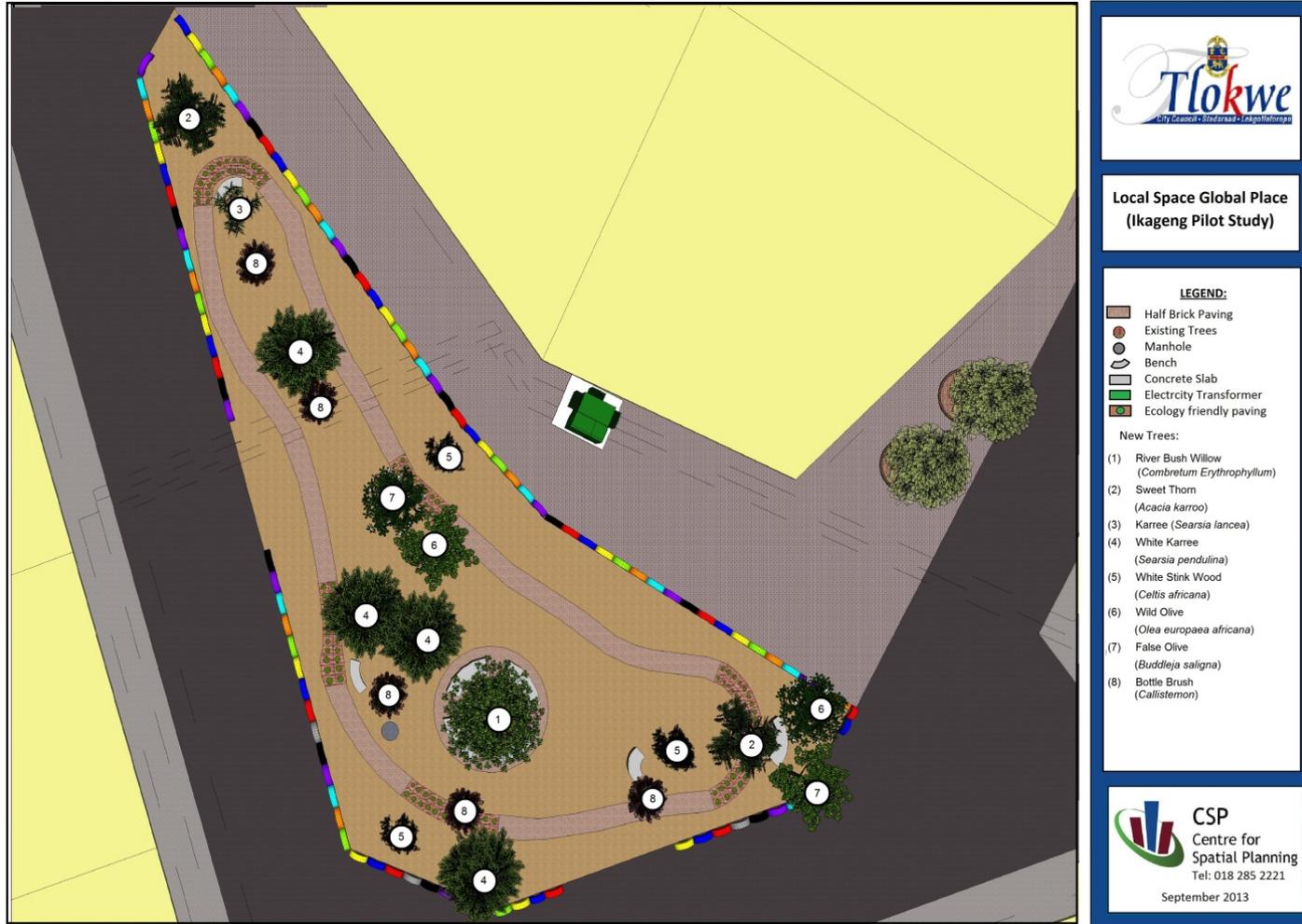


Figure 6-4: Final design

(Source: Mapped by CSP: Centre for Spatial Planning) see Annexure E



Figure 6-5: Final design

(Source: Mapped by CSP: Centre for Spatial Planning) see Annexure E

### 6.4.3 Discussion: Collaborative design workshop

The collaborative design workshop followed the stages in accordance to the collaborative model (see Table 5.1; chapter 5) (Kvan, 2000:412). These stages include: (i) *Start* (Conceptualisation of physical and social dimensions during focus group 1), (ii) *Individual input* (Participants had the opportunity to draw their own ideas with regard to the Ikageng open space, as part of a preparation for the collaborative design workshop), (iii) *Negotiation* (Individual input was explained and negotiated with and to all involved role players), (iv) *Discussion* (After negotiation, individual input was collaboratively discussed, reaching consensus on a mutual agreed proposed outcome), and (v) *Finalisation/ Reaching an outcome* (Consensus reached by all involved role players as a joint drawing is sketched, utilising input of all individual participants). This collaborative model tends to be successful in cases where consensus is reached in terms of all stages of the workshop and decision making (Miller, 2003).

Whilst testing practice and theory, the communicative planning theory (see Chapter 3) is particularly appropriate with regard to this phase of the study. Studying both the work of Habermas - Philosophical view on planning (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:16) - and Foucault - Dark side of planning (Hillier & Healy, 2010:142) - it is clear that these authors strive to deliver the society from previous bureaucratic practices – working towards a more democratic view on planning (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000:907). Therefore, their viewpoints tend to be valuable within this collaborative design workshop, as they suggest that the influence of unequal power distribution should be limited within planning and participation (Flyvbjerg, 2001:98).

This redistribution of power in this case, is considered by the primary aim of this study. PAR and place-making both strive to empower participants to obtain knowledge to improve their daily surroundings (Ochocka, Moorlag & Janzen, 2010). Ultimately, this collaborative design workshop empowered participants by means of their involvement in transforming space to place within their own physical and social midst.

Finalising the collaborative design workshop, some planning/design elements were conceptualised with regard to the joint design effort. Built- (e.g. enclosure/edges, paths, focal

point and furniture) and natural elements (e.g. trees, ground cover and flowers). Both these elements were conceptualised using a consensual approach, including all involved role players. Some intangible elements were also discussed, but were not be able to be indicated on the design. Social relations (Safety of children and the provision of a healthy environment) were part of these intangible elements of the collaborative design.

Evident in this phase of the research is the progress in the unlocking of PAR values. Previous phases released the formation of relationships, learning opportunities and empowerment (further enhanced during this collaborative design workshop). However, respect for diversity came forth in this phase of research, as participants ultimately improved the manner in which they view the opinions of other. This improved viewpoint considered the understanding of various and often diverse ideas with regard to a mutual concern (Grønkjær *et al.*, 2011:16).

### 6.5 Focus Group 3

Themes that emerged from the participants' reflection on the process after the finalisation of the plan/design can be summarised in Table 6.8 (Experience of the process):

Table 6-8: Participants' experience of the process after finalisation of design

Main themes	Sub-themes	Quotes from the participants
(i) Experience of the process	Building of strong social relationships	<p><i>"I have an issue with age difference... Like she [older female participant]... she`s older than me... I can`t have a chat with her... But we can chat... yeah...it made it different...&lt;laughter&gt;"</i></p> <p><i>"We we`re only neighbours... greeting each other... and passing by... Now, we... Participant x (older woman) can... can just call me... stand there and talk to me &lt;laughter&gt;"</i></p> <p><i>"We [participants] are friends now..."</i></p>

	<p>Formation of sense of ownership</p>	<p><i>“...we [participants’ feels responsible for the upkeep of the site] don’t want to see anybody throwing something bad there... We take care of the place...”</i></p> <p><i>“Now, I... I... I don’t know this one... &lt;tswana speech&gt; No, he’s not going to get this place... we must...”</i></p> <p><i>“...this place of ours... the place of the children...”</i></p>
	<p>Establishment of responsibility</p>	<p><i>“I never took this “parkie” [little park] into consideration anyway... nobody [community members] did... but ever since we [researchers and community members] met... it’s like... I don’t even want anyone throwing their bottles there [research area]...”</i></p>
	<p>Mutual learning</p>	<p><i>“... I learned a lot about working together with a group of people with different ideas...”</i></p> <p><i>“And I, think also... uhm... concerning working together with different people... working different people... community members who I didn’t know... ward committee members... students...”</i></p> <p><i>“I have learnt a lot... because the things [process]... they move... slowly, slowly... but they are still happening...”</i></p>
	<p>Concerns in terms of time consuming nature of the process</p>	<p><i>“So... we were expecting for something happening... That’s why not even [Participant Y] is coming... He doesn’t really see why he should come back...”</i></p> <p><i>“Maybe the project came quickly... quickly... or what... I don’t know... But now, they don’t come anymore [time consuming factor]...”</i></p>

(Source: Adapted from Strydom and Puren, 2014)

**6.5.1 Main theme 1: *Experience of the process* (Sub-themes: **Building of strong social relationships; formation of sense of ownership; establishment of responsibility; Mutual learning; and concerns in terms of time consuming nature of the process**)**

In terms of socialisation, a partnership was created between participants and between researchers and participants. The process promoted the facet of friendship relations, as a participant shared: *“We we`re only neighbours... greeting each other... and passing by... Now, we... Participant x (older woman) can... can just call me... stand there and talk to me <laughter>”* This process enhanced the social aspects and turned it into an asset rather than a challenge. The improved social relationship also enhanced the ability of inhabitants to work collaboratively to maintain the study area, as verbally stated by a participant: *“We [participants] are friends now... we don`t want to see anybody throwing something bad there...”* Further stating that participants are now socially active, initiated by the research process and seen as an improvement within the neighbourhood.

This open space was always an aspect which community members rather ignored, as it were a challenge within the community. Neglect was noticed as a lack of ownership motivated vandalism and dumping in the past, as a participant confessed: *“Yeah...I can... I never took this parkie into consideration anyway... Cause nobody [community members] did... But ever since we [researchers and community members] met... It`s like... I don`t even want anyone throwing their bottles there [research area]...”* Subsequently, the lack of ownership improved, promoting the protective notion among participants to maintain the area, as commented by one participant: *“Now, I... I... I don`t know this one... <tswana speech> No, he`s not going to get this place... we must...”* This element of the process gave participants something to be proud of, and they wish to protect their asset, as another verbal comment confirmed: *“No one is going to make this park... this place of ours... the place of the children... This is not a business place...”* They feel that the conceptualisation is set in terms of the process and they choose to comply with their decision, as they fully participated during this phase, which actually involves the process as a whole.

The process improved the sense of responsibility of inhabitants surrounding the research area, as they have a zero tolerance to dumping in the area. A responsible participant mentioned this feeling towards dumping: *“I don`t even want anyone throwing their bottles*

*there... I just want them [to keep the place clean]... it gave me something to do... just only me...*” This transformative statement proves that a more responsible atmosphere within the research field, are noticed, as participating members now want to improve the physical appearance of the site. Participants thus feel responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the area in which manner they are able to assist, as a participant shared a feeling on behalf of all participants: *“...we [participants’ feels responsible for the upkeep of the site] don`t want to see anybody throwing something bad there... We take care of the place...”* Stating that members are personally involved in partaking in the cleaning of the site, proving that responsibility is a priority in the area, which in the past was not noticeable under all participants.

As far as the learning component spread, participant in the follow-up focus group, experienced the education facet as positive, as they learned to work in a team on a collaborative manner, respecting opinions of other participants and sharing their own knowledge. In terms of education, a participant commented that teamwork was an important aspect that was learnt: *“... I learned a lot about working together with a group of people with different ideas...”* The sharing of mutual wisdom as well as different ideas is important when working on a collaborative related process, as this experience includes all concepts, discoveries and opinions in terms of decision making. Participating members also learned to be patient regarding the process. As the decision is made by more than one person, all ideas should be considered when designing such a plan. A participant shared some learnt wisdom in terms of patience: *“Ek het baie geleer... want die goeters [process]... hulle loop... stadig, stadig... maar hulle kom binne toe...(Translation from Afrikaans: I have learnt a lot... because the things [process]... they move... slowly, slowly... but they are still happening...)”* This Afrikaans statement suggests that the process is slow, but is still making progress.

Participants also experienced challenges concerning the participatory process in terms of the duration. Some of them even lost faith that the initiative will be implemented, as they felt that it is time-consuming. One participant mentioned: *“It took longer that it should have... you know... It wasn` t suppose to take more than four months...”* According to this view, participants feel that the process could be accelerated. Excitement for the outcome of this participatory process is one of the key reasons for participants to experience this facet as a challenge. Another participant explored reasons for other participants` viewpoints in terms of the process: *“Miskien die project het vinnig gekom... vinnig gekom... of wat... ek weet nie...”*

*Maar nou hulle kom nie...(Translation from Afrikaans: Maybe the project came quickly... quickly... or what... I don't know... But now, they don't come anymore [time consuming factor]...*" This verbal comment suggests that participants thought that the initiative would have progressed more in the given time.

### **6.5.2 Discussion: focus group 3**

During focus group 3, progress in PAR values was evident as participants revealed social together with psychological change, as participants grew in terms of their attachment to the friendship created among them. Unblocked PAR values include empowerment, relationships, mutual learning, respect for diversity, and social justice and equity.

Focus group 3 unlocked the value of empowerment among participants, as positive behavioural change (e.g. ownership and responsibility) was noticed in their lives. This value was further established as knowledge gathering was found to be important during this participatory process. Therefore, participants generated the skill of communicating opinions (mutual concerns) with regard to their environment. Furthermore, true collaboration occurred in this process and assisted participants to experience change in terms of stronger self-esteem, voice and improvement of skills.

Relationships created a further platform for change, as strong friendship connections were created among participants as well as collaborative partnerships with researchers (without regard to age, gender, language, ethnicity etc.). This establishment of relationships motivated participants to actively participate in the decision making process. Involvement in this case led to the acknowledgement of opinions of all affected individuals.

Furthermore, Focus group 3 revealed the value of mutual learning. Mutual learning in this stance refers to the collective learning found among both participants and researchers. Expectations are part of the learning process, as all role players gather an understanding of the general aspirations connected to the outcome of this process. Subsequently, researchers learnt to refrain from the predetermination of outcome expectations (rather considering the individual communities ideas within the conceptualisation of the final plan).

During the development of the PAR value of mutual learning, respect for diversity was revealed. This value created psychological change among involved role players as differences was considered and encompassed within the design. Participants received the freedom to voice their opinions in terms of decision making in a spontaneous manner. This implied that affected members could join in discussion without regard to their background. Furthermore, this value unlocked the redistribution of power (involvement within decision making), as participants feel part of the process on all levels.

The redistribution of power led to the unlocking of social justice and equity. This PAR value allows participants within the place-making process to learn how to address and use power structures. Core needs and challenges were discovered in an effort to understand the background of their experienced feelings. Therefore, insightful contributions could be made in terms of decision making and restored social imbalances within a micro-environment.

PAR values therefore informed Focus group 3, and revealed positive changes (social and psychological) which had an influence on the physical space as participants developed a caring attitude towards the site. As found within the study (all levels of data generation) PAR values progressively increased during the research period. This progressive change will be discussed briefly in an integrated discussion of findings.

## 6.6 Integrated discussion

**Table 6-9: Integration of PAR values and findings**

VALUES					
	Empowerment	Social justice and equity	Collaborative Relationships	Mutual Learning	Respect
Focus group 1					
Focus group 2	▪		▪	▪	
Collaborative design workshop	▪		▪	▪	▪
Focus group 3	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪

(Source: Author's own construction of findings)

During *Focus group 1*, PAR values were not yet unlocked, as this was the initial stage. As the process progressed, PAR values (Empowerment, Collaborative relationships and mutual learning) emerged during *Focus group 2* – PAR values are fully described in Chapter 4. Creativity was considered as preparation for the *Collaborative design workshop*, and this stage unlocked values that include empowerment, collaborative relationships, mutual learning and respect for diversity. As a final stage (*Focus group 3*) of the process, all values emerged including Social justice and equity, due to the reflection given by all role players.

## 6.7 Conclusion

This chapter presents the findings of the pilot study of an on-going research project that takes active community involvement as the point of departure in a place-making process

where local spaces are transformed to places. PAR is a valuable method for place-making as it actively involves communities in the place-making process from the start so that they partake in decision making. Building blocks developed for place-making in this case include: (i) acknowledging the physical dimensions of the site and how it is perceived by members of the community, (ii) understanding the social relations that exist and are constructed as a result of the open space, as well as (iii) future intervention strategies that include physical intervention (upgrade and beautification), social intervention (collaborative partnerships between community members and people from the outside) and economic intervention (creation of employment opportunities). The implementation and extent to which this place-making process empowers communities to transform local spaces to public places is something that has to be explored in follow-up phases of this study.

During these follow-up stages there should be some emphasis on the fact that space may no longer be seen as a neutral backdrop to the society. Consider the principles of place-making (multi-faceted process in which people tend to change their daily surroundings – see chapter 2). Eventually, this study, with its various stages, allows participants to empower themselves to reach a mutual goal. This empowerment can only be achieved if collaboration between all stakeholders is enhanced, ultimately leading to the unlocking of PAR values. Furthermore, the main overall theme of this process is the expectations of participants with reference to their experience. Expectations entail the need for physical upgrades as well as the promotion of certain social relations. This social relation is found to be beneficent to all role players, as positive psychological change developed in terms of their world-view.

The active involvement of participants in changing space to place is time consuming and poses commitment challenges. In this case, the process followed illustrated that the pay-offs are rewarding as meaning and value is added to a physical space, while values such as empowerment, collaborative relationships, mutual learning and respect for diversity and social justice and equity are created by place-making.

Foucault (refer to chapter 3.5.1.2) described the 'dark side' of planning the tendency of oppressive planning structures which obstructed the reaching of consensus among all involved role players. In this case, this implied a shift of focus towards a more inclusive planning process. Therefore, it is sensible to include stakeholders on each level of the

planning process on a continuous basis to promote democratic decision making. In this sense, this research is a modest step towards using the communicative planning theory for which limited practical applications currently exists, to be made explicit in a planning process.

## **CHAPTER 7 SYNTHESIS AND PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This study has up until now focused on how the process of Participatory Action Research (PAR) was used to guide place-making. During this process an open space located in Ikageng, Potchefstroom (South Africa), was transformed into a place. The community who was included in this study was subjected to forced removals during the Apartheid regime and they are currently living in an area where quality open spaces are lacking but extremely important as it forms a building block of the community's social life.

This chapter forms the main synthesis of the theoretical concepts that informed this study, as well as a discussion of the empirical findings that emerged from using PAR in the process of place-making. Due to the fact that theory and practice are viewed as intertwined and reciprocal in this study, the discussion of the theoretical study (literature review) are not separated from what emerged from the empirical findings but presented in a manner where theory and practice (empirical) informed each other.

Based on the synthesis, generic recommendations for place-making are presented to serve as a framework for planners to transform spaces to places through using PAR while specific recommendations were formulated for this specific context.

### **7.2 Discussion of theoretical concepts**

#### **7.2.1 Space and place are different but related concepts as space is transformed to place through an empowering process referred to as place-making**

The process of planning includes the change of space to place. Concepts of space and place are complex. This statement implies that space should first be understood before one can attempt to change it. Theories of space are informed by various disciplines (e.g. mathematics, geography, planning and design). Therefore, after studying the various disciplines, space in general is seen as the physical surroundings in which people live their daily lives. Space seems to be concrete, including the physical aspects of a setting and relating to the fact that space is furthermore three-dimensional (visual, touch and smell). This physically observable nature of space entails that space is duplicable (including a single identity), as it is found to be homogeneous without regardless of any influences e.g. the social.

On the other hand, place is seen as space loaded with intrinsic value. Place entails the intangible facets of a community, which is often the invisible, abstract nature of place, and includes the fourth dimension (subjective human experience). Furthermore, place consists of four constructs (visual components, an end product, the process during which it is developed and meanings attached to it), which all emerged in the various phases of this study. At first, participants envisioned only beautification of the area (place as visual component), connecting this construct with the outcome that participants expected (product-orientated). However, in a later phase the process started to unlock deeper level change (e.g. development of social and psychological change), illustrating that the creation of place is also process-orientated. As this research ultimately created change in terms of psychological and social dimensions, changing a space into a place eventually became a meaningful process to the participants. Place as something that is unique emerged as important in this study.

Place-making refers to the manner in which participants tend to collaboratively create change within their living environment. Transforming space to place (place-making) in this study proved to be an empowering process.

### **7.2.2 Planning evolved from a top-down bureaucratic approach to a bottom-up, participatory approach in which people are active role players in decision-making**

Initially planning was seen as a bureaucratic practice ("blueprint" planning) with regard to participation and decision-making and included the predetermination of a fixed outcome with regard to planning. This practice reflects the South African planning history of unequal distribution of power in terms of decision-making in planning. Decisions were made by governments and state planners, as this approach followed a hierarchal approach to planning. Systems planning soon followed due to a more flexible view of decision-making (fixed vision by means of action). However - still a top-down approach - systems planning theory accommodated segments of the society (e.g. privileged groups and individuals of the community) with regard to decision-making.

However, there was a need for a more inclusive paradigm in which the planner became more of a mediator and facilitator of the community (the public) instead of a technical expert/specialist). Participation in the advocacy planning theory paradigm entailed that only

certain segments of the society's opinions was considered as useful, meaning that only certain representatives had power within the decision-making process. This paradigm found the need to establish collaborative partnerships between the government, public and private sectors with regard to the power of decision-making (consensus building towards a mutual understanding of preferred action with regard to planning decisions). Planners (within this paradigm) strived to refrain from bureaucratic behaviour (promotion of democracy), redistributing power to all involved role players. However - still dependant on knowledge - planners saw participation as assistive in reaching their preferred outcome. Another turn in planning theory came about as Habermas and Foucault's work influenced planning. These influences paved the way for a more communicative turn towards planning theory.

The communicative planning theory is useful for this study as it allows for all participants to share values, understandings and experiences of planning process involved within the process of decision-making, and ultimately place-making. During this study, the communicative planning theory further informed the manner in which the planner should conduct research (planner seen as facilitator, considering all opinions of participants). The collaborative agreed decision should equally benefit all role players of the study (values of a democratic society), and further strive to enhance interpersonal and inclusive relationships (e.g. collaborative and later social relationships) as it suggests consensus building among all role players of the study and people affected by proposed change – correlating with both this specific study and the ideals of communicative planning theory.

### **7.2.3 Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a participatory oriented research methodology that creates a platform for multi-levelled change within communities.**

Action Research (AR) (known as the Northern tradition and mainly used in developed countries) paved the way for the development of PAR (a Southern tradition used in developing countries). Compared to AR, PAR is more focused on the active and equal partaking of participants in all phases of the research process to be part of decision-making. The process involves PAR values such as collaborative relationships, empowerment, mutual learning, social justice and equity and respect that are unlocked in communities. In this sense PAR involves more than the physical transformation of spaces in communities and seems to create a platform for change.

In order to obtain the benefits of PAR in terms of the anticipated change, certain PAR principles should be included in an integrative manner. These principles include: (i) the forming of collaborative relationships between various role players, (ii) the use of trans-disciplinary knowledge, (iii) creating a platform for change, (iv) incorporating mutual respect, (v) developing empowerment and (vi) focusing on democracy as the ultimate goal.

While PAR is divided in different typologies (including people-oriented PAR, power-oriented PAR and practice-oriented PAR) that all aim to create change, it ultimately involves implementing community needs in practice. While the various typologies have different focuses, it is best to integrate the strengths of each to optimise the positive change in communities.

PAR serves as a valuable platform to create change, which directly links with the ideals of place-making as an empowering process. During place-making spaces are transformed into places by incorporating meanings and values in following a participatory process in which people are involved in decision-making. PAR in this sense is not only utilised for physical transformation of space, but also social and psychological transformation within communities.

### **7.3 Discussion of the empirical findings**

#### **7.3.1 Progression towards the unlocking of PAR values**

The findings represent active inclusion of communities in decision-making as the point of departure. In this study a PAR method was used, which means that communities were actively involved in the place-making process from the start. During the research the emphasis was on the fact that space can no longer be viewed as a neutral backdrop for people's lives as space and people in space are interrelated. Transforming space to place during the process of place-making is an empowering and multi-faceted process during which people change and represent their lived spaces.(see Chapter 2) while meanings and values are developed in relation to these places (see chapter 4).

During the four main data generating phases (Focus group 1, Focus group 2, the collaborative design workshop and Focus group 3), values as suggested by PAR, started to unlock progressively. During Focus group 1, PAR values had not yet started to emerge as anticipated change was mainly focused on physical aspects (beautification, maintenance,

creating a safe physical environment). However, in Focus group 2 progression was noted as PAR values (relationships, learning and empowerment) started to emerge. Participants realised the importance of stakeholder involvement and the formation of collaborative relationships. Subsequently, empowerment started to surface as participants started to explore own solutions (e.g. generation of financial resources). Furthermore, they realised the potential for mutual learning through change of the physical space.

During the Collaborative Design Workshop, collaborative relationships were further enhanced as participants were asked to join in discussions to negotiate possible ideas to develop a plan/design. Therefore, participants learnt to work in a communicative setting, sharing ideas and discussing a possible outcome. This communication and negotiation of various ideas promoted empowerment, as decisions were based on consideration of all involved role players, especially the community members. Furthermore, the Collaborative Design Workshop unleashed (the PAR value) respect towards diversity (including and considering all participants viewpoints).

The process that was followed created an opportunity for participants from diverse backgrounds (e.g. culture, ethnicity, age, gender, profession) to engage in social and collaborative. Co-working and idea sharing established skills (social, negotiation and problem solving) with regard to mutually making decisions unlocking of mutual learning in return. Empowerment further emerged during this stage as positive behavioural changes such as responsibility and ownership towards the physical space were developed. These changes had a positive influence on the physical space as participants developed a caring attitude towards the site.

Using PAR created change beyond the mere physical level to include social and psychological levels of change. An integrated synthesis of the development of PAR values is summarised in Table 7.1 underneath.

**Table 7-1: Integrated synthesis of findings**

Focus group	Sub-themes	PAR values	Change facilitated/anticipated change by the PAR method
<b>Focus group discussion 1</b>	<i>(i) Physical dimensions</i>	(i) Low maintenance	<p>The participants mainly considered physical aspects of the site and stated their need for upgrade and beautification for the site to be functional. Spontaneous interactions allowed participants to voice their viewpoints and share their ideas for the site. This created a foundation for the establishment of social relations through the process. Participants expressed their willingness for voluntary collaboration. They saw the researchers as a ‘mouthpiece’ to voice their opinions with the local government. While the discussion mainly focused on the expectations of the facilitation of physical change of the site, it was recognised that positive relationships could be beneficial to the process.</p>
		(ii) Unsafeness	
	<i>(ii) Social relations</i>	(i) Feeling of neighbourliness among the participants	
		(ii) Territoriality with regard to the open space	
		(iii) Feelings of disregard by local government	
	<i>(iii) Intervention strategies</i>	(i) Physical intervention (upgrade and beautification)	
		(ii) Social intervention (community involvement)	
		(iii) Economic intervention (creation of employment)	

PAR values had not yet been unlocked at this stage

<b>Focus group discussion 2</b>	<b>(i) <u>Experience of the process</u></b>	(i) Positive feelings towards the process (e.g. happiness, excitement and appreciation)	Relationships; learning; empowerment	<p>During the second focus group session, progression became evident as more PAR values were unlocked. The anticipated functional and physical change of the site and started to create a platform for change in terms of PAR values, such as relationship formation, respect, learning and empowerment.</p> <p>Participants realised the importance of stakeholder participation. A sense of empowerment surfaced as participants started to generate own solutions (e.g. approach companies for funding). They realised the potential for the facilitation of learning through change of the physical space. While PAR values started to emerge during the process, trust in the realisation of physical change remains a concern for participants due to financial uncertainty.</p>
	<b>(ii) <u>Expectations of the process</u></b>	(i) Involvement of various stakeholders		
		(ii) Creation of learning opportunities		
		(iii) Concerns about realisation of physical change		

<b>Collaborative design workshop</b>	<b>Built elements</b>	(i) Enclosure/edge (e.g. painted tyres)	<b>Relationships; learning; empowerment; respect for diversity</b>	<p>As participants were asked to draw individual sketches of their ideas for the site, a further level of empowerment was unlocked. This also contributed to the learning of new design skills. In terms of the design workshop, participants had to work collaboratively towards a mutual goal. This facet assisted them in unblocking respect for diversity,</p>
		(ii) Paths (e.g. organic footpath with traffic signs; educative purposes)		
		(iii) Focal point (aesthetic element)		
		(iv) Furniture (e.g. benches and tables for site-users)		
	<b>Natural elements</b>	(i) Trees (5 existing trees and additional indigenous trees)		
		(ii) Ground cover (keep existing grass)		
		(iii) Flowers (aesthetic element)		

<b>Focus group discussion 3</b>	<i>(i) Experience of the process</i>	(i) Building of strong social relationships	Relationships, mutual learning, respect for diversity, empowerment; social justice and equity.	<p>A third focus group was conducted after finalisation of the physical plan/design by the participants, but before actual implementation. The process that was followed created an opportunity for participants from different age groups to form strong bonds (friendships). Working together unlocked mutual learning in terms of how to work with diverse stakeholders, such as ward committee members and students. Social skills were developed during the process of learning, including respect for other people’s opinions. Empowerment further emerged during this stage as positive behavioural changes such as responsibility and ownership had taken place. These changes had a positive influence on the physical space as participants developed a caring attitude towards the site.</p>
		(ii) Formation of sense of ownership		
		(iii) Establishment of responsibility		
		(iv) Mutual learning		
		(v) Concerns in terms of time consuming nature of the process		

(Source: Author’s own construction of integrated findings)

### **7.3.2 Physical space is an important part of place-making**

Apart from the higher order values that developed progressively during this research process (as discussed above), physical change (planning and designing the space) seems to remain an important part of place-making. The physical cannot be separated from the implementation of physical change as demonstrated by the fact that participants raised this as a concern during one of the reflections sessions (Focus group 2). While the process of place-making and using PAR informs the process, place-making is also product oriented as suggested in Chapter 2. While the implementation phase was not included in this particular research, it is viewed as an integral part of place-making.

## **7.4 Urban planning recommendations for the process of place-making as informed by PAR**

### **7.4.1 Generic proposals: A framework for place-making**

The following process (see Table 7.2) is proposed as a generic framework to guide place-making (transformation of space to place) in similar research contexts as this study. The proposal is meant to be a guideline rather than a fixed process, as each context and community differs and has its own dynamics. The suggested process also includes how to integrate PAR as a valuable method to inform the place-making process.

### **7.4.2 Specific proposals: Guidelines for place-making as product and process**

Specific proposals for place-making with regard to the product (physical space) and process of place-making are suggested as follows:

#### **7.4.2.1 Planning/designing the *physical* space (place-making as end product):**

The following planning/design elements can be considered for integrating into the public spaces design

**Natural elements\*:** (i) Maintaining the existing ground cover and trees on the site is ecologically sustainable and implies the use of existing resources; (ii) trees (planting) that are native indigenous species as part of the design are ecologically sound and readily

available; (iii) the use of diversity of plant and tree species are more advisable as these create a more ecological sound eco system and is create an opportunity for communities to learn about their own natural local environment. Incorporating diversity in terms of natural elements (landscaping) imply that an interesting and vibrant space is created where various seasons and characteristics of the natural environment is celebrated

(ii) **Built elements\***: The use of possible built elements in the plan/design include (i) an edge or territory to define the space; (ii) a focus point to attract users to the space and to serve as an orientation point on the site/in the area. A focus point establishes a particular identity or character for the site; (iii) access to services (e.g. electricity and water connections) for maintenance; (iv) a functional use (e.g. a path with traffic signs for educational purposes, play apparatus for recreation or seating areas for relaxation); (v) social areas (such as seating spaces underneath trees) for people to use the space as an outdoor living room and (vi) street furniture elements such as dustbins and lightning.

Other aspects to take into account that inform the physical plan/design when transforming a space to a place include: acknowledging the *legal aspects* and status of the space (land use, land use rights and ownership); *physical aspects* (access and services on and around the site); the *people* using the site (demographics, existing relationships, history, economic context); *ecological* aspects of the site and context and possible *role players/stakeholders* to involve in the plan/design.

#### **7.4.2.2 Planning/designing the *social* space (place-making as process):**

The following principles can be considered for integrating into the process of place-making: (i) using a *trans-disciplinary knowledge* base in which academic/expert and local knowledge is integrated; (ii) establishing *collaborative partnerships* between role players, especially the researchers (planners) and the community members; (iii) *involving participants'* in every step of decision-making during place-making and (iv) constantly *reflecting and monitoring* the process to ensure that PAR values are unlocked during the process.

Although the above emerged as the main considerations in transforming a local space into a public place in this particular community, it may differ from context to context and therefore vary in terms of what is applicable in specific instances of place-making. However, this serve as a valuable list of aspects to be included as point of departure in other place-making processes where community empowerment is needed and where planning can possible play a role as change agent.

**Table 7-2: A framework for place-making**

<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Sub-phases:</b>	<b>Goal:</b>	<b>Principles:</b>	<b>Tools (Techniques):</b>
<b>Phase 1:</b> Gaining community entrance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approach the community through an appropriate person/ structure (e.g. Ward Committee)</li> <li>- Invite the community to participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishing of trust and building relationships</li> <li>- Establishing ethical aspects (ensuring voluntary and anonymous participation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be open and transparent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initial discussion with relevant role players and community members</li> <li>- Using a translator</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2:</b> Conceptualising the space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Getting familiar with the research context.</li> <li>- Getting familiar with the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To understand the context in which place-making will take place.</li> <li>- To identify needs, aspirations and expectations of the participants (and other role players)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitating this phase on neutral ground which is accessible for the community members.</li> <li>- Address ethical aspects</li> <li>- Refrain from creating expectations in terms of the outcome of the process.</li> <li>- Create platform for spontaneous idea sharing by acknowledgment of all role players' participation as valuable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On-site Focus group discussions</li> <li>- Informed consent</li> <li>- Member checking</li> <li>- Voice and/or video recordings</li> <li>- Using a translator</li> </ul>

<p><b>Phase 3:</b> Establish partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish partnerships with the community members.</li> <li>- Establish partnerships with the local government.</li> <li>- Establish partnerships with private sector.</li> <li>- Establish partnerships with other relevant role players.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assuring collaborative relationships in terms of the process (e.g.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continually and actively involve participants (and other role players)</li> <li>- Respect people from diverse backgrounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meetings/ focus group discussions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase 4:</b> Transforming space into place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Envision the end-product.</li> <li>- Concept development</li> <li>- Plan-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitating and obtaining consensus with regard to the final/concept design.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flexibility of facilitator is important (Consider changing aspirations of community members)</li> <li>- Guide facilitation of process to consider all respectable views and opinions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborative design workshop using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Individual drawings/sketches</li> <li>(ii) Discussions</li> <li>(iii) Collective drawing/plan-making</li> <li>(iv) Member-checking as ongoing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b>Phase 5:</b></p> <p>Implementa- tion*</p> <p>*not formally included in this study but important in the place-making process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Physical implementation of the place-making process – transforming the physical space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Obtain funding</li> <li>- Obtain materials</li> <li>- Establish roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active involvement of participants in implementation</li> <li>-Flexibility in terms of implementation process (due to changing circumstances e.g. funding, weather, commitment, time-frames)</li> <li>- Ensure all role players have responsibilities – especially community members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flexible in terms of tools but mostly discussions with role players</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase 6:</b></p> <p>Monitoring/ Reflection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reflection should be conducted on a continuous basis during all phases (communication of experiences, feelings and concerns with regard to the process)</li> <li>- Monitoring on a regular basis, addressing concerns in terms of the process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitoring progress in terms of different levels – physical, social and psychological change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide platform for spontaneous reflection in terms of concerns, feelings and experiences of the process.</li> <li>- Include participants on a long-term base with regard to the monitoring process.</li> <li>- Continuous involvement is necessary in terms of the upkeep of the site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual reflection (e.g. journal of feelings and experiences)</li> <li>- Group discussions in terms of reflection on the process</li> <li>- Discussion/ Negotiation of future involvement in terms of monitoring and upkeep (Inclusion of all role players)</li> </ul>

(Source: Author's own construction)

## 7.5 Conclusion

This chapter formulated the main synthesis that derived from the research as developed from the literature review (theory) and empirical research. Based on the synthesis, recommendations for place-making in planning are formulated, using PAR as overarching methodology. An inclusive process is suggested for future place-making in order to empower participants while transforming an open space to a public place. The proposed guidelines included six phases: (i) *Gaining community entrance*, (ii) *Conceptualising the space*, (iii) *Establish partnerships*, (iv) *Transforming space to place*, (v) *Implementation* and (vi) *Monitoring/ Reflection*.

It seems as if PAR is valuable for place-making and appropriate to integrate as an overarching research methodology. The main conclusions in terms of how PAR informed this place-making study forms the focus of the final chapter to follow.

## CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION

### 8.1 Introduction

The primary aim of the research was to explore the process of place-making in planning by using Participatory Action Research as overarching methodology. Place-making in general implies the transformation of space to place by adding meaning and value to the spaces in which people live by actively involving people in decision-making. In correlation with place-making, PAR is a cyclic process that involves the continuous collaboration of and reflection by participants in order to empower them. Purposefully including people in a democratic manner in place-making seems to be more successful than bureaucratic top-down approaches. Using PAR in place-making seems to be informative, as it ultimately empowers people.

In this chapter the study is concluded by answering the main research question that guided the study (*How can Participatory Action Research inform place-making in urban planning in a local community where an open space is transformed into a public place?*), as well answering the secondary research questions ((i) *What does the place-making process entail?* (ii) *How can PAR be used to increase the involvement of a community in decision-making?* and (iii) *What are the benefits of using PAR when transforming a space into a place?*). Furthermore, the chapter formulates the overall conclusion derived from this study, discusses some important lessons learnt from the study and makes recommendations for future research. Lastly, challenges with regard to the study and limitations are mentioned.

### 8.2 Conclusions: Answering the research questions

Through following a qualitative research approach to this study and using PAR as overarching methodology by generating data from focus groups and a collaborative design workshop, the research questions are answered as follows:

#### 8.2.1 How can Participatory Action Research inform place-making in urban planning in a local community where an open space is transformed into a public place?

As PAR is change oriented, it is important to reflect on the way in which PAR created a platform for change in place-making in this study. PAR informed the process of place-making in this study on at least three levels: (i) a physical level, (ii) social level and (iii) psychological level.

### **8.2.1.1 Physical level: Transforming the space physically (beautification and upgrading)**

By working collaboratively, researchers, participants (the community) and other stakeholders developed a joint plan/design for transforming the physical space.

The final plan/design that was developed is consensus-based, as suggested by the communicative planning theory. The main aspect of the communicative planning theory that was used revolves around the manner in which collaborative decision-making was conducted. The researchers (planners in this case) did not play the role of design experts as they facilitated the process in an effort to reach consensus (as proposed by Habermas). By involving participants (the community) on a continuous basis in a bottom-up manner and by acknowledging the specific context in which the research was conducted, the method (process followed) allowed for minimising manipulation and oppression by government and professionals (as suggested by Foucault). In this way the proposed physical transformation of the space addresses the community's needs and aspirations as set out in the first focus group.

The participants' aspiration to upgrade and beautify the site was addressed by the final plan/design by incorporating natural features (keeping existing trees, planting a variety of indigenous native species and keeping natural low maintenance grass areas), as well as built features (defining the space by painted tyres, creating a focus point for identity, adding a paved footpath and adding street furniture such as seating areas, dustbins, traffic signs and play apparatus to create a safe and learning space, especially for children.

PAR informed the process of place-making by creating a platform for physical transformation of a space.

### **8.2.1.2 Social level: Transforming the community socially**

Apart from physically transforming the space, PAR informed place-making beyond the physical level by creating a platform for social change. Change on the social level included (i) change in terms of relationships and (ii) mutual learning. Change in terms of relationships includes the development of collaborative partnerships between researchers (and other role-players) and the participants (community), as well as improved relationships between participants, who became friends regardless of age gaps. These partnerships eliminated power imbalances, suggesting a more communicative turn towards participation. The communicative turn strived to promote the

ideals of democracy with regard to decision-making. Including all stakeholders in the decision-making process informed place-making on a social level by means of mutual learning. This contributed to finding solutions and striving towards the proposed outcome in a collaborative manner. Change in terms of learning the use of PAR entails the mutual learning that developed by equipping participants with social skills to work together in a team consisting of different spheres in society, such as the local government, professionals, the private sector and other community members.

Therefore, PAR created a platform for social transformation during place-making in this study, as new and improved social relationships were formed.

### **8.2.1.3 Psychological level: Transforming the community psychologically**

The last level of the place-making process as informed by PAR included the deeper psychological level of change in participants. Change on this level included (i) the creation of pride, (ii) sense of ownership, (iii) the development of responsibility, as well as (iv) respect for diversity and ultimately (v) empowerment. The use of PAR in the place-making process established pride in that participants started protecting their surroundings (as the physical site was previously ignored (dumping site) and now is seen as an asset) in a collaborative fashion. Ownership grew in the sense that participants were actively involved in the planning and implementation, creating a caring notion towards the site. The PAR method seems to have developed responsibility in the community towards the space, as illustrated in the voluntary involvement with regard to the upkeep of the transformed space. Through working together on a continuous basis with a diversity of people (different role-players), respect for people's differences and various viewpoints were developed. Lastly, the use of PAR place-making seemed to have created a step towards empowering community members. Empowerment is defined as the process in which power is redistributed - especially among previously marginalised groups – where inequalities was noticed in the past. In this instance positive behavioural changes (e.g. increased responsibility and sense of ownership) started to emerge during the process followed in this research. By developing empowerment, PAR created a platform for change on the psychological level of community members.

### 8.2.2 What does the place-making process entail?

Place-making is a complex and time-consuming process during which participants (the community in this case) are actively involved in decision-making in all the steps of transforming space to place by adhering to specific underlying principles and following a set of phases.

The place-making process is supported by the following constructs:

- **Visual aspects:** The creation of visual excitement, which is representative of the specific societal group, allowing for the place to be memorable.
- **Place-making as a product:** The creation of place according to client-specific aspirations with a fixed design/plan for implementation.
- **Place-making as a process:** This implies that the process is informed by various phases, with the inclusion of various stakeholders.
- **Incorporation of meanings:** This includes the deeper spiritual connection of inhabitants with their surroundings, adding intrinsic value to the space, and ultimately creating a place.

Furthermore, place-making process entails the following phases:

- **Getting to know the research context, the site and community members:** This step involves obtaining entrance to the community to establish trust and forming partnerships with role-players involved. It also entails facilitating a process during which the community members identifies its needs and aspirations for both the product and process of place-making;
- **Developing a physical plan/design:** This step implies facilitating a process during which community members' develop a concept plan, incorporates input of various role-players and finalises an implementable plan/design according to their needs and desires;
- **Constant reflection:** Reflection entails constant reflection on the process followed to monitor if the process meets the expectations of the participants and whether the process is empowering;
- **Implementation** (not part of this study): Although not included in this research, but in the overarching research project this study forms part of, implementation is the final stage during which the outcome of solutions and decisions of the community members (in collaboration of other role-players) are practically illustrated.

Place-making is much more than the making (planning and designing) of space as it is a process during which meanings and values are added to space based on collaborative partnerships.

### 8.2.3 How can PAR be used to increase the involvement of a community in decision-making?

PAR motivated involvement of community by means of different stages, including:

- establishing collaborative partnerships between role-players (e.g. researchers and participants) in decision-making instead of using a top-down decision-making process;
- acknowledging the value of trans-disciplinary knowledge and especially incorporating local knowledge from communities;
- facilitating and monitoring change that is creating during the research;
- practising and enhancing mutual respect for various individuals and groups to generate a platform for equal participation;
- facilitating empowerment of communities in which communities find their own solutions and change their behaviour towards the spaces they plan/design;
- creating a democratic platform where all partners are equal.

### 8.2.4 What are the benefits of using PAR when transforming a space to a place?

The benefits of using PAR in this study involve the following:

- (i) Promotion of positive change by **empowering** communities to generate knowledge that is useful in terms of a mutual concern.
- (ii) **Social justice and equity** is motivated with the use of PAR in terms of the liberation of a community with regard to previous oppressive structures (discriminative practices of previous decision-making processes).
- (iii) Sharing and accepting knowledge of other people, partaking and conducting research about them for themselves and ultimately creating **collaborative relationships** (with various stakeholders).
- (iv) The opportunity is given to all involved role players to gain knowledge on an on-going base, allowing for **mutual learning** when using PAR within a process.
- (v) Establishment of **respect** for diversity (e.g. traditions, culture, ethnicity, language etc.) and shared opinions with regard to a mutual concern.

### 8.3 Challenges for the way forward

The following challenges exist for future place-making processes as experienced in this study:

- The **time-consuming nature** of a PAR and place-making may cause participants/researchers to lose interest or lack perseverance to follow through with the process. (This study took almost two years and only a few core participants remained part of the process until the end);
- **Flexibility** in terms of the process as each community and each research context is different – this implies that researchers (planners) and other role players must be able to adapt to circumstances as research contexts are different and communities/community members come from diverse social, political and historical backgrounds. Solutions for transforming the space are unique and dependent on the needs and aspirations of the specific community involved.
- **Funding** to implement the end product of the place-making process is an important consideration as it is raised as a concern by this community from the start of the research;

### 8.4 Recommendations for future research

This study consists of a small-scale project with a small number of core community members involved during which an open space was transformed to a vibrant public place. In this sense it cannot necessarily be representative of other place-making initiatives and research contexts. To improve an understanding of place-making in a South African context and to develop a model for place-making in similar contexts, the following future research is recommended:

- Applying the proposed steps for place-making as set out in Chapter 7 in another context to develop a model for place-making;
- Follow-up research in this research context after implementation to monitor the sustainability of place-making informed by PAR;
- Further research with regard to the values and changes created by PAR during place-making;
- Future research is needed with regard to how a community can be empowered to implement place-making as place-making is both process- and product-oriented.

## 8.5 Limitations of the study

This particular study is the pilot study of a larger ongoing urban planning research project during which spaces are transformed to places based on community involvement. This study forms a micro-study context, which implies that neither the process followed, nor can the product created (the plan/design) be generalised. The findings can therefore not necessarily be transferred to another context. Each community is unique and context-bound in terms of the larger macro-environment and place-making is therefore not duplicable.

## 8.6 Implementing place-making: The final step

Although, as mentioned, the implementation of the place-making process did not form part of this study, implementation of the place-making process was initiated as part of larger umbrella project (The LSGP project referred to in Chapter 1 – Background and Chapter 5 – section 5.2 Background of research project) in September 2014 during Arbor week. Implementation entailed that the community planted fifteen indigenous trees with the researchers and private sector on the open space, while community members started with the paving that forms part of the focus point of the site. Implementing physical change on the site attracted wide interest and more than a hundred people visited the site on this day. At the end of the first day of implementation the community members spontaneously started to pick up litter, watering the trees, and beautifying the spaces around the trees that were planted with rocks lying around. This is important as the research process/methodology (PAR) proved to be a step towards successful place-making in a community previously disadvantaged and subjected to forced removals.



Figure 8-1: Site before commencement of the research

(Source: Photograph taken by researcher)



Figure 8-2: During implementation

(Source: Photograph by researcher)



Figure 8-3: The site after the first day of implementation

(Source: Photograph by researcher)

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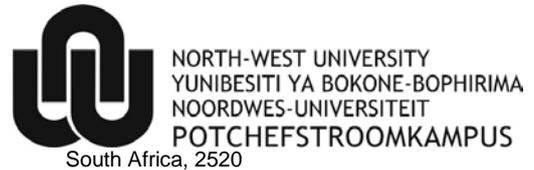
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# ANNEXURE A – INFORMED CONSENT

## EXAMPLE OF INFORMED CONSENT FORM



Tel: (018) 299 -1111/2222  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

**Urban and Regional Planning**

Tel: (018) 299 2545  
Fax: 086 567 9097  
E-mail: [karen.puren@nwu.ac.za](mailto:karen.puren@nwu.ac.za)

12 February 2013

### INFORMED CONSENT: PUBLIC PLACES RESEARCH (IKAGENG)

The subject groups Urban and Regional planning, Creative Arts and Botony of the North-West University has requested my participation in the research project: Public Places Research: Ikageng

I have been informed that the purpose of the research is to discuss my ideas about open spaces in Ikageng. My participation will involve:

- the completion of a participant profile with my age, gender, lenght of stay in the area and vested interest on properties around the site;
- taking part in an open qualitative discussion about this site and my neighbourhood/community;

I understand that there are no foreseeable risks or discomforts if I agree to participate in the study. I understand that the possible benefits of my participation in the research are to share my views on the past, present and future of this and other public spaces in my neighbourhood/community.

I understand that the results of the study may be published but that my name or identity will not be revealed. I also understand that the results of the study may be used for secondary studies connected to this project, but that my name or identity will not be revealed. The North-West University will maintain confidentiality of all records, materials and voice recorders.

I have been informed that I will not be compensated for my participation. I have been informed that any questions I have concerning this research study or my participation in it before or after my consent, will be answered by the investigators of this study. I understand that I may

withdraw my consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit to myself. In signing this consent form, I am not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies.

I, the undersigned, \_\_\_\_\_ (full names), have read the above information and by signing this form indicate that I will participate in the research voluntarily.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## ANNEXURE B – FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Focus Group 1	
No.	Question
1.	Tell us more about this site?
2.	Tell us more about your neighbourhood?
3.	What do you think should happen with this site in future?
4.	How do you as a community see your future involvement in this site?
Focus Group 2	
1.	What is your experience of the process so far?
2.	What is your future expectation in terms of the process?
3.	What did you learn about the process?
Focus Group 3	
1.	Share with us your experience during this process?
2.	What did you learn from this process?
3.	What did you learn about each other?
4.	What did you learn about working together?

## ANNEXURE C – VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTION

Example of transcription (Focus group 2) – Refer to full transcriptions of Focus group 1, Focus group 2 and Focus group 3 in included CD.

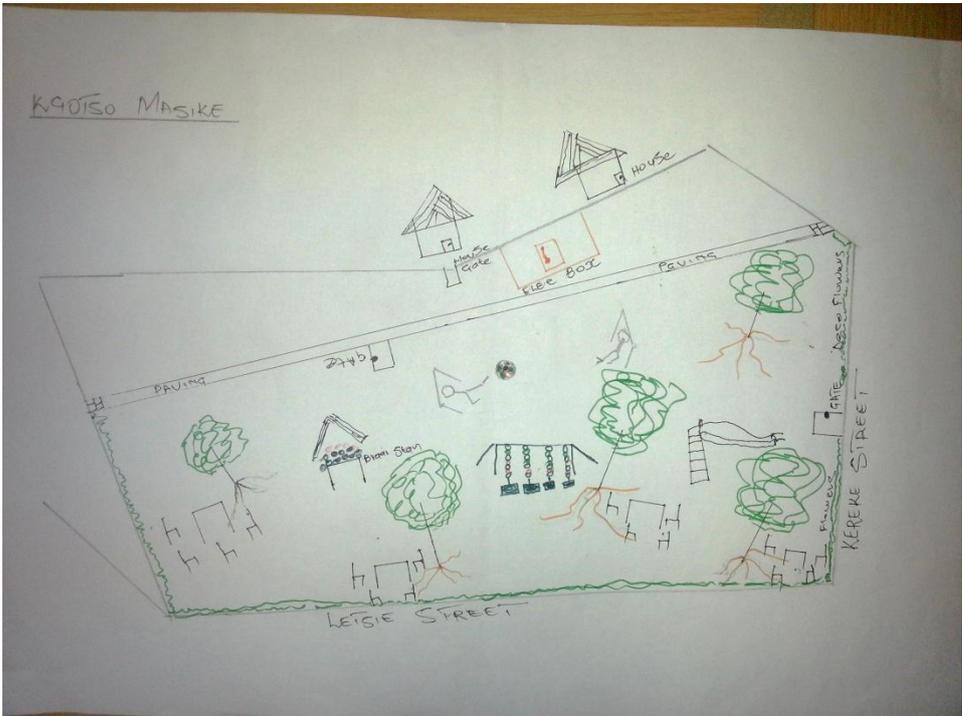
Researcher:	<p>I want to know how you experience, people coming from the university... there... and starting engaging with the community... if you can... maybe... just... share your feelings on that as well... we're going to talk a lot about these ideas... so keep... that... I will follow up on that... But, I want to know... your experience of the process of us coming here... and start engaging with the people... what was your ideas... when you arrived there at the first focus group... and... there were a lot of people sitting... asking... you questions...etc.</p> <p>What, what`s your experience of that?</p>
Participant 1:	<p>Sure... my experience from that... was... it was right... I felt very happy when people come to... uhm... assist us... and oh... helping us with that site... show that the site must not be a dumping site...</p>
Researcher:	<p>Okay...</p>
Participant 1:	<p>Yes...</p>
Researcher:	<p>Now I want to hear what the other people think...</p> <p>Participant 9? You are...you are... besides all the nice cooking you did for us...&lt;Laughter&gt; Should I go the other way around?</p>
Participants:	<p>Yes...yes...</p>
Participant 2:	<p>Yes... the other thing is... the acceptance of the community...while...during the process... they was so exiting meeting of... Because... while this site... there's so many young... children and teenagers. Then the plan that will be implemented there... the only thing that we look at... was the security... of the young one`s... to keep them from... from the street... cause if can check... were between Kereki street...it`s a busy street... two streets which are busy... cause you`ve got two tavern in that side... another one... the shebeen... so people are exited during the process of... while you`re coming... maybe because you let... you have the resources to implement them there... for the young ones... so, the community...</p>

	believe me... they was so excited... feeling there are now... Things will be well... there`s one... one... one... one... argue that they... Because, if you are there... things will go away... in terms of security... one... and then two... Learn processes within the... the site... so... I have heard...
Researcher:	What do you... what do you... just explain to me the meaning of process?  You`ve said something about learning?
Participant 2:	Ja... I mean... using the word learning.. I mean... when you implement some other resources... within the site there... the young ones will learn and be aware from the street...
Researcher:	Okay...
Participant 2::	That`s what their saying... but most important thing is... the security... for the teenagers and the young children in there...
Researcher:	Okay...
Participant 2::	Yes...
Researcher:	But I hear you say... is that the people are positive...
Participant 2:	Hundred percent... believe me... hundred percent...
Researcher:	All right...
Participant 2:	Yes... hundred percent... and that you arrive... people are exited... and see people asking questions, around and around... what this people are doing here?
Researcher:	Ja...
Participant 2:	The community... are wanting for our young ones to hear... cause that site... we want... we want something there... but we... can`t make it on our own... but you... sine you arrived, people became exited and concerned that maybe... the security will be very good... for the teenagers...

(Source: Example form Verbatim transcription – Focus group 2 )

# ANNEXURE D – INDIVIDUAL SKETCHES OF PARTICIPANTS

Refer to included CD for further examples of individual sketches of participants



(Source: Photographs of Individual Sketches)

# ANNEXURE E – FINAL CONCEPT PLAN/DESIGN

Refer to included CD for further examples of final concept plan/design



(Source: Mapped by CSP: Centre for Spatial Planning, 2013)

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*- John 3:16 -*

I solemnly declare that this dissertation is the work of the researcher Mr. W.J. Strydom (ID: 9006265155083; Student no:21757747) for the qualification for the degree M.Art et Scien in urban planning. Ideas and opinions are the work of the researcher alone and the supervisor takes no liability.