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The Value of Public Participation in Land-Use Planning for Redeeming Congestion in South African Municipalities

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Abstract. This paper captures the value of public participation as a redeemer of South African municipalities in land use planning. In this paper, it is argued that there is scant public participation in local government developmental matters, especially in land-use planning. South African municipalities are congested due to lack of public participation in land-use planning in the municipal arena. This is despite the fact that the constitution requires active public engagement in questions of developing local administration. The challenge of inactive public participation endures throughout the IDP, and this is now perceived as a dream wish. It is further argued that it is important to involve the public in land-use, especially in the following categories: commercial, residential, public facilities, industrial, and open spaces. The arguments in this paper were also founded on Patsy Healey's 1997 theory of collaborative planning. Collaborative planning theory has been used to develop ideas and arguments. This is a conceptual paper based on secondary data. The paper relied heavily on current literature on public participation and land-use planning. Despite the arrival of democracy in South Africa, the theoretical findings of this research indicated that there is still apartheid in spatial planning. It is also discovered that the adopted South African apartheid spatial planning continues to overlook community involvement in municipal land-use planning. When it comes to planning, the study proposes that municipal authorities follow the *Batho Pele* principles. At the municipal level, public engagement should not be passive but interactive and consultative. Finally, the paper advocates for land-use planning reforms and the use of active public engagement to save South African municipalities from congestion.

Keywords. Congestion, Public Participation, Land-Use Planning, Municipal Spatial Planning, Developmental Local Government, South Africa

Background and Introduction

The democratic dispensation in South Africa did not suggest that the government had achieved almost everything. Thus, South Africa has a solitary national bit of enactment, the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA), 2013, that makes an overall structure for spatial planning, strategy, and land use management for the whole country, including provincial and local settlements (Nel, 2016). Nel (2016) argues that SPLUMA is unequivocally regulating as it underscores change, social equity, value and consideration, public participation, and straightforward decision making are at the centre of the legislation. Many municipalities in South Africa are far too large to consider allowing for dynamic and direct community participation of a large number of occupants in an unpredictable planning form (Makalela, 2018). According to the National Planning Commission (2012), the planning

framework ought to support appropriately financed, resident-led community vision planning forms.

Participation in the rural community areas is passively on issues relating to land-use planning. It is an incontestable reality that no developmental local government can adequately decide to better the standard of living of its local people devoid of their active participation. South Africa is a distinctive, substantial, representative, democratic state whereby the capacity of the elected representatives' decision-making power is subject to the constitutional laws that emphasise the fortification of the rights and freedoms of individuals (Mukwevho and Nkuna, 2018). In the advent of democracy like that of South Africa, the involvement of communities and public participation essentially play a role in confirming that the directives of the developmental local government are satisfied (Maimela and Mathebula, 2015). Furthermore, they lament that permitting the community to actively participate in decision-making and the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) process of a municipality will in turn provide benefits to the municipality concerned (Maimela and Mathebula, 2015). It can be argued that public participation is a perilous issue in South Africa (Sinxadi and Campbell, 2015). This paper interrogates the values of public participation in land-use planning.

Problem Statement

The apartheid regime left South Africa's land-use management and development regulatory system as disjointed and incoherent as the spatial landscape it created (Nel, 2016). With the advent of democracy in 1994, a plethora of new legislation was enacted by the new democratic parliament to redress the apartheid laws and create new freedoms (Nel, 2016). In the 20 years since the arrival of a democratic government in South Africa, planned expenditure on infrastructure projects by municipalities has been used in part to redress inequalities and socioeconomic caricatures created by apartheid (Musvoto, Lincoln and Hansmann, 2016). Spatial planning is an important public policy tool for creating a long-term, sustainable framework for territorial and socio-economic development within a country (Mashiri, Njenga, Njenga, Chakwizira and Friedrich, 2017). When the African National Congress (ANC) won the first democratic elections in 1994; its objective was to redress the spatial imbalance of pre-1994 in terms of the provision of basic services, which was to create inclusive land-use planning (Bikam, 2016). Among the land use control operations are land subdivision or consolidation, or the formal transfer of land use rights (Dubazane and Nel, 2016). There is scant public participation in local government developmental matters, especially in land-use planning. South African municipalities are congested due to poor public participation in land-use planning in the municipal arena. This is despite the constitutional obligations that encourage active public participation in matters of developmental local government. The challenge of inactive public participation also persists throughout the whole IDP. This is also consistent with the study conducted by Mamokhere (2020), who indicates that there is a continuing lack of community involvement in municipal affairs despite section 152 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and section 25 (1) of the Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) that encourages the active involvement of communities and Non-government organizations. Mamokhere (2020) further indicates that poor community participation can contribute to community protests and vandalism of land-use properties. This paper questions why South African municipalities' land-use is congested. Are communities involved in land-use planning by municipalities, particularly when it comes to commercials, residences, public facilities, industrials, and open spaces?

Theoretical Framework

This paper is underpinned by the theory of collaborative planning. The theory is discussed below.

Collaborative Planning Theory

This paper takes as its point the exodus from Patsy Healey's (1997) orthodox and persuasive theory of collaborative planning, a theory presented in her work *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*. In its original form, "Healey's theory addressed predominately how the members of local communities can communicatively define the interests they share and have an influence on the shape of the places they share, while not necessarily sharing cultural backgrounds or ways of life in any other respects" (Healey, 1997; Mattila, 2016:345). Collaborative planning is a public policy-making process by default, and as such, part of the democratic governance of a certain territory (Agger and Löfgren, 2008). In collaborative spatial planning, governmental actors collaborate on spatial development in various ways with a wide range of stakeholders (Westerink, Kempenaar, van Lierop, Groot, Van Der Valk, and Van Den Brink, 2017). The boundary between the role of the government and the role of societal actors in collaborative planning is not clear-cut but is shifting and often contested (Rhodes, 1996; Westerink et al., 2017). In this paper, we conceptualize collaborative planning as one coin with a governmental and a non-governmental (i.e., societal) side. Collaborative planning as an inclusive, dialogic approach to shaping social space appears to accord with certain features of contemporary society (Brand and Gaffikin, 2007).

The idea of collaborative planning has gained widespread acceptance among planning scholars and practitioners. In philosophical jargon, collaborative planning dispenses with Lockean assumptions of the atomistic man in favour of an Aristotelian understanding of humans as political beings (Brand and Gaffikin, 2007). Collaborative planning is often mentioned as one of the most appropriate planning theories concerning communities, owing to its focus on creating fair and inclusive institutional settings for deliberations among public and private stakeholders (Agger and Löfgren, 2008). "Even though collaborative planning processes are normally based on delegated actors from traditional representative democratic institutions within a limited geographical area, and usually include only those 'stakeholders' who are directly involved in a planning decision, they do not take place outside the framework of a political system" (Agger and Lofgren, 2008:146). The theory of collaborative planning prioritizes how local communities can communicatively define the interests they share and have an influence on the places they share under the current conditions of pluralism of ways of life (Mattila, 2016). Collaborative planning is a new paradigm of planning for a complex contemporary society that usually mediates conflicts between parties through consensus-building processes (Purbani, 2017). It encourages people to be engaged in a dialogue in a situation of equal empowerment and shared information, to learn new ideas through mutual understanding, to create innovative outcomes and to build institutional capacity (Innes and Booher, 2004; Healey, 2006; Purbani, 2017). Collaborative planning can provide policymakers with more effective community participation.

The collaborative planning theory has been relevant in this paper based on its grounds and arguments. The theory is also in line with the existing laws of South Africa. The theory is grounded on the principle of active public participation.

Literature Review

Understanding Public Participation in the Context of Developmental Local Government

Sebola (2017) argues that public participation is one of the cornerstones of democracy in developmental local government, which, if well valued, might placate the needs of the mainstream of citizens and provide them with pride as donors to espoused policy decisions. Mathebula (2015) has argued that public participation is being employed incorrectly and interchangeably with community participation. In South Africa, however, the view is still traditional, and participation is viewed as a key element of democracy based on a premeditated approach (Sebola, 2017:28). Hence the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, section 118 reads thus; "subsection (1) Provincial government must; (a) facilitate public involvement in the legislative and other processes of the legislature and its committees; and (b) openly conduct its business, including holding its sittings and those of its committees in public, but reasonable measures may be taken-(i) to regulate public access, including access of the media to the legislature and its committees; and (ii) to provide for the searching of any person and, where appropriate, the refusal of entry to, or the removal of, or the subsection (2) A provincial legislature may not exclude the public, including the media, from a sitting of a committee unless it is reasonable and justifiable to do so in an open and democratic society".

Patel (2016) asserts that for disappointed people, socio-fiscal rights are inseparable from public and political rights. The latter implies that to achieve inclusive nationality, poor people must participate in poverty alleviation approaches and policymaking. Sebola (2016) further posited that the concept of public participation is synonymous with community participation in South Africa. South Africa does, though, have legislation in place that endorses community participation (Sebola, 2016). An Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of a municipality is a substantial tool to accomplish community participation. The Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) requires municipalities to set up mechanisms, processes, and procedures to enable local communities to participate in local governance affairs. Further, it states in section 42 (2) that "a municipal council, within the municipality's financial and administrative capacity and having regard to practical considerations, has the duty to, amongst other things, encourage the involvement of the local community and consult the local community".

"The Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) requires municipalities to establish mechanisms, processes, and procedures to enable local communities to participate in local governance affairs" (ASALGP, 2012:2; Sebola, 2016:57). The 1996 Constitution stipulates that the needs of people must be addressed and that public participation in policy-making must be promoted. In collaboration with the government, public and private institutions are constitutionally obligated to exercise public involvement in policymaking and execution (South Africa, 1996). According to Sebola (2016), this indicates that decisions are taken by the government, a public entity or the private sector without public consultation are unconstitutional and can be declared null and void. Community participation in municipal affairs should, therefore, be stimulated in properly functioning democratic dispensations, whereby the people ought to govern their own developmental needs and participate in meeting those needs (Mashiachidi and Moeti, 2016).

Public participation is an inclusive process that goes beyond mere representation (Manthwa and Ntsoane, 2018). Community members must not be regarded as passive participants but as active agents of change and development (Mashiachidi and Moeti, 2016). Public participation permits community members to have control over the public affairs of their community and allows them to resolve any quarrels and wars that may erupt in their community (Manthwa and Ntsoane, 2018).

Currently, public participation is reinvigorated and steered through forums like the Presidential Public Participation Programme (Izimbizo/Imbizo), Ward Committee Council and IDP processes (Manthwa and Ntsoane, 2018:111). The IDP in local government is employed to generate a platform for sharing ideas with the public affected by such development initiatives as projected in the plan (Maimela and Mathebula, 2015). Manthwa and Ntsoane (2018) argue that community participation should be demonstrated through improving consultation, collaboration, involvement, and cooperation between the government and the communities concerned. Mofolo (2016) posits that community participation in municipalities ought to possess deliberative qualities. In general, community participation is seen as an open, accountable process where individuals and groups within selected communities can share opinions and impact decision making (Sinxadi and Campbell, 2015).

Understanding the Importance of Land-Use Planning in South Africa

Land-use planning involves a variety of customs and procedures, but the sharing of the land for diverse practices in a geographic region may be well described in a general way such that commercial, social, and environmental purposes are modified (FAO, 2016). Land-use preparation provides the main potential for ecosystem tactics to be organized because of its strategic and interconnected nature; the area of proposals is also too broad to include whole habitats and strategic planning should incorporate the impacts of different industries and operations (Phillips and João, 2017). The incentive to democratize land-use planning systems is substantial and this will help improve transparency and land use outcomes in tandem by premeditated involvement with stakeholders and impacted society (Phillips and João, 2017).

Urban planners' common guiding principle in shaping urban environments is land-use planning (Raman and Roy, 2019). Land use planning assistance to identify important regional meetings and resources for regional and municipal growth strategies (Pershke & Elliott, 2019). The feasibility of land use planning depends entirely on the extent of accountability in decision making (Xin and Xiaodong, 2017). Land-use planning considers all biological bases that influence the land's ability to successfully conserve habitats for local species populations, habitat areas, quality, and connectivity (Jalkanen, Toivonen, and Moilanen, 2020). Land-use planning is a long-term view of the future use of land that will influence decisions on urban growth (Horner, Ivacko, and Mills, 2018). Land-use planning is also used as a land-governance instrument to deter environmental and human disasters, improve the country's resilience, and protect its sustainability land-use strategy (Briassoulis, 2019). Land-use planning activities are developed in most sub-Saharan African (SSA) communities to protect expanded housing opportunities, community soundness and food security (Chigbu, Ntshinyurwa, Timo de Vries and Ngenzi, 2019). Planning of land usage guarantees sufficient land use (Chigbu et al, 2019). Land-use planning in Tanzania involves land management and involves all the practices and decisions related to land allocation and use in trends that permit developments in the way people live (Gwaleba and Chigbu, 2020). Land-use preparation is one of the flexibility mechanisms (Saunders and Becker, 2015). The goal in Peru is to pick and enforce land use, which better fits people's needs while retaining capital for the future (Jeronimo, Rap, and Vos, 2015). Land preparation is a complete method for coping with China's non-farmland (Zhoua, Huang, Chena, Zhonga, Xuc, Hea, Xud, and Menga, 2017).

"It is essential to ensure sustainable development, health and safety of residents and infrastructure provision, as well as participation in land development processes (Healey, 2006; Pelling and Wisner, 2009; Todes, Karam, Klug and Malaza, 2010; Van Wyk and Oranje, 2014; Dubazane, and Nel, 2016:223). According to Van Wyk (2015:27)," the following components can be employed to use the importance of land-use planning in South Africa, which is to, (1)

redressing past spatial imbalances and exclusions; (2) including people and areas previously excluded, and (3) upgrading informal areas and settlements". Spatial planning and its alignment with transport planning and environmental sustainability represent the subject of sustainable planning and development (Schoeman, 2015).

The South African government propagated the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act No. 16 (SPLUMA) in 2013 to advance spatial resilience and ensure sustainable livelihoods in communities against the effects of environmental shocks and climate change (Busayo, Kalumba, and Orimoloye, 2019). Moreover, spatial planning is central to improving climate change adaptation and resilience, especially in urban environments (Busayo et al., 2019). Spatial planning has evolved from the master planning tradition into strategic forms to accommodate rapid urban change and anticipate environmental pressures (Odendaal and McCann, 2016). It emphasises redress, social justice, equity and inclusion, community participation and transparent decision-making, and awareness of the role of property, housing, and environmental management in creating functional, efficient, and humane settlements (Van Wyk and Oranje 2014; Nel, 2016). It mandates comprehensive spatial development frameworks as the foundation for the land use scheme (Nel, 2016). Land-use management systems must be accommodated to ensure sustainable livelihoods in communities most likely to suffer the impacts of economic and environmental shocks (Barnes and Nel, 2017).

The Application of the Approaches of Public Participation in the Land-Use Planning

Rechmann and Cowling (2013) indicate that in South Africa, and just like in many other countries, the municipal sphere holds the primary decision-making powers on land-use and development planning. South African laws, especially the constitution, require consultation of communities in national, provincial and local government affairs. The decisions are taken by locally elected councillors, usually based on a comprehensive technical assessment conducted by land-use planning officials employed by the local municipality. South Africa has highly developed environmental legislation: environmental protection is enshrined in the constitution and various laws and provisions have been enacted. A comprehensive and comprehensible review of the legal obligations of municipalities to act for environmental sustainability. Legislation for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) regulates consideration of environmental concerns in spatial planning processes and covers substantive developments as well as small developments. However, this section aims to explore the approaches to public participation in an analytical manner. The goal is also to show succinctness and to bypass paradoxes that can hollow both intellectual and practical abilities. The passive, interactive, and consultative approaches to community engagement are discussed below in the context of land-use planning.

•Passive Participation

Passive participation only includes involvement in the sharing of knowledge among the stakeholders (Garcia-Zamor, 2019). For example, Oyo, Maiga and Muyinda (2018) suggest that passive participation is not a form of inspiring people since it does not enhance their abilities and skills. Because of his techno-centricity and/or top-down declaration of authority, which ends further with grassroots growth execution, passive participation is characterized by unequal preparation (Fang, Li, and Lu, 2017). Oya et al., (2018) further indicate that there is passive public participation in municipal planning, especially in land-use planning. In this contemporary world, public involvement in municipal planning is often characterized by a top-down approach. In this approach, communities at the grassroots are not adequately participants;

instead, they are told and the implementation occurs with limited or without community consultation.

• **Interactive Participation**

Robert (2019) indicates that "interactive participation is when people take part in the joint analysis as well as the planning process, and the members of the target community improve their existing structures as well as take charge of their development process," such as the IDP or land-use planning. Interactive participation takes place in connection with popular scrutiny and decision-making by stakeholders (Poncian and Jose, 2019). Joint research, drafting of project plans and capacity building is carried out by partners and citizens thus active participation is encouraged (Edelenbos and van Meerkerk, 2016). Participation is not just a right to meet mission targets. Such engagement is important if a local government has mutually effective means to establish a shared goal of development to define priorities in collaboration with the community and local policy system. Continuous engagement of the community does not only improve the knowledge and ability of participants but enriches the fulfilment of needs where people learn to realize their objectives more easily. It is also a means of determining values, priority and collection action. Individuals can fully realize their potential through awareness, the ability to access, process, and use existing information (Robert, 2019).

• **Participation by Consultation**

Consultation requires individuals, however, not consciously including them in the decision-making process, to express their views and opinions (Fox and Stoett, 2016). Norton (2020), however, suggests that mediation is done until the municipality determines whether the citizens on-site are informed on local government issues. In comparison, the community representatives in most realistic cases are not presented with a voice to express their points of view in decision making. Most areas that are under the governance and jurisdiction of traditional leaders are deprived of a chance to voice their opinion on a development that is supposed to take place in their area (Kgobe and Makalela, 2018). Briefly, the members of the society are side-lined on the grounds of actions being taken. Cespedes (2020) concluded that consultation procedures are frequently pursued more in line with pragmatic facts or findings to conform than they expected. The members of the society are therefore dissatisfied, and it is, therefore, difficult to prepare centrally to represent the people's expected needs. In the collaborative growth planning process, all citizens, including poor and marginalized people, have had to participate. During the land-use planning at local government, there should be a consultative process that engages all the stakeholders. According to the authors of this paper, we believe that consultation entails gathering community input and evaluating it before making a decision. Participation in land-use planning, on the other hand, is about making decisions together.

The Value of Public Participation in Land-Use Planning

The democratic dispensation in South Africa did not suggest that the country had achieved almost everything. Consequently, just because, South Africa has a solitary national bit of enactment, the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013, that makes an overall structure for spatial planning, strategy, and land use management for the whole country, including provincial and local settlements (Nel, 2016). SPLUMA, unlike a politically sanctioned racial segregation period enactment, is unambiguously regulating because it emphasizes change, social equity, value and consideration, community participation, and straightforward decision making (Nel, 2016). Many municipalities in the South are far too large to consider allowing for dynamic and direct community participation of a large number of

occupants in an unpredictable planning form (Makalela, 2018). As per the National Planning Commission (2012), the planning framework ought to support appropriately financed, resident-driven community vision planning forms.

Maimela and Mathebula (2015) argue that the significance of including community participation in land use planning cannot be undermined in a democratic society. In South Africa, it has been obvious, or rather it is realized that people, in general, are just occupied with the latter stages during community hearings and conversations about development or spatial planning. Currently, plans have just been set up (Mahlare and Ogra, 2016). As postulated by Mahlare and Ogra (2016), community participation in this way frames an essential piece of spatial planning as it is a division under which land use planning falls in South Africa. According to Nsele (2016), community interest in land use exists in South Africa in a dormant state. The Polokwane municipal land use planning makes provisions for community participation through section 10 and subsections 3 and 4 of the Polokwane Municipal Planning bylaw (2017). It stipulates that "the municipality may, for purposes of public engagement on the draft municipal spatial development framework, arrange; (a) a consultative session with traditional councils and traditional communities; (b) a specific consultation with professional bodies, ward communities or other groups; and (c) a public meeting.

The logic of public participation usually calls for the public to participate in formulating development plans at the formative stage, rather than after politicians and officials have made their particular choices (Mzimakwe, 2010:504; Mofolo, 2016). When the public is involved as originators of policies, the relevance of policies in the eyes of society could be heightened (Molepo, Maleka & Khalo, 2015:349). It can be argued that citizens must be engaged from the planning to the implementation and evaluation phases of government activities or projects (Mofolo, 2016). Community participation processes in preparing the plan and deciding on land use requests must be inclusive and transparent (Nel, 2016:263).

The inclusion of community members in decision-making processes and the implementation and evaluation of land use planning issues have far-reaching benefits (Bakre and Dorasamy, 2018). To facilitate collaboration between local governance structures and community members, the South African government has enacted legislation such as the Constitution (Republic of South Africa 1996), the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, as well as the White Paper on Local Government (cited by Vivier and Wentzel 2013, 239; Bakre and Dorasamy, 2018:3). The planning process needs to improve dramatically because the communities' interests are involved in the affairs of the local municipalities, and that remains a thorny issue (Thebe, 2016).

The absence of cooperation and community participation contributes to an insufficient intervention of the public in land use planning, thereby dissuading successful planning achievement (Zolkafli, Liu, and Brown, 2017). The opportunity, through preparing participation findings (Jankowski, Mickiewicz, Czepkiewicz, Młodkowski, Zwolinski and Wojcicki, 2019), to get sufficiently different participants. Land use planning infrastructure, zoning and building measures also require the transfer of resources (Anguelov, Schi, Chu, Gallagher, Goh, Lamb, Reeve, and Teicher (2016). It is necessary to engage communities in the land management process (Saunders and Becker, 2015). "Community participation is taken to be a process whereby non-state actors in Thailand take part in decision-making and implementation (which may include monitoring and evaluation) of land use related climate change activities" (Kabiri, 2015:511).

The key feature of the community's participation in the instigation, supervision, and direction of land use planning programs at the local level (Masum, 2018). Public engagement in urban planning has been disputed in many ways (Jankowski et al. 2019). Any person who is

affected by planning outcomes should be kept in mind for decision-making (Jankowski et al., 2019). The adequacy of citizen involvement in land use planning is continued with banter and without precise facts (Pacione, 2019). Successive planning seeks to zone the scene with diverse land use while requiring human tendencies through community participation (Karimi and Adams, 2019). Community engagement will give the community and government benefits in the land use planning process (Zaim and Buchori, 2019).

Planning and decision-making of land-use should be facilitated by sustainable and rational study and engagement by community involvement of any relevant participant (Cockburn, Rouget, Slotow, Roberts, Boon, Douwes, O'Donoghue, Downs, Mukherjee, Musakwa, and Mutanga, 2016). With the increasing incorporation of community citizens in third-world land-use choices, politicians need a deeper understanding of the influence of land use planning on land use (Broegaard, Vongvisouk, and Mertz, 2017). In the majority of Western countries, collective participation of the community is a recognised requirement of planning (Pacione, 2019). In 2013, the Ethiopian government began building and adopting a land-use planning strategy, and a correlative participatory and community planning mechanism was initiated (Metternicht, 2017).

In the United States, most planning and zoning decisions are made at the local level (Cullingworth and Caves, 2009; Beyea, Menon, and Crawford, 2016). The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has been provided with Participatory Land-Use Planning (PLUP) to help community members ensure land rights and improve nearby institutions (Masum, 2018). Ghana restructured its community development and land use system in 1992 and 1994 and switched to local political, planning, and legislative powers to facilitate the extension of its urban and land use plans in exchange (Kleemann, Inkom, Thiel, Shankar, Lautenbach and Fürst, 2017). Indeed, active and direct engagement by people as a way of improving public participation in governmental decisions generates principles like growing government confidence, increased transparency, integrity, and high-quality public decision-making (Tavanapour, Poser, and Bittner, 2019).

Strategies to Redeem South African municipalities from congestion

Integrated transport planning is one of the adopted strategies by several municipalities to reduce and address congestion. Integrated transport planning, according to Toan & van Dong, (2020) indicates an integrated approach to the transportation system which works effectively and aims at pursuing different modes, transport and spatial uses and planning goals. The author(s) postulate that all municipalities have to embrace integrated transport planning. The paradigm shift of the spatial apartheid planning that the democratic government has adopted without remedying its impacts should be addressed by integrated transport planning as the SPLUMA does not make provisions to address the spatial injustices of the past. Land use management in South Africa is therefore rooted in British urban planning activities which first arose in response to the urban effects of the industrial revolution (Kanyepe, Tukuta, and Chirisa, 2021). These actions aimed to improve the safety and health of urban people afflicted by problems such as overcrowding, pollution, insufficient services, facilities, and facilities. Integrated transport planning encourages the use of public transport to reduce road delays and congestion. Traffic congestion has become an omnipresent problem deserving of political and civic attention (Uniyal & Gandhi, 2019). The paper further states that a comprehensive rural infrastructure development agenda should be established to deliver services closer to the citizens entirely overseen by rural municipalities. We believe that congestion may be alleviated by bringing basic facilities to rural areas.

Research methodology and design

Research Design

Without a study plan, no research inquiry can be conducted. Each study's research strategy is crucial. Kumar (2011) defines research design as a systematic technique used by academics to address research issues. Pandey and Pandey (2015), qualitative techniques provide extensive and thorough information that may be used to guide research. According to MacDonald and Headlam (2014), they can depict people's feelings and beliefs without revealing how many others feel or think the same way. This study employed a qualitative research method in a form of conceptual research, which will be discussed shortly below.

Qualitative Research Design

According to Bryman (2012), qualitative research entails the collection of social data with an emphasis on the meaning of the people being studied to give useful insight into local views. They have the potential to add to a wealth of cultural and environmental data (Mack et al., 2005). The researchers in qualitative research use interpretative or critical social science theories to emphasize the language of "cases and circumstances" as well as cultural significance (Neuman, 2014). Qualitative research is encouraged by the logic of continuous study, which follows a non-linear approach (Neuman, 2014).

However, given that this paper specifically adopted conceptual research that Jaakkola (2020) refers to it as a way of doing research that involves examining and evaluating existing data on a specific topic. It has anything to do with abstract notions or ideas. Philosophers have traditionally relied on conceptual inquiry to generate new ideas or to reinterpret old ones. The current literature was reviewed and summarized methodically. Examining peer-reviewed publications, books, public laws, and online sources was done using this technique. To achieve the study's goal, the authors also used a qualitative research technique that relied on secondary data. As a result, material from widely available publications, reports, newspapers, books, and other sources has been integrated into the research. The information was gathered from a variety of databases including Google Scholar, Crossref, J-Gate and Ebsco. From July 2021 to October 2021, the current literature was extensively examined using content discourse analysis.

Conclusion and recommendations

The South African Integrated Development Planning system includes land-use planning as a key component. The IDP emphasizes the need to involve community members when planning. However, in most South African municipalities, communities are undermined and often not involved in policy-making and decision-making. The municipalities are overcrowded with unwanted and unused public recreational facilities. Unwanted and unused facilities are regarded as wasteful expenditures. This paper acknowledges that people should be at the centre of their development. Community members must be able to voice their concerns and play an active role in land-use planning. As much as community participation is imperative, this paper was discussed in the context of South Africa by looking at the legal imperatives that encourage public participation in developmental local government. It is also found that the adopted South African apartheid spatial planning continues to neglect involving community members in municipal land-use planning. The paper recommends that municipal officials apply the *Batho Pele* principles when it comes to planning. Public participation at the municipal level should be not passive, but interactive, and participation by consultation. The paper further recommends integrated public participation in the decision-making process. Creating an environment for dialogue, particularly by breaking into smaller groups, is an effective way to both get public input and help the public learn about each other's viewpoints. In conclusion, the paper calls for

reforms in land-use planning and the application of active public participation to redeem South African municipalities from congestion. In this paper, public participation and community participation has been used interchangeable throughout because they are perceived as synonymous.

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