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THE DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATORY EXPERIENCES OF BLACK YOUTH IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Management in 50% requirement of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and development Management)

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Declaration

I declare that this is my independent work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master in Management (in the field of Public and Development Management) in the University of Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before for any other degree for examination in any other university.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess the response of youth to government public participation platforms and approaches using the youth in the City of Johannesburg as a case study. Local government was chosen as the focus of the study because of its proximity to citizens. The study explored the current approaches used in the City of Johannesburg, the general views on youth participation, the response by youth to current public participation approaches used by the city and how youth participation can be improved.

The study used a qualitative research approach. A combination of data collection tools was used. These were observations, document analysis, interviews and focus groups. The findings of the study show that there are various modes and approaches that the city uses to engage with the community of the City of Johannesburg. These include community meetings, suggestion boxes at municipal offices, izimbizo public meetings for discussion of specific issues and official council and ward committee meetings. While the significance of youth participation is acknowledged and expressed in various official documents, the tangible experiences by the youth indicate the opposite. In paper there are youth focused structures, but practically, they are not adequately utilised. Because youth participation is guided by the same rules and principles as general public participation with no specified allowance made for the participation of youth, the youth is not responding positively and as such youth participation is low. That is not to say that the youth has no interest in becoming active citizens, engaging with government. In fact the opposite is true. They are cognisant of their social, political and economic environment, associated challenges and their role as youth in all of it. They are not as cynical and disinterested. There are numerous other reasons why youth participation in broader participation spaces and platforms is low. One reason is that the mainstream approaches used are found to be alienating by the youth. Further, the knowledge of the different ways the youth can engage officials at local government on various issues is limited. Access to information required to participate confidently in these meetings is not easy to access.

Key words: youth, public participation, youth participation, participative democracy, deliberative democracy.

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Camagu!

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my two daughters; Mbali Siphesihle and Busisiwe Buhlebenkanyezi Khumalo as well as young people of Africa.

Your turn.

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List of Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
CBC	Community Based Planning
CoJ	City of Johannesburg
EFF	Economic Freedom Front
GDS	Growth Development Strategy
IDP	Integrated Development Planning
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organization
NPOs	Non-Profit Organizations
NYC	National Youth Commission
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYP	National Youth Policy
SMS	Short Messaging Services
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
UN	United Nations

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

There is enough research literature that explores the vital importance for citizens of all backgrounds to participate and be engaged in formal democracy processes. Researchers such as Floridia (2013), Lues (2014), Naidoo & Ramphal (2018), Parvin (2017) and Vestbo (2012) to mention a few, explore and argue for the need for widespread citizen participation. Such engagement, Print (2007) argues, is of necessity to ensure elected government legitimacy, which is threatened by a demonstrated decrease in election turnouts as well undermined by the rise in anti-democratic forces.

Equally, for a significant while now, the focus on youth participation has increased, making youth participation one of the prominent issues on the global development agenda. Increasingly, it has become clear that the question of the right of the youth to speak out on matters affecting them directly, let alone in the broader affairs affecting their communities and country, is by no means a given. It is a matter of contestation. Various stakeholders such as governments, donors and civil society recognise the youth's specific needs and vulnerabilities, as well as their potential to contribute positively to the global socio-political and economic development goals (Farran, 2016; Restless Development, 2012). In the United Nations' World Youth Report of (2003), it is stated that in most societies throughout the world, youth participation presents "a challenge to traditional views and attitudes towards young people" (UN 2003, p272). Research shows that there is an increasing understanding that because the youth form a significant percentage of the global population, they should be included in key decision-making processes at all societal levels (Chamisa & Shava, 2016; Mampane 2019; Suhaimi, Arshad & Yeon, 2018; UNICEF, 2019; UN, 2003). This understanding, however, requires a shift in how the relationship between adults and the youth in all spheres of life is viewed. The shift signifies a move towards an acknowledgement of and commitment towards honouring the rights of young people in public participation. Potgieter-Gqubule and Ngcobo (2009) argue that this shift implies discordancy with the longstanding inclination by adults to take decisions regarding young people on their behalf. Some see this inclination as a natural need as well as a given responsibility for adults.

With the population of the youth growing, and the world currently recording the highest population of young people ever recorded in history, these debates are becoming even more important. When this study was conceptualized in 2016, the world population was 7.5 billion (UNCTAD,

2017). “Africans aged 15-35 made up roughly 40% of Africa’s population” (Adugna, 2017, p6). With a population of over 1 billion people, of whom 65% are below the age of 35 years, Africa is indeed a youthful continent, and this presents both opportunities and challenges (AU, 2017, p5). South Africa too is a youthful country, with the youth comprising 20.5 million of the population (DPSA, 2011). This constitutes 41.2% of the total population (Statistics SÁ, 2016). Population forecasts show that by 2030, youth population will grow by 7%, to nearly 1.3 billion (Davies, Sundaram, Hampden-Thompson, Tsouroufli, Bramley, Breslin, & Thorpe, 2014; UN, 2015). Projections are that by 2055, it is expected that the youth population would have continued to grow to more than double the current levels (UN, 2015). “African youth will have increased by 42 per cent” (UN, 2015, p1). That, according to the report by Restless Development (2010), makes the youth a constituency hard to disregard. Illustrating this point further is also that when this study was conceptualised, the years from 2009 to 2018 had been declared the Decade on Youth Development in Africa (DIRCO, 2015; Efobi & Orkoh, 2017; UN, 2015). This demographic dividend is seen as an advantage, with a potentially positive impact on economic growth, political stability, and social and sustainable development (UN, 2018).

Within the above awareness, youth involvement and participation in community decision-making processes, thereby influencing policy direction, has become a global concern. Researchers like Bersaglio et al. (2015), Checkoway & Richards-Schuster (2006), Herrera (2006), Ward & Parker, (2013), Zurba & Trimble (2014) wrote of growing calls for youth participation, arguing that this from both ethical and strategic perspectives. In their work, their emphasis on youth is on them being the ‘inheritors of the future’ who possess great potential and capacity to contribute meaningfully to social change by informing decisions that impact on the future they will live in (Pritzker & Metzger, 2011, Yunita, Soraya, & Maryudi, 2018). The youth possess agency that can be tapped into to achieve various positive outcomes for their communities and themselves, and thus they are citizens who should be political participants and drivers of socio-economic change (Mengistu, 2016; Ugsberger, Collins, & Gecker, 2017; USAID, 2013).

Further, as established earlier, young people have a right, as citizens, to determine and influence the utilisation of resources as well as power and in their societies (Restless Development, 2015). By excluding the youth in contributing to and participating in decision-making processes, be it in the public or private sector, a critical resource base, not only in demographics but in a unique perspective on how these resources can be best disbursed, is lost (Restless Development,

2015). In their paper, the Commonwealth Secretariat (2017) and Restless Development (2015) argue that governance structures are unlikely to be successful if the youth is not part of these. According to them, “young people can contribute a great deal through their perspectives and experiences” (Sathyaprabha, 2013, p2). The youth, therefore, ought to be afforded the opportunities to opine and deliberate about socio-economic policy and development issues impacting not only the youth’s lives, needs and future but also those of their communities.

The post-1994 South African government recognised the significance of public participation and put in place structures to encourage its citizen body to participate fully in national and community decision-making. This is a devolved system of governance that promotes a decentralized government system as well as encourages citizen participation through public engagement structures. This, in theory, means that South African citizens have access to and can influence key decisions that affect them. Further, in recognition of the critical positioning of the youth, the South African government has promulgated several policy articulations. These policies include the National Youth Commission Act (No 19 of 1996), National Youth Development Policy Framework (2002-2007), the White paper for Social Welfare (1997), the Integrated Youth Development Strategy of South Africa (2012-2016), the National Youth Policy (2009-2014) and the revised National Youth Policy (2015-2020). These policies provide policy guidance in support of the development of young people to ensure that they grow up to be engaged citizens. The establishment of the youth desk at the Presidency and institutions such as the National Youth Development Agency is an example of how that commitment has been operationalized. These policies are an effort and an expressed commitment from the government to develop and harness the voices of young people on matters of social importance.

However, there is still a concern that despite these efforts and the availability of these participatory platforms, both formal and informal, these spaces and processes continue to marginalize and exclude the youth (Calder, Macdonald, Mikhael, Murphy & Phoenix, 2014; Columbia Global Policy Initiative, 2014; Macheka & Masuku, 2019). There is a continuing concern about the participation of youth in democratic spaces (Print, 2007). Studies such as those conducted by Booysen (2009), Mattes and Richmond (2014), Minds (2014), and Potgieter & Lutz (2014) show that while there is considerable effort to acknowledge the youth as a critical population segment, there is equally a concern over the participation trends of young people in

participatory structures. Young people reluctantly engage with opportunities that exist to facilitate participation in governance issues. Their reluctance is, however, not in isolation. According to Innes and Booher (2004), participation in government processes has declined. This decline, they argue, is because citizens are slowly feeling that public participation processes do not make any difference (Innes & Booher, 2004).

The purpose of this research was to explore the participation of youth in public participation contexts focusing on the local government level. Thus, this paper assesses the response of youth to public participation platforms and approaches using the City of Johannesburg (CoJ) as a case study. In this study, we explore the experience and response of black youth to youth participation approaches in the City of Johannesburg. The study questions and critically analyses the trends, challenges, and obstacles to youth participation in local governance. In the research, the participation of young people at a local government level is closely examined by exploring the participation approaches used by local government and the experience and response of the youth. This exploration will also help us understand the impact that public participation approaches have on youth participation. The focus on local government was due to the proximity of that level of government to citizens. It is because of the proximity to citizens that the citizens' power, or lack of power, over decision-making is possibly more identifiable.

To address the objective of the study, data was collected from diverse sources using qualitative research methodology. The field research was carried out between 2017 and 2019. Additional data was collected in 2018, and an undated public participation policy document was consulted in 2019. The data collection process was conducted in four stages. Firstly, data was collected from an analysis of selected official City of Johannesburg (CoJ) documents, secondly an observation of conveniently selected public participation meetings, thirdly interviews with youth in target communities, and lastly an interview with conveniently selected ward councillors in the selected communities, and a representative of the City of Johannesburg.

1.1. Background to the study

South Africa has a history of engaged masses. The history of the apartheid struggle presents an example of how the black masses and anti-apartheid activists used various platforms to register their disgruntlement towards the then National Party-led government. Through varied responses,

they ensured that their voice was heard not only by the Apartheid government but by also international communities. The popular slogan ‘the people shall govern’, expressed in the African National Congress (ANC) Freedom Charter during the struggle times, embraces the credence given to citizens’ involvement in governance issues (ANC, 1955). The post-1994 South African has embraced this principle of citizens’ involvement as the foundation of our democratic dispensation. Democratic South Africa is anchored on strong citizen involvement as expressed in the South African constitution and legal framework. Currently, in South Africa**,** every government department has the mandate to engage and seek public views. As mentioned earlier, because of its proximity to the citizens, the local government role in facilitating and promoting participation is more prominent.

Research indicates that if the history of the South African youth is anything to go by, there is ample evidence that young South Africans have always positioned themselves as a vital, if not a key and strategic, partner to social change (Glanvill, 2012; Maphunye, 2017; Portgieter-Gqubule & Ngcobo, 2009; The Presidency, 2014). This is reinforced in much of the government’s youth-related information. Young people are viewed as “a major human resource for development, often acting as key agents for social change, economic expansion and innovation” (The Presidency, 2014, p2). These narratives on the history of social and political struggle portray the power of youth as evident, with the youth taking up key community leadership roles. The contribution of the youth of the 1970s and 80s is often summed up in the popular narrative around the June 1976 uprising and youth uprisings of the 80s (Hlongwane 2007; Houston & Magubane, 2006; Neiftagodien, 2011). This narrative portrays the youth of this era as a vibrant, brave, and selfless group, who stood up for their communities (Glaser, 2018; Glaser,2020; Houston,, Dipholo & Pophiwa, 2016). However this is at times restricted by the African cultural view on the role of youth. On one hand, in African culture “verbal give-and-take is not encouraged”, and the youth is “expected to accept his or her parent’s word for what is right” (Habecker, 2016, p258). As stated by Ogo (2015) several cultural norms in Africa prevent meaningful dialogue between youth and elders. On the other hand, as Abbink (2005) states, it would be a mistake to deny African youth intentionality of action and agency, as has so often happened in Africanist discourse. This is because, while African culture can be restrictive to the youth, the power of the youth’s agency is evident in the narrative of most communities, particularly in disadvantaged and rural communities. The youth is selectively relied upon, including asking for their views on selective issues. In other words as Ogo, (2015) observes

young people in Africa only speak when spoken to. In that context, guided by elders' invitation, they may be considered more informed, enlightened and trusted to give advice on a specific issue.

With the advent in democracy, the role of citizens, including the youth, has become critical. There is, however, a body of research that highlights that youth democratic participation and their involvement as citizens is unsatisfactory and therefore of concern (Farthing, 2010; Musaruwa, 2018). "Globally, a generation of young people are systematically being excluded from society, whether they are in the economic powerhouses of the world or in poor countries, educated or semi-literate" (Nieftagodien, 2011, p2). Some research questions raised are around the lackadaisical attitude reflected in the youth's low participation in social and political life. Phrases such as 'youth apathy' are used to explain the low levels of participation (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016; Roberts, 2019; Zvaita & Tshuma, 2019). This kind of explanation often neglects to explore how the participation platforms, approaches and processes used, influence the youth's response and participation. In this study, we argue that youth disengagement is, to a greater extent, a result of the very public participation landscape itself. It is the premise of this study that the approaches used for participation at the local government level compromise the well-intended objectives of public participation. It also limits the involvement of marginalised groups such as the youth. This study looked at the participation of youth at formal local government public participation spaces. Through this study, we begin to critically engage with the shortcomings of public participation approaches and youth engagement and involvement at the local government level.

The study focused on the participation of youth in the ages between 18 and 35 years as per the national definition of youth in South Africa (The Presidency, 2014; The Presidency, 2015). However, the study excluded the youth in the ages 15 to 17 years. The reason for focusing on the 18 to 35 years age brackets was to align with the voting age, which is 18 years old in South Africa. The assumption is that at the age of 18, through their eligibility to vote, young people begin to officially engage with political and democratic tools and thereby formally contribute to the democratic decisions of the country. This, however, does not mean that youth younger than 18 years are deemed automatically inactive.

The researcher is aware of the ambiguity of the concept of youth, as well as the fact that even the age range identified as a focus group is diverse and highly heterogeneous. They are a group characterised by a complex variety of identities, at different stages of life, with distinctly varied characteristics. In this study, we did not explore these complexities in depth. Still, we are aware that they may explain the participation trends of youth in local government public participation spaces.

1.2. Research problem statement

Despite the efforts to create an inclusive public participation culture and space that is accessible to all citizens, the participation of young people in local government and community-based public participation spaces is reported to be low. It is also reported that it continues to decline. This should be a concern because a mute youth population means that there is a significant percentage of the population whose voices are unheard.

Reasons given for this often only focus on youth's lack of interest, their increased disconnectedness from civil and government structures, increasing levels of apathy and young people's lack of interest in and towards political and community leadership (Mattes & Richmond, 2014; Steve Biko Foundation, 2012). These studies suggest that young people are not visible in participation spaces and are often most visible during protest marches. It is the young people that are blamed and not the system. They are said to be inactive, disinterested and disengaged (Booysen, 2015; Onodera, Lefort, Maiche, & Laine, 2018; Resnick & Casalle, 2011). This rhetoric often neglects to explore how the very participation approaches – the mechanisms and process used – impact on youth participation. This research study is interested in understanding the effects of participation approaches used on youth participation trends. If the methods used create dissonance with young people, there is a possibility that they will impact negatively on the levels of youth participation. Further, the decline in youth participation occurs in the context of lessening public participation levels in general (IPAT, 2015).

There is no shortage of research on youth participation. However, most of it focuses on political participation, economic participation, and social development. International writers like Bertozzi (2015), Cahill and Dadvand (2018), Checkoway and Gutierrez (2006), Cushing (2015), Farthing (2012), Frank (2006), Print (2007), Tsekoura (2016), and Wong, Zimmerman and Parker (2010),

to mention a few, write extensively on various aspects of youth participation. African writers like Bincof (2018), Booysen (2015), Cheteni (2016), Everatt and Orkin (1993), Everatt (2000), Eze (2015) Mattes (2012), Naidoo (2009), Ndlovu and Mbenga (2018), Resnick and Casale (2012), and Seekings (1996) are a few examples of African researchers that give us a rich African perspective. However, the researcher believes that there is a gap in the analysis of the reasons for declining youth participation. The gap was identified in the understanding of how the public participation approaches and processes used at the local government level are contributing to weak youth participation. An analysis of the suitability of the currently used public participation strategies, mechanisms and processes can further contribute to the understanding of the decline of youth participation. How are those processes strengthening citizens' positions as drivers of decision-making by their governments? Tshoose (2015) suggests that a government's reason for existing is to secure and safeguard their citizens' rights. Yet, as he stressed, they often do not act per the 'mandate of' their electorate, necessitating the electorate to assume an additional role of holding the elected accountable (Thomas, 1992 in Tshoose, 2015). This, according to Siphuma (2009) and Tshoose (2015), is because the ideas and opinions of the citizens are not always incorporated into policy formulation and crucial government decision-making. This speaks to the necessity of participation but also its shortcomings.

The study focuses on the City of Johannesburg. Within the City, the study focuses on specific regions targeting three residential areas. The map below in figure 1 shows the different regions in the City of Johannesburg.

Figure 1: Map of the City of Johannesburg (adapted from http://www.pikitup.co.za/contact-us/)

While popularly known as the *city of gold*, the City of Johannesburg is complex. A significant percentage of Johannesburg's population is poor. "More than a third of the City's population lives below the poverty line", with the largest concentration of people living in poverty being in Region G, followed by Regions D and A (CoJ, 2017, p13). In 2016, "the total number of households currently living below the poverty line (R2500 per month) was 37.3%" (CoJ, 2016, p3). Unemployment levels are also on the rise. In 2010, the unemployment levels were at 23.1% (COJ, 2012). In 2014 unemployment levels were 31.5% (Statistics South Africa, 2014). In 2018, youth unemployment hovered around 40% (Afriforum, 2019). Regional analysis conducted in 2013 also indicated that Region D had the highest level of unemployment (42.7%) followed by Regions G (28.1%), F (26.2%) and A (15.7%) (CoJ, 2014, CoJ, 2012).

The City of Johannesburg was chosen as a focus of the study because it has one of the highest youth population in South Africa. At the beginning of this research in 2016, the population of Johannesburg was 4,9 million (Stats SA, 2016; CoJ, 2016). The proportion of the youth (15 to 35 years) as a percentage of the City's total population was 33.2% in 2016 (CoJ 2016). The City of Johannesburg also has high migration rates. The youth from other provinces and beyond South African borders relocate to Johannesburg in the hope of securing better employment and life opportunities. However, this influx has resulted in the City registering high youth unemployment (CoJ, 2017/18). In 2016/2017 youth unemployment was at 38% (CoJ, 2017). The City of Johannesburg has placed a significant strategic focus on the youth to address mainly their economic participation, through various initiatives and partnerships with programmes such as the Harambee programme, as well as the City's dedicated youth unit (Africities, 2015). Harambee "is a work readiness training and is presented to young people with little or no work experience and whose limited academic qualifications make them exceptionally unlikely to find work" (Altbeker, 2015, p,3) The youth unit's mandate is to co-ordinate, facilitate, advise and monitor the mainstreaming of youth development policies and programmes for Johannesburg and build relations and partnerships with other youth organizations and non-governmental organizations in the city (CoJ, 2015).

Furthermore, the focus will be on black African youth participation in three communities from three regions within the City of Johannesburg. These are Alexandra in region A, Zandspruit in region E and Orange Farm in region G. The reason for choosing these communities is because they exemplify many of the disadvantaged communities in South Africa. These regions are poor, with high unemployment rates as well as poor service provisioning and development. In

addition, through her work with development organizations, the researcher had relatively easy access to all three communities.

In this study, we then examined the youth's experiences of and responses to the approaches that the City of Johannesburg uses to engage the youth. The study also attempts to provide an explanation of the youth's experiences of and responses to these public participation platforms. Through the study of these communities, we get a glimpse of the relationship between public participation spaces and youth participation within the City of Johannesburg. At the centre of this research is understanding the public participation strategies of the City, the mechanisms and processes used in public participation, and understanding if they promote or inhibit youth participation. This research inquiry should be understood in the context of the relationship between the state and citizens as it is characterised in post-1994 South Africa, the constitutional mandate, the discourse of public and deliberative participation, as well as the role of the youth as citizens.

1.3. Research justification

As stated earlier, there is ample research done on youth participation. These studies raise concern over youth participation in democratic processes. Considering that the youth are not only future leaders but also that they currently account for much of the population, their views are critical in informing key social decisions. Their participation, or lack of, should be understood in the context of their role as citizens. It is important to understand the reasons for the perceived lack of participation. To reduce or even totally eradicate this challenge, understanding the factors leading to the lack of participation is critical. It can assist by providing a framework for developing new participation frameworks and approaches.

This research, therefore, contributes to the study of youth participation in the advancement and strengthening of democracy in South Africa. Through an analysis of the currently employed public participation approaches, the research also contributes to an understanding of whether the approaches used by the City of Johannesburg are encouraging and sustaining youth participation. By examining the participation of youth in public participation spaces in the City of Johannesburg, we get to understand not only what approaches are being used for youth participation, but also how the City's youth in communities described as disadvantaged respond to the approaches and why. Therefore, the study also contributes to clarity on whether the approaches are designed to facilitate and encourage youth participation. Exploring how the

youth views and engages with current mechanisms and processes helps with this assessment. Through the study, the youth is reintroduced as a vital constituency to the development agenda. Their role in driving democratic processes in the country, particularly at the local community level, are brought to the fore.

1.4. Research question

The primary research question is:

What are the democratic participatory experiences of Black youth in the City of Johannesburg?

To understand this question, we need to understand the approaches used by the City of Johannesburg and assess how they affect the participation of young people. To be able to answer the primary question, the researcher will also explore the following related secondary research questions:

1. What are the current approaches; (i.e., the mechanisms and processes of public participation) used in the City of Johannesburg?
2. What are the youth's and city officials' views on youth participation approaches?
3. What is the experience of youth to current public participation approaches used by the City?
4. What is the response by youth to current public participation approaches used by the City?
5. How can youth participation be improved?

1.5. Limitation of the study

Because this is a qualitative study, its findings cannot necessarily be generalized to the country's population of youth or other municipalities in South Africa. Consequently, further research is warranted. There is a limited female voice because the majority of respondents were males. The data was collected using qualitative methods. Because of the potential subjectivity of the instruments used, there is the likelihood of interpretation errors by the researcher. While care was taken in not misinterpreting respondents' responses, the researcher is aware of the potential subjective interpretation.

Managing conversations with the youth was sometimes very difficult. This was because the youth sometimes had their own set of challenges that they wished to discuss. Care was taken to

explain to the youth that engaging with the researcher on youth participation was worth their while. In addition, the researcher is aware that because of the researcher's presence during data gathering, this could have affected the subjects' responses. Although a limitation, this offers an opportunity for follow up studies to carry a quantitative study with a bigger sample with access to a diverse sample of respondents.

Access to the City of Johannesburg data posed a few challenges. For example, copies of registers to public meetings the researcher attended would have been a valuable resource for this study, but the researcher was unsuccessful in securing copies of these. Also, with the awareness that data was collected between 2016 and 2017, changes and improvements may have occurred. Still, the findings of this study offer a great opportunity for comparison and trend analysis.

1.6. Ethical considerations

Ethics is a matter that must be considered at every step of the research design and implementation process, helping define what is or is not legitimate to do or what moral research procedures are best to use (Neuman, 2011; Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012). There are four overlapping standard ethical guidelines that Ogletree and Kawulich (2012) suggest. These include informed consent, deception, anonymity, privacy and confidentiality, bias and accuracy.

For this study, the following ethical considerations were observed:

- Research study adhered to the University of Witwatersrand rules and regulations on the acceptable procedure required prior to conducting the study. A research proposal was first submitted for defence and to the university research and ethics committee and approved. Given the nature of the study conducted, the researcher did not see any prospective threats and harmful activities that may put the lives of respondents/participants in danger. Still, the proposal for this study underwent internal ethics committee considerations and was approved.
- All respondents participated of their own free will and understood the nature of their participation in the study.
- Although personal anonymity was not guaranteed, particularly for focus groups, the information shared by the participants was made anonymous during the write up of the report.

- The researcher got verbal and written consent from the respondents before the interviews and focus groups. Appendix 7 is the example of the consent form presented and read out to the research participants.
- Also, before the start of an interview or focus group discussion, the researcher explained in depth the purpose of her engagement with the respondents, the kind of questions she would be asking, and also shared the instruments she would be using.
- Participants were advised of their right to withdraw their participation from the research at any stage of the interview or discussion, should they change their mind about participating.
- For the interviews and focus groups, the researcher also explained how the interview or focus group process would develop, especially that follow up and new questions may arise based on the responses they provide.
- Permission was sought to report direct quotations and other identifiable information and facts.
- The information collected during the interviews was recorded with the consent of the participants and later transcribed and filed into a research folder. The consent form and recorded and transcribed data have been kept in their electronic form by the researcher and will be deleted once all matters relating to the study have been concluded.
- The researcher also guarded against creating expectations of easy solutions and as well as against deception.
- The researcher was transparent about the purposes of the study.
- No names of the interviewees are used in this report to maintain respondents' anonymity.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter explores and reviews debates and discussions that influence the landscape of the youth's public for democratic governance. It examines the ideological grounding of youth participation, providing an analysis of its historical and legal roots, its significance, and its relationship to public participation. We do this because youth participation exists in the context of broader public participation. The section also looks at participation approaches in the South African context, exploring current local debates on public participation and the implication for the participation of youth, particularly in public participation platforms at local government level.

The section starts by presenting definitions of the key concepts used in the study, after which the theoretical framework that informs the study will be unpacked. This is followed by a discussion of the context of youth participation, with an outlining of the justifications for youth participation, and the legislative framework and legal perspectives that inform youth participation policies. Later in the chapter, theories and typologies of youth participation, the status of youth participation and how youth participation can be improved will be discussed. The last part of this section is a summary of the conceptual framework for the study.

2.2. Clarification of key research concepts and terms

The following section offers definitions of key concepts and an explanation of how they are understood and used in the context of this study.

2.2.1. Youth

Even though the term youth has been extensively reviewed in the literature, there is not yet a rigid, single, common and precise definition of the concept (Biddle, 2017; Gyimah-Brempong & Kimenyi, 2013; Kehily, 2013; Menguisti, 2016; OECD 2013; Phaswana, 2009; Wyn & White, 1997). Some academics understand 'youth' as a relational, socially, historically, and culturally constructed concept, reflective of the complex identities and socio-economic backgrounds of the youth (Abbas, 2012; AU, 2011; Biddle, 2017; Hartinger-Saunders, 2008; Kehily, 2013; Phaswana, 2009; Vromen 2003; Wyn & White, 1997). In that then, the concept encompasses a very diverse, extremely heterogeneous and complex group characterised by a variety of

identities. To some, youth is viewed as the period of evolution from childhood to adulthood, a stage of transition from dependence to independence (Jaworska & MacQueen, 2015; UN 2015). This definition offers a notion of youth that is a socially constructed category defined by societal expectations and assigned responsibilities linked to different stages of one's life (Honwana & De Boeck, 2005).

In Africa, youth is commonly defined as the period of transition based on age categories, between childhood and adulthood (Abbas, 2012; AU, 2011; Chitukutuku, 2014; Phaswana, 2009). Specific milestones mark this period: from dependence on society's services, growing towards being the contributors to national, social, economic, political and cultural life (Abbas, 2012; AU, 2011; Chitukutuku, 2014; Phaswana, 2009). The African Union adopts a broader definition of who the youth is, expanding the UN definition of youth as 15 to 24 years and the Commonwealth definition of 15 to 29 years (AU 2006; UN Economic Commission for Africa 2017). According to the AU, youth are between the ages of 15 to 35 years (AU 2006; UN Economic Commission for Africa, 2017).

In the South Africa National Youth Commission Act of 1996, youth is referred to as all persons in ages between 14 and 35 (Portgieter & Lutz, 2014). This definition is used in various South African youth policies, such as National Youth Commission Act (1996), the National Youth Development Policy Framework (2002), the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2020, and the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) (2011). Different South African government departments have at times, however, defined the youth category differently to accommodate a particular policy agenda, for example, provisioning of services provided to a specific youth group category at a given time. For example, the National Youth Development Policy Framework (National Youth Commission, 2002) proposed 15–28 years as the age range for youth. The criminal justice system refers to youth, in the context of young offenders, as those between the ages of 14 and 25 years (Presidency, 2015). Before the national elections of 2009, the Independent Election Commission (IEC) defined the youth as persons in the 15 to 29 age bracket (Potgieter & Lutz, 2014). For this study, we use the South African definition of the youth as encompassing those individuals that fall in the 14-35 age range, in accordance with the National Youth Policy (Crause & Booysen, 2010; Phaswana, 2009). The study, however, concentrated on the youth in the age range of 18 to 35. This is because the voting age in South Africa is 18 and over.

Scholars such as De Lannoy, Fortuin, Mpofu-Mketwa, Mudiriza, Ngcowa, Storme and Smith (2018), Yeon, Abdullah, Ayub, and Suhaimi (2016), and Harlan (2016), have, however, expressed concern with this definition of youth, arguing that it is too broad. The discomfort comes from the fact that within this age definition there are many differing youth stages presenting the potential for confusion if not clearly and distinctly defined (Crause & Booysen, 2010; Everatt, 2000; Harlan, 2016; Nandigiri, 2017; Phaswana, 2009). Phaswana (2009) agrees with Iheduru (2004)'s argument that "lumping 18-year olds with 34-year olds" can be problematic for "analytical and policy purposes" (Phaswana, 2009, p3, quoting Iheduru, 2004, p9). To address any limitations that arise from the extended definition, it is critical to "distinguish between these subgroups by age to provide clarity and assist with appropriate targeting" (Phaswana, 2009, p2).

2.2.2. Participation

To have a better understanding of and clarity on youth participation in local government requires an understanding of its positionality in relation to broader public participation. The concept of participation is also subject to ambiguous and diverse interpretations, assuming different meanings in different contexts and depending on who is using it (Kinyashi, 2006; Mubita, Libati, & Mulonda 2018; Vroom & Jago, 1988). For this study, we aligned our definition with that adopted by Mautjana and Makombe (2014). They define participation as a deliberate and goal-oriented activity, often introduced at government level, in which people are encouraged to involve themselves in key policy formulation activities that involve the right to make choices and decisions about the needs of the community (Mautjana & Makombe, 2014).

2.2.3. Youth participation

Similar to the above concepts, the concept of youth participation is operationalised differently in different contexts. For this study, we refer to youth participation as the inclusion of young people in decision-making processes (Orrnert, 2018; Sheridan, 2018). Youth participation is about the inputs that "young people make to the design and implementation of the policies and programmes that affect them, their communities and nations" (Allied for International Youth Development, (AIYD), 2013, p7).

2.2.4. Public

There are various explanations of who the public is. It is often broadly defined as all affected stakeholders (Schlossberg & Shuford, 2005). Quick and Bryson (2016) note that the term 'public' is preferred over 'citizens' because the term citizens excluded many participants who do not have formal citizenship status. DPSA (2014) defines public as a "vast and heterogeneous group of people or stakeholders, organized or not, who are concerned by a specific problem or issue and who should be given the opportunity to take part in discussions, and to influence and/or jointly make decisions regarding the issue at hand" (p10). For this study, the 'public' in public participation refers to stakeholders – people who are likely to be directly impacted on by a decision being made. For this study, public refers to the citizens residing in the City of Johannesburg.

2.2.5. Public participation

Public participation is also referred to by several terms, including community participation, citizen participation, and stakeholder engagement. Public participation refers to the involvement of citizens and communities in extensive related problem-solving activities or processes for the sole purpose of influencing the formulation as well as the implementation of policies that may interest or directly affect their lives (Tau, 2013; Public Services Commission, 2008). For this study, the definition used is the National Policy Framework for Public Participation (2007) definition. In the Framework, public participation is defined as "the participation of all residents of a country, including citizens and non-citizens, in the decision-making process of all three spheres of government" (DPLG, 2007; p5).

2.2.6. Democracy

This study's premise is that public participation and youth participation are concepts informed by the principles of democracy. Research studies on both democracy and participation claim that participation is essential to democracy (Demirjan & Oktem, 2011; Kanyinga, 2014; Michels, 2006; SALS, 2013; Sebola, 2017). For this study, the definition of democracy used is that espoused by Schmitter and Karil (1991). They define democracy as a system of governance in which the electorate can hold accountable those in power (Schmitter & Karil, 1991). In addition, it is also imperative that we understand the various forms of democracy: representative democracy, electoral democracy, participatory democracy and deliberative democracy.

Representative democracy is a form of democracy in which citizens allow elected officials to represent them in government processes (Modise, 2017). The citizens are not necessarily directly involved in the processes of law-making or decision-making (Modise, 2017). Electoral democracy equates democracy with regular elections, fairly conducted and honestly counted (Barro, 1999; Schmitter & Karl, 1991). It rests on the notion of one citizen one vote. Participatory democracy emphasizes the broad participation of constituents within political systems and advocates for more involved forms of participation than traditional representative democracy (Adegboye, 2013). Deliberative democracy, on the other hand, is a political variant of participatory democracy. It presents the notion of collective engagement, negotiation and decision-making with the recognition that different actors bring insights, skills and resources and networks to bear (Adegboye, 2013; GGLN, 2015). Weeks (2000) and Abdullah and Rahman (2015) argue that deliberative democracy offers a practical opportunity for all citizens to directly influence policy resolutions by proposing into the agenda their views on policy and social problems, while simultaneously providing citizens with extensive facts and understanding about those social policies and problems.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

Four theories also inform this study. These are theories of participatory democracy, deliberative democracy, social capital, and public value.

2.3.1. The theory of participatory democracy

The theory of participatory democracy claims that citizens are in a position to influence policy directly and that politicians then undertake their role of policy implementers (Aragone & Sa ´nchez-Page, 2009). Interestingly, Modise (2017) states that South African participatory democracy is overshadowed by representative democracy. This, according to Modise (2017), poses a huge challenge for democratic South Africa and is aggravated by the citizens' limited knowledge about how political spaces operate.

2.3.2. The theory of deliberative democracy

The theory of deliberative democracy argues that democracy is about the capacity of the involvement of those affected by a collective decision, through the deliberation of that decision

(Abdullah & Rahman, 2015; Carcarson & Sprain, 2010; Michel et al., 2010; Ozanne, Corus & Saatcioglu, 2009; Pateman, 2012). Everatt, Marais and Dube (2010) maintain that with deliberative democracy, we see a shift in emphasis to a more active search for 'real' participation because this form of democracy allows citizens to engage over and above participating in elections every five years as part of the representative democracy exercise. Zeleznik (2016)'s view is in agreement with Everatt et al. (2010). Zeleznik (2016) suggests that the deliberative theory emerged over time as a response to the perceived weakness of the liberal democratic theory. The shift is according to Zeleznik,(2016), a means of assessing liberal representative institutions that treat political representatives as the main deliberators who make decisions on the public's behalf.

Curato, Dryzek, Ercan, Hendriks and Niemey (2017), however, contend that one of the great limitations of deliberative democracy is that it is talk-centric. Further, as Landemore (2017) points out, direct deliberation among all citizens is widely assumed to be impossible. In addition to that, researchers such as Curato et al. (2017), Floridia (2013), and Ozanne, Corus and Saatcioglu (2009) point out that deliberative democratic theory is often criticised for being elitist because it is seen as most accessible to privileged, educated citizens. This privilege emanates from the fact that those with access are familiar with the language and procedures of deliberation (Curato, et al., 2017). This view is, however, challenged by researchers such as Curato et al. (2017) and Hammond (2018), who emphasise that this approach is characterised by inclusivity, rather than elitist characteristics.

2.3.3. The theory of social inclusion

Mascareno and Carvajal (2015) state that it was in the 1990s that the theories of inclusion and exclusion emerged in public policy. Yet, the definition of social inclusion is still very fluid. Quite often, social inclusion is defined in relation to social exclusion (Robo, 2014). Broadly, the theory of social inclusion advocates for the inclusion of all citizens in public participation spaces. According to Oxoby (2009), the concept of inclusion refers to how individuals can access resources and institutions to their benefit. Social exclusion is seen as "the denial (non-realisation) of the civil, political and social rights of citizenship" (Salooje & Salooje, 2011, p3). It is "the inability to participate effectively in economic, social, political and cultural life, and, in some characterisations, alienation and distance from the mainstream society" (Duffy, 1995, p33).

So, the question of who is excluded in these processes is critical. It helps with providing clarity on the connections between social exclusion, citizenship, marginalised communities, structural and systemic barriers, and the extent to which individuals navigate and encounter participation in its limited, restricted or outright denied form (Saloojee & Saloojee 2011; Schiffer and Schatz, 2008). Often, the excluded are disadvantaged and marginalised. The marginalization is driven by factors such as access, age and education. Salojee and Salooje (2011) point out that whatever the source of exclusion, the effects will always be the same. “The consequences include a lack of recognition and acceptance; powerlessness and voicelessness; economic vulnerability; and diminished life experiences and limited life prospects” (Donnelly & Coakely, 2002, p11).

A socially inclusive society is, therefore, one where through valuing and respecting differences among citizens as well as meeting their basic daily social needs, the restrictive factors that make participation difficult are addressed (Cappo, 2002; Robo, 2014).

2.3.4. Theory of public value

Theory of public value, which was initially formulated by Mark Moore (1995), speaks to the framework for how information gathered should be used to improve the quality of the decisions taken. As noted by Ballintyne and Michael (2018) and Mintron and Luetjen (2015), there are three aspects of public management that Moore’s public value framework emphasizes. These are delivering actual “services”, achieving “social outcomes”, and maintaining “trust and legitimacy” (Ballintyne & Mintron 2018, p184).

What this means for public participation mechanisms and processes is that they must provide an inclusive and educative space where citizens feel they can make informed contributions to government decisions that are valued and integrated into the final decisions taken. Bozeman (2009) and Turkel and Turkel (2016) argue that public value brings together a clear agreement about the human rights, privileges and benefits to which citizens should be entitled (Bozeman, 2009; Turkel & Turkel, 2016). It also highlights the obligations that the citizens have towards the society, the state, and one another (Bozeman, 2009; Turkel & Turkel, 2016). Mintrom and Luetjen, (2015) argue then that in pursuing public value, policy designers ought to engage and listen with more attention to stakeholders drawing on their lived experiences and “situated expertise to guide policy development” (Mintrom & Luetjen, 2015, p2).

2.4. Youth participation in context

Conversations around youth participation in democratic spaces happen in a context where, as Richter and Panday (2007), Everatt and Orkin (1993), and Seekings (1996) maintain, the narratives around young people are characterised by contradictory descriptions of the youth as the lost generation heroes, villains, makers and breakers. They are seen as a societal challenge that needs to be addressed and solved, as well as "loose molecules in an unstable social fluid that threatened to ignite" (Collins, Augsberger, & Gecker, 2015; Kaplan, 1996, p16). This description is also within a context where some authors present a grim portrayal of Africa's youth status, highlighting challenges that they face, including being burdened by many social issues such as unemployment and poverty (Resnick & Casale, 2011). So, if that is the context, why then promote youth participation?

2.4.1. Justification for youth participation

Bessant (2004) observed that, as part of the debates about citizenship, there is also no shortage of advocacy for improved youth participation. The United Nations (UN), the member states, and partner agencies such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank, recognize that the youth is valuable and is a critical asset to society. In the debates about youth participation, its centrality as a necessity in fostering a sense of citizenship is highlighted (Nishishiba, Nelson & Shinn, 2005). For instance, according to Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional life (2003), the participation of young people in decisions and actions is seen as necessary to build more democratic, inclusive and prosperous societies. Further, there is increasing recognition on a global scale that the youth possess advantageous knowledge and perspectives that can benefit governance practices. They can identify social issues that are of concern to them and guide public officials on legislation and policies, as well as possibly suggest new ones because they are best positioned as experts on their social and personal experiences (Collins et al., 2015). This enhances the legitimacy and authenticity of the decision-making and policymaking processes (Bessant, 2004).

In addition, the youth's demographic advantage makes them an important constituent of the world's population. Young people now constitute a significant percentage of the total population

(Babatunde, 2015; Ighobor, 2013; Soucat, Nzau, Elaheebocus & Cunha-Duarte, 2013; Williams, Edlin & Beal 2010). In Africa, as reported by the United Nations (2015) and Madsen, Daumerie and Hardee (2010), more than two-thirds of the population are young people under the age of 25. The majority of that two-thirds is in Sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2015). In South Africa, as observed by Taljaard (2008), 54 % of the population are young people below the age of 24. However, as Everatt (2008) argues, while every South African policy is youth policy, virtually every policy is devised without accounting for the needs of the youth.

Another justification for youth participation is that the involvement of youth in decision-making is beneficial to them. It contributes to growing their appreciation for democratic and governance processes, increasing their knowledge, building their leadership skills, and assisting in their transition into adulthood, making them more responsible citizens (Musarurwa, 2018; TrustAfrica, n.d). Youth participation enables them to demonstrate and share their expertise as well as understand their weaknesses and strengths (Checkoway, 2011; Evans & Prilleltensky, 2007; Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Lührmann, 2013). Participation makes the youth much more cognisant of larger social issues that are relevant to them, and aware of other challenges and aspects of their daily lives that require attention (Chitukutuku, 2014). Furthermore, it sensitizes them to the importance of holding elected leaders accountable (Chitukutuku, 2014). This is evident in historical analysis of major political changes, where the catalyst to the changes were the actions of the youth.

In Africa's historical and political literature, the youth are presented as an important constituency with the advantage of their population size in influencing electoral mobilization and governance processes (Bob-Milliar, 2014; Chitukutuku, 2014; Resnick & Casale, 2011). They are catalysts for the revolution against undemocratic governments. (Mengistu, 2017). The 2011/2012 Arab Spring uprisings make for a good example, and so does the June 1976 youth uprisings in South Africa. This is despite that, in some instances, they are used by their leaders who, as research shows, often engaged disgruntled and sometimes cynical youth not only in the struggle for independence but also in the manifestation of their ambitions to ascend to power, with the youth providing legitimacy to their post-colonial regimes (Clapham, 2006; Resnick & Casale, 2011; The National, 2018).

This rising prominence of youth participation also occurs in a context of broader public participation. Public participation is recognized as an essential cornerstone and dimension of democracy; a critical tool for deepening and consolidating democracy as well as increasing its legitimacy (Everatt, Marais & Dube, 2010; Print, 2007; Nyalunga, 2006). This is because the very underpinning principle of democracy is citizens having a say on how they are governed. Citizens can ensure that they inform the government of their societal needs and expectations, giving legitimacy and validity to government decisions (Barnes, Newman & Sullivan, et al., 2007; Onyenemezu, 2014; Cheema & Maguire, 2002; EIPP, 2009; Greenberg, 2010; Kay & Tisdall, 2010; Michel, 2010; Michels & De Graf, 2010; Monyemangene, 1997; Piper & Deacon, 2009; Public Service Commission, 2008; Taylor et al. 2010). Public participation has the potential to ease the tension between citizens and government and promote information flow between the two, aid the formulation of the development agenda informed by local needs, as well as help constrain state abuse of power, as citizens offer oversight and influence how governments run the affairs of the country (Chaliga, 2014; Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2001; Mafunisa & Xaba, 2008; Michel et al., 2010; Onyenemezu, 2014; Public Service Commissioner, 2008; Stich & Eagle, 2005).

Above all of that, public participation is about recognizing citizens' human rights, in accordance with the UN Human Rights Commission (2013). It is premised on the notion that, by right, those who are affected by any decision taken should be included in the decision-making process, thereby contributing to efforts to tackle poverty, inequalities and irregularities resulting from power inequality in society (Carmona, 2013; UN, 2013). Cohen et al. (2008) and Stich and Eagle (2005), point out that an informed citizenry, where citizens possess valuable information associated with specific policies, is necessary to achieve the above. Public participation is good governance. Good governance is based on the core principles of participation, accountability, transparency and state responsibility (UN, 2007; Quane, 2012). Public participation ensures these principles are realised.

For the youth to become fully involved as members of society, as 'agents of change' and an important constituency in driving democratic processes, the focus should be on building their capacity and prospects as current citizes not only as leaders of tomorrow (Minds, 2014). Recent popular online campaigns, such as the 'Not Too Young to Lead' internet campaign that flooded Twitter timelines, are evidence that the youth is seeking more democratic involvement (African

Youth Commission & The Gambia National Youth Council, 2019). The 'Not Too Young to Lead' campaign has been a good indicator of the wave to further advance youth participation on a bigger scale. The movement argues that the adage that the youth are tomorrow's leaders has since been replaced by a new perspective that acknowledges that the youth are leaders of today. This resonates with Everatt and Orkin (1993), who argue that many young people are fully engaged in society, despite all sorts of adversity, and many others are ready to re-engage, given the opportunity. They carry to the future policies and decisions made in the present. Should they then not have a better understanding of how those policies and decisions are reached? Should we not then start to see the conversion of statements, such as the one above, into practical actions and not just lip service?

2.4.2. Legal perspective to youth participation

Youth participation is informed by the broader public participation legislative framework. These include several international laws and regulations, such as Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration adopted at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, The Manila Declaration (1982) and the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (1990) (SALS, 2013; UNDESA, 2012; UNEP, 2016). In 1998, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe adopted the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (known as the Aarhus Convention) (SALS, 2013).

Public participation in South Africa is further endorsed by a set of legislations, laws and policies. The constitution introduced public participation as an essential component in the development of government policies (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Section 59 of the Constitution states that the National Assembly must facilitate public involvement in the legislative (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Section 118 states that a Provincial Legislature must facilitate public involvement in the legislative and other processes of the Legislature and its committees (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Section 152 states that the objects of local government are to provide a democratic and accountable government for local communities (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). To further elaborate on the dimension of public participation, between 1998 and 2000, a number of local government legislations were promulgated (Booysen, 2009; DPLG, 2005;

Everatt et al., 2010; IPAT, 2015; Mafunisa & Xaba, 2008; Mayekiso et al., 2013; Netswera & Phago, 2013; Public Services Commission, 2008; Rapcan, 2012; SALS, 2013). These include:

- The White Paper on Local Government, 1998.
- The National Policy Framework on Public Participation (2005) (IPAT 2015)
- The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998)
- The Local Government Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000)
- The Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003)
- Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1of 1999),
- Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act 3 of 2000)
- The Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act 6 of 2004).

Youth participation is guided and supported by various international and local legislation, as well as policy articulations. In 1989 and 1995, The United Nation Convention on the Rights of Children (1989) and the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (1995) became the main international influences for youth participation. On 17 December 1979, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring 1985 as 'International Youth Year' (IYY), a pronouncement that further informed discussions about the idea of youth participation (Jamaica Youth Advocacy Network &The PACT, 2018; UNESCO 1985). The World Youth Forum again declared the year 2010 'International Year of the Youth' (NYDA, 2011; WFUNA, 2010). In 2014, ministers and leaders involved with and responsible for youth, as well as "young people, representatives of Governments, United Nations Agencies, youth-led organizations, non-governmental organizations and other development partners" gathered in Colombo, Sri Lanka (European Youth Forum, 2014, p1). This is where the declaration "recognizing the active role that young people are playing in social mobilizations and their willingness to assume responsibilities in the economic, socio-political agendas of their countries and regions" was made (WCF, 2014, p2).

African states, guided by international trends, adopted the Addis Ababa Declaration of Youth for African Youths, the African Children's Charter of 1999, and the Kakata Declaration of 2005 (Mitra, Serriere & Kirshner, 2014). In 2008, the African Continent adopted the African Youth Charter and identified young people as "partners, assets and a prerequisite for sustainable development and the peace and prosperity of Africa" (AU, 2006, p11). Article 11 of the charter emphasises young citizens' right to participate in all spheres of society and authorises that states

should foster and nurture this right by providing conducive environments and spaces for youth activism and participation, so that the youth can partake in decision-making at all levels of political and governance spaces (AU, 2006; Restless Development, 2012). In addition, the African Union (AU) declared 2009-2018 the African Youth Decade and themed 2017 the year of investment in youth to harness the African demographic dividend (AU, 2011; ISS, 2009; NYDA, 2011).

In South Africa, the Acts that pronounce on public participation do not make a distinction in approaches used for children, youth and adults. However, there are government legislations which do so, such as the Municipal Youth Guidelines (2004) which mandates Local Government to set policy and provide oversight on youth participation strategies, as well as the establishment of youth participation vehicles such as the youth councils (YDG4LG, 2004). The guidelines outline the minimum programme content for all municipalities to include in their Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and the operational business plan of youth development programmes. The guidelines also advocate for the establishment of Local Youth Units, with the responsibility of coordinating and facilitating the implementation of policies and programmes emanating from other spheres of government. Youth Committees are also to be constituted in terms of section 79/80 of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000. In addition, Phaswana (2009) states that as a member of the United Nations, South Africa adopted and ratified international treaties, as well as specific regional conventions like the African Children's Charter (1999) and the African Youth Charter (2006). Further, South Africa implemented the National Youth Policy (1996), the National Youth Commission Act (1996) and its amendment in 2000, the National Youth Development Policy Framework (2002-2007) and the (NYDA) National Youth Development Agency (2009). Altogether, these form a basis for the recognition of youth participation in different social contexts. These policies informed the establishment of formal youth structures, such as the Umsombovu Youth Fund (UYF) that later became the National Youth Commission (NYC), as well as the South African Youth Council (SAYC). The Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG)'s Youth Development Guidelines for Local Government (YDG4, LG) (2004) provides a framework for increasing the extent of youth participation. This is a measure to institutionalise and mainstream youth participation in matters of local government (Buntu & Leahman, 2015).

Lastly, the National Development Plan (NDP) recognises that the development and growth of the country are influenced by the levels of success in developing the capabilities and nurturing

the life chances of its youth (National Planning Commission – NPC, 2012). The NDP recognises that the youth play a crucial and strategic role in the socio-political and economic development of South Africa (NPC, 2012). The NDP is, however, not very direct on efforts to increase and improve participation of the youth in public participation contexts, in local government and other governance spaces (NPC, 2012).

2.5. Theories and typologies underpinning youth participation

The thinking around youth participation typologies is modelled around, and should be understood in the context of, public participation typologies proposed by theorists Arnstein, Oakley and Marsden and Pretty. Of the three, Arnstein is the most influential. Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation was published in 1969 and specifies eight rungs of citizen participation. These are manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power and citizen's control (Babu, 2015; Gaber, 2019). The first two rungs are a clear index of non-participation (Babu, 2015; Gaber, 2019). The next three rungs of the ladder are degrees of tokenism (Babu, 2015; Gaber, 2019). The top three rungs are characterised by sharing of planning and decision-making responsibilities, with citizens able to ensure accountability by achieving dominant decision-making authority. Citizen control is the highest rung on Arnstein's ladder (Babu, 2015; Gaber, 2019). The theories and typologies that inform youth participation were formulated and adapted by theorists such as Hart, Sheir, Treseder and Wong. They are linked to, and are adapted from, public participation theories and typologies referred to above. The Hart's Ladder of Participation suggests a youth participation model, represented in eight levels or rungs as depicted in figure 2 below.

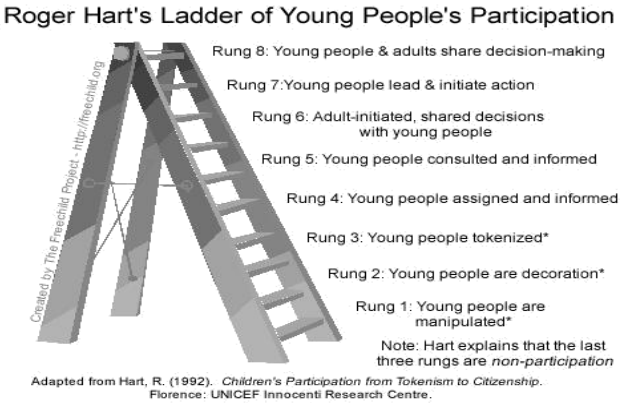

Figure 2: Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People Participation (Adapted from Fletcher 2008)

The first five levels involve varying degrees of participation, and the last three are defined as non-participant levels (Kothari, 1996). These three last levels are least desirable and manifest in the form of tokenism, decoration and manipulation (Kothari, 1996). According to the Hart Ladder of Youth Participation, the higher the participation level is on the ladder, the more desirable participation will be, and the more opportunities the youth will have to gain and grow specific competencies (Kothari, 1996). Wong, Zimmerman and Parker, (2010) argue that one of the limitations of Hart's model is that it places youth-driven participation at the top of the ladder. This has the potential to undervalue the contribution, and power-sharing adults can bring to youth and community development (Wong et al., 2010).

The second typology is Shier's Pathways to Participation, which expanded Hart's model by adding three stages to each level, which are stages of commitment (Wong et al., 2010). "At each level and stage Shier proposes key questions that can be used to probe that current level of participation or design participatory action with youth and adults" (Wong et al., 2010, p102). The main limitation of this approach is that it limits its presentation of youth-adult engagement and almost underplays the implications that engagement has on youth participation (Wong et al., 2010). The third typology emerged as a response to the linear approach advocated by Shier and Hart and was introduced by Treseder (Wong et al., 2010).

Central to Treseder's typology is the view that not every situation will be suitable for youth-driven participation, nor will their participation be a desired, essential, or fitting necessity (Wong et al., 2010). Instead, Treseder proposes five categories of distinctive but equal forms of participation, presented in a nonlinear model (Wong et al., 2010). Finally, Wong (2010) proposed a fourth typology, one that incorporates what he referred to as intergenerational linkages, attempting to move away from the ladder metaphor. Wong (2010) argues that the ladder metaphor is based on the suppositions that youth-informed, and -driven participation is the best model, a view with which Wong disagrees. Wong et al. (2010) present a five-type participation continuum. The types of youth participation are "vessel, symbolic, pluralistic, independent, and autonomous" (Wong et al., 2010, p2). Wong's typology emphasises both youth and adult involvement, and varying degrees of empowerment and youth development (Wong et al., 2010).

2.6. Youth participation approaches

The above typologies inform the participation spectrum and approaches used. A participation spectrum outlines the different options that relate to the degree of influence needed to achieve

the identified outcome (Evolve, 2015). The five categories in the public participation spectrum are:

- Consult
- Empower
- Inform
- Collaborate and
- Involve (DPSA, 2008; Evolve, 2015; Neshkova & Guo, 2012).

At one end of the spectrum is the goal to inform, and on the other end, the goal to empower (Albert & Passmore, 2008; Bryson & Quick, 2011; SALS 2013). The inform level of public participation offers the public the necessary information they need to understand the decision-making process, while the consult level simply means to ask (Albert & Passmore, 2008; Bryson and Quick, 2016; SALS 2013). In the involve level of public participation, engagements with citizens move beyond consultation (Albert & Passmore, 2008; Bryson & Quick, 2016; SALS 2013). At this level, the public is invited into the process and is provided multiple, if not on-going, opportunities for input as decision-making progresses (Albert & Passmore, 2008; Bryson & Quick, 2016; SALS 2013). The collaborate level of public participation incorporates all the aspects of the involve level, and the public is directly engaged in decision-making (Albert & Passmore, 2008). At the empower level, agencies provide the public with the opportunity to make decisions for themselves (Albert & Passmore, 2008).

Depending on where in the spectrum the participation falls, it will use one of the participation methods outlined in table 1 below.

Different Forms of Public Participation	
• Active membership of groups/associations • Assisting candidates with campaigns. • Boycotting and boycotting activists, • Citizens juries • Citizens panels and • Committee meetings • Community participation/ • Conferences • Consultations • Contacting officials • Contacting print and broadcast media • Contributions to political parties • Deliberative polling • Elections • Email petitions	• Fundraising for charities, • Internet engagement • Mass media or press conference • Municipal workshops • Persuading others • Problem-solving. • Protest • Protests • Public hearings • Public meetings • Referendum • Regular voting • Survey questionnaires • Volunteering

Table1: Different Forms of Public Participation (Ref: Adapted from Albert & Passmore, 2008; Babooa, 2008; Guo and Neshkova, (2012))

The methods can be further classified according to consumerist, traditional, forum, consultative ~~innovation or deliberative~~ innovation methods. Consumerist methods are those methods of participation which are mainly customer-oriented and concerned with aspects of service delivery (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2001). Traditional methods are those approaches which have been in use for a long time, in the history of local government (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2001). Forums refer to those activities, like regular meetings, roundtables or other forms of gatherings, which gather residents and users to discuss all concerns with regards to precise issues (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2001). Consultative innovations are those methods that survey citizens on specific issues, with no engagement in prolonged discussions (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2001). Finally, deliberative innovations refer to those methods which through deliberative processes, foster citizens' reflection on issues concerning and affecting them and their communities (Lowndes, Pratchett & Stoker, 2001). Participation in a democracy may take many formats and use varying methods, as guided by the objectives set. In South Africa, the commonly used public participation approaches and methods include varied formats as listed in table 2 below.

Examples of public participation methods used in South Africa	
• Briefing sessions • Budget consultations • Citizen advisory consultation committees • Citizen satisfaction surveys • Community development workers • Community meetings and • Exco-meets the people • Focus groups • Idp forums • Invitation for public submission or comments • Media-related initiatives such as radio talk shows and television programmes	• Ministerial and mayoral izimbizo • Petitions • Premier excellence awards • Presidential izimbizo • Public hearing • Public meetings • Taking parliament to the people • The roadshows of mayors • Ward committee • Workshops

Table 2: Examples of public participation methods in South Africa (Ref: Adapted from Parliament, 2019; African Peer Review Mechanism, 2007; Everatt et al. (2010)).

Youth specific participation also takes many forms. The forms assumed are also defined by the objective of youth engagement. The broad range of approaches includes the efforts by and ability of young people to design and implement programmes of their choice, adults' engagement with young people, youth and adults working together in intergenerational partnerships, and formal

youth representation in policymaking and planning spaces, like youth councils and youth centres (Checkoway & Aldana, 2013; Checkoway & Gutiérrez, 2006; Petrokubi & MacNeil, 2007; Zeldin 2004).

In the South African school context, according to Phaswana (2009), the South African Schools Act (1996), Section II (1), prescribes that a Representative Council of Learners (RCLs) must be established at every school with learners from grade eight to twelve. At a community level, there are various youth-focused and youth-run organisations which, as Phaswana (2009) observed, is part of the history of youth activism in South Africa. At the municipal level, the local government framework advocates for the establishment of youth units and youth councils at local municipalities to petition for youth-friendly policy decisions (Phaswana, 2009).

These structures are not without challenges. With youth councils and youth parliaments, for example, who is chosen to participate is a source of critical discussion. In their analyses, McGinley & Griev (2010) argue that the youth selected to youth councils are cherry-picked by leaders on the basis that they had some potential interest in participating. A grim picture of the youth characterised by apathy and disengagement, portrayed as alienated from communities and community structures, impacts youth willingness to be involved in these structures. Integration of the youth in political structures is insignificant. For example, the youth constitute less than two per cent of the world's MPs (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2016; Mengistu, 2017). Further, as UNICEF (2017) contends, the voices and opinions of young people are not always meaningfully considered, and there is evidence of contradictions. In Liberia, for example, while the political and civic consciousness of the Liberian youth is considered key to assisting the advancement of Liberia, there is no clear policy by government to guide the practical implication of that (TrustAfrica, n.d). In Sierra Leone, while there are some encouraging and evident instances of youth delegates in relevant council decision-making spaces, more often, their involvement is regarded as low-level and sometimes just tokenistic (Restless Development, 2015). Maina, (2015) claims that in Kenya, marginalisation of young people in governance and in social development continues, and those often involved reported feeling a sense of a lack of personal power (McGinley & Griev, 2010).

2.7. Status of youth participation

While there are identified contradictions and barriers to participation as referred to above, there are equally plenty of opportunities for the citizens, youth included, to be involved and engaged in different decision-making spaces. Although the youth has always represented a strategic group for political mobilization by African politicians, current research contends that the state of youth participation in formal platforms is still less than desirable. Research has shown that youth participation is less visible in institutional forms and invited spaces, and more visible in unconventional forms or invented spaces (Bessant, 2017; Crowley & Moxon, 2017). For example, post-1994 South Africa research studies have begun to cast aspersions on the agency of youth and**,** as such**,** their readiness and capability to be active citizens. Kwon (2018) observes that there are growing tensions between the government and youth. The youth is increasingly getting agitated and express that in many ways, including through political apathy (Kwon, 2018). In that context then, Piper and Deacon (2009) ask, do these spaces and approaches work?

There is, however, an alternative youth voice that is emerging. It is different from the voice of the 1970s and 80s youth. To be heard and to exercise their agency, the youth opt for forums other than invited spaces. The riot by thousands of young Mozambicans in 2008 and 2010 is one of these examples (Sambo, 2015). Similarly, in Tunisia in 2011, the leaderless revolution comprising of youth from different social strata articulated grievances that overthrew the regime of President Ben Ali, stirring comparable activism across the African continent (Eze, 2015; Honwana, 2013; Kabou, 2013). This wave of activism spread even in the Middle East, and elsewhere in the world (Eze, 2015). South Africa's liberation history is punctuated by moments of youth-led resistance, ranging from the 1976 uprising led initially by school-children and students, through to the school boycotts of the 1980s. The South African youth was also successful in enforcing consumer boycotts in the 1980s. Everatt (2002) describes the uprisings that gripped South Africa between 1976 until the commencement of negotiations in 1990 as being led by young people.

Further, in her research on youth and political participation, Booysen (2015) suggests that today's South African youth is anything but apathetic, politically disinterested and voiceless. If anything, the youth is politically interested, highly patriotic, conscious of the controversial matters of the day, perceptive and astute in their assessment of the political order and participates

extensively in political and socio-economic and political issues (Booysen, 2015; Lekalake, 2015; Mattes & Richmond, 2015; Oyedemi & Mahlatje, 2016). There is an emerging youth voice that sporadically questions and challenges the current status quo through strikes and recent breakaway groups forming splinter opposition political parties. In recent history, there is enough evidence that the South African youth is actively repositioning themselves as critical social agents, often using alternative forms of expression. Recently, the formation of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), a breakaway group from the ANC, indicated a formation of an alternative, independent youth voice. While it initially framed itself as a voice of disparaged youth, by speaking on mainstream issues, the EFF has since gained traction in mainstream politics, rising to be the third most powerful party in South Africa.

In addition, recent student actions such as the #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall campaigns are also examples of student/youth activism, indicating that young people are conscious of the social challenges confronting them and those faced by society at large. The youth can create their own spaces, bypassing those created by the state or society, which they consider unwelcoming and restricting of their contribution. The youth discuss issues that are important to them via online media and on social networking sites (Wyngarden, 2012). As Dayal and Wabiri (2011) argue, when formalised mechanisms are considered inadequate by the public, citizens resort to the use of alternative spaces for engagement that they have created for themselves. Marches, sit-ins, protests and strikes are also methods citizens use to express their voice (Booysen, 2009; DWEA, 2009; Everatt et al., 2010; Hartslief, 2009; Olivier, n.d;). The youth may opt for acts of violence because of their perceived exclusion from formal processes of political engagement (Ighobor, 2013; Resnick & Casale, 2011). More significantly, though, is that what is seen as non-participation is, in fact, a political expression, a means of expressing views and opinion about the persistent conditions (Eze, 2015).

These efforts are, however, interrupted and compromised by barriers that lead to the youth disengaging from formal participation spaces. Most of these barriers are linked to the dichotomous nature in which the youth is viewed, which is reflected in their participation trends (Restless Development, 2012). Some narratives paint a picture of a strong, dynamic and willing youth participation (Restless Development, 2012). The other narrative paints a low level and tokenistic youth engagement (Restless Development, 2012). The state of waithood, a period

where the African youth is waiting to get into adulthood, is another hurdle for youth participation (Honwana 2014; Minds, 2015). This is the traditional adult-centric prism which widely sees the youth as immature citizens, minimizing their contribution, which is often unacknowledged by adults (Mycock & Tonge, 2011).

Cultural norms favouring hierarchical relationships between the old and the young, and mindsets fixed on ageism continue to prevail and inform youth participation (Galombik, 2002). These attitudes are based upon gross generalisation and stereotypes propagated about young people, particularly in relation to maturity and agency (Walsh, 2012). Accepting this leads to a dismissive attitude towards young people's participation. Due to these cultural and traditional practices, it is less likely that in some communities, it would be accepted as a norm for young people to confidently, directly and openly discuss critical issues, and exchange ideas and opinions with their elders (TrustAfrica, n.d). When young people are viewed as victims or problems, rather than as knowledgeable and competent citizens with an ability to engage on national issues, their role as citizens is undermined and often limited (Checkoway et al., 2003).

In addition, Mengistu (2017) states that public participation spaces are considered unfriendly, alien, intimidating and uninviting. Unorganized youth feels excluded and sometimes there is an observed lack of genuineness in the process, where young people's participation is considered to be "partial participation at best and to tokenism and fake participation at worst". (Cammaerts, Bruter, Banaji, Harrison & Anstead et al., 2014, p11). Campbell, Lamming, Lemp, Brosnahan, Paterson & Pusey (2008) also state that meetings are seldom designed to be appealing to young people. Thus, feelings of hopelessness, powerlessness and mistrust of the processes develop. The perceived requirements for political engagement result in the youth feeling insecure and struggling with a sense of inadequacy because they do not think that they possess the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in such engagements (Cammaerts et al., 2013). Unfortunately, in the South African schooling curriculum, there is no accommodation for topics focusing on the values of civic participation to encourage political activism (Chitukutuku, 2014).

In addition, research indicates that most of the youth do not see the benefit of participation in democratic spaces, given their realities of poverty, inequality and unemployment (Potgieter et al., 2015). In post-apartheid South Africa, for the majority of the youth, life is about negotiating a

series of challenges such as unemployment, lack of post-school opportunities, living in underdeveloped communities, experiencing high levels of crime and violence, and illnesses such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic. These challenges likely contribute to low youth participation (Africa Human Development Report, 2012; Everatt, 2007; Mengistu, 2016; Minds, 2015; Unicef, 2017). Such obstacles affect their agency.

In addition, in their research, Mattes and Richmond (2015) found that the trends of youth participation are similar to adult trends of participation. There is an overall decline. Mayekiso et al. (2013) also argue that intrinsic weaknesses within the legislative framework are in themselves a barrier to youth participation. They argue that the legislation and related regulations set out guidelines, methods or approaches that are too broad (Mayekiso et al., 2013).

In conclusion, these barriers result in participation by the youth being limited (Calvert et al., 2014). In South Africa, for instance, the political voice of the youth is constantly sought but particularly so during election periods. This means that the government recognises the power that lies with its youth constituency. This focus on the youth, particularly during the voting season, is considered tantamount to exploiting the youth's political voice. As is the case in many African countries, this voice has been utilised for its voting clout to achieve the ruling elite's agendas, through the electoral process.

2.8. How youth participation can be improved

There is a growing body of work cogitating on how to guarantee that youth participation is both genuine and meaningful (UNDP, 2012). According to Calvert, de Montmollin and Winnet, (2014), opportunities for active involvement made available must also be informal, their processes relatable, and their approaches and strategies aimed specifically to attract young people from diverse backgrounds. Sotkasiira, Haikkola and Horell (2010) suggest that there also be systematic and organized support, characterised by continuous application of techniques that enable sound engagement at all levels. Further, the political, economic, and cultural barriers, and societal views of the youth that cast doubt on the readiness of young people to engage at an equal level with adults, need to be challenged and addressed. Vromen and Collin (2010) propose that youth participation, in particular, be youth-led, fun and informal, creative and responsive to young people's lives while being informed by relevant and relatable daily issues, rather than intricate policy processes.

Also, the level of political participation of the youth must be upgraded (Mengistu, 2016). This can be achieved by creating and building the capacity of structures such as youth councils and youth units at the municipal level. In South Africa, where these youth forums have been used, Matthews (2001**)** argues that they have been flawed. This, according to Matthews (2001), is because they often complicate and confuse the voices of many young people. This seems to imply that in order for all of these efforts to be effective, conditions must ensure emotional and intellectual resources are available, as well as have in place material and social structures that allow for young people to engage and participate confidently in an adult-dominated world (Sotkasiira, Haikkola & Horell, 2010). The youth must possess general skills in communication and be competent in the debates about issues that impact citizens (Matthews, 2010).

Other strategies for the intensification of youth participation in public policy at the municipal level include: affording young people an opportunity to participate in formal and informal roles in youth councils and other boards, in youth clubs or centres, community media initiatives, non-governmental organizations, social movements, or sports clubs, youth councils and youth representatives on boards, as well as participation in the country's Youth Parliament (Cammaerts et al., 2013; Richard-Schuster & Checkoway, 2010; Youth Parliament, 2006). These strategies allow for the youth's direct interaction with adult decision-makers and for the development of competence to participate in planning and decision-making. To enable the youth to partake in these roles, Campbell et al. (2008) suggest several strategies, such as giving young members much more involved practical tasks with clearly specified short-term objectives. In those roles, they suggest that the youth are treated as expert consultants and are listened to when they have something to say about local youth and issues. Campbel et al. (2008) also suggest that a youth representative can be paired with an adult mentor, someone they have admiration for and would want to be around and emulate.

Improving youth participation is also intricately interconnected with the improvement of public participation at large. The perceived low youth participation is also a reflection of low public participation rates overall (Belle & Cupido, 2013). Monastyrski (2002) lists the necessary elements for constructive citizen participation. These include knowledge of citizen participation methods and awareness education (Monastyrski, 2002). Boaz, Chambers and Stuttaford (2014) espouse that participation requires behaviour change from everyone engaged in participation

processes; both the citizens and the officials thinking differently about the role and purpose of participation.

Introducing participation as part of the school curriculum can also be an avenue to develop the necessary skills for participation (Cammaerts et al., 2013). Civic education on voting, elections and democracy should start at a young age and continue throughout one's life, engaging people on the topics of their rights and responsibilities in a consistent but innovative manner (Electoral Commission, 2014). The internet can be used as a space to educate the youth on various issues. This is because the internet has become an important communication platform embedded in the social, business and political life of most of the South African youth. Social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook, are accessible to most young people and have become a mass meeting ground for them. Social media affords the youth access to information and can be used for political and community issue-related conversations. This lowers the impact of some of the traditional socio-economic related barriers to political involvement. The downside of this, however, is that the youth are sometimes overloaded with information which may not be authentic, as these platforms can be used to spread false information.

If youth participation is to be effective, thought must be given to the context, the circumstances and the reasons in which it is initiated (Bessant, 2004). Places where adult-led participation happens, which are initiated by adult-dominated agencies, may not afford a fitting setting for young people (Bessant, 2004). Where youth participation is encouraged and harnessed, there is a potential for the bridging of the inter-generational gap, where the youth help adults better appreciate and respect young people's viewpoints and contributions, and vice versa.

2.9. Conceptual Framework

In this chapter, past studies on public participation and youth participation were reviewed to identify the knowledge gap and develop a conceptual framework to inform the research enquiry. A conceptual framework indicates a relationship and interrelationship between variables deemed important for a study (Adom, Hussein & Agyem, 2018; Kitchel & Ball, 2014). According to Kothari (2004), a conceptual framework presents the researchers view about the concept being presented in the study. Figure 3 below attempts to capture the key theories and concepts underlying the study and their relation to each other. The conceptual framework articulated in

this section guided this study through the process of collecting, processing, analyzing and interpreting the empirical findings.

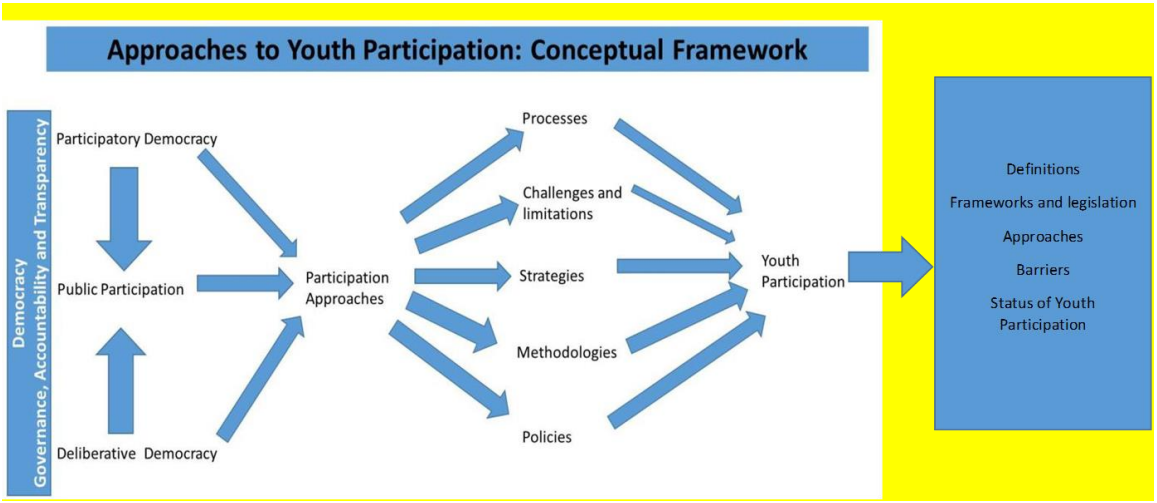

Figure 3: Diagrammatic representation of the conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study is framed around key factors, variables, constructs, issues of public participation, trends, theories and legislative frameworks concerning youth participation in the context of democracy. The conceptual framework indicates that for democracy to be bolstered, governance, accountability and transparency are critical. One way of ensuring the above is through sound public participation by all citizens, including young people. There are, however, challenges and barriers that can compromise youth participation, leading to young people either not participating or choosing alternative spaces of participation.

2.10. Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature discussion explored and reviewed in-depth debates raised by various scholars on public participation, youth participation, historical and legislative contexts, and underpinning theories and trends from the literature. From the review, it is clear that youth participation is understood and implemented alongside public participation. The literature suggests that youth participation is considered an important component of public participation. Because the youth form a large percentage of the population, they are critical actors in the public participation sphere. However, there are significant barriers and challenges that weaken the participation of the youth (Bang, 2005; Vromen & Collin, 2010). These include young people's limited comprehension of how decision-making and participatory processes function, youth's life experience, the diverse nature of young people, and young people's distrust about, or lack of

dedication and commitment to, participation processes (Vromen & Collin, 2010). Mengistu (2017) asserts that if the young population in Africa is engaged appropriately, it can be a potential driver of socio-economic change and development that the continent so desperately needs. Thus, the youth's inclusion in political, governance and social aspects is indispensable to the democratic stability of the continent. Of significance to this debate is to understand further how approaches of youth participation can be improved to ensure much more effective youth participation.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The objective of this research study is to contribute to the understanding of the factors that may lead to low youth participation. The conceptual framework formulated in chapter 2 section 2.9 helped to explain the key aspects of public participation and youth participation, as well as how they intersect. In this chapter, we outline the research paradigm, research design and research methodology used in this study.

3.2. Research Paradigm

Any research inquiry must be guided by a paradigm (Makombe, 2017; Chilisa & Kawulich; 2012). A paradigm is according to Creswell (2009) a world view. It reflects the researcher's perspectives and beliefs about their world and a lens that a researcher methodologically uses to explore the world and to explore the focus of their research project (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

There are three major paradigms: positivism, interpretivism, and critical theory (Gemma, 2018; Zukauskas, Vveinhardt & Andriukaitiene, 2018). Positivism is defined as an organised method using quantitative data. This paradigm uses experiments, surveys and statistics to investigate a given research problem (Neuman, 2011). Rehman & Alharthi (2016) assert that interpretivism believes in socially-constructed multiple realities. This approach is defined as a methodical analysis of social action through the direct and detailed observation of people in their natural setting (Kara, 2018; Neuman, 2011; Neuman & Kreuger 2003; Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, and Ormsto, 2014). This view holds that it is not possible to know reality as it is because it is always created, not discovered and mediated by our senses (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Interpretive epistemology collects mostly qualitative data (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). It tends to be subjective and, therefore, is not meant to demonstrate the generalizability of results (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016; Sabah & Pate, 2013). Critical Theory, on the other hand, emphasizes challenging surface level distortions while discovering multiple layers of reality (Chilisa et al., 2012; Neuman 2011).

The approach used for this study was the interpretive social science approach. It uses participant observation and field research techniques, requiring direct personal contact with the people studied (Neuman, 2011; Neuman & Kreuger, 2003; Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormsto, 2014).

The analysis will lead to an understanding and interpretation of how people create and maintain their social contexts (Kara, 2018; Neuman, 2011; Neuman & Kreuger 2003; Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormsto, 2014). The other two approaches, the positivist social science and the critical social science approaches, were not chosen because they were not suitable for the nature of the study at hand.

3.3. Research Design and Methods

Research design is defined as a plan with methods and techniques chosen by a researcher to combine different components of research in a reasonably coherent manner so that the research problem is handled efficiently (Creswell, 2016; Ranjit, 2011). It is a roadmap for data collection and data analysis (Ranjit, 2011). There are five major qualitative research designs, namely narrative research, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory and case study (Astalin, 2013; Cresswell, 2016; Williams, 2007).

According to Qutoshi (2018), phenomenology as a philosophy provides a theoretical guideline to researchers to understand phenomena at the level of subjective reality. It centres on a particular phenomenon to investigate while exploring the distinct context in which the individuals experience that phenomenon (Daher, Carré, Jaramillo, Olivares & Tomicic 2017). Data is gathered from those who have experienced and are knowledgeable about the phenomenon (Neubauer, Witkop & Varpio, 2019). It involves interpretations and the meaning-making of human experience; thus, a descriptive analysis of how a phenomenon is experienced by individuals emerges (Neubauer, et al. 2019; Qutoshi, 2018).

Ethnographical research centres on discovering and describing the culture of a group of people, answering the question, “what's it like to be this person?” (Creswell, 2016; Grossoehme, 2014, p6). In ethnography, one immerses themselves within the target participants’ context, thereby generating a rich understanding of their social actions (Cleland, 2017; Reeves, Kuper & Hodges, 2008). The grounded theory explains or generates theory concerning social phenomena (Cleland, 2017; DePoy & Gitlin, 2016). Grounded theory is suitable for studying social interactions, exchanges or experiences; it aims to elucidate a process (Cleland, 2017). A case study is “an intensive, systematic investigation of a single individual, group, community or some other unit in which the researcher examines in-depth data relating to several variables” (Heale & Twycross, 2018, p1). The basic idea in case study research is to pick a single case or a small

number of cases and describe how the particular case exemplifies and demonstrates a problem or an issue.

For this research, the researcher has opted to combine the case study and phenomenological research approaches. The combination of the two approaches was used because the researcher sought to obtain an in-depth expression of the participants' views and get an opportunity to monitor and/or interact with the study's participants in their real-life context. A case study approach was chosen because it allowed us to explore, in an in-depth manner, a case in a context within a defined period. The researcher chose a case study of black youth in three specific communities of the City of Johannesburg. This case study was chosen because, as Atchan, Davis and Fourer (2016) argue, it offers rich data for the analysis of identified complex issues. Further, the researcher has also chosen this approach because they believed a first-hand experience, through the observation of participant experiences in the field, would enrich the findings of the study. The phenomenological approach was chosen because of the researcher's interest in people's views and perspectives. In addition, the study sought to focus on perspectives, opinions, ideas and perceptions of a group as described below. The researcher's aim was to understand the views explored and investigated, from the perspective of the respondents. The researcher knew that information and knowledge drawn from this study is, therefore, to be understood as subjective and may not be generalized to all youth in the region or in the country.

Moreover, research design can be classified into quantitative and qualitative research design. Because the study is informed by the interpretive paradigm, it followed the qualitative strategy of inquiry and used a qualitative methodology approach. The research mainly asked a combination of what, how and why questions. The limitations associated with qualitative research and its data collection methods include challenges with gaining access to key participants as well as the fact that qualitative research generates complex data and therefore requires skill and time to analyse, making it considerably expensive (Kapoulas & Mitic, 2012). Also, its use of smaller sample sizes restricts the degree to which findings can be statistically representative and generalized. But the advantage and benefit of the qualitative approach are that it generates rich and informative data that gives deeper insight into the problems studied.

The focus of the study will not be the entire City of Johannesburg's youth population, but specifically on black African youth. The study focuses on the black youth in three Johannesburg

townships: Alexandra, Orange Farm and Zandspruit. This limited focus is not to negate the experiences of other race groups but is premised on the view that, as alluded to in the post-1994 literature explored in chapter 2, most often, black youth have been described as disillusioned compared to youth of other races. But also, community protest actions show a frustrated youth population that is increasingly opting to voice their concerns and assert their presence through protests, and is rather conspicuously absent in formal and invited public participation spaces. We see the youth at the forefront of youth-led initiatives, such as the #FeesMustFall movement. What current research has not adequately explored in depth, is whether formal participation spaces are open and accommodating to the youth and their contributions, allowing for the mainstreaming of their participation, such that they feel that their presence and input are valued.

3.4. Data collection Instruments

Data was collected between 2016 and 2017. For this study, a combination of data collection methods was used. These were observations, document analysis, interviews and focus groups. These methods were chosen because different information would best be sourced using different methodologies.

3.4.1. Document Analysis

This methodical technique is a way of collecting data by reviewing or evaluating existing printed and electronic documents that give information about the investigated phenomenon and exists independently of the researcher's actions (Bowen, 2009; Corbetta, 2003). For this study, a set of official documents was analysed. The purpose was to achieve a background understanding of the public participation strategies, mechanisms and processes of the City of Johannesburg, as well as to get a sense of how they seek to promote participation by the youth.

The documents analysed are listed in appendix 1 and included:

1. City of Johannesburg Annual Report (2017/18)
2. Gauteng COGTA. State of local Government: back to basics Perspective July 2015
3. Institutional Services Delivery Budget and Implementation Plan (2015/2016; 2016/2017),
4. The Johannesburg 2014 Growth and Development Strategy

5. Jozi A City @Work. 2012/2016 IDP: 2014/2015 Review
6. Jozi A City @Work. 2012/2016 IDP: Turning Challenges into Opportunities. 2015/2016 Review
7. Jozi: A city @ Work (2012-16)
8. National COGTA. Policy Process on the Systems of provincial and local government: Background Policy, questions, process and participation
9. State of Local Government Back to Basics Perspective (2015)
10. State of South African Cities Report (2008)
11. The City of Johannesburg Integrated Development Plans (2014/15; 2015/2016; 2016/2017)
12. The National Policy Framework on Public Participation (2007)
13. Youth Development Strategy (2011)

3.4.2. Observation

IDP and Rates community meetings were observed. Table 3 below is the schedule of the IDP and Rates meetings observed.

Date	Place	Region	Time	Type of meeting
21 April 2016	Midrand	A	17:00 – 20:00	IDP Meeting
12 April 2016	Cosmo City	C	17:00 - 20:00	IDP Meeting
17 April 2016	Alexandra – East Bank	E	10:00 – 14:00	IDP Meeting
20 April 2016	Orange Farm	G	10:00 – 13:00	IDP Meeting
15 April 2016	Roodepoort City	C	17:00 – 20:00	IDP Meeting
7 March 2016	Diepsloot	A	17:00 – 20:00	Rates review meeting
9 March 2016	Alexandra	E	17:00 – 20:00	Rates review meeting

Table 3: Schedule of observations

Observation in research is a cognitive process of recording the behaviours/interactions/actions of participants without communicating with them, through closely watching and carefully listening to interactions and exchanges, both verbal and non-verbal, between individuals (Baker, 2006; Kumar, 2005). The objective for undertaking observations in this study was to get a sense of the engagements in these spaces, the participation of youth, meeting protocol, and to observe how the meetings are run and the time given to citizens to comment, engage and ask questions. The non-participant approach was employed. This approach afforded the researcher the opportunity

to get closer to the people within a setting, through first-hand experience. Further observation was guided by a guide the researcher developed, which was informed by the literature review and conceptual framework. The guide is attached as appendix 6 to this report.

Seeking permission is one of the protocols a researcher needs to observe to conduct observation (Driscoll, 2011). For this study, permission was sought from officials in charge on arrival for the meeting. The purpose of the study, the nature of the observation and reporting of the findings were explained verbally, and the permission letter explaining the study was shared with the officials.

3.4.3. In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with ward counsellors in the selected communities, young people identified in the IDP consultation meetings and rates review meetings, as well as with the representative of the City of Johannesburg. Table 4 below provides a schedule for all the interviews conducted for this study.

Key informant	Category	Date	Length
City of Johannesburg	Official	25 January 2017	1 hour
Respondent Region A	Ward Councillor	27 January 2017	1 hour
Respondent Region C	Ward Councillor	2 February 2017	1 hour
Respondent Region E	Ward councillor	4 February 2017	1 hour
Youth _ interview Region A	Youth	14 May 2016	1 hour
Youth _ interview Region C	Youth	21 May 2016	1 hour
Youth _ interview Region E	Youth	18 June 2016	1 hour
Youth _ interview Region C	Youth	25 June 2016	1 hour

Table 4: Schedule of Interviews

A set of questions which served as a guide was developed. The guides for the different groups are attached as appendix 2, 3 and 4 of the report. The questions in the interview guide were mainly open-ended, with a few closed-ended questions. The focus was on why they were at the meeting, where were other young people, how they got to know about the meeting, if they always came to meetings, and around the participation of young people who were at the meetings. Open questions were asked as a way to open up the discussion and to ascertain a position the respondents held on a specific topic. Interviews were mainly framed as conversations, allowing

for a relaxed, conversational atmosphere. This allowed for the individuals interviewed to be open to saying much more, while at the same time allowing for the interviewer to probe using follow-up questions and non-verbal communication. (Driscoll, 2011; Holstein & Gabrium, 2006).

However, as desirable as the conversational nature of these interviews was, Holstein and Gabrium (2006) warn that while it is important to keep the interaction in check, following Patton's (2002) suggestion, the interview guide needs to be prepared to ensure that the basic lines of inquiry are followed. In addition, the researcher was cognisant of the challenge posed by this approach. Sometimes using unstructured interviews and open-ended questions may create the impression that the interview lacks structure, rendering it difficult to analyse, hence the researcher's use of closed-ended questions. The researcher closely guarded the direction of the engagement between the interviewee and interviewer, to keep to the set data collection framework of the study.

The interviews with the youth at IDP consultation meetings were conducted immediately or soon after the IDP sessions. The interviews with the City of Johannesburg official and the councillors were scheduled on the basis of their availability. In all instances, the research participants were advised of the objectives of the research. They were advised that it was anonymous and given an opportunity to change their minds if they did not wish to partake in the research study.

3.4.4. Focus Groups

The last instrument used was focus group discussions. A focus group is, according to Paton (2002), a group interview with a small number of people, on a particular topic. Three focus group discussions as per the schedule in table 5 below, were held in the three communities selected for our study.

Key informant	Category	Date	Length
Youth _ Focus Group Discussion	Alexandra Youth	20 August 2016	2 hours
Youth _ Focus Group Discussion	Zandspruit Youth	27 August 2016	2 hours
Youth _ Focus Group Discussion	Orange Farm Youth	09 September 2016	2 hours

Table 5: Schedule of Focus Group Discussions

The communities were Zandspruit, Alexandra, and Orange Farm. The groups were of mixed gender, ranging from age 18 to 35. The size of a focus group was between 6 and 10 people, as

suggested by Paton (2011). The focus groups were hosted by youth organisations in the communities. The researcher did not work directly with the host organisations but used her networking in the sector to request the organisation to host the focus group. There was no gain of any kind for the host organisation.

Focus groups ran for about 1–2 hours. Similar to the in-depth interviews, a focus group discussion guide, in appendix 5, was developed and used to guide the discussion. The questions were mostly open-ended with closed-ended questions used to set the scene. The moderator was assisted by a non-participant whose role was to document the reaction of the participants and take detailed notes on the focus group deliberations. The engagements were also recorded using a tape-recording device.

The researcher was aware of the inherent challenges of focus group discussions, which include the issues of knowledge about the topic under discussion, false consensus amongst participants, issues of bias and manipulation. Also, research participants with strong personalities may influence the direction of the discussion and unintentionally silence other participants (Biello, 2009; Burke, 2011; Rothwell, Anderson & Botkin, 2015). Different strategies were employed to manage the flow of discussions.

3.5. Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting subjects to take part in a research investigation because they provide information considered relevant to the research problem (Oppong, 2013). Driscoll (2011) states that one of the keys to successful data collection is choosing the right people to interview. For this study, the non-probability and purposive sampling techniques were used. The non-probability sampling technique includes incidental sampling, purposive sampling, quota sampling and snowball sampling (Etikan & Bala, 2017; Neuman, 2011). The other technique, probability sampling, is, according to Neuman (2011), used mostly in quantitative research and includes simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. It was considered inappropriate for the purposes of this study.

The purposive sampling technique chosen for this study is a widely used sampling method, especially in the context of qualitative research (Miles et al., 2013). The respondents selected for this study were selected because it was believed they have experience or knowledge of the issue/s being addressed in the research. The focus of this research is local government, i.e. municipalities. Our sample unit is the youth population in the City of Johannesburg municipality,

with a specific focus on Black African youth. The sample for the study was the black youth in the ages of 18 and 34 residing in three communities in Regions A, E and G of the City of Johannesburg. The case focus is three communities in region A, C and E. The City's Spatial Development Framework (SDF) explains that communities such as Orange farm, Alexander and Zandspruit are a historic representation of the 'marginalised' areas. These areas also exhibit high levels of deprivation and need, with the highest concentration of informal residential accommodation such as informal settlements, backyard shacks or invaded buildings. The youth interviewed were at the meetings. The official interviewed works in the City of Johannesburg and was identified as the correct person to respond to my questions. It was also by default that there were more males than females that participated in this study. Efforts to interview a female ward councillor were not successful.

3.5.1. Sample Size

Qualitative research by its nature is not prescriptive, and hence, unlike quantitative studies, there are no rules concerning the most appropriate sample sizes (Laher & Botha, 2010). However, the sample size determination is a critical matter because it determines the scope and extent to which the researcher can generalize (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005b; Sarmah & Hazarika, 2012). For the study, one City of Johannesburg official, three ward councillors, and four youths who attended IDP meetings were interviewed, and thirty-four young people participated in three focus group discussions as indicated in the table 6 below.

Key informant	Category	Total Number of people	Gender	
			Male	Female
City of Johannesburg	Official	1	1	
Respondent Region A	Ward Councillor	1	1	
Respondent Region C	Ward Councillor	1	1	
Respondent Region E	Ward councillor	1	1	
Youth _ interview	Youth	1	1	
Youth _ interview	Youth	1	1	
Youth _ interview	Youth	1	1	
Youth _ interview	Youth	1	1	

Youth _ Focus Group Discussion	Zandspruit Youth	9	6		3
Youth _ Focus Group Discussion	Orange Youth	15	10		5
Youth _ Focus Group Discussion	Alexandra Youth	10	7		3
Total		42	31		11

Table 6: Key Informants

3.6. Data capturing, management and analysis

During observations, interviews, and focus groups, detailed notes were made using the paper and pen approach; the tone of voice and body language was recorded. The management of data was also critical. All interviews and focus group discussions were recorded and later transcribed and stored in an electronic file only accessible to the researcher.

Because qualitative inquiry has a leaning towards exploration, discovery, and inductive logic, the method of analysis used for this study was the interpretational and thematic analysis method (Paton, 2002). Through this analytical approach, patterns and themes emanating from the data are isolated (Curtis & Curtis, 2011; Kawulich & Holland, 2012; Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). They are isolated, assessed and described (Curtis & Curtis, 2011). In this approach, precise variables or data categories are not decided prior to the research process of collection and analysis (Curtis & Curtis, 2011). The data was allowed to speak for itself, whereupon the researcher identified the emerging categories and themes (Cleland, 2017). To this end, the researcher reduced the data into small sets of themes. Using structural analyses, the researcher looked for patterns in the conversation and interactions at the observed community meeting. Thematic and interpretational analysis was used to identify and classify recurring themes and patterns in the data (Kawulich & Holland, 2012; Nowell, et al., 2017). Common threads emerged. The researcher used data coding to sort and organize these emerging themes. These were gathered under broad themes guided by the literature review and conceptual framework.

It is important to realize that there was a continuous process of interpreting the data presented in order to identify the general categories or themes. Data analysis started during the data collection stage (Neuman, 2011). Throughout the data collection stage, the researcher was identifying patterns and themes that were emerging. Researchers, such as Miles et al. (2013), support this approach, arguing that analysis should occur concurrently with data collection. This helps the researcher iteratively move to and fro between evaluating existing data and simultaneously generating strategies for collecting new data (Aspers & Corte, 2019; Miles et al.,

2013). This approach is more iterative and flexible than a linear undertaking (Cleland, 2017; Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009).

3.7. Scientific Vigour

Research must be done with vigour. In quantitative research, reliability and validity are the most important indicators of the quality of the research (Bashir, Muhammad & Azeem, 2008; Curtis & Curtis, 2011; Heale & Twycross 2018). Reliability refers to the dependability or consistency of research. It gauges the extent to which the analysis of data provides reliable results that can be replicated at different times or by different researchers (Curtis & Curtis, 2011; Neuman, 2011). Validity, on the other hand, refers to the truthfulness and authenticity of the research data (Anderson, 2010; Curtis & Curtis, 2011; Neuman, 2011; Noble & Smith, 2015). For qualitative research, due to its interpretative nature, the validity of qualitative content analysis cannot be assessed using the same set of criteria as above. This is because qualitative research is designed to ensure applicability, dependability and confirmability (Niewehuist & Smit, 2012 p137). Golafshani (2003) states that when quantitative researchers refer to research validity and reliability, it is the plausibility of the research that they are referring to; while the integrity and credibility of qualitative research are about the ability and attempt of the researcher to maintain that credibility.

Gasson (2004) points out that trustworthiness in qualitative research revolves around “four criteria 1) credibility, 2) transferability, 3) dependability, and 4) confirmability” (p. 89). Credibility scrutinizes the matter of ‘fit’ between what participants say and the representation of their viewpoints by researchers (Nowell, et al., 2017). Transferability refers to the degree to which the research can be transferred to other contexts; i.e., to what degree the study finding can be applied to other individuals, groups, contexts or settings (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Dependability ensures that the research findings are consistent and could be repeated by asking whether the research findings ‘fit’ the data from which they have been derived (Bashir, Muhammad & Azeem, 2008). Confirmability is the qualitative investigator’s comparable concern to objectivity, as it questions how the research findings are supported by the data collected Shenton, 2014).

The researcher, however, acknowledges that, as stated by Niewenhuis and Smit (2012), qualitative research can never be completely value-free, and hence, it is critical to enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of the research. Guided by Niewehuist and Smit (2012), the researcher maintained trustworthiness based on the four criteria discussed above, to ensure authenticity and increase the trustworthiness and credibility of the study. The researcher provided descriptive characteristics of the respondents, methods and techniques used in the study. Procedures employed to collect and analyse data were defined and clearly articulated. These procedures were recorded so that others will be able to understand them. All tape-recorded interviews, transcribed notes and a personal diary were kept. The researcher used triangulation. Green (2005) explains that the use of triangulation is when the researcher uses two or more different readings of one phenomenon to improve the accuracy and validity of the findings. A combination of observation, focus groups, interviews and document analysis were used. As such, for this study, the researcher has crosschecked the data across the different respondents, as well as the methods used to collect data, to see if there is an observable thematic pattern that is developing.

3.8. Significance of the study

The researcher believed that there is scope for more examination of youth participation in public policy, particularly the examination of the public participation approaches for the youth, and youth experiences with and responses to these approaches. This study will contribute to the growth of public participation as a field of study, debates and discussions on public participation and on youth participation, the methodologies and mechanisms used, and the role and involvement of the youth. In particular, this study will help with an understanding of whether the public participation strategies, mechanisms and processes used are geared towards encouraging youth participation.

In the context of debates around the strengthening of democracy in South Africa, this study can contribute towards an understanding of how integrating youth participation into local government decision-making can contribute towards this goal. The findings can also add to a body of knowledge on public participation, development of youth in South Africa, and insights on the youth, their interests and their abilities. Furthermore, the findings can assist in refining public participation mechanisms and methods to ensure more meaningful citizen engagement.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4. 1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the key data findings of the study. The data presentation was guided by the conceptual framework discussed in section 2.9., themes in the data collection instruments, as well as emerging themes of the study. In-depth discussion of the findings is in the next chapter. A broad set of guiding questions was formulated for document analysis, observations, interviews and focus groups. The questions focused on getting views and perceptions of the public participation approaches the City uses, as well as uncovering youth participation trends and the effect of participation approaches on the public participation of the youth in the communities chosen for the research case.

Observations of IDP community consultations, as well as Rates and Taxes consultations, were undertaken. An analysis of the official documentation of the City of Johannesburg was also undertaken to gain a critical understanding of the official public participation approaches the City uses. Interviews were conducted with a City of Johannesburg official, three ward councillors and conviniently selected youth that attended observed community meetings. In addition, three focus groups were conducted in the three communities selected as the focus of this study. The data was collected from specific communities in region C, E and G. The participating communities were Alexandra, Zandspruit and Orange Farm.

The below findings are presented following the trends that emanated from the raw data but are also informed by predetermined themes that formed the framework for this study.

4.2. Findings

The findings are represented based on the conceptual framework, the themes from the literature review, themes that emanated from the data collected, and the research primary and secondary questions.

4.2.1. Views on public and youth participation

The City's official documents reveal that public participation is based on a mutual relationship between the City and "its communities that leads to negotiated agreements on priorities and

publicly valuable outcomes" (SACN, 2016, p208). From the analysis of the official documentation and reports from the City of Johannesburg, we can deduce that the City is dedicated to fostering participatory democracy and Batho Pele principles as strategic objectives. Batho Pele means people first. It is all about giving good customer service to the users of government services. It is founded on eight principles (Hemson and Roberts, 2008). These are consultation, service standards, access, information, redress, best value, innovation and reward, and customer impact (Hemson 2008). The City acknowledged that its "commitment to public participation and consultation is based on constitutional and legal obligations and the governance model" (CoJ, 2015, p[1]). The Johannesburg 2040 Growth Development Strategy (GDS 2040) document states that "governance underpins everything the City does" (p49). To that effect, creating space for conversations and forging meaningful citizen participation and empowerment is mentioned as one of the key GDS outputs (p57). The strategy states that

> *"local government cannot function without an informed view of the realities and needs of all the stakeholders it serves – and it cannot be effective in delivering true value without their participation, and the active use of partnerships. Processes of hearing, and listening to the voices of stakeholders from all parts of society … helps build a socially inclusive environment, and services that matter" (p73-74)*

Document analyses revealed that the City of Johannesburg's public participation is guided by the City's Community Based Planning (CBP) approach (Jozi: A City @ Work 2012/16 IDP: 2014/15). According to the Jozi: A city @ Work 2012/16 IDP: 2014/15 review document, the basic underpinning of the City's CBP approach is to ensure that all citizens are included in planning through authentic structures, such as ward councillors and committees. CBP promotes mutual accountability between communities and officials. This is also seen as a catalyst to drive social change by capacitating residents to assume ownership of development in their communities.

The IDP review reports state the value that the City attaches to citizens and collective contribution, citizens' voices and ideas, and the City's commitment to on-going consultation. Priority 5 of the 2014/2015 IDP report speaks of "engaged and active citizenry", linking it to "good governance", which includes "accountability, accessibility, transparency, predictability, inclusivity and a focus on equity, participation and responsiveness to people's needs" (IDP report: 2014/15 Review p124). The GDS document further mentions that the City has made a commitment to the

[1] Annual Performance Report 2014/15

citizens of CoJ that they will be treated as “active agents in shaping their own future” (p3). Outcome 5 of GDS 2040 refers to meaningful citizen participation and empowerment as a priority output for the City (pg71).

Views on youth participation are less clear when compared to views on public participation. Within this understanding of the value attached to the participation of the public in informing key and critical decisions of the City, youth participation enjoys similar positive regard. All respondents expressed the necessity of youth participation. The official documents analysed, however, did not make any special mention of youth participation.

From the City’s Youth Strategy, the mention of youth participation reveals that the City is keen to i*ncrease youth participation in community life and in political life. (CoJ, 2011).* To achieve that commitment, the City is expected to c*reate more opportunities for youth participation in community life.* Further the City should *support models of participation that encourage youth to get involved in community life through seminars, conferences, consultation groups consisting of young people and similar events that promote youth participation.* The strategy also suggest that the city d*evelop civic education and political education. (CoJ, 2011).*

The view of youth participation expressed by the respondents was closely aligned with the view or value they held about public participation. All respondents expressed the necessity of youth participation. The young people interviewed acknowledged that the participation of the youth is vital. “*It is important for young people to be involved in decision-making spaces”* because decision making spaces are *“not only a space for adults”* (Focus Group, Zandspruit; Ward Councillor, Orange Farm). Young people in focus groups also recognised the importance of youth participation, despite some of the related challenges they experience. “*Every decision taken in the community will affect young people too”* (Focus Group, Zandspruit). Therefore *“it needs to accommodate both young and old citizens”*. *“When any member feels excluded, they then don’t support decisions made and end up sabotaging these decisions”* (Focus Group, Zandspruit).

To the officials interviewed, the notion of public participation is understood as a process where the “*community, in community meetings, informs the officials of* what *they need to know about the communities*” (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). The ward councillors acknowledge that participation of young people is vital. One respondent said “*it is important for young people to be involved in decision-making spaces” (*Ward Councillor, Orange Farm). The other said that it is

important to "*have a functional public participation system"* as it allows for "*the City and the people to communicate, develop a common understanding of community issues"* (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). It is seen as *"necessary"* (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). It is an acknowledged "*requirement by the Municipal Systems Act"* (Ward Councillor, Orange Farm). The views of young people are "*important and bring views adults may not have thought of"* (Ward Councillor, Orange Farm).

The youth also understand things from a particular perspective, and sometimes adults *"don't understand the youth situation"* (Focus Group, Zandspruit). *"There are decisions that adults can make on behalf of young people, especially when they are still young or have proven to be taking irresponsible decisions"* (Focus Group, Zandspruit). Additionally, young people *"are also community members affected by the same community issues as adults"* (Focus Group, Zandspruit). They sometimes "*see and know of things that adults do not know*" (Focus Group, Zandspruit). This information can contribute towards the making of sound decisions for the community, and in this instance, for the City of Johannesburg.

According to the views expressed in the youth focus groups, perceptions held about the youth in these communities contribute to the participation of youth not being taken seriously, despite it being acknowledged as important. Sometimes the views that young people are "*irresponsible"*, *"nyaope smoking", "which is not correct", "makes it difficult for adults to take (youth) seriously"* (Focus Group, Alexandra; Focus Group, Orange Farm; Focus Group, Zandspruit).

4.2.2. Public participation approaches used by the City of Johannesburg

From the documents reviewed, it can be established that the City has put into place various mechanisms, processes, structures and modalities to encourage public participation. These include:

- Outreach forums
- IDP
- Submissions
- Petitions
- Requests for comments
- Ward-based committees
- Customer surveys

- Community dialogues
- In-depth discussions
- Consultations
- Summits
- Rates meetings

(CoJ2014; CoJ 2016; CoJ 2015)[2].

Outreach forums and outreach processes refer to a series of events aimed at collected information from citizens including ward forums, workshops and conferences (CoJ, 2011) The integrated development plan (IDP) is a planning tool used by the local government to guide the budget and activities of the municipality during a particular financial year (CoJ 2012). The City hosts these on an annual basis. Similarly rates meetings which are meetings called specifically to discuss rates and taxes are held annually. Ward-based committees are community based committees that are a part of the ward council commitees and are responsible to drive a specific community service delivery issue. Customer surveys are research that the City conducts occasionally to understand citizen's views on a specific issue. Community dialogues, in-depth discussions and consultations are concepts used interchangeable. They refer to an issue and community specific engagements. Summits are conference type engagements that the City hosts. Together with IDP meetings and rates meetings, all these are sometimes broadly referred to as consultations. Submissions, petitions and requests for comments refer to written input made by citizens on various governance issues including policy related issues. These are either on request from the City or as in the case of petitions at citizens' initiative.

Other input is sourced via

- Emails
- Social media comments
- Print media
- Radio reports
- City's blog
- Suggestion boxes that are sometimes placed throughout the City and in some wards (CoJ 2014).

[2] CoJ GDS 2014, CoJ, A City at Work. 2012-2016; CoJ IDP 2014/2015 report

Below is the discussion and further analysis of the approaches most referred to, in most of the documents analysed:

1. **Petitions & Public Participation Committee**:

There is "a *dedicated committee to ensure that all written public requests and grievances are addressed timeously*." (CoJ (nd)).

2. **Ward-Based Committees:**

According to the City's official documentation,

> "*ward councillors are responsible for representing the needs and interests of their constituents". "Linked to this is the establishment of ward committees in terms of the Local Government Act, 1998, and Section 72 of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998*." (CoJ, 2018, pg 54)[3].

These committees

> *"enhance participatory democracy in local government* and *assist ward councillors"*. "*Meetings are supposed to be held monthly to discuss issues raised within the community and to obtain feedback from the ward councillor"* (CoJ, 2018, pg 54)[4].

3. **Integrated Development Plan (IDP):**

These are "*public engagement sessions"* that present communities with "*the opportunity to review and evaluate the service delivery needs and community needs priorities of the specific ward in which they reside"*. This information becomes a basis for the official IDP strategy, informed by community needs. The City communicates "*these meetings to the public by using appropriate communication methods, i.e. community newspapers, community radio stations and commercial radio stations"* (CoJ,2018, pg 55)[5].

[3] City of Johannesburg Annual Report, 2017/18
[4] City of Johannesburg Annual Report, 2017/18
[5] City of Johannesburg Annual Report, 2017/18

The apparent focus on these three seems to imply that these platforms are the most used, the most familiar, and considered the most effective. This is also evident from the examples given in the interviews and the focus group discussions. When the respondents were asked to give examples of the mechanisms and process used by the City to engage with the community on a wide range of issues, the ward councillors and youth interviewed only cited community meetings. The Ward councillors referred to IDP consultation meetings only when they were questioned further about the various public participation platforms. The ward councillors recognised other formats of public participation other than IDP consultation and community meetings but often qualified their choices with utterances such as *"I have not seen them use this one".* (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit)

When asked which mechanisms and processes worked more effectively in inspiring public participation, community meetings were cited by all the three councillors as the most effective ward-based mechanism. Reasons for this, according to the ward councillors interviewed, was that community meetings enabled community members to engage on issues specific to them and are especially more "*controllable when groups are smaller than when it's a big community meeting"* (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit)*.*

When asked if different approaches were used for different groups, the ward councillors expressed that there is no particular differentiation for different groups. But according to the City of Johannesburg, "*depending on the issue to be tabled and discussed a different group/stakeholder may be approached"* (CoJ Official). According to the interviewees, community meetings are deemed appropriate if a general issue is to be discussed. It presents an open platform in which all community groups are represented. "*It would be a costly exercise for the City to call meetings on the same issue with different stakeholders in the same community"* (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit).

When the respondents were asked about youth participation processes, in particular, they were not aware of any youth-specific participation approaches. The youth interviewed had, according to them, "*never been to any dialogue"* hosted by the Youth Unit (Focus Group, Zandspruit). The Youth Strategy document mentions local youth forums that are ward-based. However, in our engagement with the youth, the ward councillors, and the City's official, it became clear that these are either inactive or just not functioning optimally. Only one councillor had knowledge of their existence.

When the youth was asked about how they directly engaged the City of Johannesburg, they did not seem to see the importance of directly engaging with the City. They see the *"representatives as their voice"*. They prefer to *"go through their elected representatives* (because that is) *why they're elected anyway"* (Youth Focus Group, Orange Farm). They engage the City through their ward councillor. *"They are elected to represent the people"* (Youth Focus Group, Orange Farm). But the community representatives, such as street committees, Community Development Workers (CDW) and other members of the ward committee, also play a crucial role. Young people in Orange farm referred to engaging "*with street committee members on issues that worried them"* while youth in Zandspruit referred to their CDW.

The expressed view of youth participation was directly linked to the view or value of public participation held by the respondents interviewed. When young people who attended the IDP consultations were asked why they were there, one of the key reasons was so they could *"have direct communication with the City officials"* (Youth Interviews at the IDP Meeting, Roodeport). However, it was also raised as a shortcoming of the system that the citizens only communicate with the City officials during the IDP sessions. Communication *"between City and citizens is critical not only during IDP…but throughout"* (Youth Interviews with Youth at the Roodeport IDP meeting). The community must suggest other ways that they could communicate and engage with the City. "*More and* (regular) *conversations are necessary"* (Youth IDP Session, Orange Farm).

However, trust issues emerged. Some of the youth did not think that the ward councillors ever did anything with the information they received from them. Despite the acknowledgement that ward councillors provide a link and a symbol of proximity between the City and the public, trust issues were evident. This view about ward councillors tended to expose the tension between their role as political representative and role as community representatives. The political nature of ward councillors and ward meetings came through very strongly in the three focus groups held with the youth. The youth in focus group discussions found it a discouraging factor. But some of the ward councillors were preferred to "*those City officials"* (Focus Group, Orange Farm*).* One young person argued that the *"ward councillor listens to us. It is those big meetings with the City when CoJ come here. No, those people just talk and talk and nice, we just listen"* (Focus Group, Orange Farm*)*.

4.2.3. Approaches to youth participation

As mentioned earlier, the City's Youth Development Strategy mentions improving contact between the City and its youth as a priority for the City. The City also has a Youth Unit of which one of its objectives is to create a platform for discourse and dialogue between the youth and the government on issues affecting them. The Youth Unit's main mandate is to provide a platform for young people to engage with the City through local forums, dialogues, conferences, summits and seminars. The Youth Strategy document also mentions local youth forums that are ward-based. However, in our engagement with the youth, the ward councillors and City's official became clear that these are either inactive or just not functioning optimally.

According to the councillor in Orange farm, the CoJ also experienced several challenges which ultimately led to the ward-based youth forums being ineffective, such as:

> "*Bringing politics to municipality discussions, competition between the different political youth leagues, not having enough money even for basic costs. The structure of the ward council is sometimes not respected. This is a negative role. Also, you have youth council members who are young and not experienced, with zero management and leadership skills. They are about themselves and power; can they mobilise funds from other stakeholders, no" (*Councillor, Orange Farm).

However, on the positive side, it seems that the operational structures "*were useful for distribution of information, a setting for youth engagement and a platform for reality checks of the situation of young people in the community"* (Councillor, Orange farm). Ideally, as mentioned in the Youth Development Strategy, this model would have institutionalised youth development within the City of Johannesburg. The implementation of the strategy would have meant that the City establishment of the youth forum system that participates in youth focused dialogues. The system would have be inclusive of all youth formations with representative from ward level and to regional level and at the core (citywide). Such a structure would enable interaction between the City and the youth.

The ward councillors referred to various forums and structures designed at the community-based level. The City official and ward councillors could not give detailed information on these. It seems,

though, that forums, like the youth ward-based forums, have been defunct for a while, according to the interview with the councillor in Orange Farm.

When the respondents were asked about youth participation processes, they were not aware of youth-specific participation approaches. The interview with the City of Johannesburg official and the ward councillors indicate that there is not much conscious thought or effort applied to specific approaches to engage young people. The City official stated that there were no specific approaches used for young citizens. The City used "*the same approaches, even when it is engaging only young citizens"* (CoJ Official). The only significant separator is *that "where the City has interest in a particular youth issue or opinion then youth-specific dialogues will be held"* (CoJ Official).

4.2.4. Youth response to public participation approaches and trends in youth participation

There were no reports that the researcher could access to understand the levels of youth participation in the City. However, the 2016 GCRO survey reported concern over a drop in public participation, not only in the City of Johannesburg but also across the province (*CoJ, 2018)*

Despite the overwhelming recognition of the significance of youth participation, a further inquiry by the study shows that youth participation is limited. At all observed IDP public meetings, there was poor attendance by young people. On estimate, youth hardly made 10% of those who attended. In the rates and taxes review community meetings, the attendance was even poorer. When asked why they show little interest in attending and participating in these public participation spaces, the respondents cited several reasons. Some of the respondents used words like "*slow, disinterested, and too busy"* to explain why the participation of young people in decision-making spaces was less than satisfactory. "*Even when at ward councillor level, they try to send other young people to encourage young people to attend meetings and share their views"* (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit).

All the respondents also agreed that there was poor participation by young people. Usually, in "*meetings that are called by councillors, the attendance of the youth is poor, but this is because generally, attendance by youth in community meetings is poor*" (Youth Interviews, Alexandra). Interviews with ward Councillors supported this observation. An interview with the City official was not as forthcoming. In the IDP meetings observed, some youth expressed their frustration through speaking disrespectfully and aggressively at both the City's officials and other adult

community members (IDP meeting observations, Orange Farm; IDP meeting observations Alexandra; IDP meeting observations, Roodepoort[6]). This was after continuous heckling that their views and frustration were undermined, not listened to (IDP meeting observations, Orange Farm; IDP meeting observations, Alexandra; IDP meeting observations, Roodepoort[7]). This was also in response to their dissatisfaction with processes in the consultation meetings in all the meetings observed.

When asked whether the youth in the community was involved in public participation, the response from the youth revealed that those most involved are youth aligned to political organisations. Youth that was seen to be more involved, attending community meetings and raising issues at the meetings was the youth that was also labelled politically involved or aware; "*involved with the different political movements"* (Ward Councillor, Alexandra). The youth interviewed in both Alexandra and Zandspruit then refer to "*political influence"*. The youth that is most active are "*those that are politically active*" (Youth Interview, Zandspruit). The politicised youth attend all meetings, whether called by The City of Johannesburg, Ward Councillors, or others (Ward Councillor, Alexandra). "*They are keen to have their voice heard but also to push a political view and agenda"* (Ward Councillor, Alexandra).

The focus group respondents felt that only a *"certain type of young people*" would be interested in being involved, and "*this is mostly the political type*".

One young person felt that

> *"They recruit each other. You will be walking down the street with others, and then someone says to one 'hey member there is a meeting', so you think it's their meeting. You are not a member, so they cannot be talking with you."*

The young people who do not attend public meetings were described by both the youth and the ward councillors as a non-political group. Embedded in that description is an assumption that the youth was not interested in politics or aware of politics, hence their lack of interest in being involved at that level. Lack of interest is to a greater degree a result of how this youth perceives and experiences how the meetings are conceptualised, communicated and run. The non-political youth expressed a lack of interest in attendance for multiple reasons. For example, some indicated that they do not know of the meetings. This is despite the fact that, according to ward

[6] Roodepoort was not one of the sampled communities, but the researcher was able to attend this session)
[7] Roodepoort was not one of the sampled communities, but the researcher was able to attend this session)

councillors in all three communities, an effort is made to advertise meetings widely, as well as inform community members where they can access additional information required. According to the respondents in Alexandra, the youth is "*not keen about being involved in volunteerism in any community programmes. If it is not paying, they won't do it"* (Youth Focus Group, Alexandra). This implies that the lack of attendance in public participation spaces is not a unique phenomenon. It reflects levels of youth participation in general.

When asked what the response by the youth was to current public participation approaches used by the City, the respondents in the focus groups felt that only a *"certain"* type of young people are interested in being involved to that extent, and this is mostly the *"political type".* The young people themselves shared that young people have shown "*little interest"* in anything other than strikes (Youth Focus Group, Alexandra; Youth Focus Group, Zandspruit). The youth is often the face of local protest action. While "*protest*" action was seen as an alternative form of engagement which "*allowed the youth to take centre stage*" and speak out on issues affecting them and their wider communities, an interview with an official in Alexandra disagreed arguing that *"young people are tired of protesting"* (Councillor, Alexandra).

4.2.5. Reasons for reluctancy toward public participation by the youth

Below are the reasons suggested for low youth participation**:**

4.2.5.1. Lack of information and knowledge

The youth was entirely disinterested because they were not informed. The definition of informed meant *"knew about the meetings"* or *"knew about the content of the meetings"* (Focus Group, Orange farm; Focus Group, Zandspruit). From the meetings attended, there was evidence that participants did not always understand the objective of the specific meetings called by the City. They used every meeting to raise any other issue that they may have, often digressing and becoming agitated when City officials were either unable or unwilling to engage with their query. There was no clear or specific focus on the youth as a critical segment of the citizenry.

According to the ward councillors, "*the public do not always have clear information that they need to prepare for the meeting"* (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). One respondent said that "*the agenda and documents are not always given before the meeting".* As such *"they will know what the meeting is about when they are there"* (Ward Councillor, Orange Farm)". According to the City official, the information, especially for the meetings called by the City, is available from the

regional office or online. The assumption is that citizens can easily access online documentation. Most youngsters would rely on their phones in order to download documents online. Many phones do not have the capacity to connect online. For those who have phones that can connect, the issue of data being expensive was the most cited barrier. The City's official, however, argued that with access to the City of Johannesburg hotspots in the communities, this was no longer a problem for the youth. The youth suggested that the ward councillors did not make access to the information available. Others felt that "*they kept the information and did not want the community to know so that they have an advantage or for the fear that they will cause trouble"* (Youth Focus Group, Zandspruit).

Another issue relates to the language of the documents and slides circulated and used during consultation meetings. Some of the documentation used was written in a "*language not easily accessible and easily understandable"* to laypeople or *"non-English language speakers"* (Councillor, Zandspruit; Councillor, Orange Farm). Language of engagement was mixed. Although the presentations by the City officials were in English, community members could ask questions in any other language they felt comfortable.

From the youth interviews and focus group discussions, the issue of a lack of knowledge was raised as a reason that the youth did not know about the different avenues they could use to interact and engage with the City. When asked about different participation approaches employed by the City, all those interviewed agreed that most young people in these spaces did not know about the different participation approaches available to community members. The youth only knew about public meetings or engagements with their ward councillors.

This is also a resultant lack of knowledge about alternative participation platforms. Other than the public meetings, the only other way the youth know how to engage with the City "*is via the ward councillor*" (Focus Group, Zandspruit; Focus Group, Orange Farm). None of the young people in the focus group had heard of submissions or were aware that it was acceptable to send an email or petition as an individual to express an idea, concern or inquiry. The youth discussion around IDPs revealed that the participating youth did not know what an IDP is. When asked if they have attended an IDP, the initial response was to ask *"what is an IDP"* (Focus Group, Zandspruit). They have "*never heard of IDP*" (Focus Group, Zandspruit). Meetings are best understood as either meetings called by the municipality, community leader, or councillor. The youth in the focus group would report that they "*did not attend any of the IDP meetings"*

because they did not even know what the IDP meetings were about (Focus Group, Zandspruit; Focus Group, Orange Farm). In the focus groups, the youth displayed a lack of understanding of the value of participating in those IDP consultation meetings. They do not know that they can comment on the budget of the City.

"*Petitions are associated with protest*" (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). The youth referred to petition in the same conversation as protest. The petitions were the "*list"* of grievance's they hand to the official during a protest march (Youth focus Group, Zandspruit). This means that then the interest of the youth, and the value of their participation, is lost amid a lack of knowledge of these forms of participation and how young people can use them. In addition, the youth in the Orange Farm focus groups particularly felt that that the "*community meetings achieved nothing"*. They viewed community meetings as a talk shop that achieve nothing.

Young people interviewed immediately after the consultation meeting were asked if they were aware of the meeting agenda. They reported that they "*somewhat knew*" but were not specific "*because there was no formal agenda circulated"* (Interview Youth Orange Farm; Interview Youth Alexandra). The youth only superficially knew what issues were to be discussed. When asked about their level of preparation for the meeting, they reported that *they could not prepare themselves for the meetings* (Interview Youth, Orange Farm; Interview Youth, Alexandra). They had not read any of the supporting documents for the meetings. In addition, when asked about where one could access information to prepare for the meetings, the ward councillor pointed out that the information was mainly accessible via the regional office or online. For most young people, the "*regional offices are far from the community*" (Councillor, Zandspruit). For example, the Zandspruit youth would need to go to the regional office in Roodeport. It is far and, therefore, "*a costly exercise for"* youngsters who may not have adequate *"resources"* (Councillor, Zandspruit).

Perhaps that explains why in most of these meetings, issues on the agenda were often not focused on by community members and instead, community members used these consultation meetings to raise any issue of concern outside the scope of the meeting's agenda.

4.2.5.2 Utilisation of citizens and youth contribution

The City official stated that the City considers what the citizens suggest, regardless of who they are. But he is quick to explain that there are budgetary constraints and that one cannot implement everything suggested in these interactions with the citizens. This is the reason why they "*go back and report to the communities what views or suggestions are taken forward"* (CoJ Official). When the ward councillors were asked how the information collected from community engagements is used, all were unclear or undecided about how the information is used. But they all agreed that it is used. "*But it could be that things are slow, yes, and communities don't understand. But, yes, ideas are considered"* (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). The young people themselves could not tell how their contribution is used. They were, however, not perturbed by that because as "*long as they know*" what the issues are, it is enough (Youth Focus Group, Zandspruit).

4.2.5.3. Participation and Tokenism

The issue of tokenism was also expressed very strongly, both as it relates to broader public participation and specifically to the participation of young people. When asked why they did not raise their views and issues via public participation alternative spaces, the youth felt that they are often side-lined in these other spaces. Processes are seen as tokenistic because they *"have no value because there is rarely ever real discussion" (*Youth Interview, Zandspruit). *"It is just to add numbers"* (Youth Interview, Orange Farm).

As a result of this view, there is a sense of distrust of the processes and distrust of the ward councillors. "*Most meetings are ward meetings. Sometimes community involvement does not attend because they have an issue with the councillor"* (Focus Group, Orange Farm). *"They do not like the councillor"* (Focus Group, Alexandra). When asked why they would not like a councillor that was elected by the community, most responses seemed to suggest intra-party political and inter-party political differences. *"The youth for EFF won't come because the councillor is ANC"* (Focus Group, Orange Farm), *"but also within the ANC, some youth ask why him, that he was not elected properly"* (Youth Focus Group, Orange Farm). With the youth in Orange Farm, the issue was not the age of the councillor as they claimed the young councillors were not treated differently.

The youth's "*lack of experience"* to engage at the ward committee meeting level is also a constraint *(*Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). When young people are being brought into these

spaces, "*they still need to be trained*" *(*Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). Sometimes young people are *"resistant to training because they think they know and are ready"* (Ward Councillor, Orange Farm). One ward councillor argued that "*when you say to young people 'assist a ward committee member so you can gain an understanding of how things work', they say we are using them for our own benefit. How will they get to know if they are not trained?*" *(*Ward Councillor, Zandspruit).

4.2.5.4. Notification and Communication about community and other meetings

When asked how they got to know about community meetings, the youth expressed that they often get information through Short Messaging System (SMS), WhatsApp and word of mouth. They also referred to a system calling "blasting". Blasting is when an official drives around the community, making an official call through a loudspeaker. The youth said this was most effective and likely to reach more people. SMS and WhatsApp reach depend on whether *"the wards Councillor have their cellular phone contact details*" (Ward Councillor, Orange Farm).

When further asked about the other mediums through which they are alerted and invited to meetings, such as newspapers or social media calls, some of the youth expressed that they have seen the call to attend meetings from a free local newspaper publication. But it was only a few youths in all focus groups that attested to having seen the newspaper advert. The Zandspruit youth focus group discussion revealed that the free newspaper "*does not reach certain communities"*. "*Surrounding communities like Cosmo City, North Riding receive the paper"*, but not them (Youth Focus Group, Zandspruit).

Social media and visiting websites were considered the most expensive option because of the data costs incurred. As such, it is not used, and information on these platforms rarely reach young people.

4.2.5.5. How community meetings are run

How the community meetings are run was raised as a concern in the interviews with ward councillors and focus groups with the youth. The agenda for the meeting was indicated as one of the problem areas. One ward councillor contends that *"officials come up with their list of issues after discussion. Then they just want to present to the community, to agree with them, support their views."* (Ward Councillor, Orange Farm). It is not that they do not see the wrong. It is that sometimes discussing with the whole community could mean it *"takes longer"* to reach a

decision. Sometimes community members, like young people, are not well-informed about the issues being discussed at *"high level"* (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit).

From observations, the word dialogue or engagement was often used to describe the consultation meetings, although these words did not match with the approach used during these meetings. In all of the meetings observed, there was no discussion and dialogue between the officials and the community members. The meetings followed a pattern. The programme director was a City official. The agenda revolved around the City official, giving a report back of what had been achieved, followed by what was planned. The last 10 – 20 minutes were reserved for questions from the floor. The programme director controlled the process, choosing from the floor, based on raised hands, who asked questions and how many questions were asked. There was no immediate engagement with or response to the questions.

Youth spoken to at the IDP sessions considered the time allocated to the questioning session short. Only a few minutes of the programme allocated time to public engagement. The bulk of the time was used by officials giving a presentation using slides. It also looked like the few young people that were at the IDP meetings were overshadowed by the adults. Also, the limit to one question per community member was considered *a "control tactic by the officials*" (Youth Interview, IDP Meeting, Roodeport). That community members were allowed to ask only one question was considered "*inadequate"* and "*unfair" (*Youth Interview, Alexandra; Youth Interview, Orange farm).

During the sessions, there was no obvious attempt by officials to draw out youth voice. In IDP meetings in Orange farm and Alexandra, for example, young people who asked questions did not only focus on youth-specific issues or interests. In one of the observed rates and taxes consultation meetings, a young lady sitting next to an elderly gentleman seemed to be asking the questions on behalf of the adult. Her questions were broader and focused on general community concerns such as safety, crime spots, and water challenges. On further probing, it turned out this was a father-daughter pair. The daughter attended meetings with the father, not because he forced her, but because she "*enjoys being in the meetings to learn about the community issues"* (Youth interview, Alexandra).

Community meetings are sometimes viewed as political meetings due to the perception of how the meetings are organised and run. Non-politicised youth prefer to stay away (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). There seems to be a blur between community and political issues. *"Sometimes we*

hear about the meeting, but it is a waste of time. They discuss political things" (Focus Group, Orange Farm). In observed community meetings, a reference to participants as "comrades" also reflected a sense of familiarity between City officials leading the meeting and participants on the floor. When officials start to address each other and public participants as *"comrades, or member, they exclude those of* (us) *who are not members or comrades"* (Youth, Orange Farm). *"And when they do not agree with you because your voice is not popular with no support, they shout you down"* (Youth, Zandspruit).

Sometimes, the fault lies with both officials and community members, as they bring party political issues to a community meeting (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit; Ward Councillor, Orange Farm).

4.2.5.6. Access to meeting venues

Access to meetings venues was categorised as an inhibiting factor. When community meetings are held outside of the community, this presents a challenge for community members; "*If a meeting is held in the region, for example, it means transport must be arranged"* (Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). There is a cost factor that the City must consider. Although community "*members do not have to pay for transport"*, for most, having to go out of their community to go to a meeting serves as *a* "*discouraging factor*" (Ward Councillor, Orange Farm). In both the focus groups and the interviews with youth respondents, the issues of meeting times, where the community meetings are held, and where they can access information for the meetings were raised. When meetings are at night or during working hours that could be a problem. These challenges were present in the observed community engagement meetings. During the Orange Farm focus group, discussion respondents argued that there is not a lack of interest to attend community meetings. The times of the meetings are sometimes awkward. Midweek in the day is not convenient, as some people are at work or school. Midweek evenings were better but presented problems of their own. According to one young female person in Zandspruit, "*at night it's not safe for most of us to walk here, especially females. Maybe the guys can attend. But then it becomes a meeting of men*". There were only a few meetings that were held on a Saturday.

4.2.5.7. Issue with dominant voices

During the observation of community meetings[8], the researcher observed that there were dominant voices. If not dominant, it was clear that there were voices that were listened to, whose

[8] The community meetings referred to are outlined in chapter 3

views were readily accepted. In all the public meetings observed, generally, males were more dominant than women.

The officials interviewed also acknowledged that there are dominant voices during community meetings. One respondent said that it "*is the politically involved and politically connected*" (Ward Councillor, Orange Farm). Likewise, it is the "*adults that tend to speak more"* (Focus Group, Alexandra). Another respondent said that when the youth speak, "*they are aggressive and confrontational"* (Ward Councillor, Alexandra*)*. Another respondent also felt that the youth *"always come ready to fight and are politically driven"* (Councillor, Orange Farm). This alludes to the perceived aggressive and militant posture that young people tend to assume in these meetings. The ward councillor from Zandspruit felt that the youth voice "*is influenced by their political bosses. They are influenced by political leaders" (*Ward Councillor, Zandspruit). Young people interviewed raised that they were not happy with how they are treated when they speak. "*They are told to wait, keep quiet, or their views do not seem to matter"* (Youth Focus Group, Orange Farm). When asked how they would know if their views did not matter, one said that "*you speak, and someone just says ok and move on to speak to someone else"* (Youth Focus Group, Orange Farm).

The feeling among young people is that they are overshadowed by adults, who *"hogged the spotlight*" (Orange Farm Youth at IDP meeting). When young people were *"strongly"* raising their issues, they were often "*seen to be rude and called to order"* (Alexandra Youth at IDP meeting). This scenario resembles a narration by a youth at a focus group discussion who expressed "how *young people are misunderstood, and their frustration not understood".* When they are expressing a strong opinion, they are considered disrespectful and ordered to *"shut up"* or *"not speak like that".* Another young person in the Zandspruit focus group narrated a situation where a few times they have been told by adult members that they were not expected to come to the meeting *"yeyabantu abadala"* (adults only meeting). He raised his frustration with this, pointing out that whatever community issues that are discussed, young people are affected by those. Even if they are discussing them *"as young people and the trouble we make,* (they) *need to be there".*

The youth particularly cite cases where only the youth in the ruling party[9] were listened to and given a chance to participate in several municipal programmes.

[9] *The data collection for this study was conducted in 2016/17 when the City of Johannesburg was under the African National Congress*

4.2.6. Efforts to improve youth participation

When asked if there are any efforts to improve youth participation, young people said no. *"The City does not do enough to get the youth involved"* (Interview Youth, Alexandra). Only one ward councillor seemed to be fully interested in engaging with young people. He is encouraging them to stand for the upcoming ward committee by-elections for different portfolios.

A few suggestions were made on how youth participation can be improved. These included, "invitations *through local radio stations*", newspapers and *"door to door pamphlets*, especially *for ward meetings*" (Interview Youth Alexandra). Also, to further get access to young people, the youth listed WhatsApp as the best platform. *"you can form groups for different purposes"* (Focus Group, Zandspruit). "*You can continue to use this to engage youth on various issues, get opinions, and suggestions"* (Interview Youth, Alexandra). A Facebook page was another consideration suggested by youth respondents (Interview Youth, Alexandra; Focus Group, Zandspruit). Further, *"when designing ward committees include youth development forums or a similar structure like that"* (Interview Youth, Alexandra). The role of such a structure would be *"to represent the views of youth"* (Interview Youth, Alexandra).

4.2.7 Who is the citizen? Who makes up the community?

A young person in Alexandra raises a critical point about the makeup of that community. She referred to what she sees as the complexity of a community like Alexandra where the population in *"made up mainly of people who are not bonafide Alexandra community members". "Their interest in community issues is superficial, for them its bread and butter issues. They are more interested with less of general community issues but also generally most youth whether South African or non-South African, are not invested in participating in community and governance issues, their concerns being to study or to work. Issues of service delivery are not a priority to them"* (Interview Youth, Alexandra).

4.3. Conclusion

The main platforms, mechanisms and structures for public participation are wide and diverse. The view on the significance of youth participation is positive. The ward councillors and the young people spoken to acknowledge that the participation of the youth is vital. But there is

disappointment about the actual involvement by young people. There was an agreement across the board that youth participation is not good. Attendance in observed IDP community review meetings was very low. Young people must be involved in decision-making spaces, as they are not only a space for adults.

While expressing disappointment in the low levels of participation by young people, interviewed ward councillors argued that it reflected the disinterested nature of young people in the communities. The youth mentioned that a lack of information and knowledge, how the meetings are run, and feelings of tokenism are a few of examples among a number of reasons for why the youth do not often attend meetings.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of the findings of the study. A thematic analysis approach was used. The themes identified were aligned with the main key research questions, as well as the literature review and conceptual framework discussed in chapter two. At the core of this chapter, then, is an attempt to answer the main question using the findings of the study as outlined in chapter 4:

> *What are the democratic participatory experiences of Black youth in the City of Johannesburg?*

In doing that, the study also attempts to respond to the secondary questions regarded as the basis for the main question. These are:

- *What are the current approaches used in the City of Johannesburg?*
- *What are the youth's and city officials' views on youth participation approaches?*
- *What are the experiences of youth with current public participation approaches used by the City of Johannesburg?*
- *What are the responses of youth to current public participation used by the City of Johannesburg?*
- *How can youth participation be improved?*

The data from this study highlight ten key broad findings:

- The analysis revealed that there are various modes and approaches that the City uses to engage with the community of the City of Johannesburg.
- Within this understanding of the value attached to the participation of the public in informing key and critical decisions of the City, youth participation enjoys similar positive regard.
- Youth participation is held in high regard and considered a necessary part of governance processes.
- Youth participation is guided by the same rules and principles as general public participation, with no specified allowance made for the participation of youth.
- Youth participation is, however, low for various reasons.
- One of the reasons is that the approaches used are found to be alienating by the youth.
- The pervasiveness of cultural norms is another critical consideration.

- Because of these obstacles, youth interest in participation is mistakenly considered low. This study, however, shows that young people have an interest in becoming active citizens and engaging with government. They are cognisant of their social, political and economic environment, associated challenges and their role as the youth in all of it. They are not as cynical and disinterested as is often believed.
- Non-participation is a considered choice on their part. It is often a response to the challenges experienced in formal participation spaces.
- There is a view that there is a distinction between the levels of involvement by the youth that is considered politically involved compared to the youth that is not, with the former regarded as more involved than the latter.

5.2. Discussion of findings

5.2.1. Public Participation approaches used in the City of Johannesburg

5.2.1.1. What are the current public participation approaches used in the City of Johannesburg?

The City of Johannesburg uses common approaches used in the local government context. These include elections, consultations, referenda, protests, survey questionnaires, public hearings, municipal workshops, conferences, mass media or press conferences, committee meetings, public meetings, the internet, citizens juries, citizens' panels and deliberative polling (Albert & Passmore, 2008; Babooa, 2008; Guo and Neshkova, 2012). In South Africa, the commonly used public participation approaches include public hearings, petitions, taking parliament to the people, presidential izimbizo, ministerial and mayoral izimbizo, exco-meets the people, citizen satisfaction surveys, community development workers, premier excellence awards, and media-related initiatives such as radio talk shows and television programmes (DPSA, 2008; The Presidency, 2004). From the data analysis, we learn of the specific approaches the City uses. These include outreach forums, IDP, submissions, petitions, requests for comments a range of stakeholder engagements, ward-based committees, customer surveys, community dialogues, outreach processes, in-depth discussions, consultations and summits (CoJ, 2014; Jozi: A City @ Work 2012/16 IDP: 2014/15 Review). Other input is sourced via emails, social media comments, print media, radio reports, the City's blog, and suggestion boxes that are sometimes placed throughout the City and in some wards (CoJ, 2014).

At ward level, the most used are the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) forums and Ward Committee System as part of ward-based planning approach (Fuo, 2015; Isandla Institute, 2012;

Presidency, 2008; Public Service Commission, 2008). In their report, Everatt et al. (2010) note the IDP as the key mechanism for hearing local voices at a local government level and part of the 'invited' space for participation.

These approaches are similar to those that are raised and discussed in section 2.6 of chapter two earlier. The City uses internationally recognised approaches. But, as noted in the literature review and the conceptual framework, as each approach has its own advantages and disadvantages, the limitations of these platforms impact the level of public participation (Dayal & Wabiri, 2011). The limitations are embedded in institutional, cultural, knowledge and financial factors that define the participation spaces and platforms. For example, at the institutional level, Everatt et al. (2010) maintain that there is always a possibility of elite capture, and/or the better-resourced crowding these spaces and eclipsing the truly poor, marginalised and alienated whose needs should be heard in the process. Devas and Grant (2003) also state that there are social dynamics of exclusion and inclusion at the community level.

In this study, the participation platforms used are not all known to the youth. This does imply that they may not be commonly known to all citizens, not just the youth. Everatt et al. (2010) recommended a mix of participation approaches, aligning engagement styles with what works within different contexts. They argue that it is "the overlap of approaches, and in the cumulative weight of all forms of participation, that we may begin to see ways to both deepen and broaden participation" (Everatt et al., 2010, p231). This would be an ideal consideration for the youth who participated in this study. Not only would it expose them to various formats of participating, it but would also allow the City to begin to identify approaches that are best suitable for youth in different contexts.

5.2.1.2. Youth participation approaches

The findings of the study show that, although the City uses various approaches of public participation which the City's population can use to engage with the City, there is not a clear distinction with youth participation platforms. The lack of knowledge and awareness by the general public, and equally the officials, signifies that there is limited focus on youth-specific participation platforms and approaches. The study shows that participation by the youth is mostly governed by the same rules and regulations as broader public participation. The reasons for this are unclear. But the issue of cost is one of the factors that limit the diverse use of participatory approaches. Also, the understanding of the youth as citizens rightly implies that they can be and ought to be treated like other citizens. With no differentiation between different sectors of the

citizen population, using inappropriate methods for engagement can compromise participation, as well as the objectives of participation.

The official Youth Development Strategy makes allowance for youth-specific approaches through the introduction of Youth Development Structures. The strategy shows that the City has thought through the issue of youth participation. It is, however, in the implementation of these and their integration into broader public participation that there is observable weakness. The Youth Development Structures are inactive and unknown to the youth and the councillors. It is, therefore, useless as a structure that seeks to strengthen youth participation. It has not been made clear, in the strategy or elsewhere in the policy framework of the City, how these are concretised and who is responsible for mainstreaming it into the broader public participation strategy.

The Youth Unit is another futile attempt to bring forth the voice of the youth. The youth interviewed had never been to any dialogue hosted by the Youth Unit, as indicated in the focus groups' discussions. So, with no knowledge of youth-focused participation structures, particularly at ward level, youth participation is lost. The research findings show that, while the City has policies in place and the traditional public participation spaces are also platforms where the youth can deliberate, these are unknown and therefore underutilised by the youth. The study findings show that the youth feel that general traditional public participation approaches alienate them and render their contribution less important and therefore less considered when compared with adults' input. The youth-specific approaches that have been put in place are as good as obsolete, with the youth interviewed for this study having no knowledge of them and no knowledge of anyone who has participated in them. A concerted effort, therefore, is needed to strengthen the function of the Youth Unit and the youth forums, in alignment with traditional participation spaces. There was no clear, strong indication that the City of Johannesburg is in the process of adjusting and revitalising these programmes, in order to enable and improve the involvement of the youth in the public participation sphere within the City.

There are many youth approaches that the City could consider integrating much more strongly into traditional formats. The literature on youth participation also suggests several avenues and approaches for youth participation. These include engaging young people in target groups, not only as beneficiaries of specific services but as collaborators in specific community or youth-focused initiatives and encouraging them to initiate and operate a youth-led governance space

(Avis, 2015). These can also be achieved through such structures as youth councils or youth dialogues. Suggested approaches include door-to-door engagements, WhatsApp, Online, and the utilisation of existing youth development initiatives such as local Non-Profit Organisations (NPO) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

According to Checkoway and Gutiérrez (2006) and Zeldin and MacNeil (2016), youth participation approaches cover a broad spectrum of approaches, including:

- Endeavours by young people to put together programmes of their own selection.
- Endeavours by adults to consciously and intentionally involve young people as social agents.
- Collaborative endeavours where the youth and adults work together in intergenerational partnerships.
- Formal youth representation in decision-making bodies
- Consultations with the youth on policy.
- Adult-youth partnerships in planning and programming.

Phaswana (2009) identified a necessity for stronger Youth Units and youth councils at local municipalities to petition 'youth-friendly' resolutions. This study by no means advocates for a separatist approach, where the youth is engaged separately from their adult counterparts. While there are positive effects of exposing the youth in public participation spaces to mixed-age groups, using youth-specific approaches has its own benefits. The findings of this study show that the youth view adults in participation spaces with caution. The fear of being deemed rude and disrespectful forces young people to hold back, suppressing their views. Adults are also more likely to dominate the agenda. Similarly, it seems that adults still dominate and dictate the extent of youth participation; they dictate which meetings young people can come to and which portfolios in ward committees they can stand for. Even when the City has provided spaces, such as community meetings, youth representation is poor, and their views lost amid adult contributions. If young people do not see the value of their voices in these meetings, they simply stop coming. Public participation spaces are still dominated by adults, albeit we see some youth political representatives.

Representation of the youth in ward committees and as councillors is also an important aspect of youth participation in governance spaces. This can be interpreted as an avenue to ensure representation of the youth voice. This is another form of youth participation and ensuring youth

representation in local government councils. This study revealed, though, that there are few young people who are ward councillors or in ward committees. This further contributes to the view that young people are not considered ready for that level of responsibility or engagement. Further, the few young councillors are viewed with suspicion, as they are considered to be controlled by their political heads and not representing independent youth views.

This reflects international trends which show limited participation of young official representatives in elections and politics. The literature review revealed that the youth constitute less than two per cent of the world's members of parliament (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK, 2015; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2016; Mengistu, 2017). This is a result of barriers the youth experience that often marginalise them from local elections (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK, 2016). In the literature review, being viewed as too young or immature, a lack of experience, and having a short or non-existent political career were some of the barriers that emerged. A lack of resources was highlighted as the main barrier. Young people often do not have sufficient resources to campaign (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK, 2016). Because of these barriers, there is little appetite by young people to participate and govern, as they see and define these spaces as adult-centric, and thus alienating and unwelcoming to them, hence a lack of interest.

5.2.2. The views on youth participation approaches

The findings of the study reflect that there is generally high and positive regard for youth participation. There is an agreement by the different stakeholders who participated in this study in the value of youth participation. This view is also reflected in several official policies and strategy documents that acknowledge the significance of youth participation, and the responsibility of government to ensure the participation of the youth. This study's conceptual framework draws a link between youth participation, public participation and democratic principles. The literature review states that citizen involvement and deliberation with government officials on policy issues is critical to strengthening democracy. It also supports the view that decision-making spaces are recognised as not only a space for adults but a space where the views of young people are also important because of the unique and alternative views the youth bring. They sometimes see and know of things that adults do not. The youth also see and understand things from a different perspective; sometimes, adults may not understand the youth views. There are decisions that adults can make on behalf of young people, especially when

they are still too young or have proven to be making irresponsible decisions. But even then, some level of consultation is necessary.

These expressed views corroborate with views in the literature review. Collins et al. (2015) noted that the youth are the experts on their experiences, needs and interactions with immediate environments and their community. Exposing the youth to elements of civic responsibilities at a young age is important, as it contributes to their social development (AIYD, 2013; Calvert, de Montmollin & Winnet, 2014; Checkoway et al., 2005; Chitukutuku, 2014). This also improves their knowledge, understanding of processes, practical social skills, social values, and general competencies. Simultaneously, their appreciation for and knowledge of social and political issues is deepened, as well as their role henceforth in the democratic process as they become an adult (AIYD, 2013; Calvert, de Montmollin & Winnet, 2014; Checkoway et al., 2005; Chitukutuku, 2014). Participation empowers the youth's awareness of larger community and social issues that affect them and others in the community at large; this stirs in them the importance of holding leaders accountable to the electorate (Chitukutuku, 2014).

The youth will grow into an electorate that fully understands how to elect leaders and how to hold their leaders accountable. When they too are elected into leadership roles, they will expect to be accountable to the communities that they will represent. Clearly, a mere mention of the youth in official documents and outlining of how public participation ought to manifest itself in decision-making spaces is only the start. While there was a clear resonance amongst respondents and documents reviewed on the importance of young people's participation in decision-making platforms, the "how" remains the biggest shortcoming.

5.2.3. Experience of public participation

The response to participation is a result of how the youth experience participation spaces. Based on this study's findings, it is fair to agree with Booysen (2015) when she argued that participation by the youth in many of the participation spaces is low, but not because the youth does not value their involvement. Booysen (2015) argues that the youth is anything but apathetic, disinterested and voiceless.

Public participation approaches used to engage the youth are one of the factors that contribute to the low levels of youth participation. The youth in this study found the public participation spaces and processes discouraging to young people. This study shows that, although the City

uses various approaches of public participation which the City's population can use to engage with the City, young people did not know of them. With that, the approaches that the youth did know of were marred by a sense of alienation that they experienced when engaging with them. It is in using the various public participation platforms interchangeably and utilising those that fit best within a specific context, where the value of these participation methods and platforms lies.

Community meetings, whether called by the City or community leaders and councillors, register low participation rates. Young people did not see the value of their voices in these meetings for various reasons. In this study, data from observations and interviews indicate that the way community meetings are structured and run was experienced as alienating by the young people who participated. The lack of vigorous deliberation in the community meetings was observed. It is an issue that was also observed by the youth who attended the meetings. This effectively meant issues were introduced but never discussed fully. The use of the word dialogue or engagement did not match with the approach used during these meetings. The brushing over issues and lack of resolution can leave most, including young people, feeling that the process is not geared towards finding resolutions to issues in partnership with community members.

Inadequate time is budgeted for results in a quick, rushed process of question and answer, with no deeper engagement on issues. When there is no clear approach to engage with and drawing information from community members, these sessions are reduced to serving an information dissemination function. There was an overload of information given to members of the community to process while discussing these issues at the same time. Within a short space of time, this makes it difficult to sift through and meaningfully engage with the information. Most community members, including the youth, would have been only seeing the information on the day of the meeting.

Further, the youth experienced public participation spaces as politicised spaces. The fact that the language used sometimes leaned towards political rhetoric, made it sound to the youth that they were at a political meeting. This could be alienating to young people that are not politically interested or aligned, or not aligned with the party in power. The study findings show that the youth experience these spaces as an arena for dominant voices. The youth harboured reservations and expressed a sense of marginalisation in adult-dominated spaces, where they feel superficially engaged. As stated by one youth, it is the "*adults that tend to speak more"*

(Focus group, Alexandra). As a result, young people felt overshadowed by adults, who hogged the spotlight. The findings of this study illustrate that young people exhibit tendencies towards disengagement from the civic sphere and a general loss of interest in public affairs if they feel that adults are domineering and not willing to engage them and that the "*adults don't want them* to" (Focus group, Alexandra).

Checkoway (2011) terms this phenomenon 'mild ephebiphobia' or 'adultism'. This manifests when adults believe that they are the ones to prescribe solutions for the youth because they know better than young people. Adult idealism sees young people as deficient of knowledge and experience. In such contexts, the participants with less power find themselves fighting to be recognised, acknowledged and heard. This is linked to cultural norms about the status of adults vis-a-vis young people, and their relationship to one another. How the youth is viewed, as discussed in the literature review, can compromise youth participation. Honwana 2014 and Minds (2015), referred to the state of waithood, where the African youth is waiting to get into adulthood. While in waiting, their participation is defined by the adults. This adult-centric prism, justified by traditional outlook, sees the youth as immature citizens (Mycock & Tonge, 2011). These accepted cultural norms minimise youth contribution.

The atmosphere of community meetings, often charged with frustration from the younger participants, may degenerate into a less conducive, and more conflictual engagement. Sometimes there is an observed disengagement. This is where young people often assume a spectator role or choose not to participate at all. This was evident in the public meetings observed, through the youth's body language and them not raising questions. The youth became spectators. When they got an opportunity to speak, the line of questions by the youth showed that young people have a concern for broader community issues. What this indicated is that, as Booysen (2015) stated, the youth are keen to be involved and interested in community issues because community issues are youth issues.

5.2.4. The response by youth to current public participation approaches used by the City

While the value of youth participation is acknowledged by all, it has, however, not translated into practical participation on the ground. Our study revealed that participation by the youth is still considered to be low, and there seemed to be limited interest amongst the youth. In all the

community meetings observed, attendance by young people was low. Our study also revealed that the youth was not using alternative participation avenues other than the occasional attendance of community meetings. All meetings are labelled as community meetings. So, when the youth were asked about youth-focused meetings and dialogues, none in this group of respondents had attended a youth dialogue or youth-focused community meeting or know if such meetings have taken place.

Poor attendance is a result of multiple factors, including the approaches of public participation used. When the youth register dissatisfaction with the participation processes, they disengage from formal participation. Estimates from our observation are that the youth did not make up even 10% of the attendees. However, Everatt et al. (2010) raise the issue of participation measurement and argue that it should not be considered only in terms of the numbers of attendees. They argue that the quality of participation is far more vital than the number of attendees; those present may be adequately representing the non-attendance of relevant stakeholders in the participation process. As much as that argument is true, the presence in numbers is a significant first step. It signifies a presence and an opportunity to have one's views and opinions articulated, discussed and debated. In the process of that, the views are refined and also become part of debates on issues at hand. Even if the youth would attend in their numbers, what the quality, and therefore the value of their input to discussions would be, is the most critical question to consider.

It should be of concern, though, that the youth is not aware of any youth-specific participation opportunities created by the municipality. This is the key reason why they are not engaging using different formats. CDW and councillors are contacted mostly for registering a complaint, as opposed to engaging on policy-related issues. Protest action was another format used. The findings on the leaning towards protest action are similar to that by studies by Mattes & Richmond (2015), where their examination of alternative and unconventional political engagement in South Africa shows that, although there is a decline in formal public participation, with citizens aged 18-25 years there is a reported increase in participating in demonstrations or protest marches. The young people interviewed cited protest as their most effective way of registering their views and having their voices heard. Their statements corroborate the findings of a 2013 study by Booysen for Freedom House, where respondents viewed striking as a sure

way to get those in power to respond to their unhappiness. Protest has thus far been considered the most effective option, “an effective voice” (Booysen, 2013).

This form is, however, seen as a last resort after other community members (parents/adults) have exhausted alternative avenues with no effect. Their invented spaced seems to come only in the form of protest. Here, they have the power to lead the process. However, protests tend to be disruptive and often shrouded with lawlessness that then undermines the issues by shifting the focus from the issues being raised to the manner of the citizens’ delivery. There is a need for different invented spaces that reflect approaches friendlier to youth participation. Invited spaces are increasingly expanding into the virtual world (Berry, Koski, Verkuijl, Strambo & Piggot, 2019). These alternative spaces often emerge because the public is dissatisfied with the available invited spaces. As Cornwall (2004) asserts, these invited spaces need to be understood as deep-rooted in the particular cultural understandings and political configurations of the philosophies of public participation and role of citizens in a democracy.

As indicated above, our study revealed poor attendance by young people, as well as poor engagement by the young people who showed up, in the public meetings observed. Those who were there did not contribute much. Only a few of those in attendance raised an issue or asked a question. Further, a distinct difference in levels of interest between political/politically-aligned youth and non-politicised youth can be observed. Politically aligned youth saw a lack of interest in non-politicised youth. For them, the non-interest of their peers is a source of frustration. Non-politicised see spaces such as community meetings as dominated by politics. The non-politicised youth are turned off by the language, the comradeship, and the squabbling during engagements. This study did not explore the percentages of politicised and non-politicised youth in these communities. This would be a good follow-up to this study.

In general, a lack of knowledge of alternative platforms means that the youth are unable to exploit these alternative participation platforms. When the youth are given a space to express their views, their involvement goes beyond their societal status of being young citizens. This was evident in this study. That one of the respondents’ questions were broader and focused on general community concerns, such as safety, crime spots, and water challenges is testament to the fact that young people are aware of and concerned about broader community issues.

Youth non-participation is a form of expression. It expresses their unhappiness about the existing status quo. Non-participation is a form of participation. Alternative spaces, which are likely to be about promoting youth agency, can attract young people who feel marginalised, dissatisfied and disengaged into invented participation spaces. Ngamlana and Mathoho (2008) state that 'invented spaces' increase and enhance citizen participation. Communities can organise and create alternative participation spaces other than those provided by the state. Credible, community-relevant conversations occur in these spaces. This illustrates that there is a need for formal government processes to accommodate voices and viewpoints that are emerging from both kinds of spaces. Informal spaces are also approaches considered by citizens to illicit necessary responses from the government.

5.2.5. Reasons for poor participation by youth in the invited spaces

The findings of the study helped us understand that in these participation spaces, youth participation is poor. There are good reasons for poor youth participation. These are also embedded in the youth's experiences of public participation, as discussed in section 5.2.3 above. In this section, we discuss these reasons in more depth.

5.2.5.1. Modality of community engagement

How meetings are conducted can be a reason for poor participation. In this study, poor attendance by the youth may suggest that the modality of community engagement used does not suit young people. It is in how the actual meetings are run. The lack of vigorous deliberation in the community meetings was observed. Limited time set to fully discuss the issues at hand meant that issues were superficially handled. This study's conceptual framework highlights the link between democracy and deliberation. The literature review shows that democracy is about the capacity of the involvement of those affected by a collective decision, through the deliberation of that decision (Abdullah & Rahman, 2015; Carcarson & Sprain, 2010; Michel et al., 2010; Ozanne, Corus & Saatcioglu, 2009; Pateman, 2012). This refers to the full discussion by all. In all meetings observed, this was lacking. The meeting revolved around a set agenda. The agenda was set and run by the City officials. This means that the direction of the meeting was closely controlled by the City officials. The fact that the community does not have access to the agenda before the meeting limits their participation. It also results in them bringing to the meeting their own individualised agenda. Everatt et al. (2010) argue that a horde of basic, unmet needs,

including complaints around a lack of service delivery, regularly prompt hundreds of people into attending public meetings (IDP and otherwise).

5.2.5.2. Access to information

Very often, due to lack of information or distribution of information prior to meetings, young people who attend are confronted with a knowledge deficit, rendering them unable to discuss issues on equal footing with officials and ward councillors. Even though the City uses various platforms to disseminate information, the youth and the general public have challenges using these platforms. It is not always easy for the youth in these communities to access newspapers, the website of the City, or even social media. The social media space would be considered relevant for the youth. However convenient this option is, though, youth concerns over the costs associated with data need to be considered.

Further, accessing documents needed to prepare for meetings and such is likely to be a challenging exercise for young citizens, particularly citizens in impoverished communities. Most youngsters rely on their phones to access the internet. While there seems to be a proliferation of smartphones, there are still phones that do not have the capacity to connect online. For those who have phones that can connect, the issue of data being expensive becomes a barrier. If hard copies are only available at regional offices, there is a cost factor to travelling to collecting those copies. Limited access to information can lead to mistrust between the community and the officials. For example, in this study, the youth wondered why the ward councillors did not make access to the information easier for communities, like keeping hard copies for those who want them. The feeling was that ward councillors kept the information and did not want the community to know so that they have an advantage, or for the fear that the community will cause trouble. From the literature review discussion, there is evidence that those with information are at an advantage. This goes against the view by researchers such as Curato et al. (2017) and Hammond (2018) who emphasise that deliberative democracy is characterised by inclusivity. Lack of information and knowledge compromises this element.

5.2.5.3. Lack of general knowledge about public participation platforms

Closely linked to the issue of access to the agenda before community meetings, is the lack of general knowledge and access to information about public participation platforms. Knowledge and information are critical in developing meaningful youth participation. Even if there are alternative approaches that the youth can use, if they are not known or understood, they are as good as not being there. Because young people are not familiar with other alternative approaches, they are not using them, choosing to focus on mechanisms with which they are familiar. When these do not work as hoped or to their satisfaction, young people disengage. This resonates with findings by Musarurwa (2018), where he identified a lack of knowledge as a barrier to youth participation. Different approaches ideally allow for individuals and groups to find approaches suitable for them, thus contributing to the improvement of public participation. Possessing considerable knowledge and more understanding of the public participation process may suggest a more comprehensive public involvement. The poor way in which the City makes public participation platforms known to young people is partly a reason why they do not know about the different approaches to engage with the City.

5.2.5.4. Lack of citizen education

There is a lack of understanding of citizens' involvement beyond voting. This is because of a general lack of civic education on public participation. Lack of community education on the value of participation is a critical factor raised by the findings of the study. With the lack of knowledge and public education on public participation, young people are disadvantaged and are not on equal footing with their adult counterparts who may have developed an understanding of these platforms over time. If young people do not see the value of their views and lack understanding of the importance of their role and involvement, they do not see the need to be actively involved. Young people will not automatically morph into active participants in these spaces if they are not groomed towards this goal. A lack of knowledge of diverse participation mechanisms leads to non-participation.

5.2.5.5. Mistrust

The notion of trust was raised in section 5.2.5.2 as a result of a lack of access to information. In this research, mistrust between youth and adults as well as between youth and leaders is clearly identifiable. This mirrors research findings by Everatt et al. (2010), where 'issues of trust'

between communities and local officialdom, including councillors, were identified. According to Everatt et al. (2010), such distrust often arises from systemic problems and organisational dysfunction associated with how local government functions. By and large, this manifests as poor communication with the public and the failure to provide citizens with necessary information. In their 2010 research, Everatt et al. found that many people preferred to convey their concerns, grievances or propositions directly telephonically with their local councillors, whereas in this study we sensed a reluctance by the youth to engage directly with councillors regardless of the modality used.

There is also a sense of distrust of the process, the reason for the process, and how the information from the process is utilised. The overwhelming perception is that young people are engaged only when it matters to the officials. This mirrors observation made by Tshoose (2015) that there is a perception that public participation involves information sharing and the presentation of predetermined decisions presented for limited feedback from citizens. Mistrust is also linked to cultural norms which define the role and status of youth as discussed earlier. In certain cultures, like in traditional African cultures, young people are not allowed to address their elders or partake in issue discussions unless invited by the adults. Also, the study indicates that adults do not trust the youth's engagement etiquette. This is in reference to the youth coming across as aggressive and disrespectful when addressing issues in public participation platforms.

5.2.5.6. Politicisation of public participation spaces

Another barrier is the perceived politicisation of these spaces. The findings of this study reflect a group of young people who yearn for involvement in community issues but would prefer to do so in spaces that are devoid of politics. Youth who do not consider themselves politically involved are not likely to want to occupy public participation spaces. The research findings show that non-politicised youth feel alienated by the perceived politicisation of the public participation approaches that they have experienced. The study finds, therefore, that the politics that characterise public participation approaches are likely to have a negative impact on those who are not politically inclined but may have an interest in participating in community issues.

The spaces may not be political, but the way the officials and participants speak leads to their perceive politicisation. The use of language that could be considered political rhetoric makes it sound like the youth is at a political meeting. In the community meetings observed, there was an

indication of a definite inability to separate party and community representation. This discourages, and thus inhibits, active participation in formally-designed participation spaces. A neutral space that focuses on community issues and disregards political differences and power is likely to accommodate and promote engagement between community members. However, spaces where public participation takes place are never neutral. They are defined by those who have created them and will reflect the values of those who created them. Cornwall (2002) and Gaventa (2006) best illustrate this by introducing the three types of spaces in which participation takes place. These are closed spaces, invited spaces and invented spaces (Gaventa, 2006). Closed and invited spaced are created and legitimated by those in power and are mostly used to reassert their power, rather than to open space for debate (Public Service Commission, 2008; Smith, 2011; Taylor et al., 2010).

Our findings also support Mannarini and Legittiommo's (2008) research findings that young people have gradually dissociated themselves from the traditional avenues of politics and rejected party politics. Because the youth view municipal public participation platforms and approaches as political, they are reluctant to get involved.

5.2.5.7. Power Dynamics in Public Participation Spaces

Closely linked to the issue of politicisation is the issue of power dynamics. There are power dynamics that inform the levels and extent of participation. These can be between the officials and the community members, adults and the youth, or even between male and female participants. In invited spaces, such as CoJ/Ward Councillor spaces, the findings of the study show that the power resides with the officials. They set, drive, and control the agenda. They manage the process to the extent of managing the input and outcome of the process. In observing the public meetings, it was observed that the officials had control of the amount of time set aside for their input and for the input of the public. An example observed during the IDP and Rates Review community consultation showed that the time allocated for the agenda items for which the officials were responsible had the bulk of the time allocated to the meetings, leaving very little time for community contribution. The effect of this is that the officials control the engagement. They can do so because they have the power to do so. They enjoy a power that the rest of the participants at that moment do not possess.

In the public meetings observed, generally, men were more dominant than women. They express their views more. Trends with young males also reflect the same dominance. Young males are more likely to attend meetings than their female counterparts. In response to feeling undermined and not listened to, as well as in response to dissatisfaction with processes in the consultation meetings, some youth expressed their frustrations by speaking disrespectfully and aggressively at both the City's officials and other adult community members. Young people use approaches that tend to be more aggressive and confrontational; in their words, however, they are speaking "the truth" that older members of the community are unwilling to accept. This could be interpreted as the youth fighting for the agency rather than an act of defiance.

Gaventa and Martorano (2016) argue that at any given time in public participation spaces, forms of power, be they visible power, hidden power or invincible power, are at play. The interplay of these, in a public participation context, shape what is "considered to be a legitimate issue and who are considered legitimate actors" (Gaventa et al., 2016). The participants with less power find themselves fighting to be recognised, acknowledged and heard. The atmosphere is often charged with frustration from the participants and may degenerate into a less conducive, sometimes conflictual engagement. Sometimes there is an observed disengagement. This is where young people often assume a spectator role or choose not to participate at all.

The establishment of public participation spaces is, therefore, no guarantee that there will be meaningful participation, especially if the way they are structured reinforces unequal power relations amongst participants. In the case of the youth, it certainly has not meant that they can participate on equal footing with all other participants in these spaces. As Tshoose (2015) argues, there is little or no impact on addressing these unequal power relations if all that the remedial action entails is creating new community participation spaces. This is because, as Tshoose (2015) rightly observes, having new actors avail themselves does not guarantee unique and vibrant discussions of viewpoints, as their views and approaches may replicate and imitate established power structures and relationships (Tshoose, 2015). It is critical to keep mind that when the youth's views are not taken seriously, and their views are in some instances overruled by adults, their desire to be part of any similar discussions or events is diminished.

5.2.6. The Gender Effects

Although there were no gender-specific questions asked in the research, analyses of the findings showed that young women and men experienced and responded to public participation differently. Young females found it more difficult to attend meetings called at night, citing safety as a concern. Research findings by researchers such as Gottlieb (2016), state that women continue to be underrepresented numerically at local levels and lack influence in the local structures and institutions that govern their everyday lives.

5.2.7. Where would youth participation fit in the participation ladder?

According to the findings of the study, youth participation fits in the first four rungs of the participation ladder. Using the Model of Public Participation as our instrument of analysis, figure 4 below depicts the findings of our study. The figure shows that youth participation in the three communities studied for the research is limited to the first four rungs of the participation ladder.

A study by Restless Development (2012) on Sierra Leone concluded that while there are some reassuring examples of strong, dynamic youth delegates participating effectively in council decision-making, more often than not, youth engagement is at a low level and sometimes tokenistic. Most participation by the youth serves to manipulate, appease, inform and consult them, but mostly the first three functions.

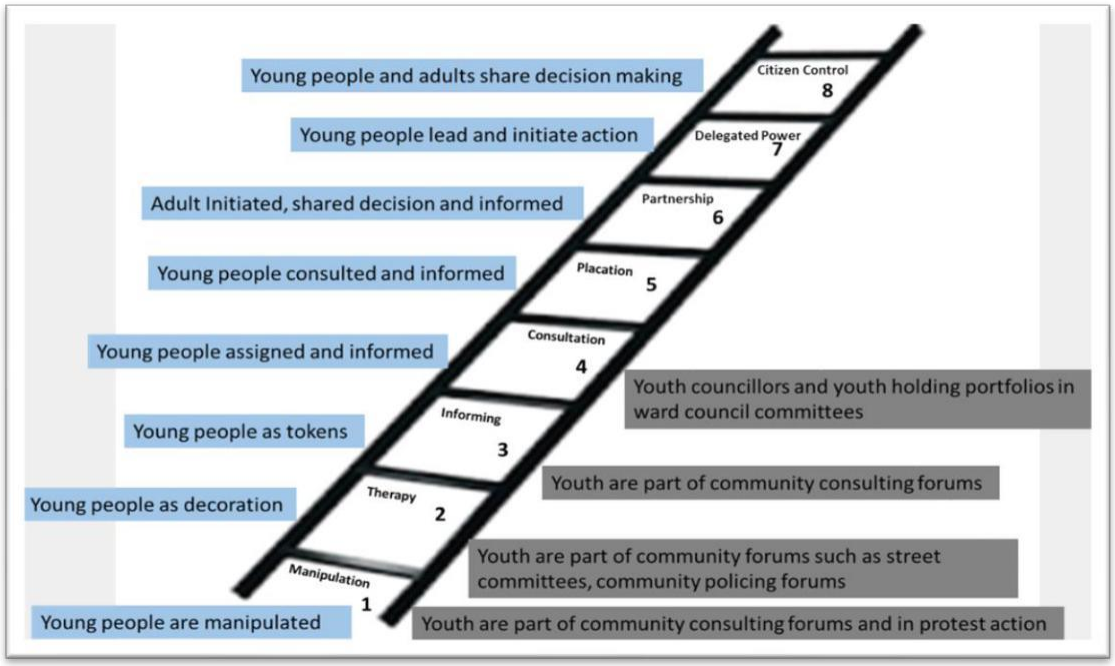

Figure 4: Youth Participation: Application to youth in Zandspruit, Alexandra and Orange Farm

5.2.8. How can youth participation be improved?

Our study findings support the view by Matthews (2001) that it is important to create spaces where all, including young people, are offered opportunities to develop necessary skills so they can fully contribute to governance, planning and decision-making through active participation in their communities. While there is an acknowledgement that youth participation is not where it should be, there were no specific efforts that the City official and ward councillors could share. A few ideas were suggested. These included:

- Encourage the youth to stand for elections.
- Invitations to meetings can be done using a variety of mediums.
- Strengthening ward-based youth forums.
- Using social media.

5.3. Conclusion

In conclusion, participation assumes a whole new character when we work with young people. This understanding requires that we consider more youth-friendly approaches to participation. In creating much more youth-friendly approaches, it is also important that we chart current practice throughout different levels of engagement, to outline how improved participation might best be realised. From this study, it is evident that young people have the interest to engage in local government; however, their potential capability to engage cannot be assumed. It is also clear that the youth, at this stage, need to be better supported and informed so they can participate more effectively.

The City of Johannesburg employs various public participation approaches. These are in line with the country's legislative framework. In addition, the City's official documents acknowledge the importance of a fully engaged youth citizenry, and the role of the City in seeking and developing active citizen involvement through different means and approaches. The City is not, however, specific about the approaches this engagement should take. The research findings show that, while participation spaces are open to the youth and that there are structures like the Youth Unit and youth councils, these do not seem to enhance youth participation. The commonly used types are the IDP and ward system. Youth-focused participation platforms are not widely known. The findings of the study reveal that the youth also have positive regard for youth

participation. So do other stakeholders. The study also reveals that the youth would like to be involved in governance spaces at community and local government level. This, however, has not translated with the same practical enthusiasm on the ground. Several reasons are cited for this. They include:

- The youth experiencing these spaces as closed, alienating and accepting to only a selected few.
- Impact of power and politics that characterise the public participation approaches.
- Seeing the spaces, such as community meetings, as a waste of time and a farce because in these spaces, the City is just following procedure to be able to say that the community was consulted on a particular issue and the community agreed.
- Finding traditional participation approaches difficult to manoeuvre. The perceived politicisation of the spaces is seen as a turn-off.
- Poor communication of when community meetings are and how these meetings are run.
- Limited youth knowledge of the different formats of youth engagement. The implication of this is that young people's involvement is only through a few approaches.

This study indicated that the youth would appreciate different formats of engaging with the City. Research findings also show that if the public participation approaches the City uses are designed and implemented in a way that alienates young people, the youth simply choose to participate through alternative spaces. But alternative invented spaces seem to be limited to protest action.

Our findings show a similar pattern to the findings of a study conducted by AfroBarometer which found that the youth is interested in being active and fully engaged in local and community structures, but their levels of involvement are contradictory to this expressed desire. A conclusion can be reached then that poor youth participation is not a result of lack of interest on their part, but a combination of factors including the type of participation platforms available to them.

Therefore, if the intention is to develop a responsive and engaged youth citizenry, that is most likely to happen at the local level, which is at the ward committee level. Furthermore, we must consider youth approaches that are more youth-friendly. This requires a changed mindset and openness to doing things differently. As Percy-Smith and Thomas (2010) discovered in their research, engaging the youth opens a space for them to confront adult authority, thus challenging their assumptions about youth competence to contribute to decisions about issues that concern

them. This is not an expression of disrespect. “If we are to develop fully the potential young people to participate in society, we may need to move beyond ‘listening’ and ‘giving children a say’, and to focus more directly on the meaning of participation in everyday life and on how young people can live ‘active citizenship’” (Percy-Smith & Thomas, 2010).

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Conclusion

This chapter provides a conclusion to the study as well as makes recommendations on how youth participation could be improved.

The literature review and conceptual framework created a platform for understanding youth participation in the context of public participation. Through the conceptual framework and review of the literature, the significance of participation is highlighted in the context of democracy. Democracies everywhere place public participation at their centre. Associated challenges and limitations are recognised. These include a decline in public participation and youth participation. Democratic governments seek ways to improve public participation and more specifically the participation of the youth. The findings in chapter 4 and the discussion show the link between our study and the conceptual framework. Firstly, our study reveals that there is no doubt about the importance of youth participation in democratic spaces. There was generally a high and positive regard for youth participation. There was an agreement by all participants in this study of the value of youth participation. There was a clear resonance amongst respondents and the documents reviewed on the importance of young people's participation in decision-making platforms. It was understood in the context of the necessity of public participation for the advancement and strengthening of democracy.

The analysis revealed that there are various modes and approaches that the City uses to engage with the community of the City of Johannesburg. These are internationally recognised and commonly-used approaches by local governments. These include suggestion boxes, izimbizo (public meetings) and official council and ward committee meetings. The various approaches are linked to the different objectives for participation. Allowance for democratic participation of youth is in this context. These approaches, however, have proved to be ineffective. This is not unique to the City of Johannesburg. The conceptual framework that underpins this study shows that youth participation is informed and closely linked to public participation. The typologies discussed in the literature review shows how youth participation typologies are developed from public participation typologies. Youth participation is, therefore, as in the case of the City of Johannesburg, informed by broader public participation approaches and principles.

However, this study shows that a mere mention in official documents and outlining of how public participation ought to manifest itself in decision-making spaces is only the start. The youth as citizens are expected to be fully participating in these platforms. The study shows, however, that participation is weak. There is a lack of knowledge by the youth of the various participation platforms available. This is the biggest challenge to youth participation. While the City has policies in place and various traditional public participation platforms available, these are for the most part unknown to the youth and thus underutilised. With the ones that they know of, there is a sense of alienation that the youth experience.

Community meetings were cited as a commonly known platform for participation with which the youth was familiar. In all of the community meetings observed, however, attendance by young people was low. This study reveals that community meeting, as a primary engagement approach used by the youth, is characterised by many limitations. Youth experiences with and response to these participation platforms is not favourable, resulting in youth participation being low. In exploring why the youth were not taking advantage of this one platform that they knew of, it is clear that there are a number of push factors, as discussed in chapter 5. How these meetings are conducted can be a lever for poor participation. There is a lack of vigorous deliberation. Very often, due to a lack of information or distribution of information prior to meetings, the young people are confronted with a knowledge deficit, rendering them unable to discuss on equal footing with officials and ward councillors. Accessing documents needed to prepare for meetings is a challenging exercise for young citizens, particularly citizens in impoverished communities. An overload of information given to members of the community to process, while discussing these issues simultaneously, within a short space of time, makes it difficult to engage in a more meaningful way with the information. For young people to feel involved and make a difference, they must know what they are talking about. This lack of knowledge about alternative spaces should be a cause for concern and speaks to a lack of civic education. With no knowledge of youth-focused participation structures, particularly at ward level, young people's participation is lost.

In addition, the mistrust between the youth and adults, as well as between youth and leaders, is another barrier to youth participation. The presence of dominant voices, which are usually adult voices, has the potential to silence the youth. This also speaks to the power dynamics between the officials and the community members, adults and the youth, or even between male and

female participants. Young females found it more difficult to attend meetings called at night, citing safety as a concern. Moreover, participation by the youth serves to manipulate, appease them, inform and consult, but mostly the first three functions. The youth experienced these participation platforms as politicised spaces, and thus alienating to young people who are not politically interested, aligned, or not aligned with the party in power. This also leads to a mischaracterisation of these platforms as political spaces, when they are, in fact, citizen spaces.

In this context then, what the findings suggest is that there is a lack of clear direction regarding the structure of youth participation in the context of broader public participation, despite the acknowledgement that youth participation is important. The same rules and principles that serve as a basis for general public participation cannot be the same rules that guide youth participation. The Youth Unit was an alternative platform to advocate for the voice of the youth. However, it seems that it is ineffective in facilitating participation opportunities for the youth. The youth interviewed had never been to any dialogue hosted by the Youth Unit. This was also the same feelings indicated in the focus groups discussions. A special allowance should be considered for the participation of the youth if youth participation is to be advanced. It is understood that viewing the youth as citizens rightly implies that they can and ought to be treated like other citizens. But that requires that traditional participation spaces be less rigid and more youth-friendly.

The research indicates that young people's engagement is not uniform. There is a clear distinction between levels of interest and therefore, potential participation of politicised youth versus non-politicised youth. Further, the research identified a lack of young people who are ward councillors or in the ward committee. The few young representatives in the council are also often party representatives. These politically-aligned ranks are still very much a reserve of the senior members of the political parties. Young people are not considered ready for that level of responsibility or engagement. This again reflects views held about the youth that are explored in detail in chapter 2. Where there are young ward councillors, it is felt that they are controlled and do not represent the youth's views.

In addition, while youth participation in formal spaces is low, the youth is much more visible in alternative spaces, such as in community protest action. This speaks to the youth finding and utilising its voice in alternative spaces. Some of these spaces are invented by the youth. In some, the youth have been invited. For the youth respondents in this study, the most effective expression for them to have their voices heard is protest action. Finally, improving youth

participation was considered a priority by all participants of the study. How that is to be done still needs further deliberation.

6.2. Recommendation

The following recommendations are made for consideration by policymakers and officials in the City of Johannesburg. Firstly, while using broad public participation spaces and platforms is appropriate for the youth as they too fit in the category as defined by public participation, it is necessary to review and revise these to ensure that these are spaces where all, including young people, feel welcome to express their views. In addition, creating youth-specific platforms and approaches geared to promote a youth voice would go a long way in advancing youth participation. There is a need for an effort to use approaches that will ensure young people feel valued in public participation spaces. The use of traditional generic approaches may need to be balanced with youth-specific approaches that appeal to youth thought, analysis and engagement mechanisms and processes. There is a case for a dual approach, where young people participate in all open public participation forums and use mainstream platforms, but also get an opportunity to engage in closed youth-only spaces. Further, existing invented community structures and spaces that the youth and broader citizenry use as engagement platforms can be aligned to invited spaces. Participation should be all-encompassing, including those who are not part of a formal organisation or influence.

But for the youth to participate more effectively, they must be offered opportunities to develop necessary skills so they can fully contribute to governance, planning and decision-making through active participation in their communities. These must be communicated to the youth. This is also an opportunity to strengthen civic education approaches. Community education is critical. All citizens, not only the youth, need to be empowered with the relevant knowledge to engage with issues at hand. It is, therefore, recommended that the City of Johannesburg offer as part of their youth development strategy citizen awareness programmes on democratic participation.

The City can also facilitate learning opportunities for the youth, ward councils and community at large at the community level. The sessions could cover areas such as the significance of participation, and the role citizens play in democracies, beyond voting. This could be also be done through inclusive community education and other community awareness programmes

aimed at improving the City's population's understanding of the value of public participation, and the roles and responsibilities of citizens. Further civic or citizenship education as part of the school curriculum could be linked to Life Orientation or History. This would guarantee that young people are introduced to their civic rights, duties, responsibilities and involvement at an early age. While this is not the function of the municipality but rather of policy development at national level, specifically by the Department of Education, it would go a long way in developing a society aware of its roles and responsibilities in upholding the country's democratic principles.

It is necessary to re-engineer the existing system of public participation, such that the platforms used are inclusive and go beyond the traditional public participation platforms and approaches currently used. This could include utilising the City's social media pages as a communication platform. Further, a dedicated youth-focused social media page would be a better alternative when considering social media platforms. As indicated by Walker et al. (2014) and Adebayo (2017), digital power presents an opportunity for engaging with young people. Social media is considered an easier tool to capture the attention of the youth. Platforms like Facebook and Twitter have become a space for new styles of protest and engagement by the youth. They use these Internet-based platforms to have a say in broader issues and express social and political concerns, sharing their views with others. The internet has become a space of expression and engagement.

Additionally, in reviewing the current public participation platforms, it is suggested that the City consider creating tailored gender-sensitive measures to facilitate the engagement of girls and young women. This requires the City to have a clear understanding of the barriers women of all ages experience, with regard to public participation. To that end, it is recommended that the City conduct an evaluation study assessing the barriers women experience in public participation platforms.

Developing and strengthening youth participation should start from the local level, i.e. at ward level. Through the ward system, the youth could be introduced to the various participation roles at the community level. The revival of former youth representation at City level is highly recommended. It is recommended that the City revisit the idea of community-based youth forums, as well as re-introduce and strengthen youth forums and youth-focused committees at ward level. This is likely to strengthen and improve youth participation at the community level.

Further, ensuring clear linkages between the youth forums and other forums within the ward council will ensure clarity on communication between these forums, the ward forum and with the City. The Youth Unit should work closely with ward forums and community-based youth organisations. The City should form youth-focused committees at the ward-based level. At the ward council level, creating Youth Advisory Committees that inform the council on different youth-focused issues is also recommended. It also recommended that the City considers introducing quotas on youth representation in all committees.

With community meeting being the commonly used public participation platform, a few things need to be improved. The facilitation of meetings should be reviewed to encourage and harness the voice of the citizen in the room. The facilitator role must be to promote engagement and the articulation of diverse views. Using a professional facilitator is recommended as this would also bring in an element of objectivity.

It is also recommended that the City reviews how the legislative framework governing public participation limits or advances youth participation. This review needs to be conducted at the national level as well. Where gaps have been identified, a youth participation strategy that encourages a different, youth-friendly format should be designed. Clear articulation of policy commitment to youth participation is necessary. In addition, it is also recommended that the City undertake further studies exploring the meaning of meaningful participation by the youth and clearly defining the indicators of an effective youth participation framework. This information can then be utilised in the development of the City's policy on youth participation. A clear guide on youth participation is necessary to guide the process, as well as provide a baseline to measure its effectiveness. Another recommended research study that the City should conduct is a review of how the City capacitates citizens, particularly the groups that are considered marginalised, to enable them to partake in the formal and invited participation spaces with confidence. Again, the findings of this study will assist the City with clarity on the present capacity development needs around public participation and how to address those.

Young people need to be conscientized about the critical weight that their voice carries in informing the City's decisions, not only on matters that specifically speak to youth issues but to general community issues as well. The City must ensure that youth engagement is not tokenistic and where the youth are participating, it is not for compliance purposes but for the intrinsic value

in involving and engaging the youth. The value of public participation is in drawing out the diverse voices within society. When deciding on youth participation, organisations must keep in mind that young people are not a homogenous group. Therefore, when analysing the barriers confronting young people, an examination of their diverse identities and circumstances is necessary. This is to ensure and strive for the inclusion of a sample of young people that is representative of this diversity.

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Appendix 1: List of documents reviewed

1. City of Johannesburg Annual Report (2017/18)
2. Gauteng COGTA. State of local Government: back to basics Perspective July 2015
3. Institutional Services Delivery Budget and Implementation Plan (2015/2016; 2016/2017),
4. The Johannesburg 2014 Growth and Development Strategy
5. Jozi A City @Work. 2012/2016 IDP: 2014/2015 Review
6. Jozi A City @Work. 2012/2016 IDP: Turning Challenges into Opportunities. 2015/2016 Review
7. Jozi: A city @ Work (2012-16)
8. National COGTA. Policy Process on the Systems of provincial and local government: Background Policy, questions, process and participation
9. State of Local Government Back to Basics Perspective (2015)
10. State of South African Cities Report (2008)
11. The City of Johannesburg Integrated Development Plans (2014/15; 2015/2016; 2016/2017)
12. The National Policy Framework on Public Participation (2007)
13. Youth Development Strategy (2011)

Appendix 2: Interviews Schedule: Official City of Johannesburg

Date of Interview:

Duration of Interview:

Respondent: Official City of Johannesburg

This research is solely for the purposes of my completion of Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Management) in School of Governance University of Witwatersrand**.** The purpose of the interview/focus group discussion is to understand how the youth participation by understanding how the youth respond to the City of Johannesburg public participation In order to do that I also need to understand the public participation approaches used by the city to engage and inform citizens, youth specific participation approaches, response of the youth but also how youth participation can be improved

Introduction

Local government legislation requires local authorities to consult local people, including young people, on the services they provide explain the existing actions/support, of national or regional scope, to promote the participation of young people in local life and follow-up mechanisms.

Part A: General Public Participation Approaches

1. Can you broadly share with us the public participation approaches used by the City of Johannesburg to engage with the City's citizens?
    - Of the approaches you have cited which ones would you say, in general, work best?
    - And which ones would you say do not work as well?
2. Does the City use the same approaches for all citizens or is there a differentiation based on factors such as age, education, socio-economic, residential etc?

Yes	No

3. Does the city have specific approaches that they use when engaging with young people?
    - If yes what has been youth response to them?

- If no, is there a consideration by the city to?

4. Does the city have a public participation policy (or other), framework, strategy documents or other official documents of the City that refer to youth participation approaches (design, mechanisms and processes).
5. Are these approaches working well?

Yes	No

- Which of these works best? Which of these do you consider to be less effective?

- Do some work best for different segments of the population? (ascertain if the city considers the different needs by the different population groups/segments of its population)

	Which works best	Which don't work well
Different population groups		
Different age groups		
Different socio-economic groups		
Differed geographic areas		

6. Does the city use the different approaches to engage the different citizens?

Yes	No

If yes which approaches do you use mostly (or specifically) for the following categories?

Different racial groups (specify)	
Different ages groups (specify)	
Different genders (specify)	
Different socio class groups (specify)	

Different education levels (specify)	

7. Where does the process of engaging the citizenry starts?

Starts by jointly formulating and analysing community needs	
and there after entering developmental partnerships	
Review of first drafts	
Review of final drafts	
Review of implementation	
Review of implantation assessment	

8. When the city has received feedback from the public does the city delineates the different voices e.g age, race, social economic backgrounds

Yes	No

9. Does the city have a PP strategy/PP Policy (get a copy)?
    - If yes, does it make mention of youth participation?

Part B: Youth participation

I would like now to focus more specifically on youth participation and mechanisms used to engage youth

10. Is the participation of youth in governance and decision making considered important for the city? Why?

Yes	No	Because

11. Are there any other official documents of the City that make any special reference to youth participation?
12. Are there specific statutory requirements (government policy/law) for youth participation?
13. How is the youth participation in the city, in comparison to general public participation trends?
14. Do you think youth understand the significance of their involvement in local and city decision making spaces?
    - Do you think they have the skills, ability and necessary knowledge to engage with critical community decisions?
    - Do they know how, they can be involved in City's decision-making spaces?

15. Stakeholder consultations with youth

How often are these held?	
For what purpose?	
When last did the city hold a youth consultation session/	
On what specific issues	
Wat was the attendance by the youth	
How was the engagement by the youth	
Interest shown by the youth in participating in	
Reach of the youth as stakeholders' engagement: i.e. Do these reach all the areas of City of Johannesburg	
Reach: are these wards based	
Reach: are these held and hosted in the CoJ offices	
If so, how do young people get h	
If so, do young people have a challenge getting here?	

Any specific challenges you may have identified in hosting and running these?	
Are the challenges youth related or CoJ challenges? Please be specific.	

16. What other ways does the city harness the collective youth voice?
    - Do we have young people who sit in council meeting or ward committees?

17. Ward Based Youth Development Forums

- Please tell us a little more about the ward-based youth development forums
- Their objectives
- How many have been held in the last 3 years
- How the information gathered in these youth forums is utilized
- Are the youth forums effective in lobbying on behalf of the youth?

18. Role of wards and ward committees in harnessing the youth voice
    - Broadly how is the youth involved at ward level?
    - Do we have young people in specific portfolios in the ward committees?
    - Any young ward councillors that we know of (18 -25 years old)
    - How else do we at ward level?

Promotion of youth participation

19. Does the city have any specific strategy in place to promote youth participation?

Yes	No	If yes, please elaborate

20. Are there particular areas that the city consciously seeks out the views and contribution of young people?
21. How is the youth capacitated to be active and engaged citizens?
    - At the ward level

- At the city's level
- Other (specify)

22. Youth Unit (011 582 7006/7082. 5th floor Nedbank building Cnr Small and Commisioner

Please indicate if the city has the following (specify if it has similar structure)

Youth Advisory Commissions	
Youth members on various advisory boards	
Youth representation in city Council	

The city's official documents on public participation.

Local actions to support the structures for participation for young people in local life

23. Does the city work with youth organizations? And in what capacity
24. What other initiatives are planned in the short term to support youth participation on the local level?
    - Do we have youth structures like youth forums at local level?
25. Are there any official documents or reports that you can share with us that could shed more light on the following

Areas of interest	Document
Youth Participation in community-based planning/ IDP/Strategy documents development	
PP	

Conclusion

26. Additional remarks on youth participation and approaches used to enhance youth participation in the city

27. <u>Summary</u>

Public Participation Approach	Used to engage youth	Used by youth	Works well with youth	Does not work well with youth
Izimbizo				
Petitions				
Community Meetings (regional and ward level)				
Planning related meetings such as IDPs/Budget Review/Rates Reviews)				
Call for submissions				
Community consultations				
Stakeholder (youth)forums				
Youth Councils				
Youth Dialogues				
Youth Directorate/Unit				
Other				

Appendix 3: Interviews Schedule: Councillors (Ward Councillor/ Member of Ward Committee/Youth Development Practitioners)

Date of Interview:

Duration of Interview:

Respondent: Ward Councillor:

Ward:

Area:

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Introduction

Local government legislation requires local authorities to consult local people, including young people, on the services they provide explain the existing actions/support, of national or regional scope, to promote the participation of young people in local life and follow-up mechanisms.

Please note that the concept public participation approaches refer to issues of public participation design, mechanisms and processes.

A: City Wide Public Participation Approaches

1. Can you broadly share with us the public participation approaches used by the City of Johannesburg to engage with the City's citizens?
    - Of the approaches you have cited which ones would you say, in general, work best?

- And which ones would you say do not work as well?

2. Does the City use the same approaches for all citizens or is there a differentiation based on factors such as age, education, socio-economic, residential etc?
3. Does the city have specific approaches that they use when engaging with young people?
    - If yes what has been youth response to them?
    - If no, is there a consideration by the city to?
4. Does the city have a public participation policy (or other), framework, strategy documents or other official documents of the City that refer to youth participation approaches (design, mechanisms and processes).

B: At local level, i.e. ward level, in this community, how:

5. What are the challenges you are experiencing with youth participation?
    - And could those be as a result of public participation approaches used?
6. What public participation approaches are mostly used to engage with community members at large and with youth specifically?
    - What is the general public response to them? And what is the youth response?
7. Let us review youth participation in community decision making spaces in this community when compared general promotion of public participation?
    - Do young people attend community meeting? And comparable to adults?
    - Do they engage with you or other city officials on various community issues i.e. at own will? (if yes, please give examples)? How do they compare to adult folks?
    - Do we have young people in ward committees?
        i. If yes what positions do, they (normally) hold? And why?
        ii. Are young people generally interested in participating in ward committees and holding positions of responsibility?

8. When views and contribution towards decisions are made by young people are these incorporated into the City's decisions? Can you provide specific examples?
    - How? What is the process followed?
9. How are at ward level is youth participation encouraged and what has been the response of young people?

10. In your view are there particular areas that the city consciously seeks out the views and contribution of young people? (Or should consciously seek youth input in?)
11. Should young people have influence in the governance and decision-making spaces of the municipality?
12. What factors/issues are likely to discourage youth participation?
13. What factors/issues are likely to discourage youth participation?
    - Do you think youth understand the significance of their involvement in local and city decision making spaces?
    - Do you think they have the skills, ability and necessary knowledge to engage with critical community decisions?
    - Do they know how, they can be involved in City's decision-making spaces?

14. How do you think the city should promote involvement of the youth?
15. And lastly? What do you think is the role of ward councillors in promoting youth participation?

Summary

Public Participation Approach	**Used to engage youth**	**Used by youth**	**Works well with youth**	**Does not work well with youth**
Izimbizo				
Petitions				
Community Meetings (regional and ward level)				
Planning related meetings such as IDPs/Budget Review/Rates Reviews)				
Call for submissions				

Community consultations				
Stakeholder (youth)forums				
Youth Councils				
Youth Dialogues				
Youth Directorate/Unit				
Other (Specify)				

Appendix 4: In-depth one-on-one Interview youth (attended IDPs/)(3)

Date of Interview

Duration of Interview

Respondent: Youth (18 -35)

Ward:

Area:

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Introduction

Local government legislation requires local authorities to consult local people, including young people, on the services they provide explain the existing actions/support, of national or regional scope, to promote the participation of young people in local life and follow-up mechanisms.

1. Early in the year you attended an IDP Consultation meeting. How did you know about it? (probe to see if they get to know about it via one or more of these approaches
    1. Via SMS from councillor
    2. Via local newspaper notice
    3. Previous community meeting notices
    4. Door to door visit by CDW
    5. Door to door visit by ward councillor
    6. Via
    7. From family members (who exactly)

2. Why did you attend
3. Have you attended any other meeting called by City of Johannesburg?
    i. What was it about?
    ii. How did you know about it?
4. How was the attendance of the youth in the?
    a. IDP meeting
    b. Any other meeting you have attended

5. Did you ask questions and engage the CoJ officials?
    a. On what issues?
    b. Do you feel that your views and suggestions were taken serious in community meetings?
6. Do you attend community meetings?
    i. Who normally calls community meetings?
    ii. What are they about?
    iii. How do you get to know about it?
7. In this community are young people in this community actively involved in community issues.
    a. Do they attend meetings called by?
        i. the municipality
        ii. by ward councillors
    b. Involved in youth organizations

8. When looking at the attendance at the meetings, do young people generally attend community meetings?
    a. When they are in attendance do, they contribute, by way of asking questions or having a view on issues discussed?
    b. If not, why do you think they are not?
    c. If they are what do you think is the driver behind such
9. Is the involvement of youth in community issues and decision making important?
    a. Is the involvement of young people in making of decision at local government important?
    b. Are you involved?

c. How?

10. Another possible way for the youth to influence decisions at a higher level is to have youth representatives at those levels.
    a. Do you know of any young person who is a ward councillor?
    b. If yes, is that person in your view representing your views, ideas etc at councillor level?
    c. Are young people in this community likely to be appointed as ward councillors?
    d. Do you know of any young person who is in the ward committee?
11. Do you think it is important for young people to be involved in decision making at?
    a. Community level
    b. Municipal level

12. Apart from community meetings how else do you engage with the City of Johannesburg? (Probe)
    a. Via a councillor
    b. Via a CDW
    c. Via their website
    d. Via Facebook
    e. Via twitter

13. Structures of participation at the local regional or national level: WHICH OF THESE HAVE YOU ATTENDED
    - summits,
    - public meetings,
    - road shows,
    - and 'izimbizo'

14. Have you had an issue/query or complaint you wanted to discuss with City of Johannesburg and how did you go about doing it?
15. Do we have a youth forum in this community?
    a. Who started it?
    b. When was it started?
    c. What does it do?

16. Are there youth organizations in this community?
    a. Do young people participate in these youth organizations
    b. Are you members of any youth organization?
17. Do you feel that the City of Johannesburg is doing enough to engage with the young people?
18. What in opinion are the best ways and approaches for the city to engage with young citizens?
    a. Are there specific issues that the city should be speaking to young people or should the city engage the youth on all matters that affect citizens?
19. Are there any other ways that the youth of this community use to engage?
    a. The municipality?
    b. Community leaders?

20. <u>Summary</u>

Public Participation Approach	Used to engage youth	Used by youth	Works well with youth	Does not work well with youth
Izimbizo				
Petitions				
Community Meetings (regional and ward level)				
Planning related meetings such as IDPs/Budget Review/Rates Reviews)				
Call for submissions				
Community consultations				
Stakeholder (youth)forums				
Youth Councils				

Youth Dialogues				
Youth Directorate/Unit				
Other				

Appendix 5: Interviews/ Focus Group Guide: In-depth Interview and Group Interviews youth (who did not attend IDPs)

Date of Interview

Duration of Interview

Respondent: Youth (18 -35)

Ward:

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Introduction

Local government legislation requires local authorities to consult local people, including young people, on the services they provide explain the existing actions/support, of national or regional scope, to promote the participation of young people in local life and follow-up mechanisms.

1. The involvement of youth in community issues and decision making is important?

Yes	No	Because

Are you involved?

Yes	No	In these areas

2. Young people in this community actively are involved in community issues?

3. Yes	No	How

Young people in this community attend meeting

Called by the municipality	By Ward councillors

a. Young people are involved in youth organizations

Yes	No	example

4. Have you ever attended any meeting in this community?
    a. Who called the meeting?
    b. What was the meeting about?
    c. Who normally calls these meetings?
5. Do you often attend meetings called by the City of Johannesburg?

6. Yes	No	examples

a. Have you attended an?

7. Rates Review	IDP Meeting	Other meeting called by the municipality	Ward meetings

How did you know about it? (probe to see if they get to know about it via one or more of these approaches)

Approach to alerting community abut meetings	IDP consultation	Rates meeting	Other meetings called by the municipality	Community/ward meetings
Via SMS from councillor				
Via local newspaper notice				
Previous community meeting notices				

Door to door visit by CDW				
Door to door visit by ward councillor Via				
From family members (who exactly				

a. When looking at the attendance at the meetings you have attended, do young people attend?
    i. When they are in attendance do, they contribute, by way of asking questions or having a view on issues discussed?
    ii. If not, why do you think they are not?
    iii. If they are what do you think motivates them to?

8. Apart from meetings called by the City of Johannesburg how do you engage with the City of Johannesburg? (Probe)

	How	Which one of these do you use more often? Why?	Which one don't you use at all and why?
a. Via a councillor			
b. Via a CDW			
c. Via their website			
d. Via Facebook			

e. Via twitter			

9. Structures of participation at the local regional or national level: which of these have you attended

a. Summits,	
b. Public meetings,	
c. Youth Forums	
d. Dialogues	
e. Council	
f. Road shows,	
g. And ‘izimbizo’	

10. As a young person have you been involved in the following and in what capacity?
    a. Analysis of community strategic needs
    b. Development of action plans
    c. Strengthening of local institutions
    d. Budgeting
11. When you have an issue/query or complaint you want to discuss with City of Johannesburg how do you go about doing it?
12. Do we have a youth forum in this community?
    a. Who started it?
    b. When was it started?

c. What does it do?
d. Do young people participate in these youth forums?

13. Are there youth organizations in this community?
    a. Do young people participate in these youth organizations
    b. Are you members of any youth organization?
14. What are other areas of involvement you as a young person in this community you are involved in (probe each of the possibilities)
    a. Volunteering
    b. Member of a youth club
    c. Member of a youth group
    d. attended a demonstration or protest march
    e. participation in community meetings
    f. raising important issues
    g. Local youth forums
15. Do you feel that the municipality (City of Johannesburg) is doing enough to engage with the young people?
16. Do you feel that your views and suggestions are taken serious in community meetings?
    a. by the ward councillors
    b. by adults
    c. by the city of Johannesburg
17. Do you know how the information sourced from you and other young people is used?
18. Do you know of any young person who is a/ has been a ward councillor?
    a. If yes, is that person in your view representing your views, ideas etc at councillor level?
    b. Are young people in this community likely to be appointed as ward councillors?
    c. Do you know of any young person who is in the ward committee?
19. Do you think it is important for young people to be involved in decision making at?
    a. Community/ level
    b. Municipal level

20. What in opinion are the best ways and approaches for the city to engage with young citizens?
    a. Are there specific issues that the city should be speaking to young people or should the city engage the youth on all matters that affect citizens?

21. Are there any other ways that the youth of this community use to engage?
    a. The municipality?
    b. Community leaders?
22. Are young people in this community interested in contributing and influencing decision making at local level (community) at government level (local government)
23. With whom do you discuss social issues?
    a. Give an example of social issues that you mostly discuss.
    b. Informal political discussion
24. Do you use of social media pages to generate conversation on social and political issues?

Summary

Public Participation Approach	Used to engage youth	Used by youth	Works well with youth	Does not work well with youth
Izimbizo				
Petitions				
Community Meetings (regional and ward level)				
Planning related meetings such as IDPs/Budget Review/Rates Reviews)				
Call for submissions				
Community consultations				
Stakeholder (youth)forums				
Youth Councils				

Youth Dialogues				
Youth Directorate/Unit				
Other				

Appendix 6: Observation Guide

1. General Logistics
2. General Attendance
3. Approach to engagement
4. Number of young people in attendance
5. No of young people who ask questions
6. Type of questions asked
7. How are the questions received and responded to?

Appendix 7: CONSENT FORM (Interviews and Focus Group Discussions)

About the research

This research is solely for the purposes of my completion of Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Management) in School of Governance University of Witwatersrand**.** The purpose of the interview/focus group discussion is to understand how the youth participation by understanding how the youth respond to the City of Johannesburg public participation In order to do that I also need to understand the public participation approaches used by the city to engage and inform citizens, youth specific participation approaches, response of the youth but also how youth participation can be improved.

Consent to participate in the research

- I understand that my responses will be kept in the strictest of confidence and will be available only to the researcher.
- No one will be able to identify me when the results are reported, and my name will not appear anywhere in the written report.
- I will not share other people's identities or responses from the focus group with others to maintain the anonymity of the participants outside of the focus group.
- I also understand that I may skip any questions or tasks that I do not wish to answer or complete.
- I may choose not to participate or withdraw at any time during the study without penalty.
- I agree to have my verbal responses tape-recorded and transcribed for further analysis with the understanding that my responses will not be linked to me personally in any way.
- After the transcription is completed, the tape recordings will be destroyed.
- I understand that I am participating in a study of my own free will.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____