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# "Social hot spot": a youth center in Hillbrow.

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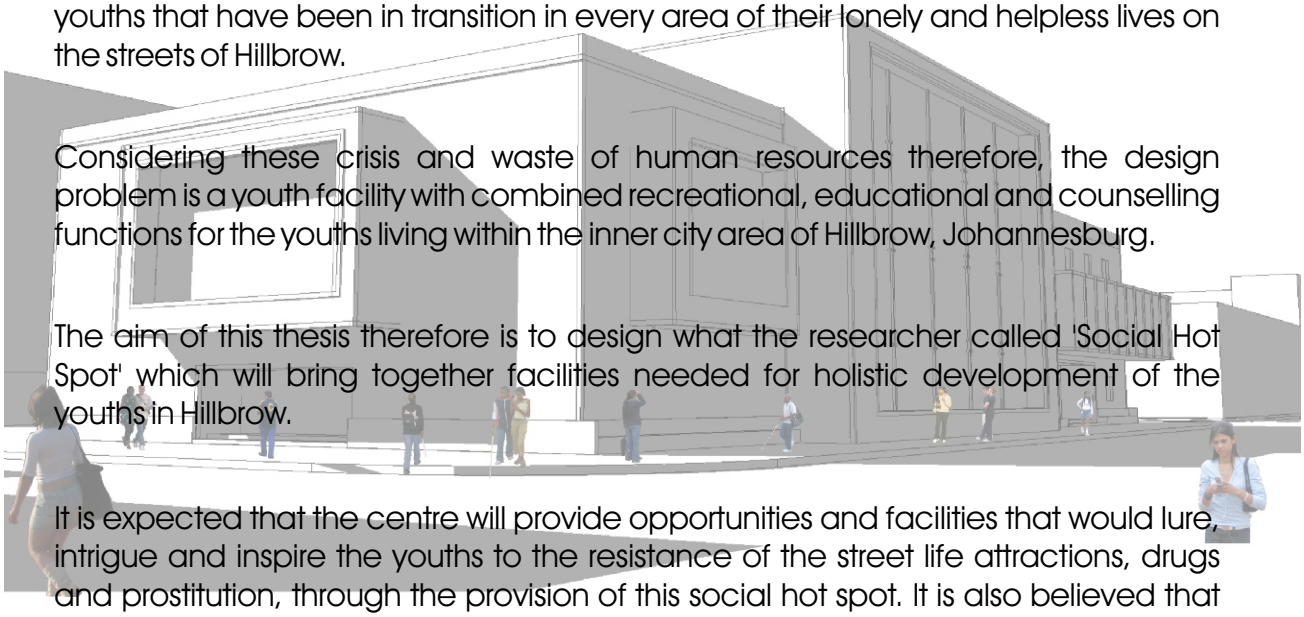
# "SOCIAL HOT SPOT"
## A youth center in Hillbrow

**Douglas R S**



Youths in Hillbrow are the subject of this thesis concern. Hillbrow according to Leggett (2003) has one of the highest populations in the Southern Hemisphere with an estimated 50, 000 people in an area of 10.28 square kilometres. The actual count is believed to be much higher due to squatters and undocumented migrants left uncounted in official census reports. Hillbrow is renowned for immigrants and crime. Sixty seven percent (67%) of the population of Hillbrow are youths between the ages of 15-35. This population justifies the choice of the recipients of this thesis proposed intervention.

Several projects have been designed by both government and non-governmental organisation including churches for youths in South Africa. Majority of these are recreational, sports and better still, skills developmental and located elsewhere other than Hillbrow. Even where they exist or any is found in Hillbrow, none are comprehensive enough to cater adequately for the needs of these groups of youths that have been in transition in every area of their lonely and helpless lives on the streets of Hillbrow.



Considering these crisis and waste of human resources therefore, the design problem is a youth facility with combined recreational, educational and counselling functions for the youths living within the inner city area of Hillbrow, Johannesburg.

The aim of this thesis therefore is to design what the researcher called 'Social Hot Spot' which will bring together facilities needed for holistic development of the youths in Hillbrow.

It is expected that the centre will provide opportunities and facilities that would lure, intrigue and inspire the youths to the resistance of the street life attractions, drugs and prostitution, through the provision of this social hot spot. It is also believed that the effective use of this project will provide youths with opportunities to be gainfully employed and constructive within the society.



The site chosen is located in Hillbrow north. It is bordered by Claim Street on the east, Quartz Street on the west and Caroline Street on the south.
Chosen because it is located in an area that is perceived as safe by the residents of Hillbrow.

Site

An analysis of Hillbrow uncovered that there are no public green spaces in the area, no designated play spaces and few learning facilities along the periphery.

The following program was developed under four main titles. They include;

- Social
- Physical
- Cultural and
- Educational facilities

Adding to the fact that the youth in Hillbrow are regularly exposed to shebeens, drugs, gambling, prostitution, rape, domestic violence, robbery, shootings etc, a voluntary counseling unit that will cater for issues such as abuse (sexual, alcohol, emotional and physical) and career counseling will also be provided for.

| Social space | Physcal space | Cultural space | Educational space |
|---|---|---|---|
| •Café<br>•Garden | •Gym<br>•Basket ball<br>•Volley ball<br>•Sports<br>•Games | •Studios<br>•Music, Dance or art<br>•Exhibition | •Resource ctr<br>•Study area<br>•Reading lounge<br>•IT ctr |