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The impact of social networks on the livelihoods of Johannesburg's inner-city residents: the case of Hillbrow

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The Impact of Social Networks on the Livelihoods of Johannesburg's Inner-City Residents: The Case of Hillbrow.

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of the Witwatersrand, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Development Planning.

Johannesburg, 2020



Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted to the Degree of Master of Science in Development Planning to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination to any other University.



Date: 23rd October 2020.

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Abstract

There is the less conventional but just as vital side to urban planning that concerns itself with the livelihoods of the everyday people. Beyond rolling out bulk infrastructure and utopian designing of cities of the future, urban planning also undertakes the difficult task of making cities receptive to all, that is, opportunities presented to all people living in cities. This research is bedded on that side of urban planning; it assesses the impact of social networks (and the daily practices that arise from them) on the livelihoods of inner-city residents.

Johannesburg's inner-city, particularly Hillbrow, is one of the most densely populated areas in South Africa. It accommodates tens of thousands of people coming into Johannesburg from different corners of the country and African continent seeking opportunities and a better life in Johannesburg. These high volumes of people living in the area are housed in high rise buildings which largely characterize the urban fabric of the neighbourhood. Hillbrow, in recent times, has also been characterised by decline, divestment and urban poverty. The high density brings about a close-knit community where people interact frequently on a social level and inevitably foster relationships and build social networks. These social networks are essential to inner-city livelihoods as inner-city residents seem to make use of them to get employment and engage in practices necessary for their daily survival (most of which are informal). In the research I explore the nature of these social networks, the practices that arise from then and probe the extent to which they impact the livelihoods of inner-city residents. I used semi-structured interviews with participants residing in the neighbourhood. Their stories indeed demonstrated the importance of social networks in improving their livelihoods amidst urban poverty and precarious living.

Key words: Livelihoods, social networks, Inner-city, informality, urban poverty, community, density.

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Chapter 1. Introduction and Background

For all of 2015 and just the beginning of 2016 I lived in the inner city of Johannesburg. I lived in a little flat which my uncle (Uncle H) rented on the corner of Petersen and Twist Street in Hillbrow. Uncle H was kind enough to let me stay there rent free in 2015 when I first moved to Johannesburg. Looking at this arrangement in hindsight, I benefitted from my relationship with my uncle and managed to get free accommodation in the inner city for over a year. He, on the other hand, benefited from our relationship by having my presence at the flat which gave him 'peace of mind' because he was barely ever around and feared his place would get broken into. Uncle H informally let me stay in his flat, he did not add my name on the lease for his landlord to formally recognise me as a tenant. Though it was informal, this is an arrangement that was mutually beneficial and, for the most part, it worked – I had a place to stay and Uncle H was at ease while he was away. Maps locating Hillbrow are shown in figures 1 and 2.

Throughout my stay in Hillbrow, I observed that it was not just Uncle H and myself that made use of our social networks in order to improve our wellbeing and livelihoods, this was widely practiced in the neighbourhood. From friends sharing information on where to buy cheaper goods; street traders letting the customers they knew by name get goods on credit; to people getting their relatives jobs at their places of employment; Hillbrow had a lot of its residents relying on their social networks to somehow improve their livelihoods. These observations-cum-experiences coupled with the work of urbanists such as Rakodi (2014), Simone (2004), Winkler (2013), Rubin (2016), Harrison *et al* (2018), Roy (2005) among others inspired me to want to know more about inner-city social networks, the practices they breed and how they impact the livelihoods of inner-city residents hence the title of this research.

As has been recognised in recent years, a vital side to urban planning concerns itself with the livelihoods of the everyday people (Simone, 2004; Roy, 2005; Rakodi, 2014; Harisson *et al,* 2018). Beyond rolling out bulk infrastructure and utopian designing of cities of the future, urban planning also undertakes the difficult task of making cities receptive to all, that is, opportunities presented to all that reside within cities. This research is embedded on people's everyday practices, that side of planning concerned with people's daily lives which seeks to better understand people's engagements and activities (both formal and informal) as discussed in the

work and studies of planners and urbanists such as Pieterse (2018), Simone (2004), Rubin (2016) and Winkler (2006) in order to find ways to improve livelihoods.

The inner city of Johannesburg is one of the most densely populated areas in South Africa (Stats SA, 2016). It houses tens of thousands of people coming into Johannesburg from all corners of the country and Africa seeking opportunities and a better life in 'the city of gold' (Clarkson, 2006; Landau, 2007; Winkler, 2012). The inner city is largely characterised by high rise residential buildings which have seen inner city residents living close and crammed above each other with every storey of these tall buildings hence the high-density figures. "In 2003, the population of Hillbrow was estimated to be over 100 000 during the week, and possibly over 200 000 during weekends. These figures become more striking with the realisation that Hillbrow comprises less than one square kilometre" (Clarkson, 2006, p452). However, Stats SA figures have the neighbourhood's population at about 70 000 people which is still a staggering figure for just one square kilometre of land (Stats SA, 2016).

However, Johannesburg's inner city, particularly the neighbourhoods of Berea, Yeoville and Hillbrow (whose location in Johannesburg and Gauteng is depicted in Figures 1 and 2); much like the typical inner city, are also characterised by dilapidation, urban decay, 'bad buildings', crime and inadequate service delivery. Furthermore, most of the residents that reside in these neighbourhoods are faced with immiserating circumstances that have left them in the lower strata of the city's socio-economic standings (Grant and Thompson, 2015). On the other hand, there is some potential in the inner city that ought to be harnessed. "History shows that urbanisation also has the potential to transform socioeconomic conditions and reduce human vulnerabilities, depending on how well the process is planned and managed" (Glaeser, 2011; Jha et al., 2013; Storper, 2013 cited in Turok and Borel-Saladin, 2014 p73).

Figure 1 below are perspective maps of Gauteng and Johannesburg meant to contextualise the study area. Source: author 2020.

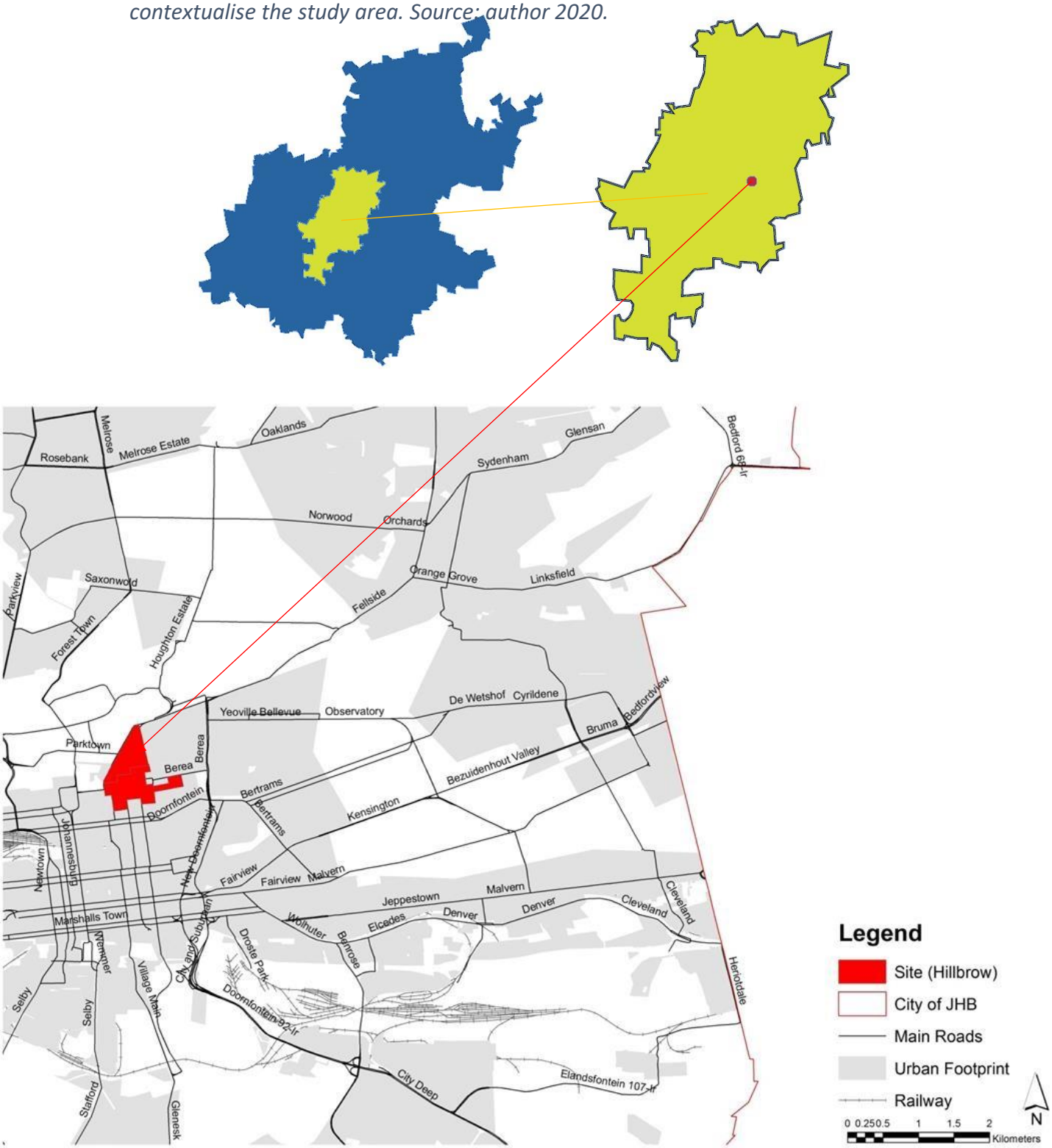


Figure 2. The map above shows the context and location of Hillbrow, Johannesburg; the study area. Source: GIS raw data from GCRO, produced by author, 2019

The characteristics of the inner city described in the paragraph above, though there may be some potential in them, have made inner city living quite precarious, especially in Hillbrow. Some residents have thus turned to their social networks to improve their livelihoods. Landau *et al* (2017) did research on the extent to which social networks in the refugee accepting cities of the south, particularly Nairobi, Gaziantep and Peshawar. Their conception of social networks was rather like Simone's (2004) theorisation of people as infrastructure. They cited social networks as being key for people living in urban areas of the south to survive and get by with zero to minimal reliance on aid from the state (Landau et al, 2017).

Problem Statement

Hillbrow's socioeconomic standing is not a favourable one. There is a relatively high unemployment rate in the area due to minimal investment in the neighbourhood thus limiting the absorptive capacity of formal employment in the area. The unemployment is further entrenched by the significant population of undocumented (or without work permits) African foreign nationals who are unable to access formal jobs as they are trying to remain invisible to the state. These conditions seem to have given rise to a culture of informality and a reliance on social networks for people to get by and even thrive in some cases.

According to Landau et al (2017), there seems to be a great deal of reliance on social networks to get work or an income in cities of the south and Simone (2004) consolidated that for Hillbrow. On the one hand, these social networks seem to be preferred over the formal channels of getting work (that is, seeing a formal advertisement and handing-in a Curriculum Vitae and potentially being formally employed) and they seem to be more functional than the formal channels. On the other hand, these social networks are not always seen in a positive light, there are matters of difference and exclusivity involved. For example, a South African male may have a broader network than a foreign female in the same inner-city neighbourhood of Hillbrow. Furthermore, those two profiles are likely to have differing needs and may be included and excluded in some networks as well.

Simone (2004) observed these social networks and engagements more than 15 years ago and they are seemingly still present to date. Nonetheless, 15 years is a long time and a great deal could have changed between the time Simone's paper was first published and now. Therefore, there is a need to weigh up the notion of social networks and put its relevance in recent times to

the test. Secondly, these social networks seem to be akin with informal activity which sometimes translates into illegal activities and there is need to probe further into that. Lastly, many of the inner-city residents seem to still be living in poverty regardless of their social networks meaning that there could be a breakdown somewhere.

Rationale of Research

With most residents of the inner city area and Hillbrow in particular being low income earners that are actively participating in the above discussed social networks, there is a need to understand the nature of these social networks, how they work, assess their effectiveness and what their impact is on livelihoods. Research on the impacts on the livelihoods would be useful in addressing some of the misconceptions surrounding informality, social capital and the inner city. More importantly, it would provide sound knowledge on what is transpiring on the ground in the inner city, that is, better positioning the city (or any other relevant and resourced authorities) to make informed decisions on either harnessing, regulating these engagements or any other interventions that may lie in-between.

Objectives

The focal point of this research lies on the two notions of 'social networks' and 'livelihoods'. The primary objective of the research is to understand the impact of 'social networks' from a 'livelihoods' lens. The research seeks to assess the impacts of these social networks on the livelihoods of Johannesburg's inner-city residents, particularly Hillbrow. I also unpack and attempt to understand what is entailed in social networks and the practices that arise from them so as to identify the means through which livelihoods are positively and significantly affected in the inner-city. I also prescribe some measures for the state, corporate and all other stakeholders on the matter to effectively execute their role to ensure a significantly positive improvement in inner-city livelihoods.

Research Questions

Main research question

What role do social networks play in the livelihoods of Hillbrow residents?

Sub-questions

- What is entailed in social networks and livelihoods?
- What are the strategies adopted in the use of social networks?

- What do these social networks mean for the people's quality of life?
- Have these social networks improved people's livelihoods; and how?

Research Method

Type of research conducted

This research is qualitative as it is based on people's (participants) accounts of their lived experiences in Hillbrow. I did also use some figures and findings from secondary desk research to enrich the quality of the research. Another source of information was a personal reflection of my experiences of the neighbourhood from the time I lived there.

How the data was collected

I gathered the information from the research participants through semi-structured interviews. I had candid conversations with them under the guidance of the research questions I drew up prior to meeting them. The questions were open ended thus allowing the participants to elaborate on their answers and reveal more than what the questions asked for on the surface and I welcomed the additional information. I interviewed six participants who gave me rich and detailed stories of their lives in Hillbrow and three others who gave me supplementary data through short interviews. One of the three short interviews was with a Nigerian man from Onitsha (Respondent 9) but he insisted that I do not use what he told me in the report. We still went on with the interview as I felt that the information he gave me would be good for my general understanding of the occurrences in the neighbourhood. I had separate face-to-face interviews with all the participants except for one who I interviewed telephonically. Five of the interviews I carried out in Hillbrow, either at the participants' places of residents or a public space and the other four I held in public spaces in Braamfontein. Figure 3 provides a summarised profile of all the nine participants I interviewed for the research and one respondent who eventually could not participate in the research.

The selection process of the participants was through snowballing. From my already existing network of people I knew living in Hillbrow, I selected one person to interview and he was the starting point of my snowball sample where I got each interviewee to point me in the direction of the next person I interviewed. Language was not an issue, all the interviewees either spoke IsiNdebele, Shona, IsiZulu, SeTswana, IsiXhosa or English which are all languages I speak.

Some gaps and flaws

The initial intended number of participants at the beginning of the research was ten but I managed to interview nine. One of the women who had promised to make some time for me was subjected to serious abuse and bodily harm during the xenophobic attacks of August and September 2019. She then had to flee before we met but promised to meet with me at the beginning of 2020 which did not happen as she did not return my unanswered calls. Interestingly, she is not a foreign national, she is Venda speaking from a small village in Limpopo but she was attacked which was symbolic of how absurd the whole idea of xenophobia is.

Another flaw I encountered was with the secondary data used for information such as population figures and the nationalities of the people living in the neighbourhood. I looked at different data sources like Stats SA, Wazimap and EasyData which all gave different figures making it difficult to comprehend and analyse the data. Additionally, these data sources did not consider the people living invisible to the state and those with falsified documents to 'legitimise' their residence in Hillbrow and the country. Recognisably, people like that alter the data presented in those sources. But I got around this by also considering data from previous similar studies, my own knowledge of the neighbourhood and the stories of the residents interviewed for more rounded and closer to accurate assessments.

Some ethical considerations

The safety of the participants and myself took precedence and I had to make sure that the research does not compromise that. With all the interviewees I got either formal consent in writing or verbal consent before undertaking the interview. Secondly, I assured them that their real identities would not be known to anyone but myself and I used pseudonyms in place of their real names in the research report. Thirdly, there is some information I was told in confidence by the interviewees which I did not divulge in the document. This information was still useful because in the grand scheme of things it helped me better understand the subject matter of the research. With the participants who allowed me to record the interviews on my mobile device, I also promised to keep the recordings to myself. Lastly, I made sure that all the participants understood that this was research only meant for academic purposes and that they were not to be remunerated in any way for it. Still on the understanding part, I made sure that they knew what the research was about, and the subject discussed in it before participating.

Chapter outline

Chapter one of the report is the introduction and background of the research. In this chapter I introduced the title and the topic, broke down the subject matter of the research, outlined the problem statement and gave the research question that I answer by the end of the report. Chapter two of the report is a review of the literature where I unpack and theorise the themes and main concepts that resonate throughout the research. This helps the reader have a sound understanding of the research from both a layman and theoretical viewpoint. Chapter three is the context of the research painting a clearer picture of the area and the people found there. I provide detailed information on the history of Hillbrow, the neighbourhood's socioeconomic status quo and the current demographics. The chapter that follows thereafter is the findings chapter (four) which is predominantly descriptive of what I found during my fieldwork and in chapter five I use literature to analyse the fieldwork findings. Lastly, the final chapter is the conclusion of the research where I synthesise all the information from the report, conclude on the outcomes of the research and give some recommendations.

Pseudonym	Sex	Origin	Status	Year moved to Hillbrow	Trade
Ronaldo	Male	Bulawayo, Zimbabwe	Fake work permit	2014	Waiter
Manando	Male	Newcastle, KZN	SA National ID	2016	Mechanic
Rasta	Male	Evaton, Sedibeng.	SA National ID	2014	Driver
Lisa	Female	Confidential	Undocumented	2012	Domestic worker
Nomalanga	Female	Sasolburg, Free State	SA National ID	2014	Domestic worker
Lewis	Male	Nkayi, Zimbabwe	Zimbawean Passport-no work permit	2004	Malayitsha
Church Elder 1	Male	Bulawayo, Zimbabwe	Zimbawean Passport-no work permit	2008	Preacher/Security guard
Church Elder 2	Female	Beira, Mozambique	Naturalised citizen, SA National ID	2004	Preacher/Nurse
Respondent 9	Male	Onitsha, Nigeria	Undocumented	2004	Informal trader/entrepreneur
Respondent 10	Female	Musina, Limpopo	SA National ID	2009	Street vendor

Figure 3: A brief profile of all the research participants showing their gender, where they are from, status and their trade.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Introduction

In this chapter I delve into the rich literature that has been written on social networks, inner city dwelling and livelihoods. This is not necessarily work that has been done in Johannesburg's inner-city nor is it work done specifically on the livelihoods of Johannesburg inner-city residents; but it is work covered from different parts of the world by various scholars' concepts and theories that resonate with my research. In doing so, I attempt to unravel these concepts while presenting them in a fashion that implants them to this research. The concepts help with the understanding of the research from a theoretical viewpoint which is shown in this chapter and will further be seen in the analysis chapter of the research report.

The discussion is centred around the two main themes of the research, social networks and livelihoods. I discuss what is entailed in social networks and all the concepts that stem from these social networks such as social capital, the people's reliance on each other to survive as termed by Simone (2004) 'people as infrastructure' and community. I also discuss livelihoods as a theme and attempt to unpack the concepts embedded in it such as hustle and even people as infrastructure and social capital which are common denominators between the two central themes. These concepts do not exist in isolation, but they are interwoven and I try to show that the inner-city creates an environment where all that is discussed in those concepts simultaneously materialises. This is where I discuss ideas of what the character of the inner city is like; and the informality and precarity in the inner city which all seem to demand that people make use of their networks in order to improve their livelihoods as the formal sector does not have a strong enough presence to take care of everyone.

Social networks and support

A key concept and major component of this research are the social networks people have created for themselves over time. "Similarity breeds connection" (which essentially describes homophily) is the principle McPherson *et al* (2001) argue is at the root of most kinds of relationships from marriage and friendship to work advice, support and other types of relationships (McPherson *et al*, 2001, p.415). This means they believe that many relationships or networks are established based on their homogeneity with regard to behavioural, intrapersonal and socio-demographic characteristics. The main argument of their work is not the necessity of homophily in the establishment of networks, but rather homophily as a

limiting factor in people's relationships/networks. They argued that, among others, homophily limits people's social networks in a way that gravely affects the information they receive and information, as we know, is a valuable resource (Cleveland, 1982) and from Forrester's (1988) understanding, it is even power. The major homophilic divides that impact information sharing and the general establishment of relations are race and gender respectively (McPherson *et al*, 2001).

Figure 4 is a graphic illustration of what a social network could look like. The blue solid nodes represent individuals and the lines in-between symbolise the lines of communication and relationships among the individuals. Some of the lines are attached to the individuals while others break just before getting to the individual which is representative of the difference in the ties and nature of relationships in those networks. Furthermore, these different ties and varying nature of the relationships are suggestive of different forms of trade; exchange of resources and assets (tangible and intangible).

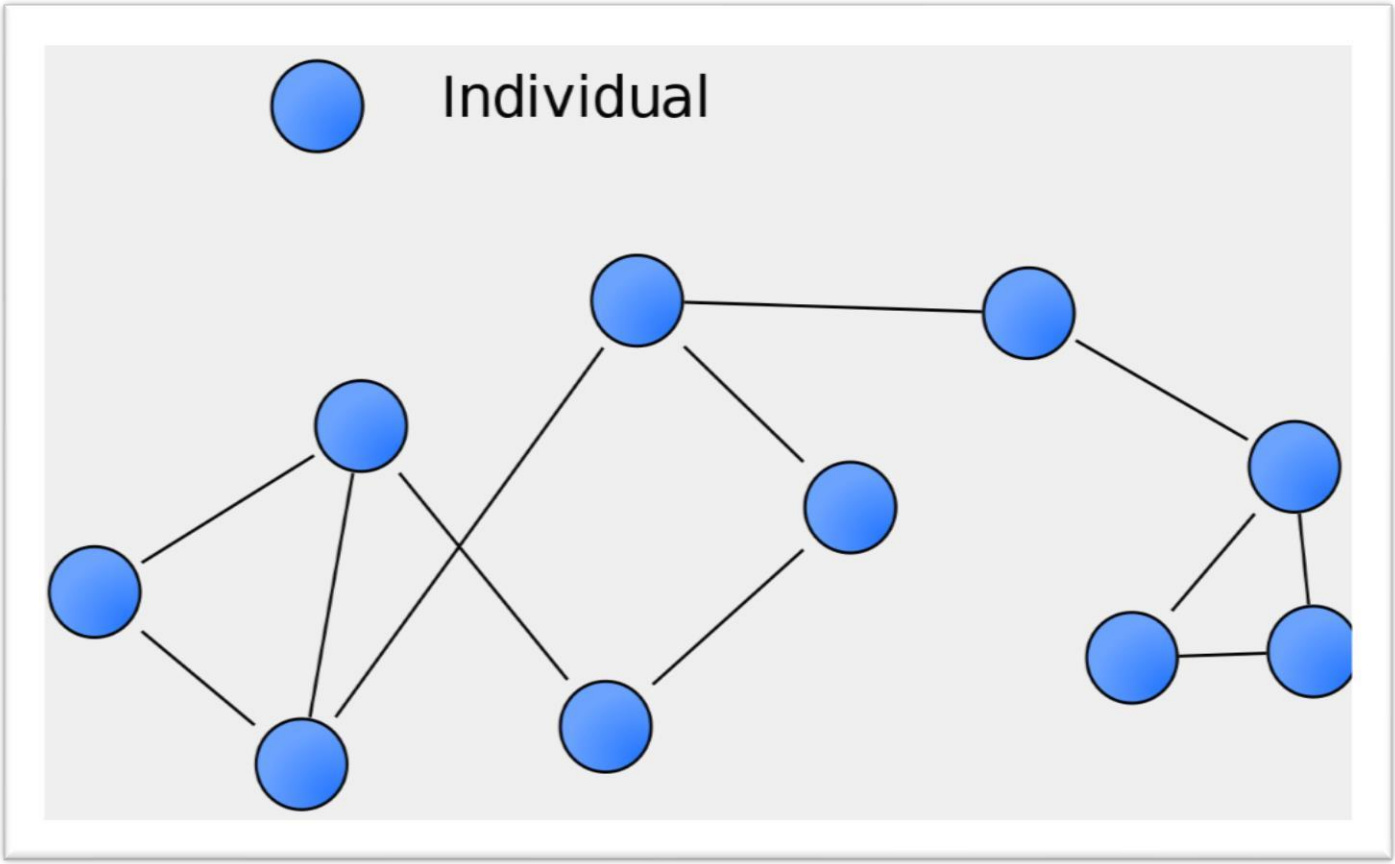


Figure 4 shows an example of a network an individual may find themselves in. In those communication lines there is often a reciprocated sharing of tangible and intangible resources.

Social networks (for the purposes of this research) are specifically the group of people comprising of family, friends, acquaintances and/or anyone that one meets and makes use of to obtain information, employment opportunities, actual money or any kind of tangible or intangible material to aid them in getting by and meeting their daily needs (Landau et al., 2017).

In the inner city, specifically Hillbrow, the population density is very high at about 70,000p/km². This high density fosters daily interaction among the residents of the neighbourhood and these continuous interactions often evolve to relationships between the individuals involved (Gewer and Rubin, 2015). High densities create an allowance for a tight knit and closely massed community where people are likely to know each other and perhaps get to a point of helping each other thus establishing social networks essential for daily living (McPherson and Smith-Lovin, 2001; Gewer and Rubin, 2015).

However, as already stated in the preceding chapter, these social networks are not entirely as ideal as they are defined above. They often exclude some persons, at times they tread along the lines of gender, nationality and citizenship among several other classifications. Some forms of solidarity groups are formed according to these categorisations and often when one does not fit the traits required to be a part of that network they are mechanically excluded from it (Palla et al, 2005; Ahn et al, 2010).

Social capital

Much related to the social networks concept, another important theme central to this research is social capital. This refers to the different components of social groups that include personal relationships, shared interests and a shared sense of identity, values, norms, beliefs, trust and cooperation and all these need to be reciprocated. Within these groups there is often a sharing of resources, both tangible and intangible to benefit all parties involved. Woolcock (1998, p.155) emphasises the element of relationships and reciprocity when he described social capital as “encompassing the norms and networks facilitating collective action for mutual benefit.” Portes (1998) further consolidates the importance of relationships in social capital when he made the distinction between economic capital, human capital and social capital by observing that “economic capital is in people’s bank accounts and human capital is inside their heads, social capital inheres in the structure of their relationships” (Portes, 1998, p.7). Prior to that, Jane Jacobs had used the term in some of her work of the

early 1960s where she discussed the value of networks. Social capital is an integral part of this research because of how people in the inner city of Johannesburg, as mentioned already, have these social networks in place and bedded in these networks is the sharing of resources for mutual benefit thus reflecting close links between social networks and social capital.

Lin (1999) confirms this research's avowal of the relationship between social capital and network by considering social capital as assets in networks. Lin's work on capital is quite different from the conventional theorisations of capital as he first establishes what capital is and then goes on to unpack social capital. He identified classical capital which he traced back to Marx' work on the bourgeois and the proletariat where the bourgeois had the means of production (capital) while the proletariat provided the labour in production for a wage. Lin identified another mutation of capital which he called neocapital. This alteration is like classical capital, but it is inclusive of the extension that the proletariat can now invest thus it recognises, from cultural capital theory, their possession or potential to possess capital in its various forms, be they skills or knowledge, to invest. With Lin's neocapital going beyond the infrastructural and monetary considerations of capital, social capital becomes easier to understand and he agrees with the general premise of social capital being an investment in social relations with an expectation to obtain returns (Lin, 1999).

People as infrastructure

The third key concept pillaring this research is the notion of people as infrastructure as conceptualised by Simone (2004). Simone discussed the micro economies and intersections that the people of inner-city Johannesburg have created for themselves to get by daily. He based his study on empirical findings from Hillbrow in the early 2000s where the residents had formed micro economies comprising of little engagements and intersections on a social and economic level to exchange goods, services and even knowledge. To elaborate, Simone gave an account on how a lot of Hillbrow's residents survived which included vast informal trading like vending, goods repairs and touting; sharing economic information and helping out fellow immigrant compatriots among other activities.

These conjunctures had become the daily means through which many of the Hillbrow residents were surviving as they formed part or all their income. Simone (2004) conceptualised this, as people taking ownership and being productive in the ways they knew how without waiting on the state and corporate to aid them with the necessary infrastructure

to be productive. He instead saw the residents as being their own infrastructure by making use of each other (through social networks and social capital) in their daily socioeconomic engagements to survive and/or thrive hence the concept of people as their own infrastructure (Simone, 2004).

The concept of people as infrastructure was birthed in 2004, over fifteen years ago and it seems it is still applicable today. With the neighbourhood's population having increased from 60 000 to about 70, 000 people since then (Wazimap, 2016), the formal sector's absorptive capacity has further been incapacitated by this population growth meaning that more people are now reliant on each other for their daily survival. However, what facilitates this reliance on each other and connects the people together are social networks. People having some form of ties with one another makes it possible for them to do business with each other and share assets and information which is essential for them to get by.

Livelihoods

The aim of the research is to understand the impact of social networks on the livelihoods of those inner-city residents that participate in them thus making livelihoods a key theme and concept central to the research. Cornway and Chambers published some work on rural livelihoods in the early 90s and their paper went on to change how the concept of livelihoods is seen throughout. They saw a livelihood as comprising of "people, their capabilities and their means of living including food, income and assets" (Cornway and Chambers, 1992, p5) both tangible and intangible. The tangible assets according to them are resources and stores while the intangibles are claims and access (Cornway and Chambers, 1992). Carney (1998) later went on to look at poverty elimination in a different light, she used the livelihoods approach to understanding poverty elimination which she described as 'taking away the limiting factor to poverty elimination'. She saw livelihoods as a people centred mix of tangible and intangible assets that people make use of in order to eliminate poverty and make a living (Carney, 1998).

Cornway and Chambers (1992) and Carney's (1998) work went to play a vital role in propagating this 'new' view of livelihoods. More recently, Rakodi's (2014) definition of livelihoods is more direct and it is inspired by Cornway and Chambers' (1992) and Carney's (1998) pieces of work. She defined a livelihood as an assortment of competences, assets (tangible and intangible resources) and activities necessary for making a living. Meikle (2014) seconds Rakodi's definition of livelihoods by referring to it as the various assets people have

access to and make use of in order to secure better lives (Meikle, 2014). Both these understandings of livelihoods mirror the work of some of the 90s major proponents of this view of the concept.

Rakodi further gave an extension by discussing sustainable livelihoods in her work as a different (but not new) concept. Sustainable livelihoods had already been tapped into by some scholars before she did and a common denominator, they all added onto the livelihoods concept that would transform it to sustainable livelihoods is longevity or endurance. This mix of assets, competencies and activities people utilise to make a living ought to withstand different circumstances and scenarios thus making the people making use of them quite resilient (Cornway and Chambers 1992; Carney, 1998; Ashley and Carney, 1999; Scoones, 2009). Rakodi writes that a sustainable livelihood is one that is capable of withstanding shocks and anomalies while maintaining its capabilities and assets or even improving on them in the present and future without depleting the natural base resource (Rakodi, 2014). In addition to how Rakodi defines sustainable livelihoods, the concept is well unpacked by Ashley and Carney (1999) from a poverty elimination point of view when they defined sustainable livelihoods as the methods and strategies taken to reduce and eliminate poverty with lasting improvements against poverty indicators such as access to housing, education and health facilities and access to assured income levels (Ashley and Carney, 1999).

The inner-city social networks are being studied from a livelihoods lens. I attempt to understand their nature and just as importantly, understand their contribution to livelihoods. With thousands of inner-city residents living in immiserating circumstances, these social networks could prove quite vital to improving livelihoods in the area. Furthermore, and just as essential, sustainable livelihoods are an important element of the research too as there is not only need for people to assemble livelihoods but it is necessary for inner-city residents' livelihoods to have a lasting effect on their socioeconomic being thus sustainable livelihoods. While livelihoods can aid people in their survival, sustainable livelihoods can help them thrive. In Gewer and Rubin's (2015) study, they saw the potential in social networks to not only help the people of Hillbrow survive, but they saw the potential for them to thrive (Gewer and Rubin, 2015) and in order for one to thrive they ought eliminate poverty and according to Ashley and Carney (1998) this can be done via the sustainable livelihoods approach (Ashley and Carney, 1998).

Social Capital and resilience

The recent understandings of social capital draw their appreciation of the term from the works of scholars like Bourdieu (1985) and Hanifan (1916). Louis Hanifan (1916) who "identified social capital as good will, fellowship, mutual sympathy, and social intercourse among a group of individuals and families who make up a social unit" (Hanifan, 1916 cited in Aldrich and Meyer, 2014). Hanifan's definition is similar to that of social networks thus exemplifying the intersections between social capital and social networks. Another much cited proponent of social capital is Bourdieu who defined it as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources that are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu, 1985, p16). He (Bourdieu) cited social capital as one of four types of capital with the other three being economic, cultural and symbolic with all four playing an integral role in the trajectories of people's lives (Bourdieu, 1985 cited in Aldrich and Meyer, 2014). Putnam (1990) gave a broader definition of what social capital is and he saw it as the characteristics of social organisations like networks, norms, and trust that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit. His understanding of social capital therefore went beyond the bounds of the neighbourhood and he perhaps saw the idea of community going beyond physical geographies and into other aspects that enable the fostering of relationships among people.

The various conceptualisations of what social capital is can all be filtered down to potential resources which lie in relationships that can be materialised into concrete means for use by people (Coleman, 1988). The work of Lin (2001) does a very good job at aiding me in tying the notion of social capital to the idea of social networks. Lin defined social capital as those resources or assets etched in one's social networks and can be mobilised through ties in the relationships found within social networks (Lin, 2001). While Lin discusses the ties between social capital and social networks, Moser and Dani (2008) illustrate the link between social capital and livelihoods. They assert that livelihoods, in situations where formal employment in the formal sector is inadequate, are heavily dependent on the people's own asset base. This asset base can be accumulated through migration, housing investments, informal business and other engagements. This assembly of assets and the processes through which it is accumulated is what they indirectly define as social capital (Moser and Dani, 2008) and what Lin describes as social capital (Lin, 2001).

Social capital plays a vital role in the resilience of communities all around the world and more specifically, in cities of the south where these communities face turmoil and shocks (Aldrich and Meyer, 2014). In cities of the south turmoil is in the form of poverty, a lack of basic services in some areas and even in some contexts, oppressive governments. However, in the midst of all those circumstances that would normally condemn any community to despair, some people emerge out of such situations and survive, others even manage to thrive which is testament to their resilience. That resilience, according to Aldrich and Meyer (2014) is largely attributed to the social capital that these communities make use of to bounce back and overcome the circumstances they are going through.

The context in which Aldrich and Meyer discussed social capital and its role in the resilience of communities was from the lens of natural disasters like flooding and earthquakes which is quite different from the research I am undertaking. The research, as already mentioned, is on the impact social networks have on livelihoods; and entailed within social networks is social capital and the resilience aspect in the research does not stem from physical disaster but it comes in the context of Johannesburg inner-city's socioeconomic troubles as poverty and crime. Within one's social network, it is almost always guaranteed to find that there are actual or potential resources or what Lin (1999) refers to as assets of social capital that people can make use of to improve their livelihoods and be resilient to turmoil and shocks

The Character of the Inner City

The inner-city is a term used to describe the generally centrally located part of the city that is often characterised by low income residencies and a general state of decline (A more detailed discussion on the Johannesburg inner city is given in the context chapter of the research). One of the primary factors of this decline is the divestment of the formal sector from the centre of the city as cities grow. This process sees many corporations moving away from the crowded centre to more spacious and often less costly premises outside the core of the city (Goo, 2017). This is often followed by an exodus of the middle class and affluent residents away from the city to suburbia leaving the core almost desolate (Kruse, 2013). Low income people occupy the inner city afterwards but there is often an overlap between the wealthy moving out and the poor coming in (Kruse, 2013).

In Hillbrow this took place in the early 1990s after other economic nodes like Sandton in the north had been established and many companies moved away from the centre of the city to

the other nodes (Morris, 1999). This is a trend that began as far back as the 80s but was fast-tracked in the 90s by the country's transition to a democracy opening up the core of the city to the black community (Morris, 1997; Morris, 1999). As the black folk moved into the inner city, there was an exodus of the white people that had lived in there and they moved out to the suburbs (Stadler and Dugmore, 2017). That outward migration of the white community from the inner city to suburbia is known as white flight (Kruse, 2013).

Like many inner cities around the world, Johannesburg's inner city is in a state of deterioration from what it once was prior to the late 1990s to what it is today (Stadler and Dugmore, 2017). There is increasing grime on the city scape and there is a grave lack of investment and sustainable formal jobs in the area which, when writing about the American inner city, Porter (1995) says are the primary perpetuators of cyclic poverty, crime, drug abuse and other social ills seen also in the Johannesburg inner city. One may argue against Porter's view on the inner city with the argument of that a different light has been cast on them in recent years and that they are now seen as places of opportunity with a lot of potential for economic and social growth (Orum, 2018). However, this argument seems to view in inner cities with an optimistic lens but it does not seem to rule out Porter's assertion that they are in a 'bad' state. The new counter argument to Porter goes on to attempt to find new ways of revitalising the inner city which indirectly implies that they are in an unfavourable state (there would not be a need to revitalise what is 'good'). That is a big paradox on the 'positive light' argument on inner cities.

Solomon (2018) agrees with Porter at first by writing that inner cities are still "concentrations of the uneducated, unemployed, underemployed, and unemployable. Many fail to stay in school and others choose lives of drugs, violence, and crime" (Solomon, 2018, p.1). There is a correlation between low education levels and income (Stryzhak, 2020). Generally, it is the case that a college educated person is likely to secure a higher paying and more sustainable job than the next person with a similar profile but with minimal or no education at all (Stryzhak, 2020). Of course, there are some outlying cases where one is uneducated but has a relatively high income and vice-versa and these may be caused by various externalities such as the availability of opportunity or the lack thereof. Besides the outlying cases, that predicament of being uneducated does have a telling effect on employability and income and it is usually negative. Porter and Solomon seem to agree on the lack of sustainable employment in the inner-city with Solomon attributing that to poor education and Porter

attributing it to the lack of businesses and investment but both do go on to agree that the unemployment channels people to a path of poverty and the ripple of that are social issues such as crime and drugs. One could say that those social ills are a likely cause for businesses or potential employers snubbing the inner city to begin with making this one big cycle and, in a way, Porter and Solomon's work, in that respect, in synch (Porter, 1995; and Solomon, 2018).

But specific to the Johannesburg inner city and perhaps more dominant than the lower education levels and lack of investment cited above, are the high numbers of African immigrants living in the inner city as their first destination into the country. For many of them, documentation is a problem and they are unemployable because of their undocumented status while for others, desperation has seen them settle for 'work beneath them' because of their second-class citizen status resulting in them almost always not getting first preference for jobs. As a matter of fact, some of the immigrants living in Johannesburg's inner city are well educated as the research's context chapter will reveal. Since Hillbrow is a transitional city (Winkler, 2006; Gewer and Rubin, 2015), there are many residents of the neighbourhood that are recent arrivals and are in-between jobs or looking to for their first jobs, this too contributes to the Johannesburg inner city's relatively lower employment rate.

Porter (1995) however deviates from that of other scholars with his highly controversial ideas on how to revitalise the inner city. He proposes a method that is rather unorthodox but very much grounded on neoliberal principles. He saw government intervention, charity and work by NGOs in an attempt to improve the inner city as 'artificial inducements' that are not sustainable, create an over reliance on handouts for inner city residents and, in a way, cripples the inner city more than it does it any good. Porter argued for an organic market growth driven by the private sector's profit motive, a legitimate self-interest in economic growth that would generate an atmosphere of competitiveness in the greater city. In addition to Porter's organic growth argument, there could be a need to let the social networks at play in the neighbourhood organically take place, however informal they are, if they improve livelihoods (more on this is on the research's final three chapters).

Porter (1995) says the inner city would benefit from such an approach through the spread of that competition eventually getting to the inner city. Some of the benefits of the free market that Porter advocated for include the establishment of a plethora of businesses that would

employ people, a wide range of goods and services being provided at competitive prices which is always good for the customer and innovation on the part of the businesses to overcome competition (Porter, 1995). Furthermore, with increasing investment and competition in the inner city, more attention is brought to the area with both the state and corporate putting the inner city under the microscope. To protect their investments, businesses take on initiatives like CIDs (community improvement districts) to ensure that the social aspect of where they are situated is healthy (Ziebarth, 2019). As part of those initiatives, they sometimes use their influence to get the state involved and likewise the state also ensures the involvement of the private sector through social corporate responsibility. Such initiatives aid in doing away with afore mentioned social ills like crime (Ziebarth, 2019).

Local community

There is a general acceptance within the social sciences that the concept of 'community' carries with it serious ambiguity that makes it difficult to define (Mannarini and Fedi, 2009; Blokland, 2017)). This ambiguity has gone on to spark a debate with essentially two sides, one being for the use of the term and the other calling for a halt in its use in the social sciences (Blokland, 2017). The former seeks to re-establish the concept despite its ambiguity as it "expresses the emotional side of being together. From this point of view, the purpose served by small communities is still intact: individuals still seek high levels of interaction, common interests, identity, and shared values, and they are able to find them only in limited collectivities" (Mannarini and Fedi, 2009 p.212). The latter, on the other hand, claims that the concept has since lost relevance and appropriateness in modern society. "According to this perspective, modernisation erased the conditions, which would enable community to form and persist, replacing informal primary ties, and social cohesion, with formal secondary ties, and social fragmentation" (Mannarini and Fedi, 2009, p.212).

For the purposes of this research, I will be accepting the first argument that does acknowledge the ambiguity of the concept but still continues to see its usefulness to modern society (Neal *et al*, 2019). The reason for this is that when I still lived in Hillbrow, I saw and experienced some elements of social cohesion on a daily, be it my neighbour telling me about a discount on basic commodities at the local supermarket or the residents of my building meeting on the ground floor to address issues of safety on the block. The bulk of these engagements occurred organically and informally which leads me to the stance of completely rejecting the second

argument which asserts that modernisation erased those informal ties and the social cohesion replacing it with formal secondary ties and fragmentation.

Taking the first argument and accepting the concept of community is useful to the research because the way Mannarini and Fedi (2009) and Blokland (2017) describe community and the way I experienced and observed it in Hillbrow essentially aligns with what social networks and eventually social capital is. The high levels of interactions, common interests and identity described in the community concept are some of the principles on which social networks founded (Gewer and Rubin, 2015). Furthermore, the length of stay in the area also plays a role because the longer one stays in an area the more likely they are to have continuous and sustained interaction with other residents thus eventually creating community and social networks (Blokland, 2017; Neal, *et al*, 2019). The daily interaction among residents in the dense neighbourhood of Hillbrow builds and nurtures relationships of different forms and these different relationships comprise of one's social network (Gewer and Rubin, 2015).

The primary, close and personal ties are available and can be attributed to multiple reasons like people moving to the inner city with their families, share housing, and the high population density in the area creating an allowance for more interaction among the residents enough for them to make friends or other kinds of relationships (Gewer and Rubin, 2015). What I saw in the area is that population density and size does play a role in fashioning an atmosphere that allows for interaction but this is not to say that this attribution of forging relationships is completely divorced from the other that considers the length of stay in an area. While high density may foster interaction, a lengthy stay in the area will cultivate familiarity through continuous and sustained interaction which cumulatively builds relationships (Gewer and Rubin, 2015; Blokland, 2017; Neal *et al*, 2019). Contained within community, be it at the neighbourhood level or beyond and tied to these relationships; social networks are then established over time.

Precarity

Precarity is a term that come to prominence in recent years with use in political theory and sociological studies becoming more often over the last fifteen years (Paret and Gleeson, 2016). The use of the term can be traced as far back as Bourdieu's study of Algeria where he used the term to describe casual workers as opposed permanent ones (Waite, 2009 cited in Paret and

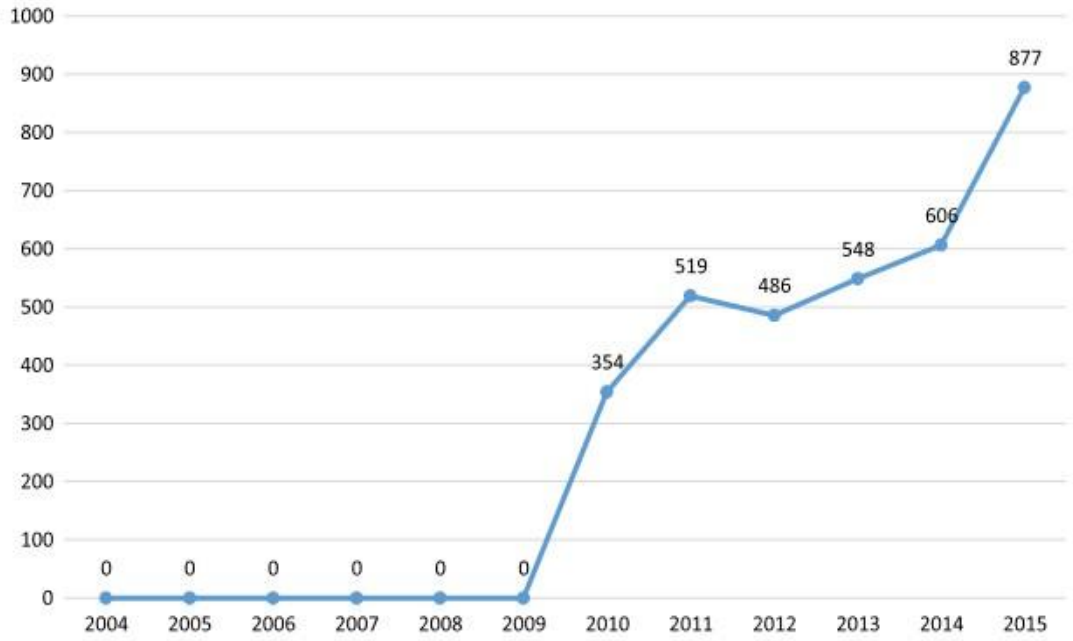


Figure 5. Mentions of precarity in google searches, 2004-2014. Source: Google Trends.

Gleeson, 2016). Paret and Gleeson argue that the term became popularised in the 21st century, some decades after Bourdieu's study when there was economic instability and a drive for austerity measures in Europe. The timing of the term's prominence in Europe coincides with housing market collapse of 2008 that was shortly followed by a global recession. See figure 5.

The perpetuation of the concept beyond Europe and as an analytical tool in academia was forged by Standing (2011) who identified an emerging global class that he called the 'precariat' who essentially consisted of those affected by an unstable economic atmosphere – cum – protestors (Standing, 2011; Paret and Gleeson, 2016). Defining precarity has come with some ambiguity as it is a relatively new term and there have been variations as to what exactly it entails. The more dominant understanding of the concept is one that puts the economy at the pivot, particularly the labour market and employment thus precarity being economic insecurity in that regard. With this logic, precarity then entails "a decrease in average job tenure, increases in long-term unemployment, perceived job insecurity, nonstandard work arrangements (e.g. temporary and outsourced work), and the reduction or elimination of employer contributions to pension and health insurance schemes" (Paret and Gleeson, 2016, p.279). Paret and Gleeson, with that mind, go on to argue that "precarious

work goes hand-in-hand with precarious livelihoods" (Paret and Gleeson, 2016, p.279) and such an assertion conforms with the research undertaken in this report`.

Looking at the nature and composition of Johannesburg's inner city which is largely characterised by a migrant population in a dilapidating inner city ravaged by crime and grime. As already discussed, there is minimal policing in the area and state intervention to revitalise the inner city has been lacking. This makes Johannesburg's inner city, and numerous others around globe with similar physical characteristics, quite precarious in that regard. The precarity gets deepened in the case of illegal immigrants living in Johannesburg's inner city as their stay in the area and the country as a whole is not guaranteed. Over a hundred of them are apprehended, detained and sent back home (deported) every week which makes them live on the edge and, for most of them, they try to stay invisible to the state. Being invisible to the state means that they live under precarious conditions where they are uncertain of their stay in the country, uncertain of their employment and uncertain on their housing situation as they are unable to sign legal leases and formal contracts as they do not have documentation.

Informality in the inner city

Another concept that will keep resonating in the research is that of informality and there are competing perspectives on how to view it. On the one hand there is the camp that is apprehensive about the effects of informality which are believed to be eventually leading the world towards an apocalyptic 'planet of slums'. From this perspective, informality is seen as symbolic of failing capitalism that has been unsuccessful in assimilating the growing number of urban labourers (Davis 2006 cited in Thieme, 2018). In this disapproving light informality is seen, "at best, as piecemeal, survivalist and akin to a poverty trap" (Marx et al, 2013 cited in Thieme, 2018, p.534) and at worst, it is seen as "a breeding ground for an increasingly abject and fractured urban sub-proletariat class waiting to erupt" (Thieme, 2018, p.534). In essence, this camp argues that informality is at most a means that people use to just to get by but does not necessarily uplift their livelihoods beyond the clutches of poverty, instead it reproduces poverty in a cyclic fashion. Looking at informality in its worst face, this perspective sees it as an instrument that does not aid the working class but rather frustrates and riles them up to an eventual tipping point at which society might breakdown (Thieme, 2018). A more outrightly cynical view of informality by Levy (2008) describes it as practices outside of policy

and state sanction enjoying the perks of avoiding regulations and taxes (Levy, 2008) and a report in the McKinsey Global Institute describes it as parasitic practices that unfairly compete with law-abiding firms and persons (Farrell, 2004 cited in La Porta, 2014).

The optimistic view of informality on the other hand sees potential rather than criminalising it. De Sonto (2000) sees informality as an unexploited tank of energy preserved by state regulations (De Sonto, 2000 cited in La Porta and Shleifer, 2014) and La Porta and Shleifer (2014) open their discussion by writing that informal firms account for "up to half of the developing world's economic activity" (La Porta and Shleifer, 2014, 109) and with this economic activity, informal firms provide livelihoods for billions of people.

There are many fast growing informal cityscapes especially in the global south (Miraftab and Kudva, 2014) These hastily growing informal cityscapes are positively seen as 'arrival cities' rather than a breeding ground for poverty and disorder. Arrival cities are the pockets and stretches of urbanities within the socioeconomic fringes (not necessarily pertaining to geographical location) of already established cities where migrants (rural to urban and from other countries) stay and make a life for themselves (Saunders, 2010). These arrival cities take shape in the form of slums, suburbia and migrant quarters both in cities of the north and the south. Saunders (2010) writes that they (the arrival cities) are not to be seen with abhorrence or fear but ought to be seen as an inevitable stage in modern day urbanisation (Saunders, 2010). Furthering this narrative is Huchzermeyer's (2011) study of 19th century Berlin and 21st century Nairobi that revealed evidence of informal cityscape dwellers willingly staying there because of the allowance to negotiate the prices of most commodities (including accommodation) in a localised economy that has been modified to suit the unpredictable nature of precariously low incomes (Huchzermeyer, 2011). Such favourable conditions would otherwise not be available in the more affluent neighbourhoods of the city as evidenced by the works of Holston (2009) in brazil and Bayat (1998) in Iran (Holston, 2009; Bayat, 1998 cited in Thieme, 2018).

Pasquetti and Picker (2017) observed that in this century there has been a growing number of people living informal lives. Their observation which they then asserted in a paper came with a lot of criticism for having derogatory undertones. However, I accept their observation in general and more specifically for the context of Johannesburg's inner city as there is a wide range of unregulated (by the state) activities taking place ubiquitously in Johannesburg's

inner city and everywhere else. The social networks I am studying in Hillbrow along with the bulk of the resultant activities that ensue as a result of these networks fall into that informality quarter. The working definition of informality for the purposes of this research is in line with the one which Chen et al (2016) gave. They defined informality as a range of "behaviours and practices that are not regulated or controlled by the state or formal institutions, including those related to income generation, service provision and settlements" (Chen et al., 2016: 336).

Ghani and Kanbur (2013), cited in Rogerson (2018), noted that informality is a defining character of southern cities and they even went to say that it is not at a decline but in fact, it is a growing phenomenon. Of course, this received some criticism from the pro-state camp but using the working definition of informality, Ghani and Kanbur's observation carries some weight. The major reason for this informality in cities of the south is the state lacking the capacity because of being under resourced, mismanagement of resources, conflict, historical reasons and/or any other reason that incapacitates governments in the global south (Miraftab, and Kudva, 2014). This is arguably the case in Johannesburg's inner city, there is minimal state involvement in the neighbourhood of Hillbrow and that creates an allowance for the people of Hillbrow to operate outside of the state (or perhaps they are left with just this option) to improve their livelihoods. They then have to build mutually beneficial relationships, networks that will help improve their 'hustle' (Ghani and Kanbur, 2013; Thieme, 2018; Rogerson, 2018).

Rogerson (2018) claims that informality is a 'defining' characteristic in the global south and more especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, he emphasises the relationship the informal sector has with the livelihoods of the people from sub-Saharan Africa by saying that the state's stance in policy and legislation would have a telling impact on their livelihoods; and unfavourable policy leads to informality. He goes on to be more country-specific and states that the informal economy in south Africa is a major source of people's livelihoods and that many of the participants in this informal economy are migrants coming from other subSaharan countries (Rogerson, 2018). Rogerson's paper seeks to examine the challenges faced by foreign entrepreneurs operating in the informal sector in relation to policy development for the informal economy of the City of Cape Town (Rogerson, 2018).

Hustle

The reason informality is such an integral component of this research is, as already stated, that it is entwined with both the two of concepts of social networks and livelihoods discussed in the research. To the eye that may see social networks and livelihoods as being concepts that are remotely placed from one another, informality becomes the thread that ties the concepts together. However, the concept of informality, on its own, is rather broad as informality can manifest in multiple forms. It could be in the form of settlements or one of the countless forms it could possibly take. The one shape of informality that fully resonates with this research is that of 'hustle' which is a substantial concept on its own that needs some unpacking.

Thieme's (2018) paper is rooted on empirical research conducted over a ten-year period in Nairobi and she uses the concept of hustle to understand the everyday dealings of people in times of uncertainty in urban environments (Thieme, 2018). She goes a step further from the much discussed and focused on political, socio-economic and structural issues faced by those living under unstable conditions; to give salience to the daily agentive struggle of people who self- identify with 'hustle' as a means of getting by in an urban environment bursting with precarity. The means they use in their 'hustling' go beyond the paid job governed by rules and momentums their personal and/or shared interests under rather improbable circumstances (Vigh 2006 cited in Thieme, 2018). Thieme builds a narrative on hustle that casts a light that sees it as an all-important component of getting by or making do as central to making a living. The above narrative is similar to that of my research that shows the relationship between social networks and livelihoods which is very much akin to the relationship 'making do' has with 'making a living' respectively. Both relationships speak to the informal engagements and activities people undertake (social networks and hustling) in order to earn enough to support themselves (livelihoods and making a living).

In the context of Thieme's Nairobi case study, hustling entails the practices the Nairobi youth (who are the subject of her study) undertake to "combine hand-to-mouth survivalism, shrewd improvisation, and a vibrant 'ghetto-based' politics of struggle that contests various appearances of authority" (Thieme, 2018). The bulk of their engagements take place in the informal waste business of Nairobi. While there may not be as big an industry in waste labour in Hillbrow, the people of Hillbrow do use their social networks to propel their informal

activities which, for the most part, is a combination of survivalist strategies taking place in the milieu of ghetto based (the inner city) politics.

Conclusion and conceptual framework

The purpose of this chapter is to ensure that there is a strong synthesis between the empirical content of the research, that is, the occurrences on the ground in terms of social networks, livelihoods and all that lies in between; and the theoretical aspect of the content, that is, what other scholars have published on this content in different contexts. This synthesis then brings about the conceptual framework of the research which shows how all these concepts that arise throughout the research are interlinked in the grand scheme of things.

In the conceptual framework takes shape within the context of the inner city, the inner city provides the main parameters of the research. However, there are instances where an innercity resident gets employed or applies their hustle outside of the inner city or they have loved ones or people within their social networks who do not reside in the inner city as the findings chapter will show. Nonetheless the bulk of the occurrences are in the inner city. The inner city also provides and atmosphere conducive for the establishment of social networks because of the high densities there and therefore higher interaction among the residents. Still on the atmosphere cultivated by the inner city; the high unemployment, presence of undocumented foreign nationals, divestment of formal sector and low formal employment absorptive capacity of what remains of it creates precarious living conditions for inner city residents. The precarity compels the residents to make use of their social networks to try and improve their livelihoods. Entailed in the exploitation of those social networks are informal practices and engagements, the assembling of social capital and general hustling. All these are meant to improve the inner-city residents' livelihoods, help them survive and even thrive in the innercity. Refer to the figure 6 for a diagrammatic illustration of the conceptual framework.

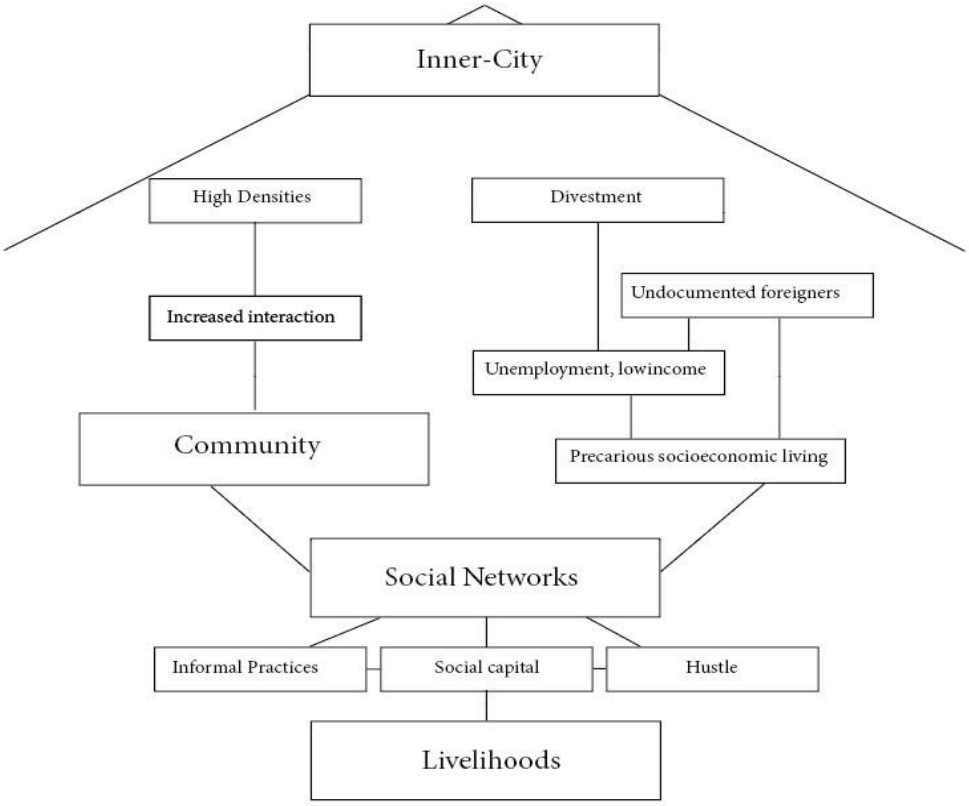


Figure 6. An illustration of the research's conceptual framework. Source: Author, 2020

Chapter 3. Context and Study Area.

Introduction

In the preceding two chapters I discussed that the research is rooted in empirical evidence found in the inner city of Johannesburg with a focus on the neighbourhood of Hillbrow. Johannesburg holds the unofficial title of being South Africa's main city of work, hustling and generally earning a better living than what one would otherwise earn if they were elsewhere (Rogerson and Rogerson 2015). Some may even argue that Johannesburg is that main city of economic opportunity not only in South Africa but in Southern Africa as well (Rogerson and Rogerson 2015). Thousands move to Johannesburg from the rest of South Africa and other parts of Africa every year in search of work and an improved livelihood for themselves and their families. Johannesburg's economic possibilities and the opportunities it presents for people to improve their livelihoods makes the city an interesting place to carry out this research on social networks and livelihoods.

The Johannesburg inner-city is one of the areas to which many new arrivals move to and this has, over time, made the inner city a melting pot of different African nationalities and cultures all densely populated in a diverse community. The case of Hillbrow is a peculiar one as the neighbourhood presents the conditions most necessary for the establishment of social networks because of its high density that fosters tight-knit relationships. The area is a place of precarity as defined and described in the second chapter, this also makes it the ideal site to study since many residents are compelled to go beyond the conventional 'nine to five' means of making a living and securing a livelihood. Furthermore, the neighbourhood's central location within the city and its close proximity to the CBD and major public transport nodes like Park Station, Bree and MTN Taxi ranks almost ensures that more people keep moving to Hillbrow every year (especially low income earners new to Johannesburg and some even new to South Africa) as it allows them access to places of opportunity through public transport. This makes Hillbrow more interesting and sets the neighbourhood apart from other highly dense places of precarity like Diepsloot, Kya Sands, Tembisa and Orange Farm which are rather on the margins of the city. For the most part, these three traits that Hillbrow possesses; the high density, precarious living and central location (along with the occurrence that I lived in the area for a little over a year), have all influenced my decision to make it the study area of this research. The latter allows me to take up a slight ethnographic orientation where I will

reflect on some of my experiences and observations on the subject of the research. This chapter sheds more light on the study area providing information on its history, the forces at play that led to its current state and how it affects and is affected by its residents and ultimately the study area's role in the social networks and livelihoods of its residents.

The history of Hillbrow.

The neighbourhood of Hillbrow has gone through telling political periods that have structured and significantly informed the neighbourhood's status quo. In addition to that, the development of the neighbourhood has also been influenced by how the greater city of Johannesburg has developed over time. Thus I will look at how Hillbrow's history is entwined with the city's; and, sporadically, the country and continent's histories feature in some parts of the chapter---1

Part of my task in this chapter, regarding the history, is to present the moments in history that are pertinent to the research and the current status quo of the study area. For the most part these snapshots in time will constitute spatial, socioeconomic and political elements which are not mutually exclusive but interact and affect one another. A singular snippet or event in history is more likely to carry two or more of those elements than it is likely to have just one. Some of the significant moments in the history of the neighbourhood are shown in

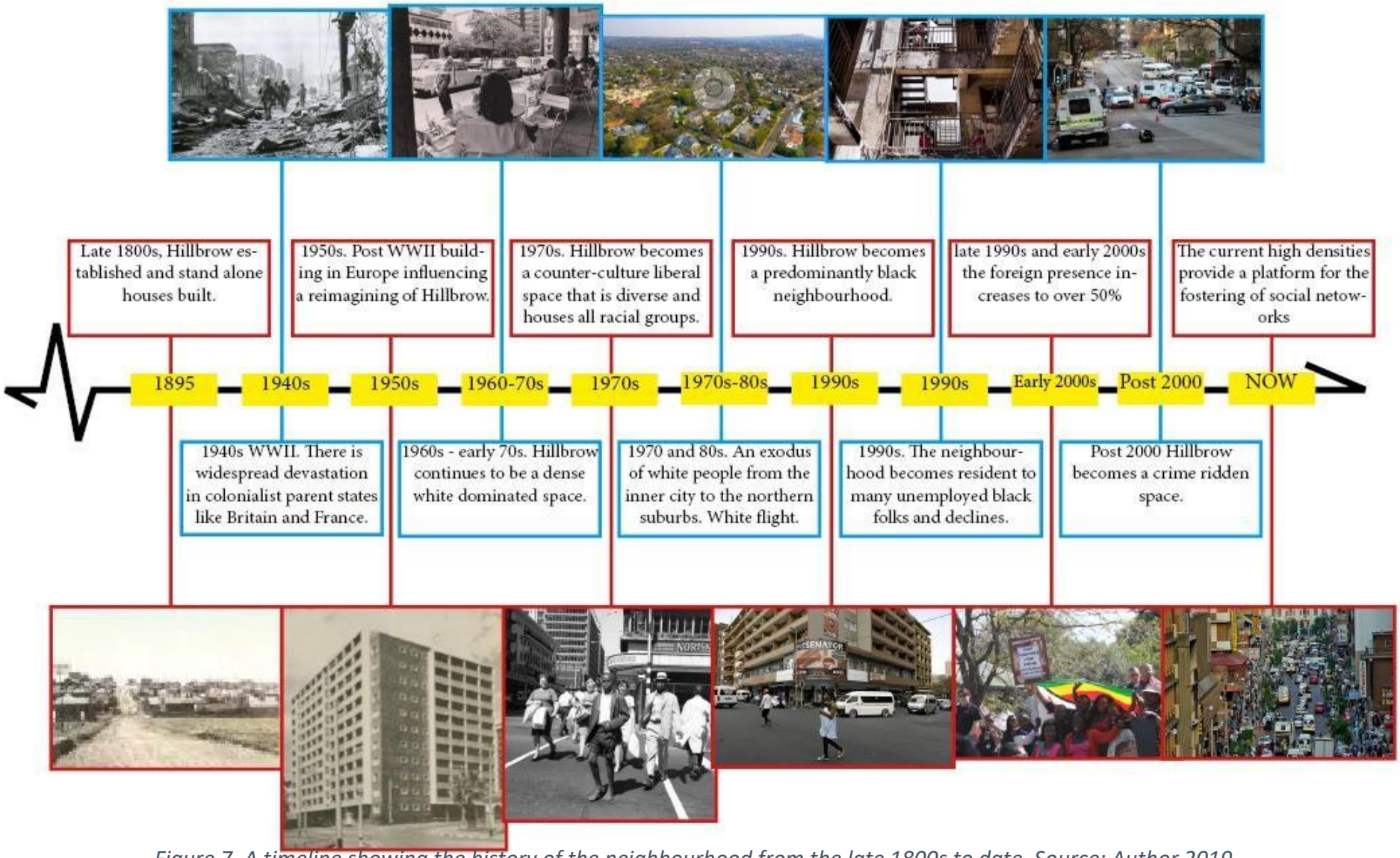


Figure 7. A timeline showing the history of the neighbourhood from the late 1800s to date. Source: Author 2019.

The establishment of the neighbourhood

Hillbrow lies on what was a farm called Randjeslaagte prior to the discovery and of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 and the subsequent establishment of Johannesburg as a small mining town (which rapidly grew into the metropolis that it is today). In the early 1890s there was a dispute on who owned this land and it was established by a court ruling in 1893 that the land on which the neighbourhood stands today was owned by J. Nicholls who, soon after the ruling, promptly sold the land to the Transvaal Mortgage, Loan and Finance Company[1]. About a year later, in 1894, the land was officially surveyed and on the 20th of March 1894 (Grant and Flinn, 1992) permission was received to change what had been mining claims to residential stands. The first laid out stands took on a right-angled triangular shape which had is southern base/border as Pretoria St, the perpendicular eastern boundary being what is

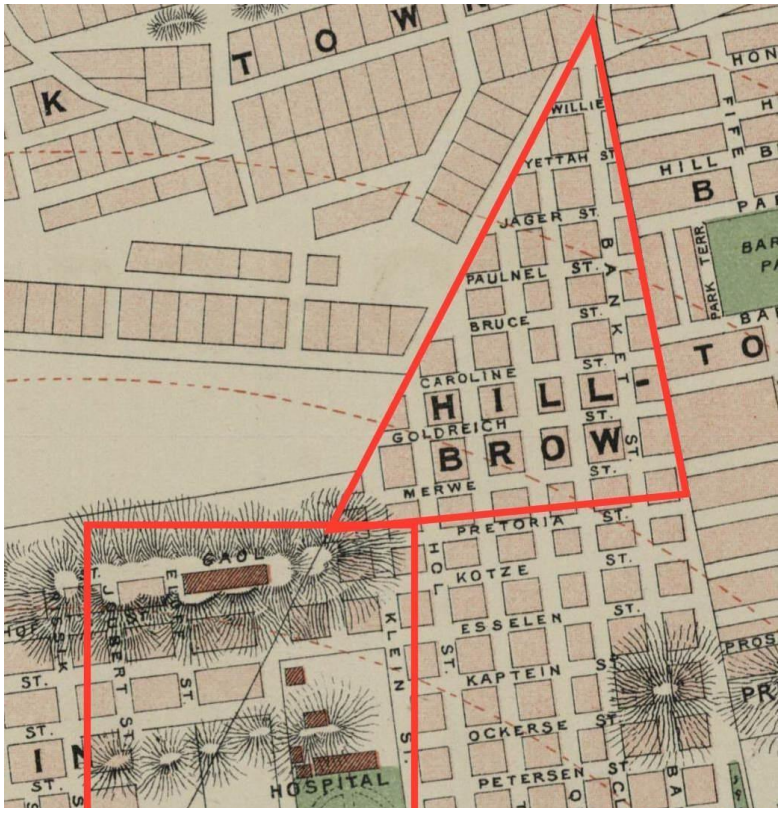


Figure 8. Figure 8 is an illustration of Hillbrow showing the initial right-angled boundary of the neighbourhood.

[1] Transvaal was a province in South Africa officially demarcated in 1910 and was in actuality until 1994 at the end of apartheid. It stretched from the central part of the country to the upper most northern section bordering Southern Rhodesia which became Zimbabwe in 1980.

Banket Street and the hypotenuse completing the shape of the area lay on what is Clarendon St today (Latilla, 2016). See figure 8.

The area that Hillbrow covers currently is much larger that. The triangular lay out of a century ago now makes up the northern third (or so) of the neighbourhood with the other two thirds being a southerly extension down Klein Street as the western border and to the east, the stretch of road, with intermittent breakages, in the form of Catherine Avenue, Nugget Street and End Street up to the point where Saratoga Avenue parts into Smit and Wolmarans Street with Wolmarans Street making the southern border of the neighbourhood (Latilla, 2016). Figure 9 shows the new boundary of Hillbrow as described above.



Figure 9. A map showing an aerial view of the study area's new boundaries in the context of the inner city. Highlighted in Black is the Hillbrow Clinic precinct. Source: Author 2019.

An advertisement on the sale of the stands was featured in *The Standard Diggers and News*, a local paper of the time, in June 1895. The description depicted the property as stands on the brow of Hospital Hill (hence the name Hillbrow) reaching Parktown and Berea. 466 stands were up for sale at first and one of the conditions on the sale was that there were not to be any shops erected, the area was strictly to be residential. Additional information on the title deeds of these properties was on the rights to the minerals found on or under the property, these were completely reserved to the crown (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1986; Nyamjoh, 2016); and this was for the whole of the Transvaal, not just Hillbrow (Beavon, 2003).

Another significant clause on the title deeds dated in 1895 was the ethnicity of the people that could purchase and reside on the property. The title deeds made it "unlawful" for people of colour purchase the properties in Hillbrow and it was also illegal for them to reside on the property with the exception of those that were bona-fide servants of the white property owners and/or white occupants of the property. This is another piece of evidence in addition to census data that shows Hillbrow's history of the neighbourhood being a predominantly white neighbourhood before 1994 (StatsSA, 2016; Latilla, 2016).

In 1897 Hillbrow became part of the Johannesburg Sanitary Board's jurisdiction and by that, it became part of what was the Johannesburg T at the time. Most of the houses built in the area were residential stand-alone houses and the area began to flourish with more and more people purchasing property, building and moving into the area. These stand-alone houses were soon to be reimagined and reinvented into the more profitable, numerically more accommodating and taller structures. This came into being in the 1920s because of the technological advancement in construction industries that took place around that time (Latilla, 2016; Stradler and Dougmore, 2017).

Post WWII Hillbrow

This trend of taller buildings replacing stand-alone, single storey houses gradually went on until 1946 when the trend was accelerated by the lifting of height restrictions in the neighbourhood. The restrictions were lifted by municipality in light of the new global building inclination of densifying upwards. The height restriction removal coincided with the end of the Second World War a year before, in 1945. The World War's influence on the grandeur of buildings found in

Hillbrow lies with the war's devastation conjuring up innovative post war architectural ideas to rebuild (Curtis, 1986; Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith, 1991; Corbusier, 2013). These ideas were soon adopted beyond the borders of France, Britain, Japan and Germany who were mostly ravaged by the war and made their way to other parts of the world like South Africa.

In Africa this influence was mostly seen in French and British colonies and in South Africa, Hillbrow particularly, there was a huge French and Brazilian influence. Post war South African architects found inspiration in the works of French architects Le Corbusier and Le Hevre and Brazilian Architect Niemyer (Stipersky et al, 2011). A lot of Hillbrow's buildings therefore demonstrated that Brazilian and French influence. These buildings include the Von Brondis Heights built in 1952 showing the Brazilian influence with its tall structure and square concrete window seals protruding outward beyond the building's walls and many others (Grant and Flinn, 1992; Latilla, 2016).

In the 1960s the city experienced an economic boom and it gave rise to a second building boom that further catalysed the construction of tall buildings in Hillbrow, but that boom began to decline in 1971 when the housing supply in Hillbrow began to meet the demand (De Certeau, 1984). By 1973, Hillbrow's flats exceeded the housing demand and, consequentially, there were a lot more flats than people to occupy them and building had to be halted. By the beginning of the 1980s, the private stand-alone houses of Hillbrow were close to being nonexistent but no additional tall buildings were being added (De Certeau, 1984; Grant and Flinn, 1992). The 1980s spatial character of the city from a bird's eye view is very much akin to that of today.

White flight

In the 1970s the neighbourhood was still a strictly white area by law, according to the Group Areas Act (1950). There were still some people of colour that lived in Hillbrow, the bona-fide employees of the white population that lived in the neighbourhood. The people of colour mainly kept to their rooms at the top of Hillbrow's high rises in what is informally known as 'locations in the sky' or sky 'townships' (BMC Public Health, 2017). But because of the high density and tight knit nature of the neighbourhood these people of colour were gradually incorporated and accepted as legitimate members of the Hillbrow community. By the late 70s moving into the early 1980s, the group Areas Act began to be slowly eroded by a growing number of coloured and

Indian folk moving into the neighbourhood because of a lack of accommodation in their designated areas and the same happened with black designated areas as well a few years later. That shortage of accommodation in the black, coloured and Indian areas was met by a housing surplus in Hillbrow hence the occupation of the neighbourhood.

By the mid-1980s Hillbrow had morphed into a very liberal space that was more 'accepting' of other ethnic groups outside of the ruling whites (Conway, 2009; Latilla, 2016). On the basis of the neighbourhood being liberal, there was also a growing population of the LGBTQ+ community. By the 1990s, there were more black people in Hillbrow than there were white folks and other racial groups with about 83% of the population being black (Census, 1996; Latilla, 2016). Along with this trend came an increase in the number of unemployed black people in the neighbourhood as well (Morris, 1999). South Africa's official transition to a democracy in 1994 marked the formal abolishment of all racially imbued laws including spatial restrictions that curtailed people of colour's freedom of movement and that was inclusive of the neighbourhood of Hillbrow (Beavon, 2006).

The influx of people of colour into Hillbrow along with the decay and decline of the neighbourhood for various reasons, one of which was the increase in the population of unemployed black people in the neighbourhood, which led to an outward exodus of the white affluent residents. This outward movement was not only a result of Hillbrow and the rest of the inner city's push factors, but it was because of the pull factors presented by the establishment of an upmarket suburbia in the northern half of Johannesburg (Silverman and Zack, 2008; Beavon and Larsen, 2014). This trend of movement of white people from the core into the outer and less dense neighbourhoods of the city fit the description of the term 'white flight'[2].

The Hillbrow-northern suburb white flight did not particularly take place in 1994, 1994 marked the official end of apartheid but Hillbrow had already been 'appropriated' by people of colour ten to twenty years before that. The 1970s and 80s appropriation of Hillbrow coincided with the first wave of white flight. However, this is not to say that there was no exodus of white people

[2] White flight refers to a mass migration of white folks from racially diverse regions of the city, to areas that are more racially homogenous (Kruse, 2013).

from Hillbrow to the northern suburbs in 1994 but this was only a continuation of an exodus that had already began (Matshediso and Wafer, 2015).

Hillbrow becomes a 'sanctuary' for African foreign nationals.

The liberal nature of the neighbourhood in the 70s and 1980s made it a zone that was defiant of the racial segregation mandated by the apartheid government. The tall apartment buildings also made the neighbourhood quite attractive to those that sought low income affordable housing in the industrious city of Johannesburg. Also, Hillbrow's central location within the city was favourable as it allowed people easier access to places of work in the CBD and easier access to public transport to other parts of the city There were thousands of people seeking such housing at the time because Johannesburg was and still is the economic capital of the country. This status that the city acquired from the late 1800s when gold was first discovered in the Witwatersrand up to the present time made it an attraction to people coming in from far and wide (Beavon, 2006; Silverman and Zack, 2008). Another group of people drawn into Johannesburg were black Africans from other parts of the country and other countries of the African continent. This group made up the working class of the city's population and a large fraction of them worked the mines. With time, as the black population grew larger, demand for low cost housing conversely increased and Hillbrow's high rise residential buildings were conveniently available for that (Mpe, 2001; Hunt 2006).

This fashion marked the beginning of Hillbrow becoming a haven for black foreign nationals in the 1970s and 1980s and the immigration figures kept growing every year (Moyo, date unknown). A comparison of Hillbrow's census data from 2001 and 2011 shows significant growth in foreign presence within the neighbourhood. Close to 10% of the population was classified as non-citizens (foreign) in 2011 and ten years later a staggering 42% of Hillbrow's population was classified as noncitizens (StatsSA, 2011; Moyo, date unknown). The number of foreign nationals living in the area grew exponentially because of the ripple effect brought by the first wave of African immigrants. The undulation is in the sense that, for a lot of these immigrants, they had to sustain two households, themselves in Hillbrow and loved ones left at home. However, with time and a better livelihood they would get some of their loved ones to join them in Hillbrow thus increasing the foreign presence in the area. This current trend of foreign nationals moving into the area and

their loved ones coming to join them morphed into an incessant cycle carried on until the present day (Hunt, 2006; Silverman and Zack, 2008).

Hillbrow's Status Quo: 'Honey, Milk and Bile'

Present day Hillbrow sparks an amalgamation of outlooks from insiders and onlookers alike. These mixed feelings stem from different possible lenses one could have on to view the neighbourhood. The title of this section is inspired by the work of Stadler and Dugmore (2017) who in turn were inspired by Phaswane Mpe's novel, Welcome to Our Hillbrow. Honey, milk and bile metaphorically captures the afore mentioned mix of outlooks invoked by the neighbourhood's current state with honey and milk symbolising the richness and opportunity Hillbrow presents and bile symbolising the stark opposite in the form of the ills the neighbourhood simultaneously offers. Stadler and Dugmore (2017) encapsulate the above impeccably, they write:

> "Hillbrow serves as a kind of 'sanctuary' that presents economic opportunities for poor, displaced, and marginalised people from within and outside South Africa. It is a place of strangers in which it is possible to shelter and forge a new life, a place of "flow, of entry and exit", of hopefulness and opportunity. Yet, it is also an uncertain "fragmented space" of "poverty, violence and dysfunction that emerges directly from apartheid and global inequalities". Our title for this commentary, borrowed from Phaswane Mpe's acclaimed novel, captures the paradoxes and contradictions of everyday life in Hillbrow" (Stadler and Dugmore, 2017, p121).

There is another interesting perspective given by some of my research interviewees and encapsulated by Ivan Vladislavic's (2001) novel, The Restless Supermarket. This perspective controversially aligns Hillbrow's decline with white flight and the influx of black folks moving into the neighbourhood. In the Restless Supermarket, Vladislavic gives an account of Hillbrow from the shoes of a retired conservative white man who believes that the negative changes in the neighbourhood's character are reflective of the regime change in the country, that is, the transition from white apartheid rule to a black dominated democracy. This outlook seems to perpetuate the notion that black presence and black rule is negative, undesirable and are to be credited for Hillbrow and post 1994 South Africa's 'demise'.

Inner city decline

Hillbrow, along with the rest of the inner city went into a state of decline which became much visible in the early 2000s. The decline was a result of several factors and the principal one was the divestment from the neighbourhood. When a lot of businesses left and set-up-shop elsewhere, there was some disenchantment over the neighbourhood. The property values decreased as the more affluent white population and black middle class who had lived there left and the low-income black folk moved in. This even led to a widespread sale of apartment properties, neglection of some and even a total abandonment of other inner-city buildings by their owners leaving many of the buildings with little or no funding for maintenance. The lowincome status of the people living in the area meant that little was paid for rentals meaning there was little for building maintenance as well, thus reproducing the decline cycle.

Being low income earners coupled with a strong undocumented foreign presence and high densities bred informality in Hillbrow. There are vast informal practices in the neighbourhood ranging from informal street trading, share housing and subletting of apartments, cell phone and car repairs, cleaning services and many other informal practices. At times these practices are illegal, and people engage in criminal activities thus contributing to the high crime rate in the neighbourhood and the crime in turn further deepens that decline. Even worse than the illegal informal practices is the violent crime the neighbourhood has now become infamous for. In 2019 Hillbrow recorded one of the highest numbers of reported murders for a single neighbourhood in the country, 111 and close to 1000 common robberies like muggings on the street (Crime Stats SA, 2019) which are all testament to the decline of the neighbourhood.

Hillbrow's housing situation

The decline seemed to be more attuned with landlord-tenant dynamics than it was with the change in the racial profile of the neighbourhood. The landlord-tenant dynamics resulted in the physical dilapidation of buildings and overcrowding (Stradler, 2017). The low maintenance of the buildings also meant that there was a shortage of services like water and electricity in some buildings. The chief cause of the poor maintenance, poor service supply and overcrowding is that the divestment from the neighbourhood also entailed that building owners neglected, sold or outright abandoned their buildings in Hillbrow and set their sites on other property investments. The overcrowding is also encouraged by landlords in their eagerness to fill up the properties with

residents who aren't eligible for rent control (Stradler, 2017). Though rental prices in Hillbrow are relatively lower than that of the more upmarket neighbourhoods, for many of the residents there, they are still quite steep. Many of them have resorted to informally subletting their apartments to other residents for economic benefits, splitting the rent. In buildings with little or no control at all the subletting can result in up to ten (sometimes more) people sharing a single apartment meant for two people at most (Mayson and Charlton, 2015).

Another common practice occurring in Hillbrow's buildings is the unsanctioned occupation of abandoned and unused buildings. Some of the neighbourhood's residents, out of desperation, move into abandoned buildings and occupy them for accommodation. In most cases of unsanctioned occupation, the people that live there pay a small fraction of what they would normally pay in fully functional buildings; they pay this amount to the person who championed the moved into the building, that person becomes the 'landlord' or when seen negatively, a slum lord. The landlord then deals with issues of tenure, tenants moving in and out of the building and disputes. In some cases, the landlord may do all these duties and not require any money from the building occupants, they live rent free (Mayson and Charlton, 2019).

While Hillbrow is dominated by residential apartments, many of the residents do not limit the use of these buildings/apartments to just residential use. They extend the uses of these buildings to support their informal trade (Rubin et al, 2016; Harrison et al, 2018). Some residents sell goods and services in their residential buildings and many of the buildings have spaza shops or some form of retail on the ground floor and there are even some whose parking lots are informally being used as workspaces for car repairs and light metal and wood workshops among other uses. Rubin *et al* (2016) refer to this extension of use of space as the reterritorialisation by repurposing and retrofitting residential space to adapt it to more multipurpose and income generating uses (Rubin et al, 2016).

The neighbourhood's demographic

Regarding the demographic statistics of Hillbrow, various secondary sources of data give conflicting figures. Some sources give quite conservative figures while others are quite generous with the figures. The main sources of statistical data that I consulted with for Hillbrow's

demographic figures are StatsSA, WaziMap and EasyData. The leading reason for this divergence in the figures is Hillbrow's organic like nature that sees the neighbourhood change and morph from one state to another on almost a daily basis and that a lot of people want to stay hidden. There hundreds of people coming into Hillbrow every week and similarly, there is also an outflow of people going out. While there may be an in and outflow of people in almost all other neighbourhoods, the figures and the rate at which it is taking place in Hillbrow are quite rampant. The population of Hillbrow stands at about 75,000, odd, and this is quite a conservative estimate of the neighbourhood's population (StatsSA, 2016). The more generous claims of what the population of Hillbrow stands at give figures amounting to well over 100,000. Again, these figures are always subject to significant change on a regular basis hence the variations from the different sources of data. The neighbourhood is officially within the bounds of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality as per the Demarcation Board of South Africa post 1994 and it lays on about 1.08 km² of land. A figure as high as 75,000 people on just over a square kilometre of land makes the neighbourhood's population density astonishingly high at about 69500 persons/ km².

Unpacking the 75000

Gender

There is a general gender balance with the 75000 people that live in Hillbrow save for a minute skew towards a male dominance. The distribution is very close to parity at 51% for males and 49% for females. I claim that these figures are reflective of an even gender balance, but this is only with regards to the population distribution. The gender balance seems to be more inclined towards males in general and at certain, but very sporadic stages, it tips towards the females in the area. As the findings chapter will reveal later on the report.

Racial groups

Having established that the 75000 people of the neighbourhood of Hillbrow is close to evenly distributed between male and female residents, there are other demographic sets that act as divides or layers to put the people of Hillbrow in different subgroups. Another layer to unpack the population of Hillbrow is that of race. Race is a fundamental issue in the general South African

context as socioeconomic issues seem to tread along racial lines. The issue of race was seemingly interesting in the 1970s when the neighbourhood was racially diverse breaking down apartheid South Africa's imposition of racial segregation in space. This intriguing trait about the neighbourhood of Hillbrow seemed to lose relevance once Hillbrow became racially unvarying, that is predominantly black (98%).

Predominant languages

While Hillbrow has a 98% black presence regarding the population, making the neighbourhood racially homogenous, there can still be a further breaking down of the area into a much narrower look at the ethnicity of the neighbourhood. Since Hillbrow is chiefly an 'arrival city' meaning that the greater portion of the population moved into Hillbrow from outside the neighbourhood, the city, province and even outside the country; it is the case that the people in the area speak different languages. The languages spoken in the neighbourhood paint a clearer picture of where the neighbourhood's residents are from. Furthermore; language, as will be shown in the findings

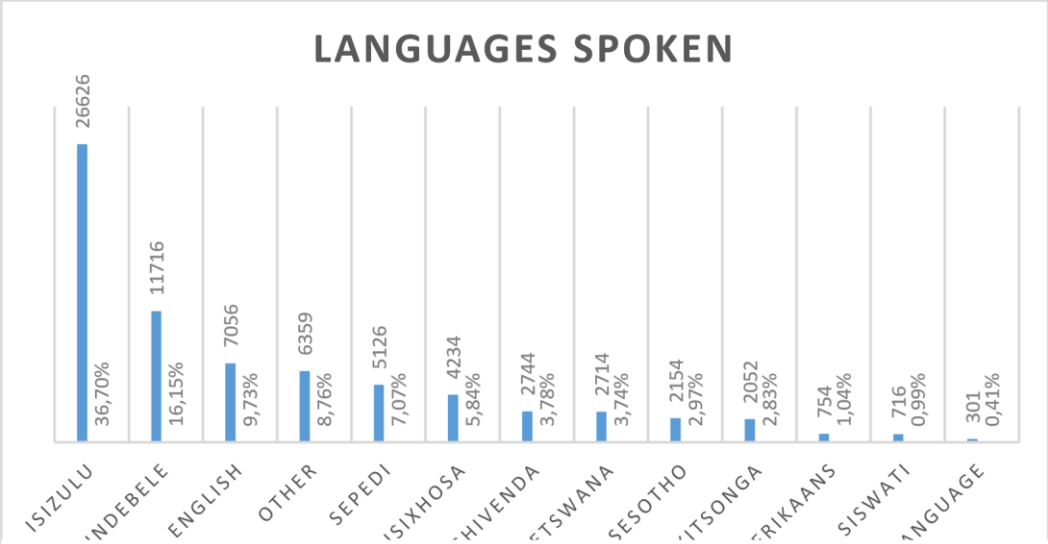


Figure 10. A table representing the languages/ethnicities of the residents living in the neighbourhood. Source: Wazimap, 2019

chapter, is one of the aspects around which some networks are built – the commonalities in language.

Hillbrow's language statistics show that the neighbourhood is quite diverse with regards to the language spoken and most of them are African languages. IsiZulu is the dominant language spoken with 36% of the population speaking it. As some of my respondents disclosed in the

interviews I carried out, IsiZulu is dominant because of its close similarity to Southern Zimbabwe's IsiNdebele and quite a lot of IsiNdebele speaking Zimbabweans in Hillbrow, especially the undocumented ones, often pass off their first language as IsiZulu in order to mask themselves as IsiZulu speaking South African citizens. IsiNdebele comes as a second to IsiZulu with 16% of the population speaking the language. This is largely attributed to the strong presence of southern Zimbabweans in the neighbourhood and the presence of the AmaNdebele tribe South African citizens who speak the slightly different language but with the same name, IsiNdebele. The third most spoken language in Hillbrow is English and that is because of its widespread nature. For most Hillbrow's foreign residents that do not speak any of South Africa's local languages, English is almost always their 'go to' language hence it comes third behind the prevalent Zulu and Ndebele languages.

A mix of other languages spoken by foreign nationals from Mozambique, Zimbabwe's northern regions, Malawi, Nigeria and other parts of Africa amounts to 9% with all the other official languages spoken in the country following thereafter and sign language being the least used language in the neighbourhood. Figure 10 illustrates these languages quite well; it gives the percentiles and the exact figures of people speaking particular languages.

From the scrutiny of the languages spoken in the neighbourhood where I attempt to attribute their being to where the people are from; a sense of people's place of birth, which is essential for building a demographic profile of the neighbourhood, is given. Close to half of ward 63's residents were born outside of the country with about 41% of the people being foreign nationals while 35% of ward 62's residents are foreigners. To confirm Hillbrow's arrival city status, for both wards 62 and 63, only 23% of the population were born in Gauteng. Even so, of that 23% some were born in Pretoria, Sedibeng, Ekurhuleni and the West Rand reducing that 23% figure to an even lower one (Census, 2011; WaziMap, 2016).

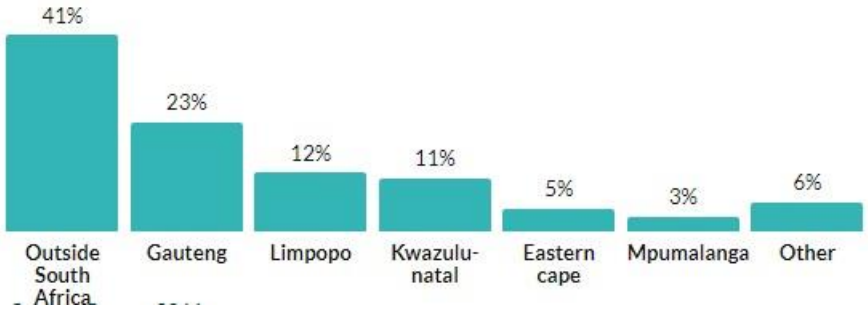


Figure 11. A representation of the places of origin for the Ward 63 residents. Source: Wazimap, 2019.

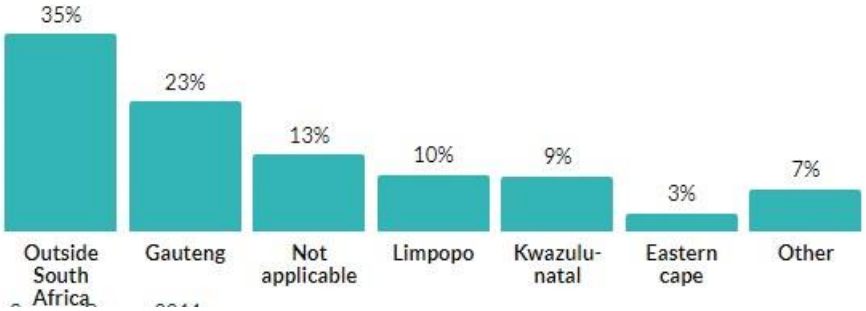


Figure 12. A representation of the places of origin for the Ward 62 residents. Source: WaziMap, 2019

The two administrative wards

Hillbrow is under the jurisdiction of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality in Gauteng. The city is spatially extensive which makes local government's administrative work quite tedious. The model that the city has therefore adopted post-apartheid is that of the subdivision of the city into multiple smaller regions and an even further subdivision into the much more manageable administrative wards. Each ward is overseen by a democratically elected ward councillor and ward committee who serve as the official representatives of the community at local government. Elections of these councillors are carried out and administered at ward level and, typically, so are the national parliamentary and presidential elections. This means that at ward level, community members are registered to vote, and they provide some statistical information about themselves which provides the basis for data needed to paint a picture of the demographic and socioeconomic status of the community. The picture becomes clearer with further research like census data collection and other research-oriented initiatives.

The one square kilometre of land taken up by the neighbourhood of Hillbrow is under the jurisdiction of two wards, namely ward 62 and ward 63. All of ward 62 has its boundaries within the neighbourhood however ward 63 is partially in Hillbrow with it being split between Hillbrow and the bordering neighbourhood of Berea. These administrative wards are easier to work with regarding the collection of statistical data on the communities, therefore I will be using secondary sources that presents data on people on the ground from ward to ward. The wards that are of interest to the research are Wards 62 and 63.

Employment

To get a general sense of the socioeconomic status of the neighbourhood, the first point of call is Hillbrow's employment figures. In Ward 62, 54% of the population is employed with 29% of the residents not being economically active. Unemployment is at a standard 16% (the province and the country are slightly higher at 17 and 18% respectively) and about 1% of the population is discouraged from job hunting. The employment statistics for Ward 63 are not too deviant from

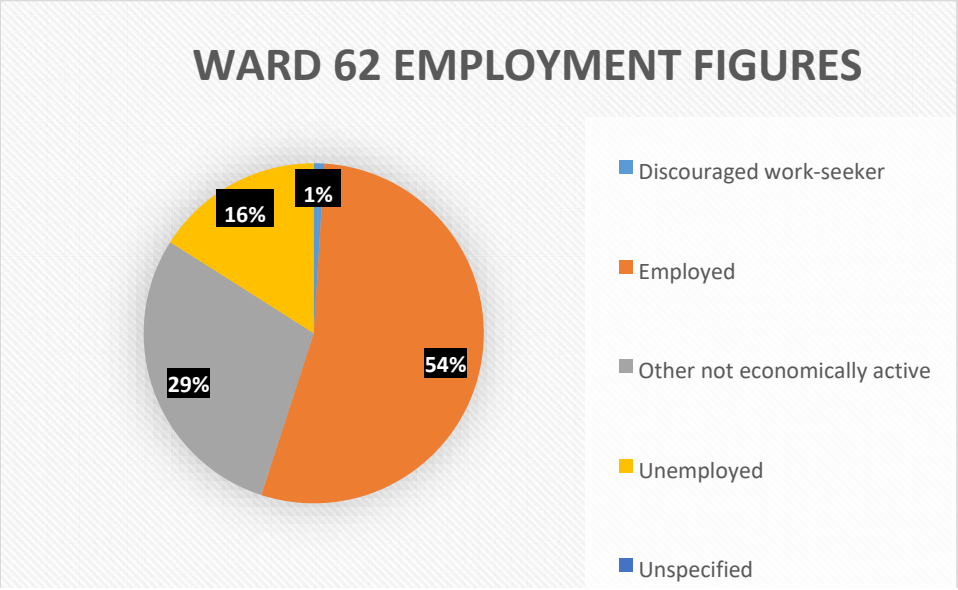


Figure 13. A pie chart showing the employment figures of Ward 62 residents. Source: WaziMap, 2019

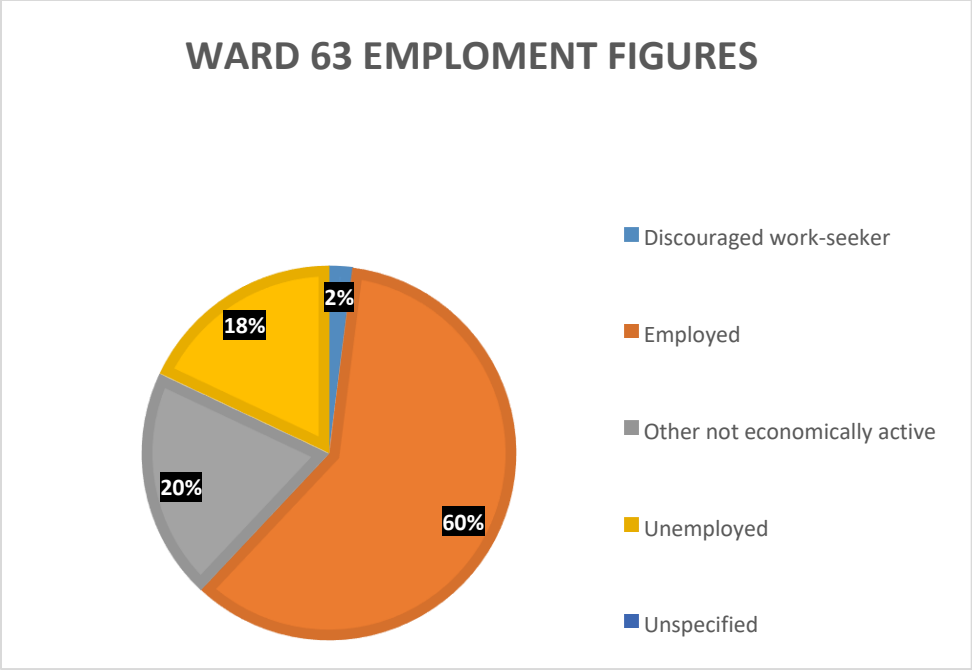


Figure 14. A pie chart showing the employment figures of Ward 63 residents. Source: WaziMap, 2019

those of Ward 62's. In Ward 63, 60% of the population is employed, about 20% are not economically active and about 18% of the residents are unemployed with 2% being discouraged job seekers.

The above employment figures are quite deceiving as they do not give an account of the informality in the area and, as already stated multiple times, informality is a key component of the neighbourhood and therefore it is a vital piece of the research. For Ward 62, of the 54% that are employed, 80% are formally employed with the rest being in the informal sector or employed in private households (mostly as domestic workers). Similarly, for Ward 63, of the 60% that is employed, 77% is formally employed while the others are in the informal sector and in private households. Furthermore, some of the people that are counted in the formal sector work multiple jobs to expand and increase their income sources. With this, some find themselves in both the formal and informal sectors – and this is a materialisation of the concept of 'hustle' discussed in the literature chapter and to be explored further in the findings chapter. Refer to figures 13 and 14 for a graphic representation of the employment figures.

Average income

Both Wards, thus the neighbourhood, have an annual average income of about R30,000 which comes down to a measly R2500 monthly income. Though this monthly income of R2500 p/m is

above both the national and global poverty thresholds (the South African threshold is about R1183 p/m and the global figure is at R871 p/m), it is still relatively low given the kinds of expenses inner city residents face as the findings chapter will further illustrate. A major expense that scoffs up the residents' wage are the monthly rentals that they ought to pay for accommodation. Figure 15 shows a range of income brackets from R0 to over R2.5million with a percentage of the households attached to each household attached to each bracket.

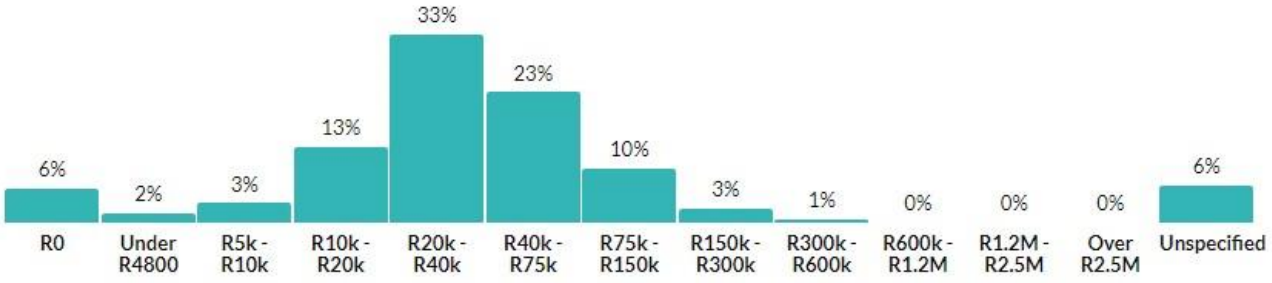


Figure 15. The average household annual income of the neighbourhood. Source: Wazimap, 2019.

Housing typologies

This lodging phenomenon in the inner city and particularly Hillbrow (paying rent for an apartment) is of great significance because of the housing typologies found in the area. The dominant form of housing found in the area are tall apartment buildings and these are often on annual leases with rentals payable at end of each month. Furthermore, the high density in the area, over 70000 people crammed in just over one square kilometre of land, fashions a property market that inflates the value of those apartments found in Hillbrow.

The housing typologies found in Ward 62 follow a similar trend to that of Ward 63 above save for some differences in the figures. Apartment housing in the neighbourhood's tall buildings dominates the housing typologies with about 65% of the ward's population living in such dwellings. A major difference in the two wards is the gap in the portion of the population whose housing status is unavailable. Ward 63 has 11% of its population fitting that description whereas Ward 62 on the other hand has a much larger portion, almost treble that of Ward 62's with 30%. This is attributed, largely but not entirely to the issue of homelessness that has inundated the

neighbourhood of Hillbrow along with Berea and Yeovale in the inner city. Ward 62 is home to many homeless folks and there are some spots where most of them spend the night. The

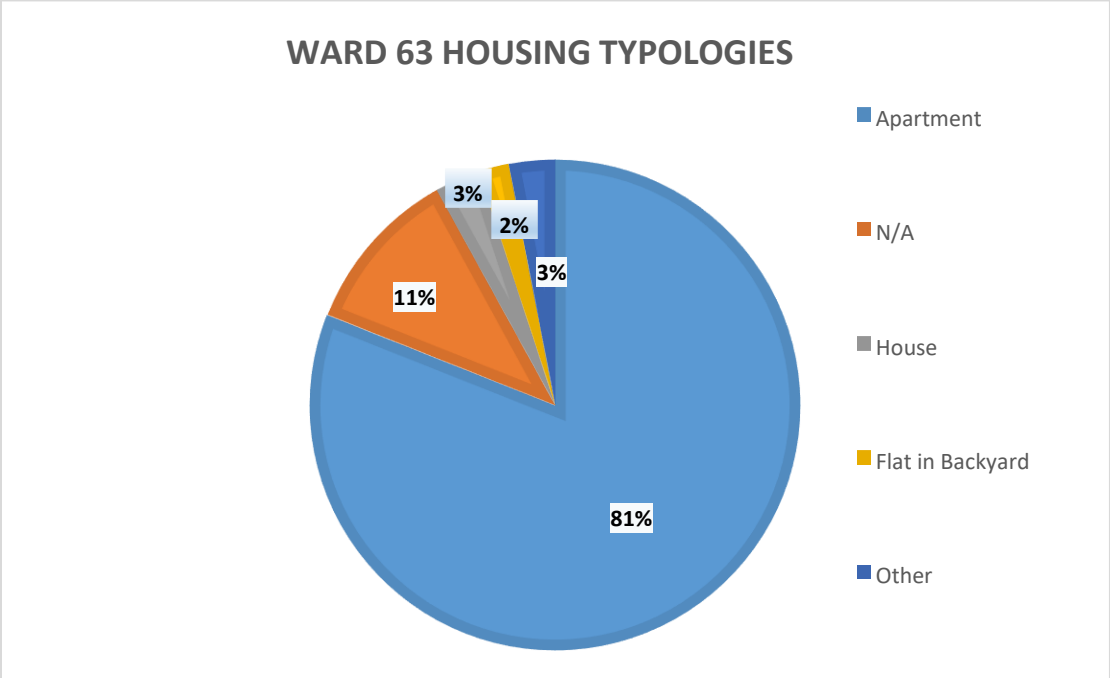


Figure 16. A pie chart showing the different housing typologies in the neighbourhood with the dominant one being apartments. Source, WaziMap, 2019.

pavements of Quartz Street and Jager Street, and the Highpoint precinct are homelessness hotspots within the ward and some of the homeless people that sleep around the Alec Gorschel Park precinct drift into Ward 62 from time to time when sparked by evictions and clean ups (3rd year research, 2017). The homeless too are part of the neighbourhood and they too have built their networks and are constantly building. During my stay in Hillbrow I became quite acquainted with a few of them and, to a certain extent, I formed part of their social networks, I discuss more on homelessness in the findings chapter. As an extension to the housing typologies of the neighbourhood, it is also important to note that the bulk of the population lives in their dwellings as tenants and are liable to pay monthly rentals. Only an estimate of 3% of the residents live in dwellings that are fully or partially paid for (ownership).

Chapter 4. Research Findings

Introduction

Detailing and looking at the nature of the networks found in Hillbrow, I found that these networks were distinct and varied between the relationships in the area. However different these networks are, the bulk of them seem to be in service to the assertion that there is a correlation between them (social networks) and people's livelihoods. All the respondents I interviewed, upon being explained to what is meant by livelihoods, seemed to believe that their social networks, regardless of their nature, do impact their livelihoods. As my probe into the networks and their impact on Hillbrow livelihoods carried on throughout the research, it became clear that most of these networks impacted livelihoods positively while some did so negatively. There are also some differences on the magnitude of the impact these networks have on people's livelihoods.

In this chapter I therefore provide detailed accounts of the research's participants on how their social networks have impacted their livelihoods. I tell their stories which reveal where they are originally from, why and when they first moved to Hillbrow, how they are surviving and, just as importantly, the role their social networks have played in their daily survival (and perhaps even thriving) in Hillbrow. The reason I decided on this story-like format is that it invokes emotion and allows the reader to empathise with the participants' life stories for the reader to get a better understanding of inner-city life, social networks and livelihoods. Additionally, the social networks and how they eventually impact livelihoods is a complex mix of aspects such as housing, informal trading, formal work, job hunting among others; and this mix is different for each individual making it even more complex. However, telling individual stories makes it simpler for the reader to understand and follow the different aspects.

Hillbrow as a cradle of social networks: Housing in Hillbrow

All the participants I spoke to, with the exception of just one, first moved to Hillbrow already knowing a person or people living in the area to whom they would first arrive. In the context chapter, I discussed Hillbrow being a 'transitional city' where people move in from other provinces or outside the country to build their base and, after a while (it could be a few months to several years), they move on to other parts of the city or the country. It seems for most of them, when they move to the neighbourhood, they have a network already established, a

network consisting of at least one other person with an accommodation resource. Evidence of this is seen in all but one of the research's respondents and Ronaldo's story epitomises this claim. Ronaldo is a 27-year-old Zimbabwean man that first moved to Hillbrow in 2014 having been spent about two years actively looking for employment in Zimbabwe but to no fruitful end. His older cousin (Dira) already lived in the neighbourhood and he (Dira) first stayed in Berea when he first moved to Johannesburg in 2011. Early in 2014 he moved to Hillbrow to be closer to his new job in Braamfontein and more importantly to pay less rent for his accommodation. Later that year, when he was quite established, he took Ronaldo in and became his unofficial guardian.

Ronaldo said in our interview, "*he [Dira] was like a father [to me] when I first moved here… he was older and he gave me a place to stay and food and stuff*," (Ronaldo, 2019). Dira lived in one of Hillbrow's bad buildings[3] which had minimal control and inspection by management and Ronaldo believed that Dira strategically moved to such a building because the lack of control would allow him to sublet the flat to multiple people. The subletting meant that the people that came to stay with him would pay for the space they occupied within the flat thus significantly lowering his rent because he was their direct 'landlord' colloquially known as 'mastanda' (Mayson, 2014). However, the agreement that he had with Ronaldo was that Ronaldo would not pay rent until he had found a job. They had this arrangement which favoured Ronaldo because of the nature of their relationship, they are first cousins and had grown up in the same household in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe which fostered a close kinship between the two. "*Even today, I know if I need something I can go to him [Dira], we grew up together, he was my brother and now that we [are] far from home he is my other father basically*," (Ronaldo, 2019).

The widespread availability of Hillbrow's bad buildings has allowed Dira's subletting practice to be a common practice in the neighbourhood (Zack et al, 2009; Charlton and Mayson, 2015). Buildings with less formal control and more informal control by omastanda (plural for mastanda) and informal resident committees such as the one Ronaldo and Dira stayed at in 2014, have contributed to Hillbrow being a cradle of social networks. Having multiple people share the same

[3] Bad buildings is a term commonly used by the City referring to buildings the City, according to their legal standards, consider inhabitable. However, in Hillbrow there is a common trend of people moving in and occupying such buildings without formal approval out of desperation.

space nurtures social networks among the tenants. The primary network, that has accommodation as the common denominator, is a network that ensures that the people within it are housed without paying the actual market values for rent because they all split the rental cost of the space thus, they pay less. This is partially beneficial to their livelihood as it leaves them with extra disposable income[4]. In Ronaldo's case, he moved to the neighbourhood and was immediately slotted into Dira's housing network through their family ties and this was predetermined even before Ronaldo left Zimbabwe. Ronaldo did not have to pay rent until he found a job and even when he did, he paid only a fraction of what was due for the apartment. When Ronaldo got a job and started paying, this meant that Dira was paying a further reduced amount as well making their living situation mutually beneficial. This did benefit him (Ronaldo) from a housing point of view especially during the time he was unemployed for the first three months of his stay with Dira because he had free accommodation.

Ronaldo's living situation in his first year in Hillbrow is not unique to him, he is merely a cog in a much larger trend in Hillbrow. Many move to the neighbourhood for the first time and are immediately fitted into predetermined housing networks through a person or persons they have a relationship with or at least, a person they would have had a prior encounter with. Reflecting on the time I first moved into the area – I, too, moved into the neighbourhood having arranged with my uncle (Uncle H) who allowed me to live in his apartment on the corner of Petersen and Twist street. In my case, I did not have to pay rent but me living there was a mutually beneficial set-up because Uncle H's job required that he travels a lot. Having me in his flat gave him peace of mind from a security point of view. Unlike Dira who got to split the rent with Ronaldo and others as his 'benefit' of letting Ronaldo stay, Uncle H got the benefit of having a constant presence at the apartment which lowered the security threat that he so greatly feared.

More evidence of people getting accommodation through their social networks is seen with Manando, another one of this research's interviewees. Manando is a Zulu speaking 29-year-old man from Newcastle in KwaZulu Natal. He first moved to Hillbrow in 2016 after he lost his job as a motor mechanic in Newcastle. The need to financially support his pregnant girlfriend compelled

[4] Disposable income is the remaining portion of one's income having paid for all necessities like rent, bills and food.

him to move to 'eGoli[5]'. Two of his friends that he had known from the time they all lived in Newcastle had already moved to Hillbrow ahead of him and they were living together along with two other men. Manando says they were kind enough to not only take him in, but also help him hastily find a job, "*I grew up with these guys, they always got me into trouble*", as he lightly chuckled but his tone changed to a much mellower one in appreciation when he went on to say, "*but the one time they did get me out of trouble, was when I needed them the most… they found me a job and a place to stay la eGoli*." (Manando, 2019). Manando, his two friends and the other two men shared a two bedroomed flat on Kaptein Street in Hillbrow.

Manando's story fits into the narrative of Hillbrow's accommodation sharing and the financial benefits it brings through rental reductions for all the tenants involved. One of Manando's two friends under whom the lease was signed (uMastanda)[6] required R450 from him at the end of every month, and according to Manando, that was considerably lower than what he otherwise would have paid had he obtained an entire bedroom for himself in a similar flat in Hillbrow. He would have had to pay about about R1600 which was half the total cost of the entire two bedroomed flat they all shared. Manando said, in our interview, that paying a measly R450 for rent went a long way towards his livelihood as he was able to re-channel the funds he would have used for a full rental payment to more capital acquisitions and investments. His two friends welcoming him into their share-house network (along with the other two guys in the second bedroom) benefited his livelihood from a financial point of view. It did so immediately with a bargain for rent, and this helped him in the long run too, with him being able to use some of the extra money saved to buy capital goods like the tool kit he now uses to fix cars in order to make even more money. "*You see I was a mechanic back home and I still use those skills here to make more money… it's, you know, hustling! Yah it's my hustle, siya-gereza[7] ndoda akulalwa (we hustle, we do not sleep)," Manando (2019).* However, there is an element to Manando's story that conflicted with one of the benefits I outlined in my personal reflection, the security element.

[5] eGoli is the name Manando used to refer to Johannesburg, it means the city of gold.

[6] In cases of subletting, the person whose name is on the lease and to whom the other tenants pay their rent is informally referred to as uMastanda.

[7] Ukugereza means to hustle to make money. It is an informal term used mostly in Hillbrow and the townships.

Contrary to Uncle H's peace of mind because of my presence in his flat, Manando's presence was not welcomed by the other two fellows who used the other bedroom at first, they in fact accused him of being an accomplice to the theft of one phone and two speakers which belonged to them and the items were in the communal living room shared by all five men at the time of their disappearance. He (Manando) says he was not offended by the accusation because he knows this is Hillbrow and that "*a lot of people here [in Hillbrow] will do anything to get that paper [money], they'll even resort to crime*" (Manando, 2019). While subletting may prove to be financially beneficial, it often comes at the cost of security and privacy (Mayson, 2014).

From Ronaldo and Manando's stories along with mine, it becomes clear that Hillbrow, through its largely present characteristic of shared accommodation spaces, is a neighbourhood that not only influences the building of social networks but the neighbourhood is a cradle of social networks, a seemingly good place to start. It seems Hillbrow has it in its character to foster a spot for a new person to be part of a housing network (both formal and informal) making it possible for all and sundry to find accommodation through an already existing housing network in which they are slotted into. The array of buildings from the well-kept and well-run ones to the old dilapidated buildings present an opportunity for most of the neighbourhood's new residents to find a place in which they could fit in depending on the new resident's socioeconomic status. However, these buildings on their own do not just present the opportunity of housing for new residents but the informality within them breeds subletting and share-housing hence the fashioning of housing networks within the neighbourhood. These housing networks seem to provide a platform for new residents to start a life in Hillbrow and propels them into other networks that impact their livelihoods within the neighbourhood.

In other neighbourhoods like Braamfontein which also have high-rise residential buildings, a new tenant has to follow the formal channels to get accommodation there. I briefly lived in Sandown and Braamfontein for about three years, and in both places, I had to sign a formal and stern lease which boldly stated the number of tenants allowed to reside in the apartment and prohibited subletting. Subletting was punishable by an immediate expulsion from the building. Two of the prerequisites to signing those leases included providing evidence of being able to afford the place in the form of a bank statement and identity documents; I never had to produce those in Hillbrow.

Some of the research's respondents did not even have bank accounts because of their undocumented statuses. There seems to be a level of tenant-landlord trust in Hillbrow which is likely fuelled by the mutual benefit of not having to produce documents (for the tenant) and reduced maintenance obligations (for the landlord) thus save on maintenance costs. This stark contrast between Hillbrow's informality and high density; and Braamfontein's (and other similar neighbourhoods) prim nature puts an asterisk on how Hillbrow cradles social networks.

The pivotal role of social networks in the respondents' trade

I used Manando and Ronaldo's stories as a tool to highlight how the study area presents a good platform for one to live in the area and inevitably be part of a social network by way of housing social networks. However, the research has revealed, as anticipated from the beginning, that these networks can be quite dynamic and not only serve one purpose but can serve multiple purposes simultaneously. For some of the respondents I interviewed, that initial housing network they found themselves in would propel them into other social networks that are in service to the improvement of their livelihoods. For the other respondents, their additional social networks are separate and have no connection to their housing networks. In this section I will be unpacking the dynamics of the social networks that are directly linked to the respondents' main trade[8].

How Ronaldo's social networks kick started and enhanced his career in restaurants and hospitality.

While Ronaldo lived with Dira, he was actively looking for jobs using formal channels such as going through the classifieds section on the daily paper and applying for everything he thought he would be able to handle but he was unsuccessful. All the while, he was unconsciously building a network that would eventually lead him to his first job. "*We used to drink a lot, especially when my cousin was off [work] or on weekends. His friends who became my friends also would come over sibushaye*[9]" (Ronaldo, 2019). During some of their heavy drinking sessions Ronaldo would confide in his new-found friends about his futile attempts to get a job and in October 2014 when one of Ronaldo's friends (Mike) lost his job, they began searching together.

[8] The main daily activity they get up to earn a living e.g. one's day job i.e. teacher, driver, salesman or builder etc.
[9] *Sibushaye,* in this context, is a Zulu colloquial reference which means the drinking of alcohol galore and this almost always comes with pride as an attachment.

Mike taught him to broaden the scope of his search for jobs by introducing him to unorthodox, unconventional platforms where one could possibly find a job. He took him to a noticeboard at the corner of Banket and Pretoria Streets just outside Shoprite Hillbrow. He also took him to a few other similar noticeboards around the inner city in Berea and Yeoville. These noticeboards are informal and community members post notices covering an many issues ranging from accommodation to let/sought, items for sale, services rendered/sought and even jobs (most informal and temporary).

It was on the noticeboard in Yeoville where both Ronaldo and his friend found posts that would lead them to employment. Ronaldo found a post by a small kitchen operating in Hillbrow and Tembisa looking for extra hands to help wherever needed. Ronaldo got the job at the Tembisa kitchen. No experience, documentation or bank accounts were required, he just had to show up and this was beneficial to Ronaldo because he did not have a work permit and his passport had already overstayed the 30 day visit he was given at the border. This job in Tembisa where he cooked, cleaned and served customers would then become his first job that would spur him on to a career in that industry. Ronaldo says once he got his first pay from that job, he saw an instant improvement in his livelihood in the sense that he now had the buying power to purchase some items he needed like decent clothing and food he enjoyed. The decisions he now could make on what to eat at the flat with Dira represented a deeper meaning – he now had a heavier proverbial voice in the decision-making process of all to do with their living conditions. That, too, impacted his livelihood because he had been at Dira's mercy regarding almost all necessities but now that he had some money, he had a voice. He says in monetary terms him and Dira were now equals although he would not disclose their income in figures.

In giving an account of this, Ronaldo did highlight that his friend only helped him because he too (the friend) was in search of a job which brings about ideas of reciprocation and mutual benefit in these social networks. This is an important characteristic of these social networks, they ought to be mutually beneficial otherwise there would not be an incentive for one to be involved in a social network if they are not getting anything from it. This is true except for relationships where the affinity is by blood or the rare cases where all parties genuinely care for each other to the extent of lending help without reciprocation.

Ronaldo's rise in the restaurant and hospitality field.

Once he started working at the kitchen in Tembisa doing the dishes, waitering, cleaning and filling in wherever needed, Ronaldo says he fell in love with waitering because he got to meet and interact with many people. "*Lots of people came in everyday. I enjoyed talking to all of them and I was nice to everyone. Who knews, maybe I was going to make friends in high places, and they give me a nice job and if that didn't happen, at least I still got tipped well for being friendly*" Ronaldo (2019). This statement by Ronaldo demonstrated that he indeed seems to have a belief that social networking plays a vital role in improving his livelihood and in this particular case, he believed it would work out for him by getting a better job offer from one the people in his network. He kept expanding that network daily while he worked in Tembisa and his relentlessness in that expansion of the network gives further evidence of his belief in social networks.

That unrelenting attitude to keep talking to people hoping that one of them would get him a better job eventually paid off after three months of working at the kitchen. One of the patrons at the kitchen (James) whom Ronaldo had exchanged contact details with got a promotion at his work place, a fancy and quite elaborate coffee shop in Fourways, and with that new position James could now influence the decisions on recruitment. Ronaldo says James remembered how well Ronaldo always served him at the kitchen and how in all their infrequent chats Ronaldo mourned about how he was searching for a better paying job. James forwarded Ronaldo's name to his colleagues and vouched for him to get a job as an all-round help at the coffee shop. This worked out well for Ronaldo.

In our interview, the idea of mutual benefit had come up earlier when Ronaldo spoke about his friend who helped find the job at the kitchen, so in keeping with that idea, I asked if he saw a similar pattern with this coffee shop case. His response to this affirmed to the earlier supposition he had made, "*yes definitely, I was very nice to him and he could see that I was friendly with all the customers and that is always a good thing to have in this business. He knew bringing me in to work at the coffee shop would also benefit him, the top bosses would say 'good boy' to him for bringing me in*" (Ronaldo, 2019).

Ronaldo says at the coffee shop he made triple the amount of money he made at the kitchen and he saw an immediate improvement in his life and that new job gave him the financial freedom to

leave Dira's flat for better living conditions. As already discussed in the previous section, Ronaldo shared an open plan flat with Dira along with four other men meaning that the place was crowded, and he did not get maximum utility[9]. He therefore moved out having worked at the coffee shop for a few months.

When Ronaldo moved on from Dira's apartment, he acquired a newly refurbished two bedroomed flat on Twist street which he shared with James who had now become a close friend of his. Ronaldo says he likes how he had a room of his own meaning he had some privacy and security. An individual's freedoms are highly essential for their livelihood, they are a large part to their wellbeing. Ronaldo's job at the coffee shop brought him both negative and positive freedom[10].

Through James, he got to meet more people from the coffee shop's other branches, and some were in the company's top hierarchy. This expanded and enriched Ronaldo's network, much so that he was offered the assistant manager position at one of the coffee shop's branches at O.R Tambo airport by one of the men he was now acquainted with from his newly enriched social network. This took place in 2016 but that promotion to a managerial post did not materialise as Ronaldo's stay in South Africa was illegal. He did not have a work permit or any kind of visa legitimising his stay in the country and for the managerial post he had to have the right documentation. His undocumented status did not just cost him the promotion, he lost his job once management found out that he was an illegal migrant.

The predicament which Ronaldo found himself in is not unique to just him, but there are thousands of foreign nationals living in South Africa illegally and this is primarily because of the atrocious living conditions in their home countries (Crush and Williams, 2018). Their undocumented state being illegal is from a legislative point of view, but this becomes questionable when one uses a human and social rights lens to view their difficulties. In many cases when an illegal immigrant is found out, they are reported to the police or the Department of Home Affairs and they are then deported back to their home countries. Ronaldo was however

[9] The full pleasures of using the apartment.

[10] Negative and positive freedom are political concepts that refer to the freedom from and the freedom to. See next chapter.

fortunate to only lose his job, the coffee shop hierarchy decided not to take his case further to state authorities. Ronaldo's personal relationship with some of the coffee shop's hierarchy is what spared him from having his matter escalated to authorities. One could argue that his social network was at play here again in keeping him in the country.

By mid-2016, Ronaldo had found another job at a café in one of Johannesburg's large private hospitals. He found the job posted on an online advertisement application, he submitted his CV and was hired immediately. "*They only asked for a copy of the back page of my passport and I gave it to them. Before I knew it, I got a call and they asked when I could start*," (Ronaldo, 2019). The income he earned from the café only just covered his rent and he heavily relied on James and occasional handouts from Dira for utilities, food and petty cash. Again, his social network helped him survive this period.

As a plan devised to pull Ronaldo out of his financial situation, his friends along with Dira, decided to start a stokvel[11]. This was a stokvel of eight people, all members were to contribute R1000 each and the first recipient of the contributions was Ronaldo. This essentially bought him R7000 credit and seven months to fully pay it back in monthly payments of R1000. With that R7000 Dira connected him with some men in Hillbrow that helped him obtain a forged work permit. "*You said you won't use my real name, right? …So I paid four R4000 to some Nigerian guys that used to work with Dira and they got me a permit, it looks legit… I know it's wrong but I had to do it; get rich or die trying, you are from Zim, you already know"* Ronaldo (2019).

With this new permit he was able to engineer a move to another coffee shop (which I will refer to as coffee shop 2) in Rosebank. The money there was better than the café and he says he saw himself return to his 'glory days' where he could afford basic commodities and have a little extra left over for leisure. The job at coffee shop 2 he obtained through his mother's friend who was the manager at the coffee shop in 2017. She offered him a position as assistant manager. Ronaldo says that job at coffee shop 2 was good for him because he did not lack anything, and he also managed to send his mother R1000 every month for her upkeep. Not only was the job good

[11] A stokvel is a group of people who come together after fixed time intervals and each contribute a fixed amount of money into a central pocket. The money contributed in one meeting is given to one member and this is a process that rotates until all members have received money from the central pocket (Koenane, 2019).

enough to sustain his livelihood but it seemed to have been far reaching as he was able to send some money to his mother, thus the job having an impact on multiple livelihoods in different geographical locations. This is true for many migrant workers who leave home to work in distant towns, they earn a living, not just for themselves but for their families and loved ones left at home (Maphosa, 2007; Nzima, 2017).

As of July 2019, Ronaldo co-manages a big restaurant in Sundown, Sandton. James switched jobs from the coffee shop to manage the restaurant in Sandton at the beginning of 2019. After a few months, his co-manager lost her job and James recommended Ronaldo as her replacement. Ronaldo said, in our interview, that restaurants normally look in-house to fill in a vacancy, but this restaurant did not do that. The main reason for them looking outside was Ronaldo's friend's dogged persistence to get the restaurant to bring Ronaldo in. From Ronaldo's description of the events that led to his appointment, it seems James called in some favours to get Ronaldo the job. The job at the restaurant has served him quite well, his income increased incredibly from his basic salary and tips. He says he is doing so well such that he is considering a move away from Hillbrow as he feels he can now afford an apartment 'in a better neighbourhood'. Another cause that greatly incited the need to move were the recent xenophobic attacks in the area as he never felt safe since they occurred in the latter stages of 2019. Although Ronaldo sees an improvement in his livelihood financially, he does however concede that he now must work long hours with ten to twelve hour shifts sometimes and that eats into his social life which he claims has since become non-existent. A social life, leisure and spending time with loved ones is quite integral in one's livelihood and Ronaldo's new job has had a negative impact on that.

How Manando's local social network threw him back towards his passion.

It seems to be the case that when many people move to Hillbrow from distant cities, they start over and often they begin a journey that takes them on a different path. What necessitate this different trajectory is often desperation, the need to meet immediate essentials such as accommodation, food and providing for dependents back home (Petzold, 2017). The above profile is almost the perfect description to Manado's story. As stated earlier, he worked as a mechanic in Newcastle, KZN before moving to Hillbrow. What prompted his move is that he had

lost his job and had a pregnant girlfriend to take care of. He consequently left them behind in Newcastle and moved to Johannesburg, particularly Hillbrow.

When Manando moved in with his two friends in Hillbrow he had already been promised a job at a well-known fast food chain where one of his friends, JT worked. He was happy with that because his salary at the takeaway place was more than he made in Newcastle fixing cars. Once he got to Hillbrow, he settled in quite well, "*I settled in quickly and I started working within two weeks thanks to Bra JT and Bongz"* (Manando, 2019). Not only did his friends help him with accommodation, which was an immediate need for his livelihood, but Bra JT recommended him to his superiors at the takeaway place and he got a job to work in the kitchen there. Within two weeks of living in Hillbrow Manando had a place to stay and a decent stable job to sustain himself and send about R700 to his girlfriend in Newcastle. He said "*for a start, it wasn't too bad and Bra JT had said if I learned how to operate the till I would definitely get promoted to work at the till and take orders and I did [just] that… In just three months, I was at the till*" (Manando, 2019).

Some move into the inner city and stay for months without finding a steady job (Simone, 2004) but for Manando it seems having Bongz and Bra JT within his social network fast tracked his process. He says within three months he was sending R1500 back to his girlfriend and he still had enough for food and his contribution towards rent at the flat. Manando says he was very happy with how "things were turning out of him" but he still felt the void left by his passion for fixing cars. "*Bra Luther, I was making money at the takeaway place and I was happy about that; but honestly I was happy but unhappy if uyang'thola.*[12] *You see fixing cars was not just about money for me, it's all I knew, and I loved it*" (Manando, 2019). Manando worked eight-hour shifts and he was usually off work by 6pm and he says he did not know what to do with his time between 6.00pm and midnight and bedtime daily. He said this feeling of emptiness got worse on his off days every Tuesday. A well sustained livelihood demands some contentment or a reasonable level of joy and from Manando's own qualitative assessment of his happiness, that void ate away at his happiness and thus his livelihood.

Manando would, on occasion, spend time with some of the people he had met and gotten to

[12] Uyang'thola is a Zulu reference meaning 'do you get me or do you ask me'?

know in the building he stayed at and have a look at their cars. He would often help them with small mechanical issues and advice on how to deal with some of the car trouble they experienced. This 'hobby' led to an epiphany which exposed him to the possibility of rediverting his career back into the motor mechanics business. "*So the woman that lives right above us has a car that was always giving her trouble and she heard from some guys in the building that I can fix cars. She came to me one day and asked me to fix hers, she said she would buy all the parts needed I just had to fix it*" (Manando, 2019). He says the woman bought all the required car parts and some tools that he needed to get the job done.

His neighbour buying him the tool kit worked as an enabling trigger that set off his Johannesburg motor repairs venture. Furthermore, as Manando describes from his experience, her willingness to buy the tool kit, car parts and pay for his labour essentially meant the deal was very lucrative for Manando and this deal was a microcosm of the market in Johannesburg – "*people make more money in Johannesburg, that is why I moved here*" (Manando, 2019). Manando says for the same car problem in Newcastle, he would have made just over half of what he made from fixing his neighbour's vehicle in Hillbrow. The monetary gains from fixing cars in Johannesburg seemed to be way more than they are in Newcastle and this further spurred Manando onto the car repairs business. His next client thereafter was the woman's friend who also lived in the same building and was referred to Manando by his satisfied neighbour and first client. He successfully fixed the second car in their residential building's parking lot and he says, it quickly became known within their building and surrounding buildings how good a mechanic he is. "*I was suddenly very busy on my off days and after work. I always had a car to fix and one or two waiting to be fixed. My charges depended on the problem of the car, but [roughly] I made more money from just two cars than I did at [the takeaway place]*" (Manando, 2019). The decision to leave his job at the takeaway place was inevitable and it came in just shy of a full year working there; at which point he had acquired some equipment to expand his capacity as a motor mechanic.

Manando's clients mainly comprised of Hillbrow residents and they got to know him through referrals and recommendations. Satisfied customers would recommend him to their friends with car trouble and this kept happening until Manando became quite a household name in motor mechanics in the neighbourhood. What made business better is that his customers were not once

off customers, but they would go back to him for all other car troubles they faced. "*Bra Luther you know this, you lived here before, you know people here don't have money and they buy cheap old cars which are always breaking down and this is good for business because their cars are always broken down. One week it's this, next week it's [that] and so on*" (Manando, 2019).

Customers being readily available played a vital role in the take-off of Manando's business. The way he got those customers is symbolic of the claim one would make suggesting that social networks indeed have an impact on livelihoods. His business stemmed from a small network of people in and around his building in Hillbrow coming for help with car trouble and that network grew to reach farther areas of Hillbrow and even Berea. Word on his services quickly got around and this was accelerated by the character of the neighbourhood, Hillbrow and Berea's high densities [13] . Paradoxically, the same characteristic of the neighbourhood counted against Manando's business as he did not have much space to work on the cars he was fixing. Most of Hillbrow's high rise building do not come with yard space and the building he lived in did not. Manando often had to opt for working in parking lots and on the side of the road just outside his building and this was not good for business as his motor mechanics business required more space than he had available to him. He is currently considering a move away from Hillbrow to a neighbourhood where he will have a spacious backyard to do his work.

Since he went back to being a mechanic, Manando has been able to secure a flat to rent for himself. A two bedroomed flat on Esselen Street in Hillbrow. At the time of our interview he said he had saved up enough money for lobola[15] and he planned on marrying his girlfriend sometime in 2020. The two bedroomed flat was in preparation for his girlfriend and young son's move to Johannesburg to live with him. He had also revived the engine of an old Mazda and installed it in the chassis of another one as his personal project to build himself a car – he was close to finishing it. He seemed happy about how his career was turning out, especially financially and how his good finances were enabling him to access all the other things he wanted, including living with his girlfriend and young son. From the way he smiled and how his eyes lit up when I asked him to

[13] More on the role of high densities in expanding networks to be explained in the analysis chapter.

[15] Lobola is the bride price paid to the bride's family as sanctioned by African tradition.

describe his finances and general comfortability in a bid to gauge how being a mechanic has impacted his livelihood, I could tell that Manando was a man at the dawn of new levels of well living and he was excited. He is in a deep conviction that his work as a mechanic is his ticket to improved livelihood and he knows that that the success at his job is highly dependent on his social network-cum-clients.

Ezinjeni - the 'place of dogs' that acts as a hub which sustains Johannesburg inner city livelihoods and livelihoods beyond the Limpopo River.

How Lewis' network got him to be a trusted and successful Malayitsha.

One of the research's key respondents is Lewis, a 54-year-old man from the rural region of Nkayi in Matebeleland North, Zimbabwe who now lives in Hillbrow, Johannesburg. In the year 2004 Lewis was retrenched at his job as a bus driver at a national bus service company in Bulawayo Zimbabwe. He was one of the thousands of economic casualties of Zimbabwe's economic demise which followed the fast-tracked constitution change and booting-out of white commercial farmers in the country's early 2000s land reform. The plummeting economy saw thousands like Lewis lose their jobs in the country and endure the effects of unemployment, that is poverty in its most abject form. The poverty was accompanied by a national crisis on the part of the state as well, it was in the form of food shortages, poor healthcare, minimal service delivery, a dysfunctional government, and even economic sanctions on the country imposed by the West and this made Zimbabwe unliveable for many (Toriro, 2009; Shizha and Kariwo, 2011).

Lewis was part of a larger exodus of people from Zimbabwe's Matabeleland region that moved down south to South Africa in the search for greener pastures. He left his wife and two children in Bulawayo, illegally skipped the border by jumping over fences, walking for over 20 kilometres around the Musina-Beitbridge border area and even fording the Limpopo river evading border control officers and crocodiles in the Limpopo. Lewis says his journey to Hillbrow was treacherous but what gave him the courage to take it on was the hope of finding a better life for his family 'eGoli' and the little comfort he found in that he was not alone during the journey. There were others like him that he had travelled with. Additionally, what gave him extra comfort was that to get across the border they had guides to help them across, he referred to these guides as

'amagumaguma[14]'. After about fifty hours of travelling, Lewis eventually made it to Hillbrow in the winter of 2004. The comfort in numbers and help from the amagumaguma represents a different way in which one's social network, even if its temporary, can still impact one's livelihood even in the most unorthodox of ways.

Lewis arrived in Hillbrow without an accommodation plan like Ronaldo and Manando, he did not have a known network of people living in the area nor did he have much money to start off with. These layers of difficulties essentially rendered him homeless and forlorn. But Lewis says even though he was homeless he still carried the hope he had left Zimbabwe with. Lewis said he "*was [homeless] for more than two weeks; one week on that wide pavement [curb] outside the clinic [Hillbrow clinic on Klein Street]; one week at the park [Joubert park] down there on Wolmarans Street next to Kings Ransom*" (Lewis, 2019). By the end of his first week in Hillbrow, Lewis had already met "hundreds" of people from random encounters and interactions on the street. Lewis says he was aggressive about putting himself out there and meeting people because he knew that his opportunity to make it in Johannesburg lay with one of those people he met daily on the streets of Hillbrow and a little further down south of that in the CBD. This demonstrated not only an understanding of the role social networks play in livelihoods, but it showed a conviction in it, a conviction which had morphed into real faith in social networks.

His faith was not, little did he know that his opportunity did not lie with just one person but it lay with many people, some in Hillbrow and others in other parts Johannesburg and Gauteng. The first person in his network was a man who later became his best friend, Chico. They met at a chip shop on Twist Street and they began chatting; Lewis told him about his homelessness plight and it turned out Chico was homeless too. Chico, through his social network, had managed to ask around and find a secluded space at Joubert Park with a makeshift roof over it. All this information he shared with Lewis at the chip shop as both men chatted about their predicaments
and the conversation ended with Lewis receiving an invite to spend his nights at the park which was better than the cold hard surfaces of the Klein Street curb outside Hillbrow Clinic.

[14] Amagumaguma the name given to the group that operates at the Zimbabwe – South Africa no-mans-land stretch between Beitbridge and Musina. They assist border jumpers to get across the river and reach Musina successfully for a hefty fee. However, they are also notorious for robberies and violent crime in the area and on the very same immigrants they assist.

Once Lewis started sleeping at the park, he spent more time with Chico and a few other men that slept at the park. This was the case even during the day as the men foraged for food and work on the streets of Johannesburg's inner city. The men seemed to forge a friendship as Lewis spoke quite highly of all the men in the group that slept at the park and he held the ones he spent his days with to an even higher regard, this was evidenced by the way he spoke about them fifteen years later in our interview. With his new friends – also new social network, they wandered to certain parts of the inner city that he had not been to, he found extra boldness in numbers which proved to be very helpful in his job search. Lewis says they walked into shops, knocked on doors and even waited for halted cars at traffic lights hoping they would get some work.

After a week of this practice, he finally got a breakthrough when he and one of his friends walked into what seemed like a mechanic's yard-cum-loading dock-cum-storage space on Esselen street in Hillbrow. From his first impression of the space he could not determine what exactly the land use was, the space was obscure. There were many minibus taxis with trailers behind them, hundreds of boxes of different sizes inside and outside the vehicles, a lot of people within, some going in and others going out, it was bustling. Lewis says aside from its busyness which normally would mean it is rife with opportunity, what drew them in with confidence were the unmistakable yells in IsiNdebele their home language (his friend was Ndebele too). "*The minute we walked in; our lives changed. We told one of the men there that we were looking for jobs and he said there was a driver looking for strong men to load up the heavy boxes and tie them up to make sure they were secure. When we met the driver, it turned out he was originally from Nkayi too and he gave us the job [instantly] and asked that we call two more men because the job was for four men*" (Lewis, 2019).

Lewis says the driver barely interviewed them and neither did he ask for documentation, he only asked where they were from and when Lewis mentioned Nkayi, the driver seemed much more at is and he gave them the job. They thought it was temporary as they did not discuss the duration and full job description, but Lewis would later find that the job was permanent for all four of them and the full job description included the task of loading goods into the trailer, collecting money and goods from customers and writing it all down, travelling with the driver to Zimbabwe to deliver the goods to the customers' families, unloading the goods at all the unloading places

and travelling back to Johannesburg with the driver to repeat the same routine. "*We were now oMalayitsha*[17] *and the day after we got the job, we loaded up and got on to the N1 [to Zimbabwe]*" (Lewis, 2019). Lewis believes the driver trusted them instantly because him and the driver were both from Nkayi. From that day in 2004 Lewis' fortunes turned around, the "Malayitsha" job he had gotten paved way for better living for him. He got an apartment for himself and he says he pretty much could afford all the essentials he needed to live. Lewis broke down how he spent his money in our interview, "*making more than R4000 at the time was like being rich, I paid R900 rent and other things like food and clothes only cost me R1000 leaving me with R2000 to send my wife and kids in Zimbabwe… and I was mature already, I did not go to clubs and waste money on prostitutes like these other guys*" (Lewis, 2019). I asked Lewis how he managed to cross the border back to Zimbabwe since he was undocumented at the time and he said the driver told them not to worry and that he would take care of the border authorities which he did. But he did say that after four or five trips, he and his other three colleagues and friends got their passports which made their travels easier.

Having gotten his passport, being from the same region as the driver and holding a Zimbabwean driver's licence helped Lewis rise up the ranks above his colleagues and he was assistant driver by 2006 which obviously came with an even better pay. Lewis welcomed this promotion because it meant a better livelihood, not just for him but for his family too. He says the timing of this was perfect because the promotion came at a time when Zimbabwe's economic turmoil was turning for the worst, but he could provide for his family. Lewis says between 2006 and 2009 he made the most money because that is when Zimbabwe was hit by hyperinflation which saw even more Zimbabwean families being dependent on the work of their bread winners in South Africa and sending money and goods back home via omalayitsha. Business was so good for Lewis, he managed to buy himself his own minibus in 2009 and started his own malayitsha trade transporting both people and goods to and from Zimbabwe.

17.OMalayitsha are a group of informal cross border transporters of goods and people operating between Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Now Lewis has four vehicles in operation, he drives one and has employed three drivers and twelve other men to help with the business. Lewis says driving is his passion and it is paying his bills both in Hillbrow, Nkayi and also in his new and third home in Bulawayo. He says all he has now would not have been possible had it not been for his immediate network at Joubert Park that accommodated him when he was homeless and gave him the courage to seek work in places that otherwise would have been intimidating. He says that same network over the years has helped one another with small loans, favours and kind gestures that have made all their lives and their families' lives a bit better. The driver that first employed Lewis also took a chance with him because the earlier discussed homophily in social networks, both men were from the same rural area and the driver was inclined to giving him a job because of that.

The inner workings of the Malayitsha business and how it thrives off social networks.

OMalayitsha are trusted with people's hard-earned money and goods to transport all the way to Zimbabwe. Lewis says it is rare for customers to randomly use a malayitsha they do not know and have never done any business with before. A malayitsha needs to build trust over time and gradually grow his network of customers through referrals and people recommending him to their friends that need malayitsha services. Once he proves to be trustworthy, customers payback that trust with unwavering loyalty.

Lewis operates from Hillbrow, at the earlier described place where he first got his job. The place goes by two names which are used interchangeably, 'ezinjeni' and 'ezibayeni' which loosely translate as 'a place of dogs' and 'the kraals' respectively. I visited the space twice to interview Lewis and I made some profound observations. It is an open space characterised by high volumes of traffic within and outside the space. The traffic is both in vehicular and pedestrian form. There are men fixing and servicing cars within the space, men readying and loading packages onto the vehicles and there are a lot of people, both men and women, who are customers looking to send stuff back home. There are no signs outside the space to show what the place is all about and Lewis says this is because all the malayitshas that operate there want to keep the place inconspicuous. Though it draws a lot attention with its busyness and is widely known throughout Hillbrow, Lewis says it is best that they remain unofficial and indiscernible to formal institutions, especially the state.

Lewis saying they wanted to remain invisible to the state was quite paradoxical, he says within his and every malayitsha's network are police officers and border control authorities both in South Africa and Zimbabwe. He says it is important to have these state authorities for the 'smooth' operation of the business. They need permits for their vehicles to operate between the two countries and they obtain those at the police station and because of the frequency of their travel hence frequent visits to the police station, they establish relationships with the officers and eventually these officers become a part of their network. Lewis says having the police within his network guarantees him a permit each time he needs one. "*It is always good to have them around; I can tell you now, I have never been denied a permit in over 10 years of doing this work,*" (Lewis, 2019).

Regarding the border authorities; many a time Lewis and all the other oMalayitsha carry either embargoed goods and/or a quantity of legal goods beyond the accepted limit. Border authorities can confiscate or prevent a malayitsha from passing through when carrying such goods but having the border authorities within one's network and knowing them on a first name basis is halfway to guaranteed smooth passage at the border. The other half is "*obviously leaving a 'cok*[15]*' behind each time you cross, they do not just let you through because they know you*" (Lewis, 2019). Furthermore, some omalayitsha like Lewis have extended the reach of their business to transport people as well, and usually people that opt to travel with omalayitsha instead of the much trusted and formal air travel or bus companies such as Greyhound and Intercape which traverse that route on a daily are people with no passports or whose passports are spoilt for one reason or another. For those people to be let through at the border hustle free, omalayitsha facilitate their passage by negotiating upfront with the border officials in their network and giving them (the officials) a 'coke'. All this however comes at an extra charge for the customer in addition to the normal travel cost they ought to pay.

The malayitsha business is highly reliant on the network of people the malayitsha himself establishes. The network consists of the peculiar customers who want to trust a malayitsha before doing business with him, the police and border officials; all of whom contribute to the

[15] Coke, coca-cola or cool drink is code for bribes within the '*malayitsha*' circles.

successful running of the malayitsha business. Lewis has found great financial success from that which has translated into a better livelihood for him and his family. But looking at the operation in the grand scheme of things, it is not only the malayitsha whose livelihood is improved from the operation, but everyone within the network gets to benefit from it. In the case of the customers sending goods and money to Zimbabwe, livelihoods are even supported as far as Zimbabwe as the customers' families receive money and goods. Everyone else in the network except for the customers receive financial benefit while the customers get the satisfaction of knowing that their loved ones are taken care of which may not be a tangible bettering of livelihood but there is some utility to it that satisfies customers. Figure 17 below shows the services Lewis offers and what he normally charges, he says the prices are negotiable.

Service	**Price**
General travel to/from Bulawayo	R350
Travel with no passport/spoilt passport	R1200
Heavy bag of goods (determined by Lewis' men)	R800
Light bag (determined by Lewis' men)	R400
Passport exit stamp to avoid overstaying	R300

Rasta's social network in his Uber driving business

Rasta is a 42-year-old man from Evaton at the Emfuleni Local Muicipality South of Johannesburg but he currently lives in Hillbrow. Hillbrow is the base for his job, but his work makes him mobile and he drives all over Gauteng. Rasta is an Uber driver[16]. He says for a long time, until well into his 30s, he lived life in a carefree manner because he still lived at home with his mother who

[16] Uber is an online application that connects drivers registered on the application to members of the public that need transport. Both the drivers and the Uber company earn money from every ride/journey a driver successfully completes.

worked and provided him with all that he needed. This was until 2014 when his mother retired from work and her income was halved by the transition from normal pay to pension. Rasta told me in our interview, "*ay man, and smell the damn coffee*" (Rasta, 2019). He realised he could not just sit at home and wait on his mother to fend for him, he had to work and thus he moved to Hillbrow at the end of 2014.

Rasta already knew some people living in the area which is what influenced his decision to move to Hillbrow to begin with. He first moved in with some friends on Edith Cavel Street which demonstrated (as shown in earlier cases) the importance of social networks in accommodation. Unlike my other respondents, it took very long for him to get his first job in Johannesburg, he does not recall the exact dates however, but he estimated that it took him over six months. Within the first month of searching, the friends he had moved in with got frustrated with him as they felt as he was not doing enough to get work and they eventually parted ways. Rasta says that did not deter him because he knew quite a lot of people that would happily take him in and he went on to Berea to live with a cousin of his, Bandla which was another illustration of the use of one's social network to get accommodation. He later moved on from Bandla's place because they argued often, "*Bandla sold weed, drank too much and always brought weird people to the house.*" (Rasta, 2019). Rasta went back to Hillbrow and stayed with his older half-sister, Tsepiso who took him in and was very supportive with accommodation, food, transport money, encouragement and just emotional presence as Rasta described.

With Tsepiso, in a small apartment on Quartz Street, Rasta stayed until she got traditionally married and moved out. He also left the apartment and found a place of his own and this was after he had lived with her for a year and fortunately, he had a job by then and he could fend for himself. His sister's husband had a friend that owned an old Mercedes which he planned on converting into a metre taxi but needed a driver to complete the conversion. Rasta's brother in law facilitated his friend and Rasta's meeting which culminated in Rasta getting the driver job. This was another example of social networks aiding one in their quest for a job. Rasta drove that Mercedes for just over a year until sometime in 2016 when he decided to switch over to Uber. The main reason for the switch was that there was growing competition between the old school metre taxis and Uber and Uber seemed to be winning that competition hence Rasta's transition.

It was a seamless transition as Uber was growing in Gauteng, all he had to do was register and he got placed with a car owner instantly.

As an Uber driver, Rasta had to meet a weekly minimum target of R2000 to the owner of the car after fuel deductions and Uber's 25% commission on all fares. His aim every week was therefore to surpass the target to the car owner's satisfaction, and this determined how much the owner would pay him. This kind of setup worked well for him half the time and sometimes he barely met the target meaning he did not have much left for himself. He did however survive from what he made and the occasional handouts from Tsepiso and her husband. The more rides he took on, the more people he met and with most rides he would chat with the passengers and establish some form of connection either through language or anything they have in common. Some of the chats, especially with those people that he encountered on multiple occasions and those that live in Hillbrow whom he already knew, fast became an establishment of a business network for Rasta. He offered these people informal ride accounts with him cutting out Uber and the car to make extra money for himself.

Rasta has created a network for himself where he offers riders fees lower than what Uber charges. This he does off the books without the Uber application recording the rides meaning he gets to keep all the money he makes from it. An example of this is Rasta's daily morning and evening trip to OR Tambo International Airport. A trip from Hillbrow to the airport with an Uber costs about R300 but Rasta charges his carpool of four people R150 per trip. The four people all work at the airport, three live in Hillbrow and one in Yeovale and Rasta picks them up outside their places of residence every morning between 5.30 and 5.45am and drives them to the airport. He does so in the evenings as well, picking them up from the airport and taking them back to inner city. They split the R150 fee among the four of them which reduces to R37.50 for each person per trip. This is not his only network of private clients, but he does have more who are not as regular. Some call him on occasion and they work out a fee that is considerably lower than what the Uber application would charge.

"*I know some will say it's illegal because it's not my car but I still make up for it, I meet my targets all the time… besides, this is Jozi, we are all hustling here,*" (Rasta, 2019). Rasta could barely make ends meet before he started making use of his private clients and he says once he started, he

made more money. He makes enough to cover his expenses and remain with enough to send to his mother as well. He says the money he makes goes a long way because he does not have any dependents save for his mother who demands very little. He has even began saving up to buy a piece of land in Evaton where he plans on building a house for himself.

Though his livelihood seems to be positively impacted by this trade from a financial point of view, he admitted that it is lowkey taking its toll on his overall wellbeing. To make up for lost time on his private clients, Rasta usually must work long hours and well into the night which is not good for his health. Additionally, there has been a recent scourge of Uber hijackings by people that request a ride on the app using phony accounts only to rob the driver upon arrival and this has been quite prominent in the Hillbrow, Berea, Yeovale and CBD area. Another threat to his safety are the constant squabbles Uber drivers have with metre taxi drivers over 'Uber's theft of an industry that was originally theirs'. The competition between the two is not of the healthy kind like one would expect in an ideal laissez-faire market, there have been reported incidents of violence and unfortunately some cases have yielded the worst outcome, fatalities. While Rasta makes what he calls "a lot" of money which is good for his livelihood, it comes at the cost of his safety and wellbeing. "*What can I say man… i-job yi-job*[17]" (Rasta, 2019).

A synthesis of Ronaldo, Lewis, Manando and Rasta's stories

The four men's stories above are all different yet they all make use of social networks to improve their livelihoods and this is reflective of the dynamic character of social networks. Ronaldo and Rasta had family who already lived in Hillbrow and those family ties were instrumental in them acquiring accommodation in the neighbourhood. Manando and Lewis on the other hand, had their social networks which helped them find accommodation manifest in the form of friends and in Lewis' case, that friend could be argued was still a stranger at the time and later became a friend. All men got accommodation (though for Lewis it was most precarious) and their social networks at play in their accommodation were in the form of different kinds of relationships.

The dynamism of social networks does not only lie in the different exact relationships they materialise in, but they are also dynamic in the sense that they can be at play to serve in different

[17] I-job yi-job is an amalgamation of the English word 'job' with Zulu prefixes which means 'a job is a job'.

situations. The four men ply their trade in different ways, but they all managed to make use of their social networks in their economic trade to earn an income. This showed that social networks can be reshaped and adapted to service in different situations where they are needed. For example, Ronaldo's cousin Dira who was central to Ronaldo's social network played multiple roles in Ronaldo's livelihood from offering accommodation to connecting him with a contact that would get Ronaldo a work visa; and this shows adaptability in social networks. Another example is in Lewis' much wider social network; though he did not recycle and repurpose the same people to help with different needs like Ronaldo, Lewis' network had enough people to cover the multiple needs that he had thus his social network adaptable in that sense. Furthermore, the two men are in different industries, but they still used networks to get ahead showing that these social networks can be applied in different industries, even in the formal sector as seen in Ronaldo's current managerial position.

Another key piece of information to highlight from the four accounts is how helpful social networks have turned out to be for Hillbrow's residents. Though it is impossible to quantify the impact of social networks on the men's livelihoods, qualitatively they did have a great impact. All four men's social networks were instrumental in them getting accommodation and work which are both essential aspects of livelihoods. This was also helped by the character Hillbrow, the informality and tight knit community fostered by the neighbourhood's high density catalysed the usefulness of their social networks. In their need for accommodation, the informality in the neighbourhood's housing practices such ass subletting and occupation of bad buildings made it easier for Manando, Rasta and Ronaldo to obtain accommodation by sharing rooms and spaces with the people in their networks. Regarding the men's means of earning an income the neighbourhood's informality still catalysed the usefulness of their social networks as seen in Lewis' malayitsha business which is inconspicuous to the formal eye but known to many Hillbrow residents operating informally.

While the informality does work in the residents' favour, it however seems to instigate illegal activity. Lewis' bribing of state authorities in his network, Ronaldo's connection to the Nigerian fake visa ring and, relatively mildly, Rasta's toned-down conning of the car owner and Uber are all examples of how some of Hillbrow's residents use their social networks unscrupulously to

improve their livelihoods. This presents a threat to parties affected by this illegality and it is also threatening to the men themselves as they could end up in prison, deported or lose their jobs. The illegality element reinforces any arguments against informality and these arguments often equate informality with unlawfulness (Levy 2008; Farrell 2004 cited in La Porta, 2014). I however do concede that the criminal element is but a fraction of informality; and there are some scholars who share the same view, Rubin (2016) writes "the invisible and the informal do not equate with the chaotic or anarchic, as is the case so often presented" (Rubin, 2016, p6).

A Hillbrow church cognisant of the opportunities within the congregation

This section moves away from the story telling approach used to give the accounts of Ronaldo, Rasta, Manando and Lewis' stories on how social networks affect their livelihoods; and places more focus on the role of one church in Hillbrow as a hub of social networks and the role the church played in the livelihoods of its congregants.

While many Pentecostal churches today take on a stance that requires their members to give to the church on the prosperity gospel premise, 'give so you can receive more' (Katsukura, 2018), there is a church in Hillbrow that seems to break away from that line of reasoning. One of the church's elders, Elder 1, who agreed to have a very brief interview with me said he knows that a lot of inner-city residence are 'struggling' to get by, and the church tries to assist in all the ways it can. "*We know most of our members are struggling, even me I'm poor myself… so we only ask our members to give what they can but mostly we try to help them with real thing*s" (Elder 1, 2019). Elder 1 did not carry on with the interview as he was in a rush but referred me to another church elder, Elder 2, who went on to list how the church was helping its congregation. She seemed to be very excited about the projects the church was involved in as she spoke with a smile on her face, an eager tone and animated gestures. "*We have two services per week, one on Sunday which is the main service, you should come, and one Wednesday evening and we serve food after both those services. You see some of our members come to church hungry and we try to feed them*" (Elder 2, 2019). The food project is one of the ways the church helps out its members and Elder 2 listed a few others which included donations in the form of clothes and food stuffs and bringing in professionals for skills training. All of this is funded by European donors and friends of the church.

What particularly caught my attention which is more in tune with the research but was not mentioned by both elders is how the church recognises the potential within the congregation to help one another. The church sees the congregation as more than what it seems, but as a social network that could help each other with work among other things. This I realised when I took Elder 2 up on her invite to visit and I went to one of their Sunday services. It is a rather small church with about a hundred people that were in attendance on the day and they convene in quite modest premises on Wolmarans Street. During the service there is a segment reserved for job related announcements where the master of ceremony announces to whole church matters of work sought by the members and members hiring. Church members looking for work and those hiring all tell the MC before the service starts and the MC makes the announcements in a ten-minute time slot during the service. This is a great way to make use of church members as a network that can be tapped into as a resource which helps members find work.

I spoke to two women that go to the church and live and live Hillbrow whose names were called out as work seekers. Both are domestic workers who are already employed in the northern suburbs but have the weekends off. One of the women (who I will refer to as Lisa) stays with the family that employed her during the week and only goes to her room in Hillbrow on Friday evenings while the other woman (Nomalanga) travels to and from work every weekday, she rents a flat across the road from the church. On weekends they do not take time off to relax but they do freelance domestic work wherever they are temporarily hired which is often by other members of the church. I asked them both if the announcements at church helped and they strongly agreed, one of them went on to even express how well the announcement works, "*I usually get more calls to clean than I can actually attend to because of the announcements… some people even ask me to come during the week after work which I can't do, the announcements really work for sure*" (Nomalanga, 2020). Lisa agreed and said they both make enough money on weekends to cover their rent which leaves their basic salaries from their respective places of employment to cover the rest of their expenses and to send home. They were both surprisingly open with sharing the exact figures of how much they make with Nomalanga's basic salary being R3500 and Lisa's having been recently bumped up to R5000. With each weekend they both make R500 at least, depending on the amount of work they do. For a typical Hillbrow flat that is a

bachelor/one bedroom flat they charge R300 for a full service which includes spring cleaning, laundry and ironing.

The church with its many congregants was not only seen as a place and group of worshipers by its pastors and elders, but they also saw the economic potential for its members within its members. The church as a hub of social networks has helped some of its congregants like Lisa and Nomalanga who have made use of the work announcements segment during the church service to get weekend domestic work from other members. This has proven to be more than useful to their livelihood according to Lisa and Nomalanga's assessments.

The use of social networks to fend off xenophobic attackers in Hillbrow 2019

Just as important as accommodation and economic feats discussed in the sections preceding sections of the report, safety is a major component of livelihoods. Xenophobia has been a contributor to the precarity of livelihoods in Hillbrow because of Hillbrow's strong foreign presence, it (xenophobia) threatens the safety of all residents, even the South African born citizens. In this section I show how social networks were utilised to fend off the xenophobic attacks in 2019.

The xenophobic attacks of 2019 saw some misguided and ill-informed South African nationals violently take out their frustrations of unemployment and poverty on African foreign nationals who they believe are 'stealing' jobs and other essential resources from them (Piper and Charman, 2016). This particular group of locals believe there is a correlation between their socioeconomic plight and the presence of African foreign nationals in 'their spaces' and these spaces are often low-income black neighbourhood (Piper and Charman, 2016). With Hillbrow being a foreign overran neighbourhood, it became one of the targets of the ill-reputed xenophobic attacks of 2019.

When the attacks started brewing sometime in September, pockets of black townships were targeted. Known foreigners in these communities were called out and subjected to abuse meant to intimidate and drive them away from the neighbourhoods. In some extreme cases the abuse was violent with people getting seriously hurt. Information on this reached Hillbrow before the group of attackers made their way there. Some of the research's foreign informants told me that

they received word on the attacks while they were still at their early stages. One claimed to have even known about the attacks before they occurred, and they all received information through the network of people they have on WhatsApp. They all belong to multiple WhatsApp groups of Hillbrow residents and information on the attacks and the attackers planning on targeting Hillbrow was posted on all their WhatsApp groups.

On the same platform, foreign nationals living in Hillbrow were able to anticipate the attack on Hillbrow and they promptly mobilised themselves so they could fend the attackers off. Messages on WhatsApp and social media were being sent around raising awareness of the coming attack and calling on all able foreign nationals in Hillbrow to take a stand against xenophobia and fight. On the day of the attack, over one thousand foreign nationals living in Hillbrow armed themselves with what they could; and according to Lewis, in the frontline were o*Malayitsha* most of whom carry firearms. When the attackers eventually came, there was brief stand off and the attackers eventually retreated having seen that they were outnumbered by the Hillbrow residents. The use of WhatsApp to spread the word on the attack and brace for it is a typical example of social networks in the form of social media in use and impacting the livelihoods in the form of security and safety. Fending the attackers off Hillbrow saved thousands of foreign nationals living in the neighbourhood who otherwise would have been subjected to violence and loss and damage of property like how other foreigners in townships had suffered (Lewis, 2019 (informant)).

How social networks have played a role in the establishment of informal institutions.

A constant for the neighbourhood of Hillbrow are its two characteristics of it being low income with a strong presence of undocumented foreign nationals. What this means for a large portion of the population is the denial of access to certain services provided by formal institutions, specifically formal services such as bank savings accounts and life insurance (Stadler and Dugmore, 2017; Alfaro-Velcamp, 2017). These are services that would normally be denied to undocumented persons, those trying to be invisible to the state, the informally employed and at times low income earners. Many of Hillbrow's residents fit either one or more of those profiles thus they are denied these services even though they do need them.

However, through social networks there has been a way to bypass the formal institutions and obtain similar services informally. Through the earlier mentioned stokvels like the one Ronaldo

was involved in, one can save their money without keeping cash at hand. The rotational monthly distribution of money to members of the stokvel allows each member to save their money for as many months as there are members within the stokvel. This is close to like how a savings account would work at a bank (Koenane, 2019). Ronaldo says for one to be part of stokvel they need to be trusted by the other members and this could only be possible if the person is already known to at least or more of the members, the person ought to be within the network either remotely or very close.

Regarding life insurance and similar services, my personal reflection on this issue takes me back to the informal burial society my uncle belonged to. In the building that I lived at on Twist Street, a group of men who all lived there started an informal burial society where they would all take out a fixed amount of money (R550) every month and deposit it into one bank account under the name of the trusted treasurer. Uncle H was also a part of that society. What makes a burial society different from a stokvel is that a pay-out (of R10000) would only be made to members when a family member listed upon joining society died. The amount was doubled if a primary member of the society passed on and R20000 would be paid out to their next of kin, ideally to spend on bereavements. All this was informal and no documentation was needed, one just needed to be a known man living in the building to be a member which is another instance of how social networks play a role in accessing certain services which they normally would not get with institutions if they were undocumented. These services are essential to people's livelihoods as they aid financially, and they bring about peace of mind.

Conclusion

The findings of the research show that because of the inner-city's limited absorptive capacity to formally employ people along with the high presence of foreign undocumented migrants, there is precarious living in the inner-city. Though at times some may fortunately get formal employment within the limited capacity just as Ronaldo did at first; for many, their undocumented costs that illusive formal employment opportunity as we saw in Ronaldo's case when he lost job because he did not have papers. The vast availability of bad buildings and buildings with minimal formal control have afforded the poor and undocumented some accommodation through the share housing using the *mastanda* system. Living together like that

seems to foster relationships and enhances one's social network. The high density of the neighbourhood adds on to social networks and it is these social networks that Hillbrow's precariously living residents have turned to improve their livelihoods. Many of Hillbrow's residents use their social networks to obtain employment opportunities like Ronaldo, Lisa and Nomalanga did; to start up and improve their businesses (mostly informal) as seen in Lewis' *malayitsha* business; and even to set up informal institutions that act as replacements for the formal ones which undocumented residents would otherwise not have access to. Informality also has a large role to play because most of the activities and practices that arise from social networks are informal and yet very essential to inner city livelihoods.

Chapter 5. Analysis of Findings

Constructing the range of networks described in the findings chapter.

A closer look at the social networks at play in the research uncovers some interesting dynamics, most of which have been largely or partially discussed in the literature. The findings of the research do confirm the wide extent of social networks that most literature describes. In the findings chapter I narrate the stories of multiple individuals living in Hillbrow and making use of their networks to better their lives. In these stories we see people's social networks ranging from childhood friends, family to acquaintances they have only known for a short while and people they share something in common with. This is in line with Landau's *et al* (2017) description of social networks as a group of people one has a relationship with, whether close or remote, and makes use of them for tangible and intangible resources for the advancement of one's self. That broad range is seen in Ronaldo's story where his cousin, friends and his customer-cum-friendcum-colleague-cum-roommate among others all play a role in his rise in the restaurant and hospitality industry. Lewis chatting with a stranger at a local chip shop in Hillbrow and that stranger playing a role in him finding a job further consolidates that wide range of relationships that constitute what a social network is.

Though the relationships are wide ranging and different as Landau *et al* describes and the research uncovers; they all seem to be based on some of commonality. In the research, all the different relationships between the research subjects and the people in their networks are based on respective common denominators. For example, there are the very apparent commonalities like blood in the family ties of Rasta and his half-sister, Ronaldo and Dira, nationality in the case of Lewis' employment as a malayitsha; and then there are commonalities such the one that founded the unlikely relationship of Lewis and the man at the chip shop – both men were homeless at the time and that brought them together. Also, in the case of the burial society which Uncle H belonged to, there were two common factors that bound the men together – their residence at the same building and all of them being male. This characteristic of social networks being rooted in one or more commonalities is what McPherson and Smith-Lovin (2001) describe as 'homophily' in social networks meaning that people are generally attracted to similar beings and establish relationships based on a common 'thing' that both or all parties share.

It is easy for one to suppose that these characteristics of social networks as theorised by the above-mentioned authors are contrary to one another. The misconception of their contradiction may stem from one being related to a wide range of different relationships and the other calling for similarity for the establishment of a relationship. However, the research reveals that both assertions can coexist among people within a social network. One can have different relationships with different people and all relationships having respective commonalities pillaring them. Furthermore, McPherson and Smith-Lovin (2001) do not talk discuss homophily in an ideal light as essential for relationships, they see it as a limiting factor that curtails the wide range of relationships people could have.

Exclusion in Hillbrow's social networks. Gender and nationality among other dividing lines.

In light of McPherson and Smith-Lovin's (2001) argument of homophily being a limiting factor, the research noted elements of that in the social networks at play in the stories looked at in Hillbrow. As much as the stories revealed social networks having a positive impact on the livelihoods of Hillbrow's residents, that impact could be of a larger magnitude if the Hillbrow residents broke away from homophily and established networks with people they had close to nothing in common with. A McPherson and Smith-Lovinian analysis would will see a break away from homophily raising the ceiling on many important things such information received, attitude and general interaction would be less restricted. In Uncle H's burial society and Ronaldo's stokvel are good initiatives that served the two well livelihood wise but these initiatives are much gendered, they excluded women thus limiting their potential for expansion in numbers and depth in the form of different perspectives and ideas women would bring in.

The exclusion was not only limited to gender. Many of the networks in Hillbrow had nationality as a commonality between those involved within the network. The context chapter of the research showed that the neighbourhood is quite diverse with multiple African nationalities found there. Except for instances where interaction with other nationalities is unavoidable such as Rasta's Uber driving and Manando's motor mechanics business; and perhaps Ronaldo's transaction with the Nigerian men for a permit, all the 'strong' relationships were between people of the same nationality. Though McPherson and Smith-Lovin (2011) point out the limiting

factor of homophily, they also argue that relationships where there is no commonality linking the parties involved are easily eroded away). This kind of view raises the supposition that perhaps having these relationships founded on nationality lines strengthens the ties and the exclusion of other nationalities in social networks may not be deliberate but it is the case that relationships with the 'other' are just too fragile thus they do not last long. An argument could be made against nationality not being a strong enough connection, but the same nationality in the same foreign neighbourhood is often invokes wistfulness and that is, at least better grounds to start a relationship than in situations where there is no common nationality shared. Lewis and his first employer demonstrated this.

Gender and nationality seemed to be the leading lines along which relationships are forged in Hillbrow whereas McPherson and Smith-Lovin (2001) generalisation suggested that it would be race and ethnicity. I suppose these are in unison as all the networks in the Hillbrow stories had race in common, all the subjects were black and the people in their networks were black too even though Hillbrow has minimal racial diversity to allow for anything other than networks being black. Secondly, according to Tonkin *et al* (2017) the meaning of the term ethnicity is very broad and is inclusive but not limited to nationality thus rendering McPherson and Smith-Lovin's (2001) supposition on ethnicity quite applicable to Hillbrow.

Qualifying the impact on livelihoods. Sustainable livelihoods endurance and circumstances?

In all the interviews I carried out, I would explicitly ask the question, "how do you think these networks have impacted your livelihood" as per the research's working definition of what livelihood means which I explained to them prior to asking the question. All the responses did confirm that their livelihoods were impacted positively by their social networks but there was, with most of the interviewees, a general understanding of livelihoods in a financial light. Most of them did not go beyond finances in describing their livelihoods, they merely quantified their livelihoods using monetary figures and values.

This view of livelihoods is not far off from the simple definition of livelihoods given by Ashley and Carney (1999) which is the methods and strategies to eliminate poverty (Ashley and Carney, 1999). Even Rakodi's (2014) direct definition that sees livelihoods as a mix of competencies,

assets and activities required to make a living seems to imply this financial view at face value. Reconciling the monetary perspective of livelihoods that the research's interviewees had, and the simple definitions described above, one could be led to believe that poverty is eliminated by making money, or a living is made by earning a 'good' financial income.

More depth has been given to the concept of livelihoods where indicators such as access to health care, education and assured income levels are introduced by Ashley and Carney (1999) to determine livelihood and Rakodi (2014) introduces the concept of sustainable livelihoods that can withstand shocks and anomalies. With the extended depth of the livelihoods concept, the financial view as an indicator becomes inadequate. One can have money but no access to quality healthcare because of their undocumented status. Secondly, many Hillbrow residents earn their income through informal channels that are perfect for particular local economic climate like Lewis' *malayitsha* business. A shock or an anomaly in the form a police raid at Ezinjeni would send Lewis out of business and Ronaldo's fake permit being possibly discovered looming over his head is a sign that his income is not assured, are both examples of how money on its own does not equal a good livelihood or a sustainable one.

However I do concede that in many cases money has the power to purchase access to a many tangibles and intangibles that could improve one's livelihood and this is seconded by Sharshar (2018) when she argues that money plays a vital role in gaining access, particularly citizenship for the wealthy in affluent foreign states. While in Hillbrow there are no super models spending hundreds of thousands of dollars at the Department of Home Affairs as seen in Sharshar's work, there are some similarities in Lewis' malayitsha trade where he gets people without passports but with some money across the border and Ronaldo obtaining a visa from his Nigerian contact for R4000.

Still in the light of finances purchasing access, in most of the stories the participants spoke about having an increased disposable income as a direct result of their social networks. This means they had more left for leisure and they, to an extent, got the freedom to do what pleases them. This type of freedom was conceptualised by Berlin (1958) as positive liberty which is essentially the freedom to act upon one's own will (Berlin, 1958; MaCcallum, 2017). For example, Manando purchasing a vehicle in sprawling Johannesburg afforded him the freedom to get around the city

more. This is something that Ronaldo expressed once he got his first job, he had the freedom to make his own decisions and do what he liked to do. But in Ronaldo's case his freedom was double edged, he got positive freedom to do what he liked and he also got what Berlin theorised as negative liberty which is the freedom from external interference (Berlin, 1958; MacCallum, 2017).

In his case the external interference was in the form of Dira who made all the decisions as he was the bread winner prior to Ronaldo's employment.

The pivotal role of densification in the assembling of social networks and livelihood.

The research did find that there is a correlation between the social networks one is involved in and his/her livelihood. The impact these networks have on livelihood is often positive and this relation between networks and livelihood seems to be welcomed by Hillbrow's residents. More so, the neighbourhood itself plays a vital role in making the impact on livelihood a positive one by providing an ingredient quite central to the working of these social networks – densification. Hillbrow's large population crammed in just a square kilometre land and housed in high rise residential buildings makes the neighbourhood one of the most densely populated areas in the country. While this could be seen negatively by associating high density with noise, crime and a general urban nuisance, it seems densification in Hillbrow is aiding many residents with the improvement of their livelihoods.

Taking a closer look at the information collected during the research, it seems densification in Hillbrow has contributed to the neighbourhood's resilience just as a study by Gewer and Rubin (2015) revealed. Densification in the area has fashioned a situation that creates an allowance for "poorer people to survive and, in some cases, to thrive" (Gewer and Rubin, 2015, p71). Densification manifests and plays out differently in Hillbrow, it forges an atmosphere that allows people to engage each other on a daily thus establishing social networks that are vital for daily life. These social networks are central to most income generating activities taking place in the neighbourhood. A wide range of economic activities take place in the neighbourhood as discussed earlier in the research and this is in line with what Gewer and Rubin (2015) call 'intense land use'. Beyond people just living in their flats, there is more going in the neighbourhood like Manando using the parking lots of Hillbrow's residential buildings as a makeshift garage for car repairs hence the intense land use afforded by the high density and social networks in Hillbrow.

The following passage by Gewer and Rubin encapsulates what I found in the research regarding the neighbourhood's high density;

"The increased density has meant that there is significant choice around housing and accommodation options, ranging from staying free of charge right up to relatively expensive, but generally shared, accommodation. The density also fosters the emergence of myriad organisations, formal and informal networks and opens the possibility for the majority of people to find some kind of economic niche. The diversity and density in the area is also accommodated by support networks, such as family, friends, kin networks, faith-based organisations and even communal security organisations like community policing forums[18]" (Gewer and Rubin, 2015 p71).

However, the 'economic niche' mentioned above is not honestly exploited by some residents. For some people the ends which is the need to survive and thrive, is a goal they are willing to attain by any means necessary. Some of the activities in the neighbourhood do improve people's livelihoods but they are illegal hence the 'necessity versus means debate'.

Necessity vis-à-vis means.

This piece of analysis does not seek to make an excuse for crime, but I am shedding light on how at times necessity trumps the means. In the stories of the Hillbrow residents we see illegality emerging as a key theme; from illegal undocumented migrants, fake documentation, subtle corruption, a bit of illegal trafficking, building hijacking and squatting and the misuse of employer resources for personal gain all on the part of the research's interviewees. This illegal activity by the research's subjects is part of a greater narrative in Hillbrow, the neighbourhood has violent and many other kinds of crime coupled with the illegal activity described above.

Short (2018) argues that criminal activity is more strongly associated with poverty and with changing social and economic conditions. This conclusion is aligned with what the research uncovers as the subjects either explicitly or subliminally expressed that their illegal activity was due to their poverty, they had to survive. Rasta felt he was not making enough money as an Uber

[18] The support networks described by Gewer and Rubin are all included in the 'social networks' as used in this research.

driver so he started using the vehicle offline to transport the people in his network for a fee to make extra money while Ronaldo got a fake permit so he could get a better and higher paying managerial post and Lewis illegal border skip to South Africa from Zimbabwe and his malayitsha trade are all criminal but were necessitate by what Short (2018) would argue is their instinct to survive and what Nicholson (1998) refers to as hardwired human behaviour (Nicholson, 1998; Short, 2018). It seems to be the case that the people of Hillbrow's undesirable social and economic circumstances take out judgement of the law; and they stand on the side for 'the cause justifying the means' argument.

Again, Short (2018) cited changing social and economic climates as another factor in addition to poverty that spares people onto illegal dealings. The way Short meant this was through the more apparent instances such as socioeconomic anomalies like the Great Depression of 1932 or the 2008 global recession which saw drastic downturns in the socioeconomic climates of the USA and the world respectively (Short, 2018). Times of war are also a major culprit that change the socioeconomic conditions of society and thus foster some criminal activity among the people.

In the case of Hillbrow, the changes in economic and social conditions are not as obvious, but one could argue that the moments in the neighbourhood's recent history (from the 70s to date) have cultivated significant change for the conclusion that they too contributed to the high crime rate in the area to be drawn. Between the late 70s and current times, the neighbourhood saw a drastic change in racial demographics with white flight, the end of apartheid and a transition to democracy and an influx of African foreign nationals coming in; all of which are serious contributors to the neighbourhood's socioeconomic status quo, a status quo birthed from many changes within a relatively short period. Using Short's (2018) view, these changes would be attributed to the crime in the area.

The generic conceptualisation of poverty correlating with crime comes from a sociological perspective where issues are scrutinised holistically with people taken as groups or a collective to analyse poverty and crime trends (Kingston and Webster, 2015). But when one takes a step further to use a psychological perspective where the individual's behaviour is examined in isolation, the results yielded are likely to be different because different experiences, circumstances, inherent character traits and individual agency all amalgamate to make up an

individual that is different from the next person and they all play a role in the individual's behaviour and practice of agency (McAlpine and Amundsen, 2018). To expand on the two aspects, the sociological point of view would paint Lewis and Rasta with the same brush; both men earned their living through unscrupulous dealings but the psychological aspect would see their dodgy activities but go on to note Rasta's regret and Lewis pride in these shady acts (I observed the regret and pride of the respective men in their tone and expressions during the interviews) as important to highlighting individual difference. Therefore, while it could be easy to notice patterns of crime in poor communities as some scholars rightly do so, it could simultaneously be an oversimplification to conclude that poverty breeds crime because more than just economic circumstance pushes one to a life of illegal activity.

The interwovenness of informality, hustle and illegal practices amidst urban poverty.

It is widely accepted that the Johannesburg inner city harbours and propagates informal practices as previous research has revealed (Simone, 2004; Stadler and Dugmore, 2017, Todes et al, 2018). My research also revealed that there is vast informality taking place in Hillbrow with all the subjects of the research participating in the neighbourhood's informality in one way or another. However, there is a perception that demonises informality (Levy, 2008; Thieme, 2018) as it is often conflated with criminal activity (Chiodelli, 2019) with which (crime) Hillbrow is ridden with; and as it was seen in the research's findings chapter and the subsection preceding this one, some of the research's subjects go beyond the legality lines in their informal practices.

Does informality therefore breed criminal activity? Many definitions of informality stem from an understanding of what formal practices are and they simply go on to pass informality off as the opposite of that. Such an outlook on informality often sees it in a negative light and is likely to be consistent with the question at the beginning at the of the paragraph. For example, Levy (2008) who takes on a cynical view of informality describes it as practices outside of policy and state sanction enjoying the perks of avoiding regulations and taxes (Levy, 2008) and a report in the McKinsey Global Institute describes it as parasitic practices that unfairly compete with law-abiding firms and persons (Farrell, 2004 cited in La Porta, 2014). Such an outlook would see the informality and self-determination from the state in Hillbrow quite negatively and possibly conflate it with some of the criminal activity taking place there. Practices such as unlicensed micro

businesses and even people's state of being undocumented migrants are rejected under Farrell (2004) and Levy's (2008) view.

On the other hand, there is a view of informality that breaks away from the arguments that criminalise it, this view sees potential in it. De Sonto (2000) sees informality as an untapped tank of energy sealed by state regulations (De Sonto, 2000 cited in La Porta and Shleifer, 2014). Furthermore, La Porta and Shleifer (2014) open their discussion by citing informal firms as accounting for "up to half of the developing world's economic activity" (La Porta and Shleifer, 2014, 109) and with this economic activity, informal economic practices provide livelihood for billions of people. This position on informality sees informal activity in a positive light and instead of criminalising it, it embraces it. Roy (2004; 2009; 2018) takes a step further and claims that informality is actually constructed by the state through its arbitrary maps, categories and cut off points to combat it (informality). She saw these strategies to maintain order by authorising and deauthorising different groups of traders as the state remaking legality and illegality thus informality being constructed.

The stories of the Hillbrow residents documented in the preceding findings chapter could be seen from the two polar lenses of informality described above as portraying what is argued on both sides. Lewis' corrupt dealings with border officials and Ronaldo's procurement of a fake work permit are all aspects of their informal practices but they undermine the law and seem to be an insult to citizens that get on with business the 'right way', law-abiding citizens. Rasta using an Uber vehicle owned by someone else for personal financial gain with the Uber application turned off is part of his informal practices, though it may not cross the legal line, it too paints a bad picture of informality and those who 'indulge' in it. Rasta could easily be seen as a worker that does not make an honest living but cuts corners to get ahead and this too can be seen as an insult to diligent, hardworking citizens that make an honest living every day.

Simultaneously, the view that embraces informality will be cognisant of the predominant conditions under which Hillbrow is set up, the primary one being the urban poverty context. This view sympathises with the context and sees these informal practices by Rasta, Lewis, Ronaldo and everyone else whose stories are told in the research as being innovative enough to improve their livelihoods regardless of their situation. Recognising the urban poverty context and the need

to escape the poverty trap helps makes the research's subjects' end goal clear and it is a worthy one; it tactfully makes one sympathise with the means they use to reach their goal.

Additionally, this more tolerant view of informality also takes on a stance that at times views informality in relation to the state, its officials, policy and regulations. This particular stance sees informality as a product of the state's inadequacies. For example, Huchzermeyer (2008) when discussing informal settlements in South Africa, she identified a fault in state policy which problematised informal settlement understanding. The fault is that there was only a focus on the top structure in the definition given in the Urban Foundations (1991) document, and it read: "shelter usually constructed with unconventional building materials" (Urban Foundation, 1991:24). This definition only focused on the house structure and negated essentials like households occupying illegal land, or households with insecure tenure. This generally highlights how misunderstood informality is, even on the part of the state.

At times practices of the state leave out certain and people and they are left with no option but to engage in informal practices. In Ronaldo's work permit case, he obtained a fake one because to him that was faster and more effective way to do so. Firstly, his passport had overstayed meaning that had he gone to the state (Department of Home Affairs) he was likely going to be deported back to Zimbabwe and banned from re-entering South Africa for five years (SA Immigration Act, 2000). Secondly, in the very remote chance that he was not deported and his formal application for a work permit was accepted, he would have had to wait for over three months for that application to get approved and according to immigration law he would not have been allowed to work during that time (SA Immigration Act, 2000). Lastly, a formal application accepted does not guarantee approval, sometimes people are denied work permits and visas and that is a chance Ronaldo was not willing to take. However, there may have been a lack of responsibility on Ronaldo's part as he did not take advantage of the Zimbabwean Documentation Project which was a Department of Home Affairs initiative that started in 2009 targeted at regularising and documenting Zimbabweans illegally living in South Africa. The project relaxed some of the requirements stipulated in the Immigration Act for one to get a visa and it lessened the waiting period (Hungwe, 2013). The project was still ongoing when Ronaldo's visitor's days on his passport expired but he did not take advantage of the project.

In Lewis' cross border escapades, the state also has a hand in his exploits. He openly shared his story about having to 'buy cooldrink' for border officials because this is something that is widely known and accepted. The malayitsha business is not some covert operation only known to a small incognito ring of individuals, it is widely known, and it is daily operational. State officials at the border who, ideally, are an embodiment of the state are a part of the informal malayitsha jaunts and in fact perpetuate the practice by facilitating their smooth crossing at the border. Likewise, in Uncle H's burial society and other informal establishments like stokvels in Hillbrow; the state and formal institutions play a part too by shutting out those that do not qualify. Persons undocumented and those that do not earn enough are all left out from banks and life insurance policies and these are a need for most people. They therefore resort to these informal institutions as a substitute.

From the above examples, we see the state either pushing people out into informal practices or in Lewis' case, inviting people into informal practice by accepting 'cool drinks'. There are also the widely known cases of the state and formal sector just not having enough capacity and resources to employ all persons. That too plays a role in pushing people towards the informal sector. In a way the informal sector eases the pressure from government and formal sector to be of service to all people.

There also seems to be a misconception of what is entailed by informality in the city, many are inclined to thinking of the more visible informality such as informal street trading which according to the city's bylaws and Operation Fiela is criminalised. Even a lot of literature is available on the visible informal trading ((Tissington, 2009; Benit-Gbaffou, 2015 and 2016; Pernegger, 2016; Rogerson, 2016 cited in Harrison et al, 2018). However, there is more to informality than what often meets the eye. The research revealed that are some stealthy informal practices that easily go unseen. Nomalanga and Lisa's informal domestic work are an example of how some informal activity could go unseen, be harmless to the next person and still be a reasonable sustenance of livelihood. Another example seen in the research is how Manando would informally fix people's cars at the parking lots of their respective buildings, unseen by the public thus not becoming a nuisance (but Manando did on accession fix some cars on the street). The stokvels and burial societies too highlight how informality can be invisible at times. Harrison et al (2018) cited The

QLFS, 4th Quarter 2013 figures as saying that retail informal activity is leading in Johannesburg's inner city accounting for 37%, but there are other noteworthy informal practices including construction (13%), transport (8%), repair of personal goods (5%), human health activities (3%) and education (3%)" (Harrison et al, 2018, 15). Harrison's et al research did also show that there were other services such as cell phone repairs, hairdressing and Manando's car repairs.

Share housing and the precarious tenure of accommodation in Hillbrow in relation to the law.

Considering the informal practices in the neighbourhood and how those are aligned or deviate from the legislation, I was compelled to discuss some of the overhanging accommodation arrangements in Hillbrow. The findings chapter revealed that, by way of social networks, there is substantial share housing and subletting in Hillbrow's residential buildings which qualifies as informal practice as well. The reason why people engage in this practice is to minimise the cost of accommodation as much as possible and there is generally an inverse relationship between the number of people living within a flat and the rental amount each individual would have to pay. The more the people sharing a space the less each of them would pay for rent (Watson, 1994). Hillbrow is a prime location close to economic opportunities and transport nodes like Park Station and the MTN Taxi rank which draws many people to the area, especially first time joburgers (Harrison et al, 2018) hence a serious demand for housing in the neighbourhood. That heavy demand for housing is met well by the sharing of space flats which reduces rental costs per person.

There are essentially two enablers of this practice that the research found; firstly, the relatively high number of 'bad buildings' in the neighbourhood which have zero to minimum regulation by owners and management or have completely been taken over by illegal occupants and; secondly, the stealthy ways of the of Hillbrow residents who manage to sublet unnoticed by building management. Either way, subletting and share housing is often in breach of most lease agreements which could result in eviction thus making tenure for all living under such conditions quite precarious (Gilbert et al, 1996). And in cases of buildings taken over by occupants, tenure is insecure because all people living in those buildings are occupying them unlawfully and their stay is not guaranteed but this has been going on for decades (Wilhem-Solomon, 2016).

While one may be inclined to thinking that the legislation on housing and contract law (for the leases) ought to put an end to this, it seems it is not the case. Contrary to belief, it seems the law is furtively allowing these illegal and/or unwarranted occupations of disused buildings. While building owners and flat owners may have their property rights, the Constitution (1996) which is the supreme law of the land does not allow the eviction of a people informally settled on a property without a provision of alternative accommodation made for them by the city. Pillaring the constitution is another major source of the law in the country and that is court case precedence. The Blue Moonlight Vs City of Johannesburg case highlights how the law is judicious on the matter and upholds the rights of the urban poor before anything else (Tissington and Wilson,2011; Kruuse, 2011). The case is now being used as precedence in all other similar cases that came thereafter.

In the court case, Blue Moonlight Properties who owned an industrial property in Berea, adjacent to Hillbrow served the illegal occupants who squatted in the property with an eviction notice. But the 86 (or so) occupants of the property fought the eviction on the grounds that the city had provide alternative accommodation for them. The City of Johannesburg however argued at the High Court in 2010 that they provided alternative housing for people they evicted from city owned property and that in cases where people are evicted from private property, the onus is on the owner of the property to provide alternative housing. The High Court however rendered the City's housing policy unconstitutional as it unfairly discriminated between the urban poor evicted from state owned property and those evicted from private property. The court therefore ordered the eviction but mandated the city to either provide alternative accommodation or pay all the households R850 monthly towards the cost of finding their own accommodation. The city did appeal this decision at the Supreme Court of Appeals, but they lost the case and got a similar but sterner judgement (Kruuse, 2011).

In addition to some residence stealthily subletting and sharing accommodation space even in regulated buildings being a major contributor to the informal housing status quo in Hillbrow; what transpired in the Blue Moonlight court case is alike a reason why there seems to be some continuity in the squatting and occupation of Hillbrow's unused buildings. The law seems to favour the urban poor regarding this issue. However, this pro-poor stance of the law gets its fair

share of criticism. The then Minister of Human Settlements, Tokyo Sexwale, labelled the Blue Moonlight case decision as the 'legalisation of illegality' (Sexwale, 2010 cited in Tissington and Wilson, 2011). Perhaps an even greater criticism of the implications of the Blue Moonlight court case is that it burdens local government with what ideally ought to be in the national sphere of government's jurisdiction, particularly the National Department of Housing. And this is a burden local government does not have the budget for within its limited resources (Tissington and Wilson, 2011).

Chapter 6. Conclusion and Recommendations.

The paradoxical impact of social networks on livelihoods.

On the one hand…

The research undoubtedly uncovered that social networks do play a vital role in the livelihoods of inner-city residents. All the participants made use of the people they had ties with to conjure up resources and assets for mostly their trade to earn an income and for other essential needs like accommodation. Such a role played by social networks in the assembling of resources to meet daily needs seems to generally have a positive impact on inner-city livelihoods. Most of the participants conceded that for them to be in the position they were in socioeconomically in the inner city, a position better than the one they were in before moving to Hillbrow, they had the people in their respective social networks to thank for the role they played. While there is a general improvement in their livelihoods, boosted by their social networks, a keen scrutinization of the social networks-livelihoods dynamic in the inner city may not fully embrace the outcome.

The positive impact of social networks on livelihoods

I found that social networks play an important role in a key component of one's livelihood in the inner-city, the procurement of accommodation. One of the keyways in which they played a role in the participants' housing arrangements was through the people in the participants' network who were already Hillbrow residents organising accommodation for them in an agreement made prior to the participants' move to the neighbourhood. An example is Manando's arrangement with his two friends who already lived in Hillbrow to let him stay with them when he first moved to Hillbrow from Newcastle. Another way in which social networks proved to be essential in the livelihoods of Hillbrow's residents accommodation-wise, is through the share housing and subletting practice. Through this practice the residents were able, within their housing social networks, to live together by sharing rooms and spaces in Hillbrow's apartments thus significantly lowering their rental payments.

Beyond the housing, social networks improved Hillbrow residents' livelihoods by boosting their trade and increasing their income. Lewis' loyal customers whose trust he had to earn first and have now become an integral part of his social network only send their goods and cash back home

(to Zimbabwe) through his malayitsha business. Furthermore, as part of his network, he has people who smoothen his journey between Zimbabwe and South Africa to-and-from like the border officials and traffic police in both countries. More evidence of this is seen in how Ronaldo's friend helped him find a job; and Rasta establishing a relationship with Uber users who would then ride with him bypassing the Uber app, and with rides like that Rasta got to keep all the money made from the ride.

A positive impact on people's livelihoods was also seen in informal institutions birthed from social networks. The example of the burial society that Uncle H was involved in and Ronaldo's stokvel with his friends highlights how social networks are vital for people who otherwise would not have access to formal institutions such as banks and insurance would to be able to bypass that obstacle and establish their own informal equivalents. Nomalanga and Lisa's church as an 'institution' too was instrumental in improving the two women's livelihoods. Their cleaning services were regularly announced at the church leading to them establishing a network among the congregants to whom they rendered their services.

Social networks have afforded precariously living inner city dwellers opportunities they otherwise would not have access to, especially the undocumented and the unskilled. "For the vast majority of people living in the inner city of Johannesburg, everyday life is characterised by unpredictability, flexibility and negotiation" (Rubin, 2016, p50); and at the heart of this negotiation are the social networks people are involved in. Ronaldo's story epitomises this assertion when he negotiated his way out of a tough situation; he realised that he could only move around laterally with his work but not vertically to get a promotion because he was undocumented; he then decided to get a fake work permit through his network when Dira connected him to the Nigerian men running a fake visa operation. For Ronaldo and many others like him the negotiation is between the legal and illegal, formal and informal, abject poverty and surval; and finding the best means to apply survivalist strategies - sometimes at the cost of moral integrity and formal rules and regulations.

The preceding paragraph seems to suggest that the use of social networks and the informal engagements and informal application of survivalist strategies by Hillbrow's residents to improve their livelihoods undermines rules and regulations as it is often presented. While there is a

disregard of formal state rules and regulations (Levy, 2008), it is often the case that there is regulation and control within the informal. Though Rubin (2016) is referring to the particular inner workings of a basement in Hillbrow when she says “a high degree of regulation and control exists, despite the seemingly informal atmosphere that pervades the space” (Rubin, 2016, p50), her word are still be applicable to the rest of the neighbourhood as her findings regarding regulation in the basement are a microcosm of what transpires in the reset of neighbourhood and the inner-city at large. Regulation in the informal practices in Hillbrow manifests through the socially determined and collective understanding of the space and engagements that occur within it (Rubin 2016). The neighbourhood’s bad buildings have very minimal to zero formal control but the subletting and mastanda practice and even the informal residents’ committees set up to deal with issues within the buildings suggest a working and accepted system of control and regulation in Hillbrow’s informal housing circles.

On the other hand…

Though the use of social networks has a positive impact on inner-city livelihoods, there are some negatives to be noted. It seems like the positive impacts of social networks on livelihoods are thwarted by some of the practices that transpire off the use of social networks.

For many of Hillbrow’s residents, the use of social networks to improve livelihood has perpetuated informal practices that are merely survivalist with a limit to economic growth. This is seen in Lisa and Nomalanga’s informal weekend cleaning services which have such a high demand, they do not meet it. A formally launched cleaning business with a business plan and goal to grow is more likely to fully exploit the demand and even broaden the market beyond the church and Hillbrow. What gives such a business the edge is reinvesting its income back into the business to expand it whereas when one is operating informally like Lisa and Nomalanga did, the oversight to expand is often missing. Manando and Lewis’ potential is also curtailed like Lisa and Nomalanga’s. The outcome of many informal economic practices within the neighbourhood is survivalist, the actors do not seem to thrive (though there may be some exceptions).

Another way in which social networks have become the residents’ own undoing is through the social networks’ ability to afford people informal (and sometimes illegal) ‘equivalents’ to formal opportunities, resources and assets they otherwise wise would not have access to. While this is

good for one's livelihood, it may get in the way of obtaining the legitimate resource which could even prove to be more beneficial to livelihood. Ronaldo getting a fake visa using his network and not capitalising on the Zimbabwe Documentation Project limits his potential because he still needs to, for the most part, remain invisible to the state thus limiting his access to certain services and resources whereas he could have gotten genuine documentation through the ZDP which would have legalised his stay in the country and afforded him more opportunities. A great reliance on social networks and informal practices has no reassurances, livelihoods remain precarious and there is no peace of mind.

Though a lot of work on informal practices and social engagements including this research challenge Farell (2004) and Levy's (2008) cynical view of informal practice; Farell and Levy's view still has a premise. Governments are elected to protect and serve, the legislation and policy by government is meant to protect and serve and all people living in the republic are meant to abide by the rule of law, this is especially true for democratically elected governments like South Africa's where the majority vote wins. No individuals are above the law and certainly people cannot decide which laws to follow and which ones to disobey, they ought to follow all the laws of land. Such inconsistencies with following the law open a doorway to anarchy and, according to CrimeStats SA (2016), Hillbrow is one of the most crime ridden neighbourhoods in South Africa. The informality, which is synonymous with social network reliance for livelihoods, might be a contributor to Hillbrow's pockets of disorder.

Recommendations

The current legislation and policy criminalises a lot of the informal practices taking place as a result of the social networks. Also, "current [urban] planning procedures do not account for the broad (and expanding) spectrum of diverse urban practices currently occurring within the inner city" (Rubin, 2016 p.50). Too often local government's responses to such urban challenges try to eliminate them through rules that demonise these practices according to standards that are often detached with the realities of the inner-city. The following recommendations are an urban planning approach to dealing with some of the challenges faces in inner-city Johannesburg while remaining in touch with the reality many inner-city residents are reliant on the wide array of informal practices that stem from social networks.

- A more useful approach to dealing with these challenges is a deeper cognisance on the part of the state, to understand the embeddedness and necessity of social networks and the practices that arise from them in the livelihoods of inner-city residents as this research has revealed. This deeper understanding can be achieved by government actively reaching out through research similar to the one I have just carried out and other learning initiatives. These initiatives ought to be done in an amicable fashion where the state makes it clear that they are trying to have an understanding with the residents and that they should not feel threatened. This could be done perhaps by avoiding direct contact with the residents and contracting a third party like university researchers to collect data.
- The knowledge gathered from learning initiatives would then be used as the basis for "rethinking and redefining policies and regulations in ways that would enable people to work and live more functionally, and with integrity" (Rubin, 2016 p.7). The policy and regulation change should be more progressive and tolerant and would be aimed at harnessing and supporting the practices stemming from social networks rather than criminalising and destroying them because that would be more productive for inner-city livelihoods.

  For example, on the issue of Hillbrow's illegal immigrants, it would be wise for the state to use Hammar's (1985) understanding of the distinction between 'migration policy' and 'immigrant policy' when dealing with the undocumented migrants in the neighbourhood (Hammar, 1985). An immigrant policy approach would best suit the case of Hillbrow where close to half the neighbourhood's population are undocumented foreign nationals and the policy would seek to speed up their integration and incorporation into local society and improve their standard of living (Hammar, 1985 cited in Van Der Leun, 2003). This approach would of course be different from the more commonly used immigration policy that regulates entry and controls immigrants (Van Der Leun, 2003). This understanding and policy approach would inform more initiatives like the earlier discussed Zimbabwe Documentation Programme (ZDP) to reduce the precarity of undocumented migrants.

- State support for small to medium businesses (registered and unregistered) would also be useful. This support could come in various ways including tax relaxations for small businesses and spatially targeting the inner city with tax relaxations and incentives for businesses to set

up there. Another way would be a revisit of city bylaws to get them more in touch with the daily realities of people's practices for survival. The informal practices such as the all too common street vending are, for the most part, criminalised by the city's bylaws which require registration/licensing and operation only at areas designated by the city for legitimisation. Many inner-city residents involved in these practices find it a resource-strenuous and business thwarting challenge to adhere to the city's bylaws. However, these informal economic practices improve livelihoods and the informality is a 'victimless crime,' the city could ease up on the bylaws and allow inner-city dwellers to trade informally.

- Regarding housing, the city ought to tighten up on building control to reduce the exploitation of residents living in 'spaces' (even the undocumented ones). This does not necessarily mean evictions of tenants, but a state mandate to get building owners and managers to make the conditions in their buildings more liveable. And instead of just rendering buildings as 'bad,' the state ought to proactively, in partnership with building owners and residents, upgrade the bad buildings and make them more dignified.
- Akin with the need to improve the buildings and residents' living situations, is a need to harness the robustness of the buildings and spaces in Hillbrow. Considering how Hillbrow's residents are so heavily reliant on the spaces in and around their residential buildings to ply their trade, it is imperative that the onus is shared among them and the building/owners to harness, preserve and maximise on the flexibility of these buildings and spaces to ensure that there is adequate opportunity to live and work in the area. Manando fixed cars mostly in the parking lot of his building and on the side of the road. Taking Manando's residential building for instance, which had ample unused parking space in the basement (because most tenants are the lower income bracket and do not own vehicles), the building manager/owners in consultation with the tenants could agree to convert part of that unused space into a workspace for the residents to work on their craft/trade.
- However, in the same light of policy rethinking, there would be a need to tighten and crack down on excessively criminal practices like violent crime, the fake visa issuing, and the bribery of state authorities like what Lewis does at the border which erode the rule of law and compromise the integrity of state officials. In a nutshell, the state needs to be more cognisant, tolerant and supportive of the social networks (and practices that arise from them)

in the inner city as these are essential for inner-city livelihoods; but the tolerance should not extend to networks and activities that are corrupt and infringe on the rights and safety of people.

Answering the research question.

For the most part the research findings answer the main research question by confirming the major role played by social networks in inner city livelihoods. However, the findings also go on to raise other important issues that result from the use of social networks with the intention to improve livelihoods. One of these is informality and informal work which are quite dominant in the neighbourhood of Hillbrow. With many of the residents being foreign nationals and some being undocumented, there is extensive informality in the labour market in the inner-city. This takes shape in either one of two ways; undocumented residents informally gaining access and being part of the labour market like how Ronaldo got a fake visa stamp on his passport to get that earlier discussed formal job; and the other way is a purely informal labour market where residents start informal businesses and informally offer services like how Lisa and Nomalanga started and operated their cleaning service businesses. This informal access to the labour market and the informal labour market are highly reliant on productive social networks as they need a shearing of information and resources in order to be successful. Informality and hustle seem to be a key component of what is entailed in social networks and livelihoods of Johannesburg's inner city. Regardless of the seemingly survivalist strategies (and at times the criminal element) to earn an income, all the participants agreed that their social networks positively impacted, directly or otherwise, their trade which in turn improved their livelihoods.

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Appendices

The Impact of Social Networks on the Livelihoods of Johannesburg's Inner-City Residents. Participant Information Sheet.

Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is Mzingaye Luther Jubane and I am a Masters student in Development Planning at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. As part of my studies, I have to undertake a research project, and I am investigating the impact of social networks on the livelihoods of inner-city residents. The aim of this research project is to find out the nature of the social networks in the inner city, unpack how they operate and ultimately see how these networks impact the livelihoods of inner-city residents.

As part of this project, I would like to invite you to take part in an interview. This interview will involve a one-on-one sit down at Theatre Park in Braamfontein or another public place of your convenience, where I will ask you some questions pertaining the networks you are involved in (or excluded) and how they help (or hinder) you meet your daily needs. It will take around 20 minutes. With your permission, I would also like to make an audio recording of the interview using my phone.

You will not receive any direct benefits from participating in this research, and there are no disadvantages or penalties for not participating. You may withdraw at any time or not answer any question if you do not want to. The interview will be completely confidential and anonymous as I will not be asking for your name or any identifying information, and the information you give to me will be held securely in a password protected computer and not disclosed to anyone else. I will be using a pseudonym (false name) to represent your participation in my final research report. If you experience any distress or discomfort at any point in this process, we will stop the interview or resume another time.

If you have any questions during or afterwards about this research, feel free to contact me on the details listed below. This study will be written up as a research report. If you wish to receive a summary of this report, I will be happy to send it to you. If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email hrec-medical.researchoffice@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely,

Mzingaye Luther Jubane

Signature: 

Researcher: Mzingaye Luther Jubane,

1088772@students.wits.ac.za +27613004706

Appendix 1. Participant information sheet.

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Consent Form for Residents and Employers

The Impact of Social Networks on the Livelihoods of Johannesburg's Inner City Residents. The Case of Hillbrow.

Mzingaye Luther Jubane

I, ...agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve. I agree to the following:

(Please circle the relevant options below).

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous	YES	NO
I agree that the researcher may use anonymous quotes in his / her research report	YES	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	YES	NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used anonymously after this project has ended, for academic purposes	YES	NO
I agree that the researcher may take pictures of what he deems necessary for his research without compromising my position.	YES	NO

..... (signature)
..... (name of participant)
..... (date)

..... (signature)
..... (name of person seeking consent)
..... (date)

Appendix 2. Consent form for the participants.

The Impact of Social Networks on the Livelihoods of Johannesburg's Inner City Residents: The Case of Hillbrow.

What role do social networks play in the livelihoods of Hillbrow residents?

Sub-questions

What is meant by social networks and livelihoods?

What do these informal channels mean for the people's quality of life?

What are some of the strategies adopted in the use of informal channels?

How have these social channels improved livelihoods?

How best can these informal channels be harnessed or should they be done away with?

Interview Questions

1. Where are you originally from?
2. Why did you decide to live in Hillbrow?
3. How long have you lived in Hillbrow for?
4. Who do you live with?
5. Do you have family you are in contact with back home?
6. What skills do you possess?
7. Are you employed full time?
8. What do you do for a living?
9. What skills do you possess?
10. How did manage to get this job?
11. What else do you do (besides your daily job) to meet your daily needs?
12. Are the people in your life within Hillbrow and beyond, helpful in you meeting your daily and economic needs?
13. If so, how?
14. What is the nature of your relationship with these people, how are you related?
15. Do you in turn help them as well?
16. Do you feel like the network of people in your life has contributed to a better livelihood?
17. Do you feel a sense of belonging to this network?
18. Are there any other networks that you feel like you are excluded from?
19. What do you think are the reasons for you being excluded?

Appendix 3. Interview Questions.