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Exploring the relationship between geographies of cultural participation and sense of belonging in Parkmore South Africa

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ABSTRACT

Studies show positive relationships between cultural participation, sense of belonging, and place, however there is little research which looks at these connections in the global South. A deeper understanding within a local context is important for South African cultural policy as they relate to social cohesion and nation building.

Using mapping and narrative analysis to analyse individual experiences and practices of a small participant group from Parkmore, a middle-class suburb of Johannesburg, South Africa, the study uses narrative inquiry to illustrate each participants' sense of belonging in connection with their suburb, city and country; and explore the relationship between their sense of belonging and cultural participation.

The study was able to identify a number of connections between participants' belonging and participation, but this was rarely linked to place. Further research is needed to identify which forms of cultural participation enhance belonging and connection to place.