

**#ReclaimTheCity: The Use of Facebook to Engage the State and the Public on
Affordable Housing Delivery in Cape Town, South Africa**

Saratu Musa Mshelia

DWHSAR001

Submitted to the University of Cape Town

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MPhil in Southern Urbanism



Faculty of Science

African Centre for Cities

Environmental and Geographical Sciences

University of Cape Town

Supervisor: Dr Nobukhosi Ngwenya

September 2023

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive licence granted to UCT by the author.

Plagiarism Declaration

I, Saratu Musa Mshelia, hereby declare that the work on which this dissertation is based is my original work (except where acknowledgements indicate otherwise) and that neither the whole work nor any part of it has been, is being, or is to be submitted for another degree in this or any other university.

Signature:

Signed by candidate

Date: 16 September 2023

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my late parents, Mr and Mrs John and Pindar Daniel Dawha. Your legacy of integrity, service, love and kindness will never be forgotten.

Acknowledgements

I am most thankful to God for the gift of life, family, and friends. I am grateful to my participants for the time and invaluable insights and engagements that supported the development and completion of this dissertation.

My sincerest gratitude goes to my supervisor, Dr Nobukhosi Ngwenya, for her constant support, patience, and guidance, challenging me to grow and do better as a scholar. Her insight and knowledge have inspired not just my work but also the researcher and scholar I hope to be. Thank you for always being generous with your time and knowledge.

I am especially grateful to Dr Anna Selmeczi and the faculty at the African Centre for Cities for all their support. I am also thankful to my MPhil cohort for making the learning journey unforgettable.

My profound gratitude goes to the MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program at UCT for sponsoring my study and providing life-changing opportunities that have contributed to my personal and professional growth.

Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to all my family and friends – most especially to my husband, Musa Salmamza Mshelia, and our daughters, Eliana and Elizabeth. Thank you for cheering me on and supporting me through the highs and lows; I am a better person every day because of you.

Abstract

The global increase in the use of social media has enabled the real-time connection of people across localities, the fast sharing of information and the mobilisation of communities for a common cause. Social movements are increasingly leveraging this phenomenon to expand their activism to the digital space to reach a wider audience. This is true in the South African context as well where Reclaim the City (RTC) and Ndifuna Ukwazi (NU) – the two cases for this research – utilise a social media platform, namely, Facebook, to engage with the State and the public on affordable housing delivery in Cape Town.

To understand how Facebook is utilised by these organisations, a qualitative research approach was adopted. First, a systematic review of posts published between 2017 and 2020 on the Facebook pages of RTC and NU was undertaken, excluding the contents of comments to the posts. Second, five semi-structured interviews – three with participants from RTC and two from NU – were also conducted. Lastly, non-participant observation was also undertaken at three events organised by the organisations to understand the link between their online and offline engagements.

The findings indicate that RTC and NU have played significant roles in highlighting the need and urgency for affordable housing delivery in Cape Town's well-located areas. This has been achieved through in-person *and* online campaigns and activities. Focusing specifically on the digital realm, the findings indicate that Facebook serves as a complementary space of engagement for both RTC and NU.

In this space, RTC shares personal stories on housing struggles and promotes its offline campaign events to raise public awareness and support. They also share information that provides insight into the State's obligations, promises and failures regarding affordable housing issues. NU, on the other hand, leverages its social media platforms to mostly educate the public on affordable housing delivery through the dissemination of housing research findings, providing information about tenancy rights and available support against eviction, as well as providing updates on state policies, projects and ongoing housing-related court cases.

The findings illustrate that Facebook is an essential space for public sensitisation and mobilisation. However, as the findings further indicate, online campaigns are designed to support offline campaigns and in-person activities by mobilising the public. Yet, as the findings further indicate, the stated audience of RTC's Facebook page – the poor and working class –

faces significant challenges in the form of high data costs which limit their engagement with the Facebook posts of RTC and NU. Thus, the findings intimate that social media serves as a complementary space of participation and primarily facilitates engagement with the upper working class and middle class.

Keywords: Affordable housing, social housing, social media, social movements, advocacy

Table of Contents

Plagiarism Declaration.....	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Abstract	vi
Table of Contents.....	viii
List of Tables	xii
Chapter One: Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the Study	2
1.3 Issue Under Study	4
1.3.1 The Cases.....	5
1.4 Main Research Question	8
1.5 Structure of the Dissertation.....	8
Chapter Two: Literature Review	10
2.1 Introduction	10
2.2 Social Movements in South Africa	10
2.3 Housing Movements in South Africa.....	11
2.4 Digital Activism	14
2.5 Social Media Activism	16
2.6 Public Participation	20
2.6.1 Ladder of participation	20
2.6.2 Spaces in which power works	23
2.7 Effective Public Participation.....	25
2.8 Conclusion.....	25
Chapter Three: Methods and Techniques	27
3.1 Introduction	27
3.2 Research Paradigm.....	27
3.3 Research Design.....	28
3.4 Research Methods	29
3.5 Research Techniques.....	31
3.5.1 Document study	31
3.5.2 Non-participant observation	33
3.5.3 Semi-structured interviews	34

3.6	Sampling Procedure	36
3.7	Data Analysis	37
3.8	Ethical Considerations.....	38
3.8.1	Informed and voluntary consent	39
3.8.2	Non-maleficence.....	39
3.8.3	Confidentiality and anonymity	39
3.8.4	Transparency and openness	40
3.8.5	Carefulness	40
3.9	Limitations of the Study	40
3.10	Conclusion.....	41
	Chapter Four: Research Findings.....	42
4.1	Introduction	42
4.2	Nature of the Organisations.....	42
4.2.1	Reclaim the City	42
4.2.2	Ndifuna Ukwazi.....	48
4.3	Housing Activism in Invited Spaces	52
4.4	Radical Activism in Invented Spaces.....	54
4.5	Facebook: A Space of Participation	56
4.6	Digital Activism on Facebook.....	60
4.6.1	Advantages of Facebook for digital activism	67
4.6.2	Challenges of Facebook for digital activism	75
4.7	Conclusion.....	77
	Chapter Five: Conclusion	78
5.1	Introduction	78
5.2	Summary of Findings	78
5.3	Leveraging Facebook: Augmenting RTC and NU's Housing Activism.....	81
5.4	Recommendations	82
5.5	Avenues for Future Research	83
5.6	Conclusion.....	83
	References.....	85
	Appendices.....	110
	Appendix A: Ethics Clearance Certificate	1
	Appendix B: Participant Consent Form	2

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Aerial image of Woodstock Hospital site.....	6
Figure 1.2: Location of Woodstock in Cape Town.....	6
Figure 1.3: Aerial image of Helen Bowden Nurses Home	7
Figure 1.4: Location of Helen Bowden Nurses Home in Cape Town	7
Figure 2.1: Elements of connective and collective actions networks	18
Figure 2.2: Arnstein's ladder of participation.....	21
Figure 3.1: RTC Facebook timeline account of events leading up to occupations.....	32
Figure 4.1: Interaction of elements that constitute RTC as a social movement	43
Figure 4.2: Screenshot of RTC Facebook post on land and housing campaign	44
Figure 4.3: Banner at the Cissie Gool House Co-Design Exhibition 2022	45
Figure 4.4: Residents moving around in the dark at Ahmed Kathrada House	47
Figure 4.5: Screenshot from NU website.....	49
Figure 4.6: Screenshot of NU's Facebook post illustrating grassroots lobbying	50
Figure 4.7: Screenshot of NU's Facebook post illustrating Johnston and Gulliver's (2022) conventional actions	51
Figure 4.8: Screenshots of NU's press statements.....	53
Figure 4.9: RTC's submission in response to the provincial call for comments on the Tafelberg Financial Model for Social Housing	53
Figure 4.10: Display of placards at the RTC Cissie Gool House Co-Design Exhibition 2022	56
Figure 4.11: Themes across NU's Facebook media posts, 2017–2020	57
Figure 4.12: Themes across RTC's Facebook media posts, 2017–2020	58
Figure 4.13: Screenshot of RTC's Facebook post on grassroots mobilisation in partnership with NU around the Tafelberg #StopTheSale campaign.....	59
Figure 4.14: Screenshot of an RTC Facebook post showing the offline outcome of an online call for donation.....	60
Figure 4.15: Screenshot of NU's Facebook post on the Zero2One tribunal ruling, 19 January 2018.....	63
Figure 4.16: A screenshot of RTC's Facebook post on the Zero2One tribunal ruling, 24 January 2018.....	64
Figure 4.17: Word cloud from NU Facebook media posts from 2017 to 2020.....	65
Figure 4.18: Word cloud from RTC's Facebook media posts from 2017 to 2020	66

Figure 4.19: Screenshot of RTC’s Facebook post updating followers about the occupation and demands	67
Figure 4.20: Screenshot of RTC Facebook post illustrating the mobilisation of the public to raise donations to support the occupation	67
Figure 4.21: Screenshot of the RTC and NU Empty Plots and Promises Walking Tour, 16 July 2022	68
Figure 4.22: Screenshot of RTC Facebook post calling for donation for victims of fire outbreak at Pine Road, 14 February 2019	69
Figure 4.23: Screenshot of an RTC Facebook post of a live coverage of event organised in person, 23 March 2017	70
Figure 4.24: Screenshot of an RTC Facebook post denouncing being labelled as criminals	71
Figure 4.25: Screenshot of RTC and NU’S Facebook post temporarily ending Advice Assembly in person and moving it to Facebook	72
Figure 4.26: Screenshot of RTC Facebook post illustrating the use of social media to confront city officials and their (in)actions	73
Figure 4.27: Screenshot of RTC Facebook post illustrating social media being used to challenge the status quo	74
Figure 4.28: Illustration of clicktivism and metavoicing on RTC and NU’s Facebook media posts published between 2017 and 2020.....	75
Figure 4.29: Screenshot of RTC’s Facebook post highlighting NIMBYism around Woodstock, 20 November 2017	76

List of Tables

Table 1.1: Social media profiles of Ndifuna Ukwazi and Reclaim the City.....	4
Table 2.1: Forms of people power strategies in housing movements.....	13
Table 4.1: Examples of RTC and NU's participation in invited and invented spaces.....	56

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Section 26(1) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996* (South African Government, 1996) enshrines the right of every South African citizen and permanent resident to access adequate housing. However, this right is yet to be realised for many. According to the Department of Government Communications and Information Systems (2020), an estimated 2.3 million South African households live in informal settlements. The term ‘informal settlements’ refers to settlements that exist outside of formal city planning processes, lack legitimacy in terms of land use rights and often also lack access to basic services¹ (Dovey and King, 2011; Richards, O’Leary and Mutsonziwa, 2007).

Informal settlements often develop because of the inability to access and afford housing and not an intent to “transgress the formal codes of the State” (Beardsley and Werthmann, 2008, p. 83). Most residents of informal settlements live in poor living conditions and with the threat of eviction. This threat, together with the continued lack of access to (formal) housing, has had several ramifications; one is housing activism (Marutlulle, 2021). The poor and the working class seek to effect changes in their housing conditions beyond state-sanctioned spaces of participation.

For this research, the terms ‘public participation’ and ‘public engagement’ are used interchangeably to refer to public involvement, both passive and active, and within formal and informal settings. Beyond state-sanctioned spaces of participation, the poor and working-class demand and mobilise for the urgent delivery of adequate and affordable housing.

With the rise in the use of digital devices and social media platforms in recent years, housing activism in South Africa has transitioned into the digital sphere (Gwaze *et al.*, 2018). Digital spaces enable housing activists to expand their networks, build support and raise awareness both locally and globally (Bosch, Wasserman and Chuma, 2018). Digital networks and platforms on the internet, particularly social media platforms, have over the years facilitated activism that transcends local geographical locations. Here, the term ‘activism’ is used to refer to deliberate action that aims to realise social or political change (Cammaerts, 2007). George and Leidner (2019, p. 4) define digital activism as “[s]ocial activism mediated through digital

¹ These include basic services such as access to clean water, toilet, and electricity (Richards, O’Leary and Mutsonziwa, 2007).

technologies to promote social movements ... [in a context that involves] connective social actions” (see chapter 2).

Digital activism on social media platforms has spurred several political and social causes in many countries; the 2011 Egyptian revolution and the #BlackLivesMatter movement in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada are examples. The increasing advancement of and access to information and communications technology (ICT) services increases access to social media platforms, enabling social movements and non-government organisations (NGOs) to advance their causes, consolidate their offline activities, mobilise support and reach out to a wider audience (Melki and Mallat, 2014). This is the issue under study.

This research examines how Reclaim the City (RTC), a Cape Town-based social movement which works in collaboration with Ndifuna Ukwazi (NU), an NGO, engages with the State and the public via social media on the topic of affordable housing delivery in Cape Town. This chapter now turns to a discussion of the background of the study. This is followed by a discussion of the issue under study. In Section 1.4, the main research question is presented. The chapter concludes with an outline of the structure of the dissertation.

1.2 Background to the Study

Spatial and socio-economic segregation, population growth and land unavailability are major contributors to the housing crisis in Cape Town (Matheson, 2011). The problem of spatial, as well as socio-economic segregation and uneven development, is deeply rooted in the legacy of apartheid (Turok, Visagie and Scheba, 2021).

‘Black’ areas as defined in terms of the *Group Areas Act of 1950*², which was used to displace Black communities to the peripheries of cities (Christopher, 2001), were further discriminated against through the “redistribution of resources from less favoured spaces and classes to the suburbs, which deepened patterns of segregation” (Mabin, 2005, p. 41). With the limited inflow of income and limited employment opportunities, coupled with slow government provision of

² The Group Areas Act passed in 1950 enabled the racial segregation of people in South Africa in the apartheid regime (Christopher, 2001).

subsidised housing, informal and backyard housing developed rapidly in areas such as Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain (Turok, Visagie and Scheba, 2021).

The pace of housing delivery remains slow in present-day South Africa. Not only is the pace of housing delivery slow but it is also outpaced by demand (Marutlulle, 2021). Furthermore, the low quality, generic matchbox design and mass-produced nature of government-subsidised houses have given rise to urban sprawl. Often located on urban peripheries, these government-subsidised houses are far away from job opportunities and other economic and social services. Consequently, such housing is unable to address the critical issue of poverty in disadvantaged communities (Cross, 2008). Thus, the need to locate these houses in economically advantageous areas has become apparent (Cross, 2008; Landman, 2010).

Housing – well-located, affordable housing, in particular – is critical to addressing the spatial segregation and inequality still plaguing South Africa’s urban spaces (Van Rooyen and Lemanski, 2020). As has been noted in the literature, South African affordable housing programmes have an integrative function and are central to unlocking well-located areas for the benefit of poorer citizens (Housing Development Agency, 2014; Tissington, 2011).

Overall, an estimated 3,3 million low-cost housing and 4,6 million housing opportunities³ have been provided by the democratic government of South Africa (Department of Human Settlement, 2017; Marutlulle, 2021). Yet, according to Tissington (2011), in 2010, the housing backlog in South Africa stood at 2,1 million due to social and economic factors such as rapid urbanisation, unemployment and natural population growth.

The backlog increased to about 2,6 million in 2020 (Thukwana, 2020). The backlog is evidence that a considerable number of South Africans are continuously waiting on the State for housing. Furthermore, citizens have, to a large extent, not been effectively included in housing delivery processes (Bond and Tait, 1997; Charlton and Kihato, 2006; Tissington, 2011). Beneficiaries have little to no say in the design, quality, or location of the houses they receive.

Attempts by the State to engage citizens have been referred to as hypocritical – a show without the intention to truly “meaningfully engage with the people” (Zikode, 2009, p. 3). The lack of meaningful engagement and the housing backlog has resulted in a contentious reality for many

South Africans who are forced to live “in the meanwhile” (Oldfield and Greyling, 2015, p. 1102), waiting for houses that might never materialise in their lifetimes.

1.3 Issue Under Study

The realities of constantly waiting on the State, however, do not mean that citizens are surrendering to the process. Rather, citizens push back and challenge the State through both formal channels and insurgent practices, resorting to many forms of activism both in person and online, particularly on social media. By linking people across the globe in real time through the internet, social movements leverage social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to amplify their campaigns. RTC and NU, the cases for this research, that are very visible proponents of affordable housing activism in Cape Town, do the same (Eidelman, 2021; Eyong, 2020; Wingfield, 2019). Both organisations have active accounts on some of the popular social media platforms, namely, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Social media profiles of Ndifuna Ukwazi and Reclaim the City

Social Movements	Facebook		Twitter		Instagram	
	23-04-2022	07-08-2023	23-04-2022	07-08-2023	23-04-2022	07-08-2023
Ndifuna Ukwazi	Page likes: 11 629	Page likes: 12 697	Followers: 13.9k Following: 2 090	Followers: 15 024 Following: 2 528	Followers: 2,090 Following: 73 Posts: 244	Followers: 3 983 Following: 435 Posts: 440
Reclaim the City	Page likes: 14 667	Page likes: 14 688	Followers: 4 310 Following: 310	Followers: 4 392 Following: 306	Followers: 2 935 Following: 23 Posts: 232	Followers: 3 093 Following: 33 Posts: 289

This research examines how RTC and NU are leveraging social media platforms, namely Facebook, to engage the State and the public on affordable housing delivery in Cape Town.

1.3.1 The Cases

RTC is a social movement that emerged in 2016 in Sea Point, Cape Town. The movement seeks to “resist unjust evictions, disrupt property power, stop the sale of public land, build affordable housing and desegregate the city” (Reclaim the City, no date). RTC has led affordable housing campaigns, fought against evictions, and strategically negotiated with the State on behalf of illegal occupants. RTC often works closely with NU, which is a Cape Town-based advocacy NGO that was established in 2011. NU is described as:

“[A]n activist organisation and law centre that promotes the realisation of Constitutional Rights and Social Justice – through legal, research and organising support to working class people, communities and social movements.” (Devex, n.d.)

According to NU’s Facebook page, the organisation is made up of “a group of activists that use research and strategic litigation to campaign for justice and equality in poor and working-class communities” (Ndifuna Ukwazi, no date). NU engages in housing advocacy and provides legal, administrative and policy research support to communities and social movements (Wingfield, 2019). Since 2016, RTC and NU have worked together to push for affordable housing, namely, social housing⁴ and gap housing⁵, within Cape Town’s inner city.

RTC with the support of NU has continued to advance its campaigns for affordable housing in Cape Town’s inner city over the years, mobilising citizens to occupy the Woodstock Hospital in 2017 (Figures 1.1 and 1.2) and the Helen Bowden Nurses Home in Green Point (Figures 1.3 and 1.4). Both buildings are located within the inner city. These properties have been renamed the Cissie Gool House and the Ahmed Kathrada House, respectively.

⁴ Social housing is a subsidised rental housing programme that offers housing opportunities in well-located places for households earning an income between R1 850 and R22 000 (Western Cape Government, n.d.).

⁵ Gap housing is a housing delivery tool that targets those who “earn too much to qualify for a government-subsidised house but also earn too little to qualify for a bond from a bank to buy a house” (Viljoen 2021).

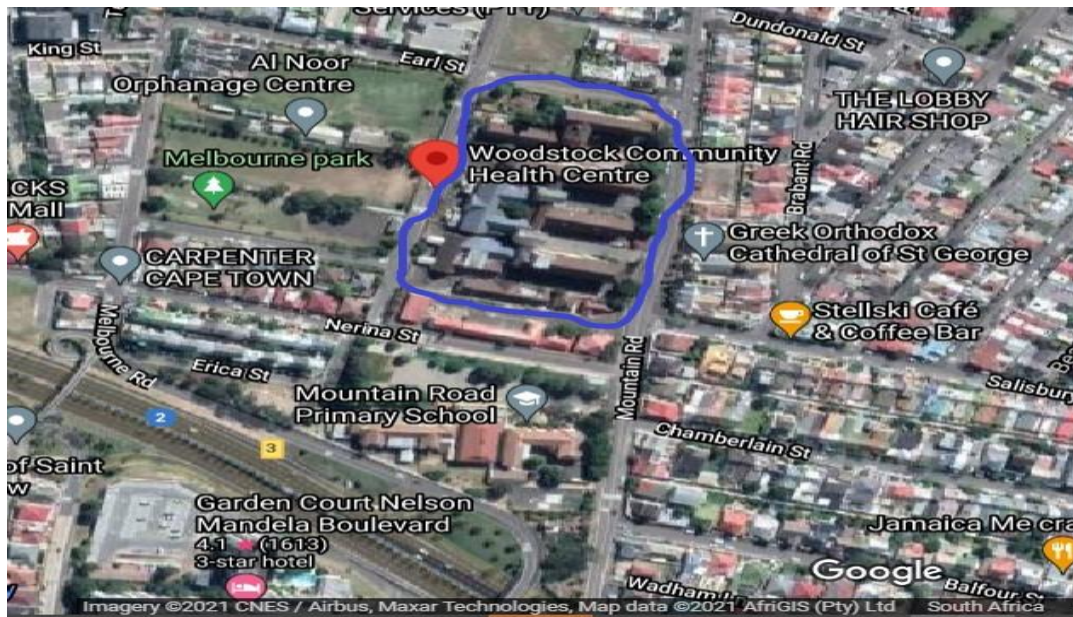


Figure 1.1: Aerial image of Woodstock Hospital site (GoogleMaps, 2021)

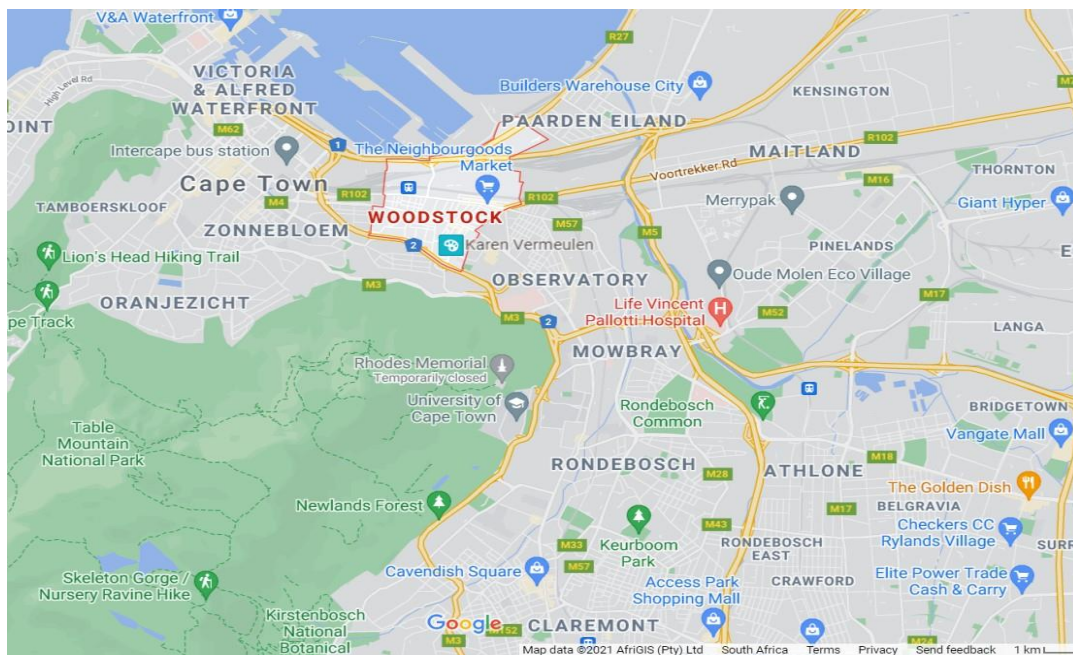


Figure 1.2: Location of Woodstock in Cape Town (GoogleMaps, 2021)



Figure 1.3: Aerial image of Helen Bowden Nurses Home (GoogleEarth, 2021)

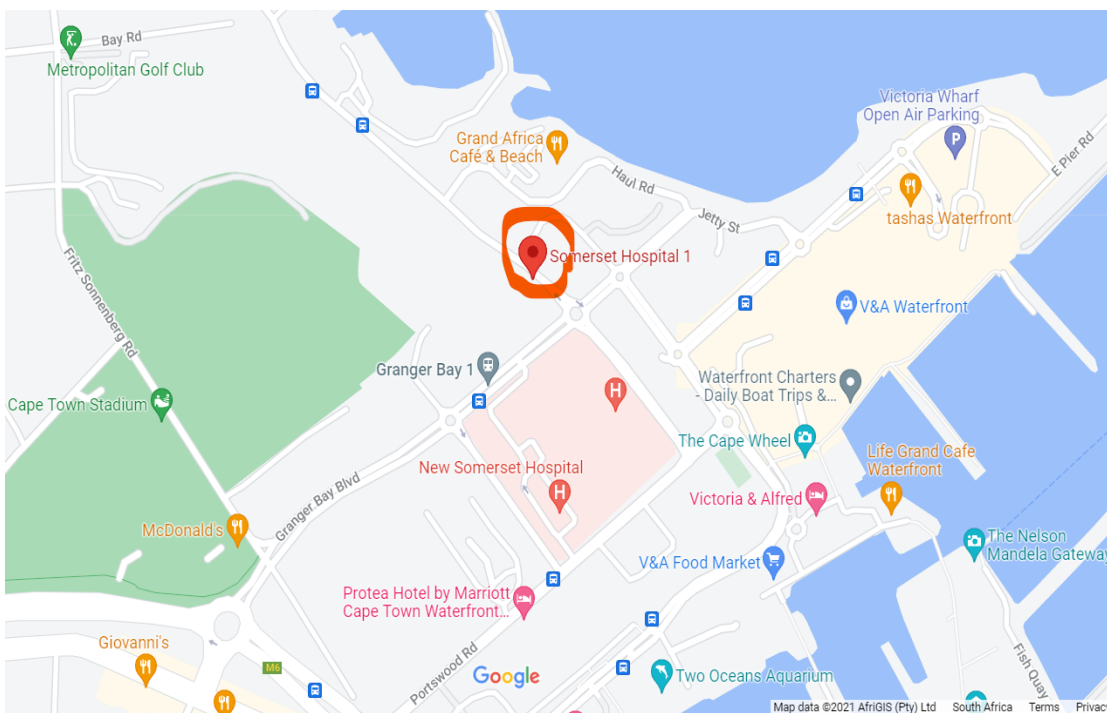


Figure 1.4: Location of Helen Bowden Nurses Home in Cape Town (GoogleMaps, 2021)

RTC and NU continue to engage the State and mobilise the broader public to support the occupiers as well as their campaigns through various mechanisms, including social media. The use of social media for these purposes constitutes the issue under study.

1.4 Main Research Question

Given that the issue under study is broadly concerned with digital platforms and the opportunities they provide in facilitating engagement, the two-fold main research question asks:

How are RTC and NU leveraging Facebook platform to engage⁶ the State and the public on affordable housing delivery in Cape Town?

The answers to this question will facilitate the attainment of the following research objectives:

- To determine the ways that RTC and NU use social media platforms as spaces of participation.
- To determine the limitations and advantages associated with the use of social media platforms as spaces of participation on affordable housing delivery issues in Cape Town.

1.5 Structure of the Dissertation

This research is outlined across five chapters as follows:

Chapter One introduces the issue under study. It also outlines the background of the issue – the housing crisis. It concludes by stating the research question and the research objectives.

Chapter Two presents the relevant literature that grounds the research. It discusses key concepts that are central to the research topic including public participation, social movements in South Africa and digital activism. The chapter highlights that social movements across the globe are more interconnected and able to inspire one another (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021). Thus, while many of the activities of social movements often play out within physical spaces of participation, they can also unfold within digital spaces – including, but not limited to, social media (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021). The proliferation of social media, aided by the emergence

⁶ ‘Engage’ in this context implies “attracting and keeping [someone’s] attention and interest” (Hornby 2010, p. 35641) on something. For instance, attracting and keeping the State and public’s attention on affordable housing activism.

of the internet, has unlocked advantageous possibilities for social movements to connect, aspire, create social value, sympathise, and broadcast campaigns in real-time across the globe (Chamakiotis, Petrakaki and Panteli, 2021; Mutsvairo, 2016; Ngidi *et al.*, 2016).

Chapter Three outlines the research methods and techniques used to collect and analyse the data for this research. It also discusses the research paradigm that grounds the research and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four presents the findings obtained from the qualitative data and a discussion on the meaning and implications of the findings. The findings highlight the complementary role of social media in the housing activism of RTC and NU, as well as its limitations, such as digital inequality, especially of the poor and working class.

Chapter Five provides a summary of the research. It answers the main research question and offers some reflections on the benefits and limitations of social media as a space of participation. It also submits recommendations for further research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter engages with the literature to fulfil two objectives: first, to theoretically ground the research within existing bodies of literature and, second, to develop assessment criteria against which the case can be evaluated. This chapter is divided into three sections. The literature on social movements in the context of South Africa is discussed first. This discussion is followed by a review of the literature on digital activism. The chapter concludes with a discussion on public participation.

2.2 Social Movements in South Africa

Social movements are characterised by collective action, a common cause or ideology and mobilising efforts to bring about change (Ballard, Habib and Valodia, 2006; Crossley, 2002; George and Leidner, 2019).

Blumer (1969, quoted in Crossley, 2002, p. 3) defines social movements as “collective enterprises seeking to establish a new order of life [and] they have their inception in a condition of unrest”. Blumer further argues that social movements derive their “motive⁷ power, on one hand, from the dissatisfaction with the current form of life. And on the other hand, from wishes and hopes for a new system of living”.

Alternative definitions of social movements similarly emphasise the intentions behind the group’s formation. For example, George and Leidner (2019, p. 6) define social movements as “collective actions that revolve around a shared cause”. Ballard, Habib and Valodia (2006, p. 3) define social movements as follows:

“[P]olitically and/or socially directed collectives, often involving multiple organisations and networks, focused on changing one or more elements of the social dynamics, social, political and economic system within which they are located.”

Zald and Ash (1966, p. 329) define a social movement as a “purposive and collective attempt of a number of people to change individuals or societal institutions and structures”. From the

⁷ Motive implies motivation.

several definitions provided, two constant attributes of social movements that abound are the collective nature of the movements and the motivation to push for change.

While apartheid-era social movements in South Africa mostly focused on addressing the injustices of apartheid, a growing number of social movements post-1994 have responded primarily to service delivery failures (Bond and Mottiar, 2013; Lanegran, 1995). Social movements in South Africa convey their dissatisfaction through protest, a fundamental right enshrined in Section 17 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Legal Resources Centre, 2021). While the first post-apartheid administration experienced a “honeymoon phase” (Mottiar and Bond, 2012, p. 310) without significant protest events, “protest action became a significant feature of political life in South Africa during Mbeki’s term of office⁸” (Duncan 2009, quoted in Alexander, 2010, p. 27).

Bond and Mottiar (2013, p. 285) refer to the root cause of the rise of these protests as resistance to the State’s development strategies that enable the “commodification of life”. These development strategies include mechanisms for privatising public assets and goods as well as the favouring of expenditure that has minimal direct benefit for the broader citizenry. All these, alongside unequal access to employment opportunities, have contributed to the widening of poverty and inequality margins (Leibbrandt, Woolard and Woolard, 2007). As a result, several housing movements have emerged in post-apartheid South Africa. These movements have shaped and continue to shape housing discourse and its governance.

2.3 Housing Movements in South Africa

In response to the injustices⁹ associated with the lack of access to adequate housing, several housing movements have emerged across South Africa. These housing movements can be grouped into two broad categories:

⁸ President Mbeki served as president of South Africa from June 1999 to September 2008 (South African Government, no date: online).

⁹ Chronic waiting captures the reality of the politics of waiting for housing delivery in South Africa. The term ‘politics of waiting’ refers to “the growing number of situations in which people wait for years or whole lifetimes” for housing (Jeffery, 2008, p. 954). Citizens respond to this politics of waiting through very visible counter-hegemonic movements (Marutlulle, 2021) or quiet encroachment (Miraftab, 2009; Oldfield and Greyling, 2015).

“[Movements that through advocacy] have carved out limited space to access funds for community-led, self-build projects in formal housing programs and informal settlement upgrading programs for community-led approaches that minimise displacement from new development, [and the] overtly militant movements, focusing on fights against evictions.” (Bradlow, 2018, p. 1)

Both types of movements, the ones more aligned to advocacy and the ones more to activism, utilise varying strategies to mobilise aggrieved or dissatisfied parties and their supporters towards collective action for change. These strategies include occupying public buildings and land and demonstrative protests. Mitlin and Mogaladi (2013) provide two examples of housing movements that demonstrate such a contrasting strategy approach – the Federation of the Urban Poor (FedUP) and Abahlali baseMjondolo.

FedUP members use concepts such as daily savings and loans as tool to build a strong financial position that enables them to negotiate with the State for their housing needs to be met (Swilling, 2013). Despite facing challenges such as the demolition of constructed houses by the State, this strategy has enabled FedUP to secure an estimated 2 735 houses through State housing subsidy programmes, mostly between 1996 and 2000 (Mitlin and Mogaladi, 2013, p. 24).

Abahlali baseMjondolo, which mobilises shack dwellers in their fight for adequate housing (Patel, 2008), employs strategies such as demonstrations, boycotting elections and illegal connections (Mitlin and Mogaladi, 2013). Their strategies are more confrontational as initial attempts to engage with the State using invited spaces of participation such as peaceful protests have failed and resulted in members being designated criminals (Selmeczi, 2012). Tattersall and Iveson (2021) refer to these strategies, which inform the formation of housing movements and the tactics employed in their campaigns, as people power strategies and group them into five types (Table 2.1).

Counter-hegemonic efforts are practices that confront, contest, expose and challenge powers of oppression and exclusion within invented or claimed spaces of participation (Hunjan and Pettit, 2011; Miraftab, 2009). Social movements, in certain contexts, align with the logic and practices of these counter-hegemonic activities in challenging injustices around issues such as housing, crime or inequality.

Table 2.1: Forms of people power strategies in housing movements (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021, p.7)

	Definition	Understand power?	Features
Playing by the rules	Formal democratic participation	Participate and express ideas	Culture set by the decision maker
Mobilising	Explosive mass protest action	More (people) is more (power)	Fast, lots of activity, say no.
Organising	Rebuild civil society	Strong leaders in strong institutions connected, acting	Slow, intentional. How you win matters. Solutions
Prefiguring	Be the change you need	Model what is possible	Deep engagement – reproduce food/rest and politics
Parties	Use the state to make change directly	Get elected to make change, influence electoral space	Winning, pragmatism, compromise if necessary

The first form of people power – *playing by the rules* – refers to the strategies deployed within formally recognised participatory spaces such as filing a legal complaint with the court. Playing by the rules has a legitimacy that is widely recognised, making it “difficult to completely ignore” (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021, p. 5). However, decisions made from this approach are mainly made by assigned figures who hold the deciding power. *Mobilising* is a strategy that utilises mass numbers and coordinated efforts to address complaints. Social movements, for example, employ this strategy alongside the press to bring supporters together for a cause. While this strategy often picks up momentum quickly, it is often not sustained for long and makes reaching a unified consensus difficult (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021).

Organising is a strategy within which collective action and support within and across “institutions and alliances” are utilised (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021, p. 5). Chambers (2018, p. 126) describes organisers as “agitators, catalysts and public-life coaches [who] stand for the whole”. Organising as a strategy can unite a community around a cause and create space at the grassroots level for participation (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021). *Prefiguring* is a strategy that enables the public to “authentically [tell] the story of what they want and [demonstrate that] it is possible” (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021, p. 6).

Lastly, *parties* are a form of people power strategy that plays out within the space of electoral processes. In this strategy, movements “us[e] levers of the State directly to make change” (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021, p. 6). This strategy leverages the political power of people to rally

around multiple interests or “agendas”¹⁰ (Tattersall and Iveson 2021, p. 6). However, the ability to push for change with this strategy is limited by the conflicting rationalities that exist within political structures (Bardhan, 2002), such as the conflict between pushing for political party interests and prioritising public concerns. This raises the following subsidiary research question: *What are the features of the tactics and strategies used by RTC and NU on their social media spaces?*

2.4 Digital Activism

There is no consensus on the definition of the term digital activism (Joyce, 2010; Kaun and Uldam, 2018). The lack of consensus is a result of the applicability of the term in a wide range of fields, which are in turn underpinned by a “disparate body of knowledge with diverse epistemologies and focal points” (Kaun and Uldam, 2018, p. 2100). The lack of consensus also arises from the focus on sensational stories and case studies around digital activism without a critical engagement with the underlying tactics and procedures involved in conceptualising, organising, and executing digital campaigns. This almost exclusive focus continues to produce a fragmented field of study (Joyce, 2010).

Conceptualising digital activism is thus “context-specific” (Ozkula, 2021, p. 63), which also results in a diverse range of terminologies that often overlap with the concept of digital activism. However, according to Joyce (2010), these terms fail in their description to capture exhaustively the concept of digital activism under the digital tool¹¹ or activity promoted. Examples of such activities include cyber-activism, e-advocacy, social media activism and online activism (Joyce, 2010; Ozkula, 2021). The interchangeability of these terms and their overlapping description contributes to the ambiguity in understanding digital activism.

Karatzogianni (2015, p. 1) offers a useful and extensive definition of digital activism:

“Political participation, activities and protests organised in digital networks beyond representational politics.¹² It refers to political conduct aiming for reform or revolution by non-state actors and new socio-political formations such as social

¹⁰ Refers to “a coalition of interest” (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021, p. 6).

¹¹ Digital tools here refer to digital technologies, devices, and platforms, such as the internet, computers, mobile phones and social media, that are relevant to digital activism (Joyce, 2010; Ozkula, 2021).

¹² “An arrangement whereby one is enabled to speak and act with authority on the behalf of some other” (Encyclopedia.com, 2022).

movements, protest organisations and individuals and groups from the civil society, that is by social actors outside government and corporate influence.”

As in this definition, what is dominant across most descriptions and definitions of the term ‘digital activism’ is a reference to the digital sphere and the counter-hegemonic nature of the activism that ensues. However, it is important to note that digital activism often does not exist or play out exclusively in the digital space. Sometimes it works to initiate or complement street protests (Yang, 2009).

Jurgenson (2012, p. 84) refers to the complementary relationship between digital activism and activism offline as “augmented reality or revolution”. The 2011 Egypt revolution, which is popularly referred to as ‘the Facebook revolution’ by mainstream media, is a poignant example (Lifvergren, 2011). Ismail (2014, p. 269) illustrates how the “place of popular quarters and the role of urban popular forces” also informed and shaped the revolution. Therefore, in this case, digital activism and offline activism reinforced each other.

The conceptualisation of online and offline activism as distinct sets of events is an approach referred to as digital dualism (Jurgenson, 2011). Augmented reality, on the other hand, recognises the interconnections between digital and offline activism as a set of “increasingly meshed” (Jurgenson, 2011, p. 1) events. Social movements that can approach digital activism from the augmented reality mindset can move beyond social action to more effective social activism (Sivitanides, Shah and Mehta, 2013). While social action creates awareness for change, social activism goes beyond promoting the change to mobilising action that has the potential to create the desired social change (George and Leidner, 2019).

The core values that ground a social movement as well as its underlying needs, beliefs, and goals associated with the movement can also influence its mode of digital activism, specifically its action repertoires (Selander and Jarvenpaa, 2016; Stein, 2009). Action repertoires, which can be online or offline, are “legitimate actions and means that are available to supporters to act on a given political opportunity” (Selander and Jarvenpaa, 2016, p. 2).

Sivitanides, Shah and Mehta (2013) outline three perspectives within debates around the merits of digital activism. First, digital optimists tend to “view the moral nature of the Internet as a reflection of the moral nature of its users” (Sivitanides, Shah and Mehta, 2013, p. 4). As such,

they rely on the nature of digital relationships and their associated social constructs in promoting a more just and empowered society.

Digital optimism for instance aligns with Kersting's (2013, p. 272) concept of "demonstrative democracies". These are "forms of participation which are not always instruments of the invited spaces produced by government or political parties but are sometimes introduced and invented by civil society" (Kersting 2013, p. 275). Those who subscribe to the pessimist's perspective "use the moral neutrality argument to underline the possibility of destructive behaviour and to counter the optimists" (Sivitanides, Shah and Mehta, 2013, p. 4).

While the pessimists can agree that digital activism has both beneficial and constructive benefits, they are more inclined to see the destructive potential it presents. The pessimist perspective raises concerns about control, surveillance, and inequality (Faris and Meier, 2012; Greenfield, 2018; Robinson *et al.*, 2015). For instance, digital activism has the potential to exclude some people from participating due to the cost of access to data and more efficient digital devices, resulting in what some scholars refer to as digital inequity or digital inequality (George and Leidner, 2019; Schradie, 2018).

The persistent perspective is more attuned to the concept of augmented reality. Rather than viewing digital activism as a revolutionary turn in advancing the cause of social movements, the persistent view is that digital activism is merely a tool that facilitates what was already possible with traditional activism, just at a faster rate. Therefore, the following subsidiary research question is asked: *Which perspectives have RTC and NU adopted and how have they influenced the movement's cause as well as participatory space?*

2.5 Social Media Activism

According to George and Leidner (2019, p. 5), "[s]ocial media remains one of the most popular means of enabling digital activism". About 4,20 billion people are estimated to be currently using social media globally, with social media users growing at an estimated rate of 13.92% in Africa, coming in second in 2019–2020 just behind Asia (Dean, 2021; Kemp, 2021). These digital devices and tools, which are enabled and connected through the internet, create a connective environment that, according to Chatora (2012, p. 2), makes these tools "social".

The social nature of these environments extends beyond enabling and building online relationships to sharing ideas and knowledge. However, the ideas and knowledge that are

shared on social media are more likely to be personalised than unified as they spread unlike communication in activism organised offline. As Bennett and Segerberg (2011, p. 4) highlight:

“[P]ersonalized communication in this context entails providing greater opportunities for individuals to define issues in their own terms and to network with others through social media, thus distributing the organizational burden among participants who may look to NGOs and social movement organizations more as facilitators than as active directors of actions.”

This implies that while social media enables a faster and wider spread of information and communication for social movements, it reduces the ability of social movements to control the narrative that is disbursed as well as the ability to sustain a focused agenda. This makes it difficult to achieve “organizational control over communication and action” (Bennett and Segerberg, 2011, p. 5).

Bennett and Segerberg (2012, p. 749) frame the network that emerges from digitally mediated activism spaces, such as social media, as facilitated by “the logic of connective actions”. These authors describe connective action networks as:

“[I]ndividualized and technologically organised sets of processes that result in action without the requirement of collective identity framing or the levels of organizational resources required to respond effectively to opportunities.” (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012, p. 750)

This differs from the logic of “collective action networks” (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012, p. 749), within which organisation and mobilisation strategies are more centralised with a unified motivation and goal. However, the connective action that emerges within social media spaces is also able to express desirable features of collective action, such as sustained commitment. This is considered a hybrid between the more individualised connective action and the conventional collective action (Figure 2.1).

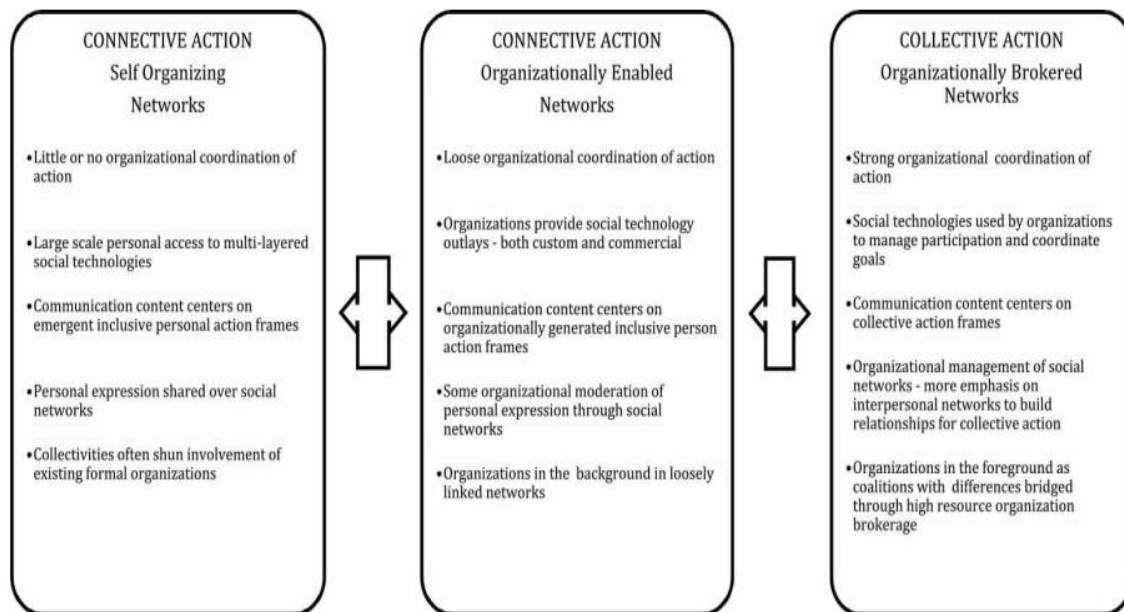


Figure 2.1: Elements of connective and collective actions networks (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012, p. 756)

This hybridity also illustrates Jurgenson’s (2012) concept of augmented reality. The reduced cost of organisation, as well as the mobilisation associated with social media, makes it much easier to attract participants. These participants are often self-motivated, making their commitment more sustainable (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012). The different action networks, however, are not necessarily mutually exclusive; they can be observed in one movement “side by side in the same action space” (Bennett and Segerberg, 2021, p. 758).

Understanding the action network strategy of a social movement on social media can shed light on its engagement capacity, the sustainability of its organisational agenda and network in the digital space, as well as its political effectiveness (Bennett and Segerberg, 2011).

Social media has greatly consolidated the activism efforts of social movements by providing cheaper and instant coverage, easier communication and networking and more efficient organisation, collaboration, mobilisation and networking (Melki and Mallat, 2014). Cizek (2016, p. 315) highlights how activists leverage these platforms to “shift [the] balance of power and functioning as tools of resistance and alternative platforms for communication”.

Chatora (2012, p. 4) also points out that social media platforms have “great potential for encouraging collaborative political participation [... as] people use social media to air their views and express (in some cases) anger and dissatisfaction”. Cizek (2016, p. 315), however,

also acknowledges that social media platforms “may not be living up to their two-way communication promise”. This speaks to the idea that both content creators and subscribers can communicate and shape the conversation. Mutsvairo (2016, p. 6) notes:

“[W]hen it comes to activism, providing a platform for protests does not always mean everyone understands the content of a message or knows what action to take upon reading it.”

While it encourages participation on a broader scale, social media tends to generate what Murthy (2018, p. 2) describes as “high levels of noise”. Noise, in this regard, refers to exposure to an overwhelming volume of information that is not always relevant, for example, trolling¹³ on social media comment sections. This noise can divert attention from the social movement’s agenda. Additionally, certain types of digital participation such as clicktivism,¹⁴ metavoicing¹⁵ and assertion¹⁶ associated with popular digital platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter often do not produce or translate into effective impact for campaigns (George and Leidner, 2019). That is, they do not often translate into desirable public collective action or response beyond posting comments or liking a post.

The digital divide, which speaks to the lack of equal access to data and digital devices, can also reproduce inequality in social media activism (Schradié, 2018). It is within this tension that this research is located, acknowledging that although social media platforms have significant potential for enhancing public participation, they are not without challenges and limitations. A critical examination of the engagement strategies deployed by social movements on social media platforms can provide insight into the nature of the participatory atmosphere they create. Thus, the research asks the following subsidiary research question: *What type of action network is observed in RTC and NU’s social media engagements and what type of engagement strategy ensues?*

¹³ Engagement on the internet by anonymous users who “leave deliberately cruel and callous comments that served no purpose other than to hurt, shock, offend and sow discord” (Hannan, 2018, p. 220).

¹⁴ Clicktivism refers to agreeing or supporting an activist post online by “liking” or following the page (George and Leidner, 2019).

¹⁵ Metavoicing refers to sharing, retweeting, reposting and commenting on a social media post created by another (George and Leidner, 2019).

¹⁶ Assertion refers to content creation. It informs others via video, audio, image, or text media on social media platforms (George and Leidner, 2019).

2.6 Public Participation

It must be noted that, within the literature, there is a lack of consensus on how public participation should be conducted (Delgado, Lein Kjøberg and Wickson, 2011; Rowe and Frewer, 2005). Bearing this in mind, Arnstein's (1969) definition of the concept of public¹⁷ participation grounds this research. Public or citizen¹⁸ participation, according to Arnstein (1969, p. 216), is as follows:

“[T]he strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated and benefits like contracts and patronage are parcelled out. [... It is the] means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society.”

2.6.1 Ladder of participation

Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation is useful as it not only differentiates between various types of participation but also exposes the power dynamics, both visible and invisible, that exist in participatory processes. Arnstein (1969) conceptualises eight gradations of citizen participation (Figure 2.2). These are grouped into three categories, namely, nonparticipation, tokenism, and citizen power.

¹⁷ The use of the term 'public' in the term 'public participation' leaves room for uncertainty regarding the boundaries between state and citizen involvement in particular processes (Purcell, 2016).

¹⁸ Drawing on Purcell's (2016) conceptualization of the term 'public', the terms 'public' and 'citizen' are used interchangeably in this research to refer to participants outside the State.

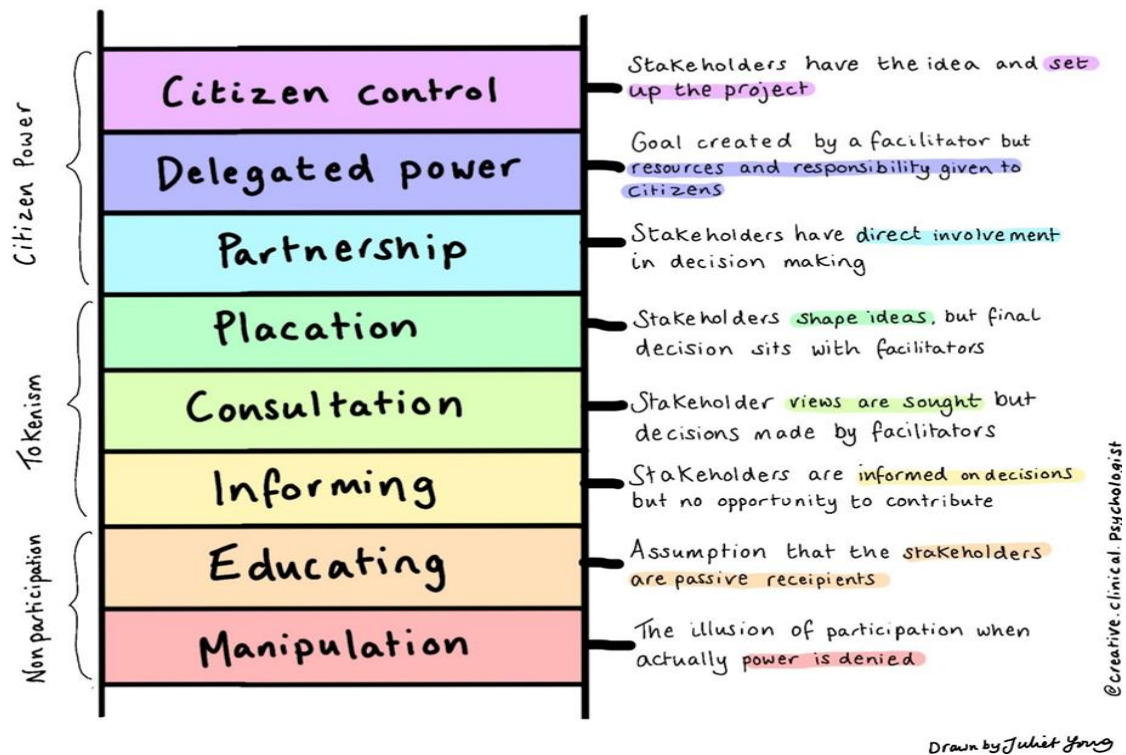


Figure 2.2: Arnstein's ladder of participation (Young, 2021)

The first category – nonparticipation – refers to a prescriptive, coercive type of process (Mensah and Ernest, 2013). Public participation processes falling into this category enable those in power to justify their decisions to the public. Zikode (2009) describes this type of engagement as not only pretentious but also sometimes threatening; any attempt by the public to push back can be met with a violent response from the State (Patel, 2008).

Arnstein (1969) discusses two gradations of participation under this category. The first gradation is manipulation, in which citizens are provided with an illusion of participation but have no agency to either contribute or effect change. Such participatory processes are aimed at “engineering [the] support” of the public (Arnstein, 1969, p. 218).

The second gradation of nonparticipation is therapy, or ‘educating’ as illustrated by Young’s (2021) adaptation. In this form of participation, “the focus of it is on curing them [citizens] of their ‘pathology’ rather than changing the racism and victimisation that create their “pathologies” (Arnstein, 1969, p. 218). That is to say, the root cause of resistance is not only ignored but also labelled and treated as a social dysfunction in need of a cure (Selmeczi, 2014).

The second category of participation in Arnstein's typology is tokenism. In this category are gradations of participation where, although citizens might have a voice, which is they get to say what they want or need, they lack the power to ensure their desires are enacted.

Gradations of participation that fall under tokenism can be said to be decorative (Lundy, 2018). Tokenistic processes are often only a show. They lack true intent to engage participants (Hart, 1992).

Arnstein (1969) provides three gradations of participation under this category: informing, consultation and placation. Informing refers to a type of participation where, by design, the process encourages one-sided communication (informing). The disadvantaged group in this process only receives information but is unable to contribute or shape the final decision. Arnstein highlights that those meetings masked as participatory engagements but filled with technical jargon fall under this gradation. Carim and Warwick (2013) also highlight the risk of social media platforms promoting this type of communication. So instead of facilitating dialogue, a "one-way 'broadcasting' of information" occurs instead (Carim and Warwick, 2013, p. 524).

The second gradation of tokenism is consultation. Described as "window-dressing on" (Arnstein, 1969, p. 220), this process of participation goes a little beyond merely informing by consulting participants through voting and surveys. However, this occurs without any intent to use the public inputs and opinions gathered. According to Arnstein (1969, p. 219), the only supposed benefit to participants in this process is that they get to "[participate] in participation [while] power holders achieve evidence that they have gone through the required motions of involving 'those people'".

Placation follows consultation in Arnstein's ladder of participation. With placation, citizens are strategically selected into the decision-making process in such a manner that their voices or opinions do not end up contributing towards any change. This outcome is ensured by those in power by either placing people whose loyalty aligns with their interests or by ensuring that the final decision-making power stays outside the influence of the public. Placation, therefore, only empowers citizens to a point where they have "extensively 'participated' but have not profited beyond the extent the power holders decide to placate them" (Arnstein, 1969, p. 220).

In the digital sphere, tokenism can occur in the form of placation, taking advantage of the fact that sometimes online participants' support does not go beyond liking or sharing posts within

the digital space (McKay, 2016). Such shallow performance, while not completely unbeneficial, can hinder meaningful engagement by providing merely an appearance of participation for supporters (Stella, 2021).

Gradations of participation at the level of ‘citizen power’ are those wherein citizens not only have a voice but can initiate and influence change. The levels of participation within this category include partnership, delegated power, and citizen control. In partnerships, citizens, and power holders both have planning and decision-making power. Mechanisms such as joint policy boards, collectively established ground rules and negotiations are employed to ensure that power is adequately redistributed (Arnstein, 1969). Power, however, is often not shared by those in power but is claimed by citizens. This claimed power remains effective when an “organised power base” and “resources to hire and fire” are available to all parties to ensure accountability and independence (Arnstein, 1969, p. 222).

Further up the ladder from partnership is delegated power. On this rung, the dominant decision-making power lies with the citizens who hold a majority of the seats on the decision-making board or have the right to veto should negotiations between stakeholders reach an impasse.

The highest level of participation on Arnstein’s ladder of participation is citizen control. This gradation of participation affords citizens the highest level of power. However, absolute control by citizens is neither achievable nor the defining attribute of citizen control (Wouter, 2021). The intention though is to ensure that citizens achieve the highest level of control feasible so that they are “in full charge of policy and managerial aspects and [are] able to negotiate the conditions under which ‘outsiders’ may change them” (Arnstein, 1969, p. 223).

2.6.2 Spaces in which power works

According to Gaventa (2006), power works in three spaces: closed, invited or claimed spaces. Spaces are defined as “opportunities, moments and channels where citizens can act to potentially affect policies, discourses, decisions and relationships that affect their lives and interests” (Gaventa, 2006, p. 26).

Closed spaces are decision-making processes or spaces that are inaccessible to the public to participate. These are spaces that are only accessible to certain “elites” (Gaventa, 2006, p. 26). As noted by Nikuze, Sliuzas and Flacke (2020), these types of decision-making processes tend to build mistrust between the State and the public.

Invited spaces are spaces in which citizen participation is strictly by invitation from the governing agency, State or organisation. These spaces are mostly observed in policy-making processes. While invited spaces can offer better accountability of the State and foster better State-citizen relationships, criticism has been pointed towards their tendency to marginalise communities and enforce the interests of the State and elites through, for instance, censored invitation of participants (Aiyar, 2010; Patel, Sliuzas and Georgiadou, 2016).

Claimed or invented spaces (Miraftab, 2004, p. 1) are counter-hegemonic spaces mobilised by the less powerful, marginalised, or dissatisfied communities or social movements (Gaventa, 2006). That is, they are practices that confront, contest, expose and challenge powers of oppression and exclusion within invented or claimed spaces of participation (Hunjan and Pettit, 2011; Miraftab, 2009). Common interests, demands or goals are the basis for solidarity in these spaces. These spaces make provision for the voices of marginalised communities to be heard, especially when they are ignored by the State (Kersting, 2013).

The difference between ‘claimed’ and ‘invited’ spaces is based on intentions and not relationships. Within invited spaces, power can be said to lie dominantly with stakeholders while public participation is aimed towards coping with “existing systems of hardship” (Miraftab, 2004, p. 4). Participation within invented spaces, however, is characterised by actions that resist existing protocols with the sole aim of bringing change (Miraftab, 2004). Power in such a context lies predominantly with the public. Accountability is strengthened when claimed spaces and the power dynamics within them are equitably distributed.

It is important to note that invited, claimed and closed spaces do not exist in isolation. Each space is in a “dynamic relationship” (Gaventa, 2006, p. 27) with other existing spaces. That is to say, they are interrelated, as well as able to transform and influence one another (Gaventa, 2006).

Irrespective of the platform – in person or virtual – on which these spaces are hosted, Gaventa (2006, p. 29–30) states:

“Without prior awareness building so that citizens possess a sense of their own right to claim rights or express voice and without strong capacities for exercising countervailing power against the ‘rules of the game’ that favour entrenched interests, new mechanisms for participation may be captured by prevailing interests.”

2.7 Effective Public Participation

Arnstein's (1969) definition of public participation highlights the enabling power of effective public participation for citizens, especially in marginalised communities¹⁹. Effective participation refers to participatory processes with good or desirable outcomes within a particular context. The same applies to meaningful participation (Rowe and Frewer, 2000). Webler and Tuler (2000) provide two meta-principles – fairness and competence – that can be considered criteria for effective public participation. Webler and Tuler (2000, p. 568) state:

“Fairness refers to the opportunity for all interested or affected parties to assume any legitimate role in the decision-making process. [C]ompetence refers to the ability of the process to reach the best decision possible given what was reasonably knowable under the present conditions.”

Webler and Tuler (2000) further elaborate that for a participatory process to be fair, the event must be designed in such a way that all those who need to be in attendance can be present. Attendees must also be able to contribute, engage and be part of the decision-making process. The principle of competence is ensured when consensus criteria are set in place to validate facts, resolve disputes and decide on participatory processes (Webler and Tuler, 2000), ensuring that the decision-making process is inclusive and organized in a consensus manner. The subsidiary question raised here is: *Have RTC and NU's online participatory spaces embraced the principles of fairness and competence?*

Through effective participation, transparency and accountability can be ensured in many matters, for example, service delivery. However, the quality of participation is critical in determining its enabling power. While public participation and engagement, in theory, are meant to empower, in practice, not all participation activities drive or initiate change (Arnstein, 1969; Dennis, 2019; MacArthur, 2016).

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter presents existing literature that grounds the topic under study. Firstly, literature on the conceptualisation of social movements is discussed. This is followed by an overview of

¹⁹ Community in this context, is defined by James *et al.* (2012, p. 14) as follows:

“[A] group or network of persons who are connected (objectively) to each other by relatively durable social relations that extend beyond immediate genealogical ties and who mutually define that relationship (subjectively) as important to their social identity and social practice.”

housing movements in South Africa and the strategies employed in such movements. The chapter then turns to a discussion on digital activism and the conceptualisation of the term, followed by a discussion on social media activism and the engagement strategies it supports. The chapter concludes by highlighting literature on public participation, spaces of power, and the concept of effective participation. The chapter highlights subsidiary questions that help interrogate the findings of the research.

Chapter Three: Methods and Techniques

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methods and research techniques used in the process of carrying out this research. It also justifies the selection of these methods while outlining how the methods were applied. The first section discusses the research paradigm. This is followed by a discussion of the research design and methods. The next section discusses the data collection techniques used and is followed by a discussion on the sampling procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations pertinent to this research. The chapter concludes with a brief reflection on the research journey.

3.2 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm²⁰ is defined as “a mental model or a framework of thought or belief through which one interprets the reality” (Singh, 2019, p. 3). By clarifying the paradigm in which a research project is situated, the ontological²¹ and epistemological²² underpinnings that frame the work are made clear (Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg, 2021). This is necessary and important in the justification of the methods adopted to arrive at the research findings.

While the bodies of literature drawn upon commonly reference two paradigms – positivism²³ and interpretivism, only the latter will be discussed in this section as this is the perspective from which this research was conducted. Interpretivism, which is often attributed to qualitative research, “assumes that reality is socially constructed; that is, there is no single, observable reality. Rather, there are multiple realities, or interpretations, of a single event” (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015, p. 9). This perspective as such is investigative and considers people's lived

²⁰ A paradigm can be defined as “a set of beliefs that represents a worldview” (Singh, 2019, p. 3).

²¹ Ontology is defined as “the study of being” (Crotty, 2003, quoted in Ahmed, 2008, p. 2). First, it aims to understand reality. Second, it reflects upon existing knowledge (Ahmed, 2008; Alharahsheh and Pius, 2019). This implies also reflecting on what is already regarded as truth (Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg, 2021).

²² Epistemology, on the other hand, is defined as “[h]ow reality is being known by the researcher [and] is concerned with how a researcher is aiming to uncover knowledge to reach reality” (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2019, p. 40).

²³ The term ‘positivism’ refers to a structured scientific, methodological and result-oriented perspective that is often attributed to qualitative research (Mazouz, 2020).

experiences and how they construct meaning (Ryan, 2018). It is also context-specific; the findings derived are not intended for generalisation (Singh, 2019).

As Alharahsheh and Pius (2019) note, the ontological and epistemological positions subscribed to by the interpretivist paradigm are relativism and subjectivism. Relativist ontology is described as the “belief that reality is a finite subjective experience, [where] nothing exists outside of our thoughts” (Levers, 2013, p. 2). This way of thinking implies that human experience informs reality and no two experiences are the same (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2019; Singh, 2019).

Subjective epistemology is described by Denzin and Lincoln (2005, quoted in Levers, 2013, p. 3) as the “belief that knowledge is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity”. This implies that context is critical to how knowledge is perceived and processed. While these perspectives produce findings that cannot be generalised, they provide a contextual understanding of in-depth research problems that originate from real-world experiences. It is for this reason that the interpretivist paradigm has been adopted for this qualitative research project. It is to a discussion of the research design that this chapter now turns.

3.3 Research Design

This research is qualitative. Qualitative research is a type of research that involves non-numerical data, or more often “uses words as data, collected and analysed in all sorts of ways” (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p. 3). It also involves the analysis of text often from a contextual point of view to derive meaning (Moravcsik, 2019). Qualitative data, therefore, is hard to measure or analyse using the numeric logic often attributed to quantitative research²⁴ (Braun and Clarke, 2013; Kalu and Bwalya, 2017).

Qualitative research by design is concerned with the analysis of lived or perceived experiences of people to better understand the research questions asked (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). This makes it possible to turn these experiences into usable data that offer insights that are useful for practical application (Miller, 2019). But while findings obtained from qualitative research can shed more light on a research problem and provide deeper understanding, they can be challenging when applied directly elsewhere (Korstjens and Moser, 2017), particularly when

²⁴ Alharahsheh and Pius (2019, p. 40) describe quantitative research as one “relating to measuring quantity with application to a specific phenomenon and this is expressed in terms of quantity”.

the expectation is to reproduce the same outcome. This is because the outcome of qualitative research is often contextual by design and not often intended to speak for realities outside the sample population (Miller, 2019).

The objectives of this research, however, reduce the risks of this limitation. The research study, broadly speaking, seeks to understand the possibilities around social media platforms as spaces of engagement between and among civil society organisations, the State and the public from a context-specific narrative. As such, the contextual nature of qualitative research is both suitable and enables the achievement of “deep understanding” (Woodside, 2010, p. 6) of the research focus using several methods of data collection.

Another limitation associated with qualitative research is subjectivity. Subjectivity implies the degree to which data collection and subsequent analysis are influenced by an individual's unique perspective (Damaskinidis, 2017). This raises concerns about the credibility of the findings. This limitation can be minimised through the acknowledgement of the role of the “researcher as an instrument” (Pezalla, Pettigrew and Miller-Day, 2012, p. 2). The phrase refers to the researcher's role in selecting, observing, interpreting, and omitting data in qualitative research.

For this study, the subjectivity of the researcher is viewed as a resource that contributes to the research journey and not as a limitation. By engaging in reflexivity, the researcher considers their own contextual background and research interests, as well as any institutional advantages that could potentially impact the interpretation of data. This is done to ensure that the participants' experiences remain the focal point of the analysis. Also, methodological triangulation, defined by Noble and Heale (2019, p. 67) as a method that “promotes the use of several data collection methods such as interviews and observations”, is employed in this research to improve the credibility of the study.

3.4 Research Methods

The research method that was used in this research was the case study method. A case study is an approach that “examines a phenomenon within its real-life context [where] data are collected on or about a single individual, group, or event” (Guest, Mitchell and Namey, 2012, p. 39). Case study research can focus on a person or a phenomenon within a particular context with specific, descriptive narratives that explore complex issues (Hancock, 2006). Case studies can

be carried out in an exploratory,²⁵ explanatory,²⁶ or descriptive manner (Hancock, 2006). The descriptive case study is utilised for this research.

A descriptive case study is a detailed analysis and interpretation of a particular phenomenon to understand a particular social issue (Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg, 2021). In the case of this research, it is used to understand how social media is utilised by RTC and NU in their various engagements with the State and the public. The case study method “focuses on specific phenomenon; is contextual and bounded by time and space; and is richly descriptive” (Hancock, 2006, p. 15-16). These are the unique attributes of the method.

In selecting an appropriate research method, Johannesson and Perjons (2014, p. 39-40) highlight three considerations to be applied – suitability, feasibility, and ethical appropriateness. First, the method chosen must be suitable and align with the goal and purpose of the research. The case study method was selected for this research as it aligned with the research objectives, which are to understand the role of social media in the strategies employed by RTC and NU to engage with the State and raise public consciousness on affordable housing in Cape Town.

Second, the choice of research method must take into consideration the ability to access the case, time constraints and availability of resources in its execution (Johannesson and Perjons 2014, p. 40). Both RTC and NU are based in Cape Town, South Africa and, as such, provide practical and affordable access for this research. Furthermore, both RTC and NU are strongly involved in efforts to mobilise citizens around calls for affordable housing within the inner city (Eidelman, 2021; Eyong, 2020; Wingfield, 2019). Lastly, the choice of research methods must uphold all ethical considerations in the execution of the research (Johannesson and Perjons 2014, p. 40; see Section 3.8).

The case study method produces detailed and thick narratives that are useful for understanding the diversity and complexities of a given problem statement by providing specific, detailed and contextual insights into the issue under study (Flyvbjerg, 2006; McLeod, 2007). Case studies enable a researcher to focus on fully understanding the research problem without having to draw a definitive outcome. Bassey (1999, quoted in Cousin, 2005, p. 426) describes such

²⁵An exploratory case study by definition “seeks to define research questions of a subsequent study or to determine the feasibility of research procedures” (Hancock, 2006, p. 33).

²⁶Explanatory case studies “[seek] to establish cause-and-effect relationships [with] a primary purpose to determine how events occur and which ones may influence particular outcomes” (Hancock, 2006, p. 33).

outcomes as “fuzzy generalizations, based on the scientific conception of the fuzzy principle, which asserts that everything is a matter of degree, nothing is certain”. This implies embracing the uncertainty of the process, and the anticipated and unexpected outcome of the findings.

A commonly cited limitation of case study research points to the particularly contextual nature of the data it produces (McLeod, 2007; Simon and Goes, 2013). Flyvbjerg (2006), however, points to the contextual attributes of case studies as valuable to understanding unique social relations. Thus, the case study method is appropriate for this research as it has no specific pre-assumed outcome but seeks to understand a complex social dynamic in a specific organisational setting.

Another criticism of the case study research method is that where a small sample population is involved in a research project which seeks to understand a phenomenon at an organisational level, the case study method can produce narratives that are unverifiable beyond the participants’ accounts (Woodside, 2010). This limitation has been minimised in this research through triangulation, that is, the use of several data collection techniques. These are discussed in the next section.

3.5 Research Techniques

Research techniques, or data collection techniques as they are sometimes referred to, are the “tools and techniques that are used in the collection and analysis of data” (Jackson, 2013, p. 57). The following research techniques and tools have been used in this study: document study, non-participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Each of these is discussed in detail in the next three sub-sections.

3.5.1 Document study

Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg (2021, p. 335) describe document study²⁷ as the use of “material that was not created with the aim of research in mind [which] can include personal documents, official reports, mass media and archival data”. For this research, pamphlets and documents produced by RTC and NU on affordable housing activities were examined to support data triangulation. Existing relevant public records such as court documents and media publications were also examined. Lastly, and central to the research objectives, social media posts, mainly pictures and video posts from the Facebook accounts of RTC and NU, were also

²⁷ These authors also refer to this technique as documentary analysis (p. 341).

examined. The data analysed from RTC and NU's Facebook accounts was limited to posts from 2017 to 2020. The timeline captured events unfolding around the Tafelberg case.²⁸ The timeline provides insights into the online activities of RTC and NU from the launch of the court case to the announcement of judgement in 2020 (Figure 3.1).

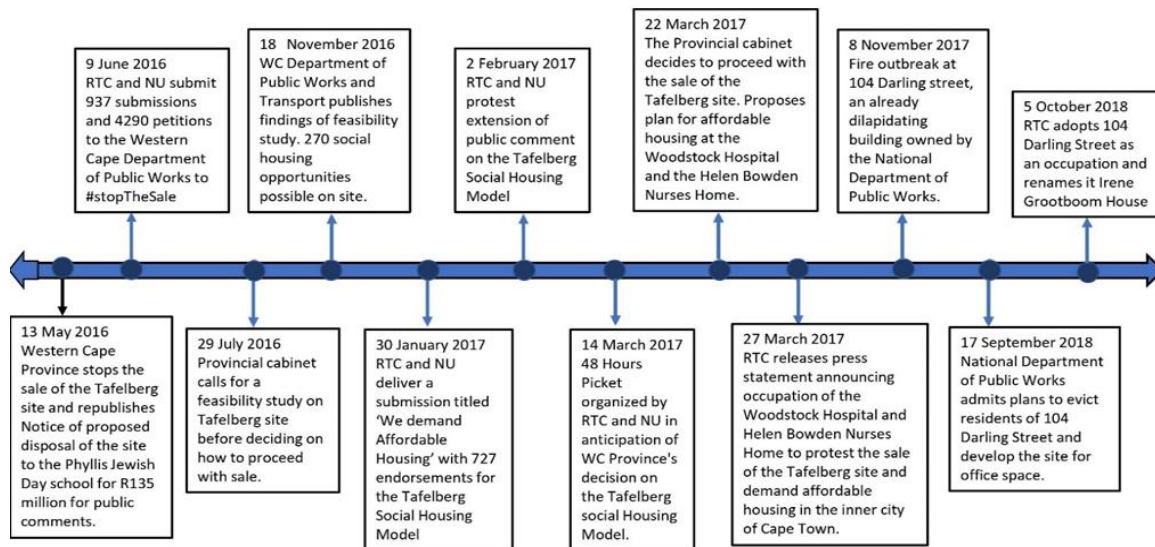


Figure 3.1: RTC Facebook timeline account of events leading up to occupations (Reclaim the City, no date: online)

The data collected through this tool were treated as archival data. Archival data is a collection of information from different or the same sources that can be retrieved, interpreted, and analysed in subsequent research (Jones, 2010). These archives were analysed to explore the targets of the posts, the responses generated from the posts and how these responses shaped debates or conversations (Gwaze *et al.*, 2018). The emergence of social media as a source of archival data has been researched in various applications such as digital libraries (Xie and Stevenson, 2014), probative evidence (Sleep and Tranter, 2018) and personal digital assets (Kreiczer-Levy and Donyets-Kedar, 2019; Zhao *et al.*, 2013).

²⁸ The first campaign by both RTC and NU was the #StopTheSale campaign in 2016. This campaign was initiated in response to the City's decision to sell a Tafelberg property to the Phyllis Jowell Jewish Day School in 2016 for R135 million. The Tafelberg property was formerly the site of the Tafelberg Remedial School before its relocation in 2010. With the property having been vacant for a decade, the Provincial Department of Transport and Public Works in the Western Cape decided to sell it. This decision, according to Gamble (2020, p. 7), entailed the Provincial Government ignoring its "constitutional and statutory obligations" to make the property available for social housing. Campaigns organised by RTC and NU both online and offline contributed to the reversal of the sale of the property in 2020 through the courts.

Document study is advantageous for this research as it is not cost-intensive. It is also useful for observing trends and patterns over time that would otherwise be difficult to obtain with other methods such as observation and interviews (Guest, Mitchell and Namey, 2012). While social media platforms offer several possibilities in their treatment as an archive, doing so is not without challenges. Bode *et al.* (2020) note that one limitation of social media data is related to the identification of authorship of content. For instance, as content is often shared across social media, it can be challenging to authenticate the source of an idea extracted online and understand the data effectively. This is, however, minimised by analysing only posts under RTC and NU's official social media accounts, bearing in mind that individuals within either organisation have 'run' these accounts during the specified period.

Social media data can also be problematic in that it can be dynamic, easily edited, manipulated, or deleted (Ringel and Davidson, 2020). To minimise this risk, the data were collected and documented using Microsoft Excel. The context of the data as such only applies to the moment the content was posted and not necessarily reflect the actual perspective of the post at the time of analysis. This reflexivity is taken into account in the analysis of the data and understanding of the findings.

Document study also has the potential of projecting a biased interpretation and understanding of historical trends. For example, social media as a source of data has been criticised for its lack of transferability and its limitations in being a credible representation of a population because of the diversity of social media users (Martí, Serrano and Nolasco, 2019). To manage these, non-participant observation and semi-structured interviews were used to further understand these historical trends and their interpretation from a more contextual perspective.

3.5.2 Non-participant observation

The second data collection technique that this study utilised was non-participant observation. Williams (2008, p. 521) describes non-participant observation as "a relatively non-obtrusive qualitative research strategy for gathering primary data about some aspect of the social world without interacting directly with its participants". Non-participant observation can be carried out covertly or overtly (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2009; Williams, 2008). In the overt approach, participants are aware of the researcher's presence and role, though interaction is very limited (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2009); with the covert approach, the participants are unaware of the researcher's presence or role.

For this study, overt non-participant observation was undertaken. This approach facilitated the observation of RTC and NU's work in person. Field notes were made and pictures of the spaces under study were taken. In combination with other data sources, data from non-participant observation has the advantage of providing an opportunity to gain a close-up understanding of the research problem.

The limitations of this technique are, however, tied to the subjective nature of the data collection process. The researcher decides what is observed and how it is interpreted. To minimise this, relevant information obtained from the document study, such as meeting days, spaces of engagement and occupied buildings, were used to guide the non-participant observation.

A second limitation is that observation can influence the reactions of participants being observed (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2009). This is known as the 'Hawthorne effect',²⁹ a situation where individuals who are being observed modify their normal behaviour or activities because they know that they are being observed (Oswald, Sherratt and Smith, 2014). By building a good relationship and establishing one's presence as a trustworthy ally, this phenomenon can be minimised, making the participants comfortable with the researcher's presence (ibid.). Rapport was built through attendance at various organised events throughout the study. The events themselves were large enough that the presence of the researcher was barely noticeable.

3.5.3 Semi-structured interviews

Five semi-structured interviews were conducted. The semi-structured interviews were undertaken individually with three RTC members and two NU staff. The gender composition of the participants included two men and three women. The interviews were conducted in English and took an hour on average. The interviews were also conducted in person with an initial introduction facilitated via emails and WhatsApp; follow-up interviews incorporated both online and in-person interviews.

²⁹ The phrase originated from an unintended discovery in experimental studies conducted in Chicago in the early 1900's (Oswald, Sherratt and Smith, 2014, p. 55).

Semi-structured interviews utilise open-ended questions, some of which are listed in an interview guide³⁰ to obtain data from participants (Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg, 2021). Open-ended questions are questions that have no pre-collated selection of answers and require more than a yes or no response. They allow for an in-depth response that aids the researcher in gaining a better understanding of the research problem from the participant's perspective (Guest, Mitchell and Namey, 2012). However, they take longer to conduct and analyse. The use of open-ended questions in semi-structured interviews to guide the direction of conversation allows room for flexibility (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). This enables participants to contribute unanticipated details.

Open-ended questions also allow the interviewer to probe participants' responses. Probing entails seeking further information based on the verbal or non-verbal responses offered by participants (Given, 2008). They also open up the opportunity for follow-up questions to be asked during the interview. Semi-structured interviews can be carried out with individuals or a group of participants (Jamshed, 2014). Semi-structured interviews were utilised in this research as they provided insight into how the organisations engage the public and the State on affordable housing delivery in Cape Town.

A limitation of this technique, however, is that semi-structured interviews can be time-consuming for everyone involved. Additionally, online platforms can also be accompanied by connectivity challenges and associated data expenses (Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg, 2021). These constraints were minimised in this research by confirming the comfort and ability of participants to use online platforms and whether or not they required assistance in the form of data for the interview.

Another limitation of this technique is the risk of bias from the interviewer in terms of the choice of questions and how they are directed at the respondents (Pezalla, Pettigrew and Miller-Day, 2012). The same can be said of how the respondents choose to answer those questions and what information they choose to share or omit. To minimise the input of such bias from the researcher, the interview questions were carefully designed to not presume that RTC and NU use their social media platforms as spaces of participation, thus, allowing the responses of participants to provide insight into how RTC and NU utilise the platforms.

³⁰ A list of questions that helps a researcher to frame and direct the interview process (Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg, 2021).

The researcher also maintained reflexivity (Braun and Clarke, 2021) throughout the research journey by maintaining an awareness of her subjectivity and how it could impact the study. As for bias from the participants, open-ended questions were used to gather as much insight as possible from the participants' responses. Follow-up interviews were also conducted virtually to build on prior interviews. The follow-up interviews also provided opportunities to gain new insights.

3.6 Sampling Procedure

Non-probability sampling was used to select participants for this study. With non-probability sampling methods, members of a specific population – the organisations under study – do not stand an equal chance of participating in the interviews (Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg, 2021). This sampling method was used because the research objectives were mainly concerned with generating a deeper understanding of the research problem. As such, statistical representation was not required (Guest, Mitchell and Namey, 2012). This method is also advantageous as it is cost-effective and time-efficient. Five participants were selected using purposive sampling.

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method through which research participants are selected based on the researcher's judgement, convenience and prior knowledge of the population or the participants' attributes and knowledge of the research topic (Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg, 2021; Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). This approach allowed for the selection of participants from RTC and NU with the most knowledge about the social media engagements of these organisations.

A major limitation of the use of purposive sampling is the risk of researcher bias influencing the selection process and as such the reliability of findings (Regoli, 2019). This is particularly true when the researcher's judgement is not underpinned by a strong theoretical perspective (Sharma, 2017). Mitigation against this bias was unnecessary in this study not only because of the reflexive approach to thematic analysis adopted but also because of the small number of individuals in both organisations who are directly involved in the development and posting of social media content. Awareness of subjectivity was acknowledged by the researcher; a review of the literature about and research into the organisations was undertaken to identify relevant staff with the most knowledge of the social media management of their organisations.

Due to the limited knowledge of the structure of the organisations under study, snowball sampling was also employed to help identify additional participants with knowledge that was useful to the study. Snowball sampling is used when overall population knowledge or access is limited, making it difficult to identify suitable participants (Fouche, Strydom and Roostenburg, 2021). Snowball sampling allows initial participants to refer the researcher to other participants with similar or even better experiences or knowledge of the research topic.

Similar to purposive sampling, snowball sampling can be affected by bias from the participants' judgement about whom they refer. This raises a concern about sample diversity (Kirchherr and Charles, 2018). The referrals can result in recruiting individuals who might not prove resourceful to the study while isolating those who might. However, for this research, this bias was not applicable due to the close nature of the network of the population under study. Participants' referrals were limited to staff within the same organisation with a previously established role in social media management. As such, their experience and expertise in the research topic were verifiable.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study was carried out using Braun and Clarke's (2021) *reflexive* approach to thematic analysis. Reflexive thematic analysis is an approach to thematic analysis whereby a researcher critically engages with data, codes the data and generates themes; the researcher plays a central role in how knowledge is derived from the data (Braun and Clarke, 2021; Byrne, 2022).

The six phases of reflexive thematic analysis include data familiarisation, data coding, initial theme generation, theme development and review, theme refinement and naming and lastly, writing (Braun and Clarke, 2021). The phases are not rigid as they do not necessarily have to unfold in a specified pattern; they instead entail “going sideways, backwards and sometimes even around in circles, as you move from the start to the end of the process” (Braun and Clarke, 2021, p. 79).

The data from the interviews were first transcribed and analysed alongside the findings from the document study and non-participant observation. The initial transcription of the interviews was done using Otter.ai software and edited manually to crosscheck for misspelt words or typographical errors. To identify and define themes, the interview data and the data collected through the document study, which consisted of the social media posts, were analysed and

coded using the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software NVivo. The approach to thematic analysis as employed in this study embodies “a reflexive researcher” (Braun and Clarke, 2021, p.48) as an essential tool in engaging with and analysing data. A reflexive partner is described as follows:

“[S]omeone who is thoughtful and (self) questioning, identifying and then interrogating their positions, values, choices and practices within the research process and the influence of these on knowledge generated; someone seeking awareness and new possibilities.” (Braun and Clarke, 2021, p. 58)

A reflexive researcher practices reflexivity throughout the research process. Reflexivity, as described by Braun and Clarke (2021, p. 56), has to do with a “researcher’s generative role in research and their insight into and articulation around this role”. Reflexive thematic analysis is both advantageous and appropriate for this research because it is a flexible analytical method that acknowledges pre-existing perspectives and knowledge as a resource and not a limitation. This enables the researcher to analyse data from participants with varying opinions (Nowell *et al.*, 2017) and approach the study as a process that adds to existing bodies of knowledge. Reflexive thematic analysis does not view researcher subjectivity as something to be avoided but rather encourages the researcher to acknowledge and interrogate subjectivity (Braun and Clarke, 2021).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

In conducting research involving the collection of data from human participants, certain measures need to be applied throughout the research process to ensure that the research is conducted ethically. Ethics can be defined as “a method, procedure, or perspective for deciding how to act and for analysing complex problems and issues” (Resnik, 2020, para. 5). In research, it implies a code of conduct that not only protects the participants but also supports the accomplishment of the set research objectives. It also promotes accountability and strengthens relationships between collaborating partners (Resnik, 2020). In addition to applying for and receiving ethical clearance (Appendix A) from the University of Cape Town’s Faculty of Science Research Ethics Committee (FSREC), the following measures were applied to ensure proper ethical conduct throughout the research process:

3.8.1 Informed and voluntary consent

Informed consent refers to voluntary participation in research by participants after being given all the available information on the research aims, how the collected data will be used and the potential impacts associated with participation (Manti and Licari, 2018). Informed consent was obtained in written format from participants who were asked to sign a consent form.³¹ The forms were signed after participants were informed about the objectives of the research and their potential role in it. Participants fully understood that their participation in the research was voluntary and they could withdraw from the research process at any time. Participants were also informed about the type of data required from them and how the data would be utilised. The written and signed consent form was obtained from participants before the interviews were conducted.

3.8.2 Non-maleficence

The principle of non-maleficence in research entails that participating in research should cause no harm to participants or anyone by its design or methodology (Gelling, 2015). Measures were applied to ensure that the principle of non-maleficence was adhered to throughout the research process through the careful design of the research objectives and methodology, for example, ensuring participants understood the research aim and their rights and role in the study. Also, as described by Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg (2021), careful reflection on possible risks and benefits during data collection and analysis was undertaken. Reflexivity was applied throughout the research process to minimise possible harm to participants.

3.8.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

Measures were taken to ensure that the confidentiality and anonymity of participants were protected throughout the research process. Confidentiality implies the protection of data obtained from participants; anonymity implies the protection of participants' identities (Fouche, Strydom and Roestenburg, 2021). No personal or identifiable information was collected or disclosed in the process of data collection, analysis and drawing up of findings. Responses of participants from the semi-structured interviews were collected in their capacity as members of RTC and NU. The data, which were stripped of all identifiers, gathered were securely saved

³¹ See Appendix B.

in a password-protected hard drive to prevent unauthorised access and protect participants' confidentiality. This hard drive was and continues to be kept, in a secure drawer.

3.8.4 Transparency and openness

Transparency in research entails the honest disclosure of the relevant steps taken by a researcher to arrive at the findings (Tuval-Mashiach, 2016). Transparency not only promotes the trustworthiness of the research but also allows other researchers to be able to replicate the methods elsewhere (Batt and Kahn, 2021). Measures were put in place throughout the research process through open communication and feedback. Openness was upheld by making the research findings available to participants and the broader research community. The findings – in a copy of the full thesis as well as a summarised version – were presented to the participants at the end of the study. The summary included the use of visualisation of data using a word cloud to illustrate the frequency of appearance of topics discussed on the Facebook pages of RTC and NU across the years analysed.

3.8.5 Carefulness

Care was applied in collecting and storing the data and conducting data analysis to minimise the risk of losing data. Data was stored in a secured drive and backed up in a password-encrypted folder on Google Drive as a backup. Also, despite the lifting of the National State of Disaster in South Africa (South African Government, 2022), while preparing to start the fieldwork for this research, care was taken to ensure that the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for all participants and the researcher was minimised even though the mandatory wearing of a mask and other previously mandated COVID-19 protocols no longer applied. This was ensured by encouraging social distancing and intermittent hand sanitisation while in the field.

3.9 Limitations of the Study

In exploring how RTC and NU leverage social media platforms for engagement with the State and the public, this study was limited to one social media platform – Facebook. Facebook was selected as the source of social media archives for this research because of its popularity within South Africa. Of the estimated 60.6 million residents of South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2022), 29.5 million used Facebook as of March 2022 (Kamer, 2022). More than half of these Facebook users were between the ages of 18 and 34. The statistics also show that women make up 50.1% of these Facebook users (NapoleonCat, n.d.).

Facebook is, thus, the most used social media platform in South Africa, accounting for 69.68% of the overall social media users in the country (StatCounter Global Stats, 2022). Its wide usage makes it suitable for this study to provide insight into the nature of engagement on RTC and NU's Facebook media posts.

The research was also limited in terms of the timeline for posts published between 2017 and 2022. This timeline was selected to capture engagements that led up to the Tafelberg judgement in 2020.³² The judgement was a significant event for both RTC and NU in their mobilisation for social housing and other affordable housing in Cape Town. Limiting the timeline was essential to completing the research within the timeframe available to the researcher. However, this means that the findings do not reflect the changes in the intensity and engagement of both organisations' Facebook activities post the COVID-19 pandemic in any great depth.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methods and methodology used in achieving the aims and objectives of this research. First, the research paradigm was discussed, establishing the research's positionality in terms of ontology and epistemology. The discussion continued with an outline of the research design and the techniques used in collecting data. The next section discussed the sampling techniques used and was followed by the approach utilised to analyse the data. This was followed by a discussion on the ethical considerations adhered to throughout the research process. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the limitations of the study concerning the sourcing of social media archival data and the timeline applied.

³² Refer to Chapter One.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the research findings obtained through document analysis, observations and semi-structured interviews. First, this chapter examines the nature of the organisations RTC and NU. This is followed by a discussion on the nature of their spaces of participation and lastly, the nature of their activism on the Facebook platform. The chapter concludes with a comparative discussion on the pros and cons of digital activism on Facebook for State and public participation and engagement.

4.2 Nature of the Organisations

RTC and NU have worked closely together in the campaign for affordable housing in Cape Town's central business district (CBD) since 2016. While both organisations advocate for affordable housing and against unjust evictions of the poor and working class in Cape Town, they do so in differing but complementary ways as indicated by the findings of this research. These differences are due, in part, to the nature of each organisation. It is to a discussion of the nature of each organisation that the chapter turns.

4.2.1 Reclaim the City

According to their website, RTC is “a social movement of tenants and workers campaigning for affordable housing in well-located areas” (Reclaim the City, 2023, online). RTC started as a campaign to contest the sale of the Tafelberg property.³³ Since then, it has evolved into a social movement. Tilly (2006) describes a social movement as a movement whose campaigns, repertoires and “worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment” (WUNC) constitute and contribute to its functioning and success (Figure 4.1).

³³ Refer to Chapter Three.

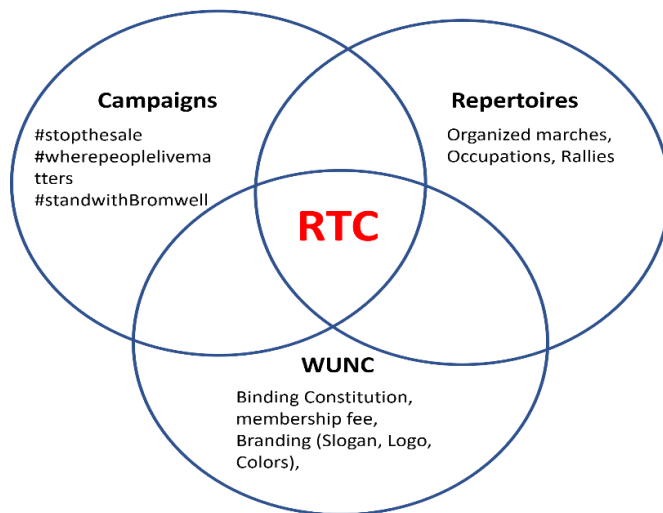


Figure 4.1: Interaction of elements as described by Tilly (2006) to illustrate RTC as a social movement.

RTC's sustained campaigns centred on the delivery of affordable housing for the poor and working class in Cape Town's well-located areas fall under two broad categories: land and housing, and resisting evictions and displacement. The former involves campaigns that advocate for affordable access to land and housing, as well as the utilisation of public land in well-located areas, such as the Rondebosch Golf Course, for affordable housing (Washinyira, 2020).

The focus on government-owned land, also often referred to as 'public land', is linked to the State's constitutional obligation to provide housing to redress apartheid spatial planning (Figure 4.2) and the notion that public land should be used to address public needs. In this case, the need is for housing delivery for the poor and working class.

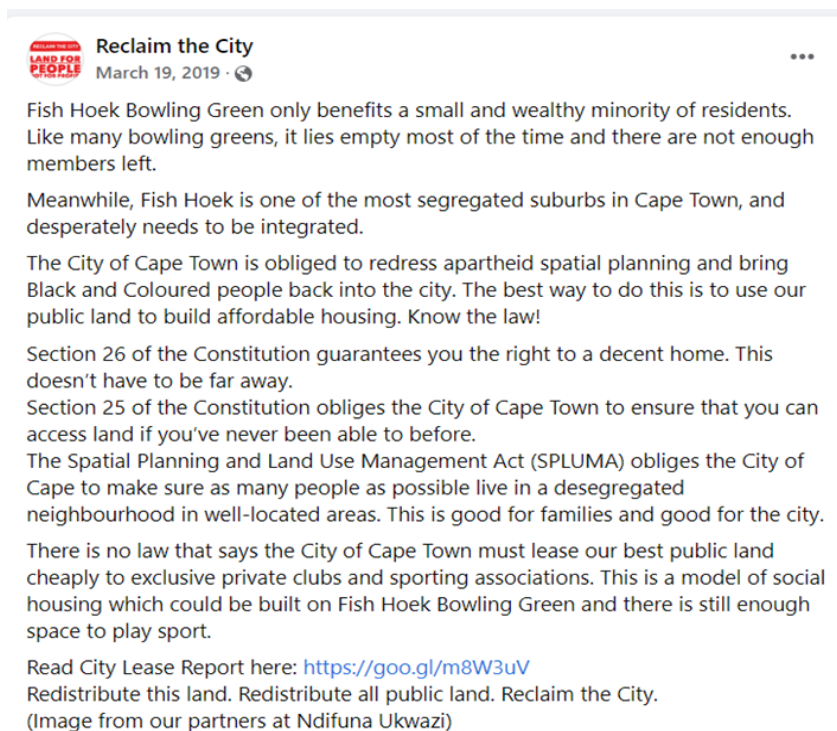


Figure 4.2: Screenshot of RTC Facebook post on land and housing campaign (Reclaim the City, 2019, online)

In this instance, RTC's approach to reclaiming the power to 'prefigure' a desired future in practice (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021) aligns with Purcell's (2016) invitation to conceptualise a 'public' separate from a 'sovereign state'. The use of 'public land' to refer to state-owned properties, however, suggests a conflict to Purcell's (2016) conceptualisation of the 'public'. City officials, however, maintain that public lands must be maintained for public infrastructure and social service delivery. In 2020, for instance, the then Executive Mayor of Cape Town, Dan Plato (2020, online) is quoted in a news article saying:

“Public land intended for housing, healthcare, schools, transport, basic services and community facilities would be permanently lost to unlawful land occupations, with devastating consequences.”

Campaigns aimed at resisting evictions and displacement, on the other hand, address rental tenure security for the poor and working class and the impact of gentrification, which results in the relocation of the poor and working class to the urban peripheries, away from the inner cities and social and economic opportunities (Reclaim the City, 2023, online). In their campaign, RTC demands that the City provide housing for those facing such evictions within the areas of eviction and stop the relocation of poor urban residents to the city's periphery.

RTC campaigns target raising public awareness of housing delivery through social media posts, organised protests and public meetings. As Tilly, Castañeda and Wood (2019) argue, these campaigns level clear demands against the state for a desired change – affordable housing in well-located areas.

As described by George and Leidner (2019), RTC also utilises a distinct set of repertoires to advance its campaign causes. These include protests and marches, the symbolic³⁴ occupation of public land, the occupation of vacant government property and public meetings. RTC currently has three occupations that provide housing to more than 1,700 residents (Charles, 2018; Reclaim the City, 2023). These include the Cissie Gool House in Woodstock (Figure 4.3), the Ahmed Kathrada House in Green Point, Cape Town and the Irene Grootboom House in the Cape Town CBD.



Figure 4.3: Banner at the Cissie Gool House Co-Design Exhibition 2022

The Ahmed Kathrada House and the Cissie Gool House occupations started in March 2017 in response to the decision by the Western Cape Provincial Government (hereafter ‘the Province’) to proceed with the sale of the Tafelberg site despite ongoing demands by RTC, NU and other supporters for the site to be utilised for affordable housing (Reclaim the City, 2017). In the statement released by the provincial cabinet announcing the decision, a proposal was put

³⁴ Symbolic implies a temporary occupation as a form of protest.

forward by the province to utilise the Woodstock Hospital and Helen Bowden Nurses Home for affordable housing but was later critiqued as unfeasible due to construction cost (Furlong, 2017). Emphasising a lack of true commitment by the Province to develop the site, RTC occupied the building to demand affordable housing and protest the sale of the Tafelberg site. In a statement released on 27 March 2017, RTC made a set of demands including the halting of the Tafelberg sale and the development of a clear plan by the Province to develop the Woodstock Hospital and Helen Bowden Nurses Home for affordable housing.

At the time the announcement was made, several evictions and cases of displacement due to gentrification were taking place in Woodstock. Through cases such as the Bromwell Street eviction,³⁵ RTC has mobilised support for its plans to occupy in protest for affordable housing. The Cissie Gool House occupation now shelters about 900 residents (Reclaim the City, 2023), while the Helen Bowden Nurses Home now shelters close to 800 residents (Trenchard, 2022).

The Irene Grootboom House, formerly known as 104 Darling Street, is owned by the National Department of Transport and Public Works (NDTPW). It became an RTC occupation in October 2018. In 2017, the third floor of the building was engulfed in a fire that further worsened the already dilapidated condition of the residence. Activists, including RTC and NU, made attempts to get the NDTPW to aid the affected residents and conduct maintenance on the site to no avail. After several unsuccessful demands by residents and supporters of RTC and NU to garner National Government support, the residence was later adopted as an RTC occupation and renamed Irene Grootboom House after plans to evict residents and build office blocks on the site were published in the media (Charles, 2018; Reclaim the City, 2018).

RTC's occupations continue to face challenges such as the lack of access to electricity supply at Ahmed Kathrada House (Figure 4.4), police raids, tenure insecurity and lack of legitimacy to occupy the premises. Despite the many challenges, these occupations continue to advance RTC's campaign for affordable housing delivery in Cape Town's well-located areas. It does so by demonstrating the necessity of such projects, meeting the housing needs of residents and keeping the conversation of affordable housing delivery ongoing through engagements with both the State and the public.

³⁵ The Bromwell Street eviction case was first filed in 2015 by residents to oppose the eviction application launched against them by the property developer, Woodstock Hub (Broughton, 2023).



Figure 4.4: Residents moving around in the dark at Ahmed Kathrada House (Reclaim the City, 2023, online)

RTC also demonstrates George and Leidner's (2019) logic of collective action mobilised around a common goal. The goal, as published on RTC's website, is "campaigning for affordable housing in well-located areas" (Reclaim the City, 2023, online). Participant C (interview, November 30, 2022), a member of RTC, elaborates as follows:

"And what is RTC standing for? And what are they claiming? And we normally say that we claim back what belongs to us. Government lands belong to us as the people, as the movement, as people that are in need of houses, people that are in need of land that's been just standing vacant, buildings that just stand vacant, that doesn't (*sic*) been used by the government."

The common interest underpinning their campaign informs the repertoires of actions employed by RTC in their everyday activism (Selander and Jarvenpaa, 2006).

RTC also displays WUNC, as described by George and Leidner (2019) and Tilly (2006). *Worthiness* is seen in the manner in which RTC members understand and exercise their right to affordable housing within Cape Town's inner city. The right of access to housing, enshrined in Section 26(1) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*, and the provision within the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act of 2013 that enables municipalities in South Africa to manage urban spatial planning inform their demand on the State to fulfil its

obligation. Members are educated on their rights and the State's obligations during meetings such as the Advice Assembly.

The *unity* and *numbers* attributes are evident in RTC's pursuit of collective action and common cause (Ballard, Habib and Valodia, 2006; George and Leidner, 2019; Zald and Ash, 1966). Responses from RTC participants exemplify not only unity but also the existence of a collective identity when talking about the concerns and activities of the organisation. For example, while highlighting the issue of poor engagement by the City on housing delivery, Participant D (interview, December 14, 2022) states:

“Whereas for us as the social movement, we want detail, which would be very helpful to help people to understand where the development will take place, how it will take place. What are the possibilities of them accessing it, that development?”

The use of ‘us’ in this instance points to a shared identity or collective attribute, pointing to the attribute of unity as described by Tilly (2006). This shared identity is seen in actions such as registration of membership, a unifying slogan, identifiable branded shirts, and an adopted constitution that guides the movement. This, in turn, points to RTC as a social movement.

4.2.2 Ndifuna Ukwazi

Established in 2011, NU advocates for access to and the delivery of affordable housing in Cape Town's well-located areas for the poor and working class. They do this through research, collaborating with communities and social movements and providing legal advice and representation to advance spatial justice (Figure 4.5). The research is used to show what must be done or what is being done or ignored by the State within Cape Town. Legal advice is available to qualifying individuals facing illegal evictions by and unjust rental demands from their landlords.



We're an activist organisation and law centre that challenges the reproduction of spatial apartheid in Cape Town and promotes social, economic and racial justice through increased access to land and dignified homes.

WHAT WE DO

Figure 4.5: Screenshot from NU website (Ndifuna Ukwazi, no date, online)

The two key terms that are associated with the work that NU does are advocacy and activism. Advocacy has to do with supporting a cause (Johnston and Gulliver, 2022; Nelson and Vucetich, 2009). Advocacy can be very visible – as with organised protest, or subtler – as in the case of lobbying (Cox and Pezullo, 2017). NU utilises ‘grassroots lobbying’ (Berry and Wilcox, 2018) through research dissemination and other media content as part of their advocacy efforts to shape public awareness and opinion on affordable housing delivery issues in Cape Town. Grassroots lobbying is described by Berry and Wilcox (2018, p. 190) as lobbying that aims to

“[E]ngage the broader public, [to try] to change the content of public opinion, change the importance of the issue to the broader public, or both. [B]y mobilising the broader public, groups hope to make various policies more or less likely to be enacted.”

NU carries out grassroots lobbying by providing the public with evidence-based facts to back NU’s efforts to garner public support and mount pressure on the State for desired change. Lobbying in some instances mobilises the public to engage the State directly and support the campaign as in the case of NU’s opposition to the lease renewal of a tennis court in Sea Point, also located on state-owned land, by the State in 2018 (Figure 4.6).

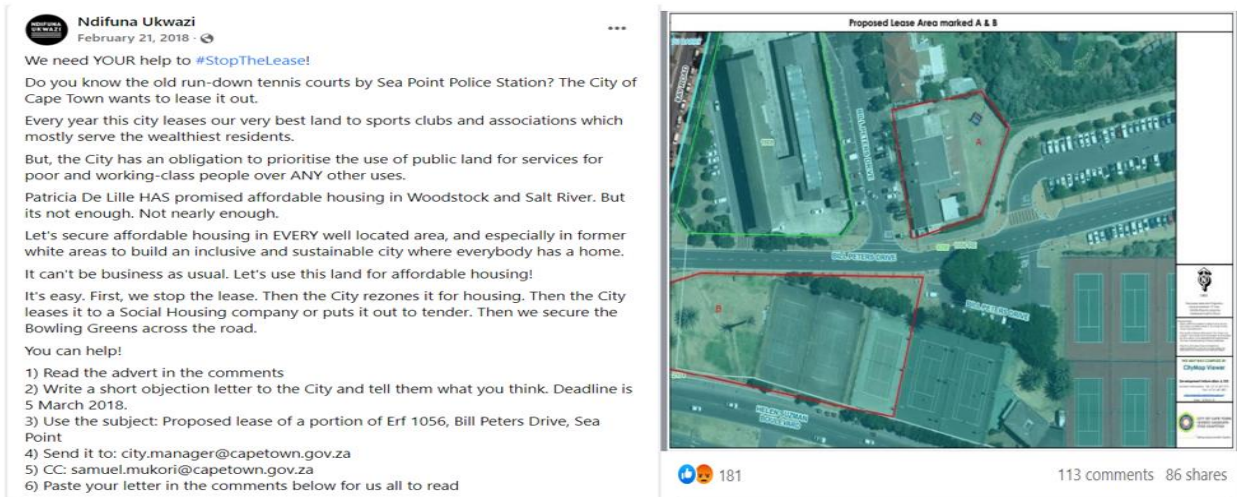


Figure 4.6: Screenshot of NU’s Facebook post illustrating grassroots lobbying (Ndifuna Ukwazi, 2018, online)

Advocacy, as stated by Johnston and Gulliver (2022, p. 45), “becomes activism when it takes a specific form within a discourse arena”. For NU, the discourse arena that underpins their work is that of ‘spatial justice’. At the heart of NU’s campaigns is the call for spatial justice, as stated on their website:

“[C]ompelling government to meet its constitutional obligations to use land to provide affordable housing; challenging the private sector to contribute to delivering affordable housing; defending the rights and security of tenure of people who are being forced out of their homes and displaced because of rising rents, gentrification, unfair rental practices and in some instances, because of devastating and violent state-led evictions and demolitions of homes; and protecting the rights of people living on the streets.” (Ndifuna Ukwazi, no date., online)

The nature of the activism that NU undertakes mostly falls under the category of “conventional actions” (Johnston and Gulliver, 2022, p. 47). They engage with formal and institutionalised platforms such as judicial systems to campaign and push for desired change. For instance, NU often responds to the State’s call for public comments on proposed plans by submitting technical submissions to the State departments involved to either support or object to the proposed plans (Figure 4.7). NU’s activism also occurs outside formal institutions, often in partnership with communities and social movements. NU mobilises public meetings and protest marches in their campaigns, as with the Tafelberg campaign in 2017 in partnership with RTC.

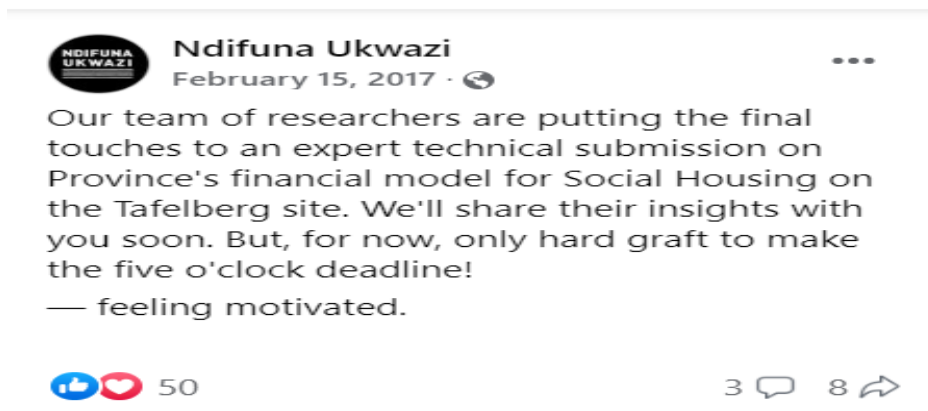


Figure 4.7: Screenshot of NU’s Facebook post illustrating Johnston and Gulliver’s (2022) conventional actions (Ndifuna Ukwazi, 2017, online)

As a law centre,³⁶ NU’s activism is limited to the bounds of lawful protests and engagement with state institutions. The South African Legal Practice Council’s (SALPC) Code of Conduct (Legal Practice Council, 2019)³⁷ which applies to all legal practitioners in South Africa, prevents admitted attorneys and advocates from engaging in any form of unlawful engagement, such as trespassing or occupying (government) land or property without the express consent of the owner.³⁸

The SALPC Code, however, also enables NU to support RTC from an advisory standpoint. As indicated in Section 9.3 of the SALPC Code: “[a] legal practitioner may give advice about whether any act, omission or course of conduct may contravene any law” (Legal Practice Council, 2019, p.694). As such, while advocates also have the freedom of expression enshrined in the *Bill of Rights, 1996*, (South African Government, 1996)³⁹ care is taken to ensure direct

³⁶ Law centers are not for profit organisations that “offer legal advice, casework and representation to individuals and groups. Spotting local trends and issues in the course of their work, they highlight them to bring about necessary policy changes and to prevent future problems. Law Centres also help build capacity within local communities by training and supporting local groups and educating people about the law and their rights” (Luton Law Centre, n.d., online).

³⁷ Draft Amendment: National Forum on the Legal Profession Code of Conduct made under the authority of section 97(1)(b) of the Legal Practice Act, 28 of 2014. Final published South African Legal Practice Council Code of Conduct made under the authority of section 36(1) of the Legal Practice Act, 28 of 2014 (Legal Practice Council, 2019, online).

³⁸ For example, section 9.2 of SALPC’s Code of Conduct (Legal Practice Council, 2019, p. 694) states:

“A legal practitioner shall not, in giving advice to a client, advise conduct that would contravene any law; more particularly, a legal practitioner shall not devise any scheme which involves the commission of any offence.”

³⁹ *Bill of Rights (1996)* enshrines rights to freedom of expression and constitutes Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 (South African Government, 1996).

participation does not break the law. Thus, NU's involvement in some events and its partnership with RTC is limited to an advisory role.

4.3 Housing Activism in Invited Spaces

The invited spaces of participation as described by Miraftab (2004) are formal spaces that are guided by rules and set procedures determined by the state. These include, for example, the judicial system, the courts and the State's public participation processes related to proposed developments, draft policies or by-laws (City of Cape Town, 2021). Together, RTC and NU utilise invited spaces to resist and challenge the State on their right to affordable housing. NU for instance objects to housing developments that exclude the poor and working class at the planning tribunal.

Other engagements within invited spaces happen through op-eds and press statements. A case in point is the op-eds published by RTC and NU affiliates responding to the City's former mayor Dan Plato in independent newspapers. The Mayor's earlier publication in *The Daily Maverick* makes bold statements about the illegality of occupation, associating occupation with acts of terrorism (Plato, 2020, online).

The op-eds, one of which likened the City's actions to a declaration of "war with the poor and working-class [that weaponizes] words to win its battles" (Clark, Hazell and Mohapi, 2020, online), written by RTC and NU in response to the Mayor's claims reemphasise the urgent need for housing among the poor and working class (Bosch, Hazell and Clarke, 2020, online). However, such engagements with the State do not guarantee that RTC and NU are going to be heard as the risk of being criminalised or branded as lawbreakers remains imminent (Sali, 2017). Councillor Malusi Booi (Booi, 2020, online) describes RTC as follows:

"[An] organisation that does not represent the broader public, [and] does not account for public money or national housing processes, but purports to decide who benefits from housing and who should not."

Statements like those of Councillor Booi project organisations like RTC as an obstacle to the advancement of affordable housing delivery in Cape Town. To challenge or counter these sentiments, both RTC and NU often release their press statements (Figures 4.8 and 4.9) and op-eds, with information that responds to allegations, corrects misinformation and informs the

public. This is done in defence of their position that being poor is not a crime and housing is a fundamental right that the State must address with urgency.



Figure 4.8: Screenshots of NU's press statements (Ndifuna Ukwazi, no date, online)

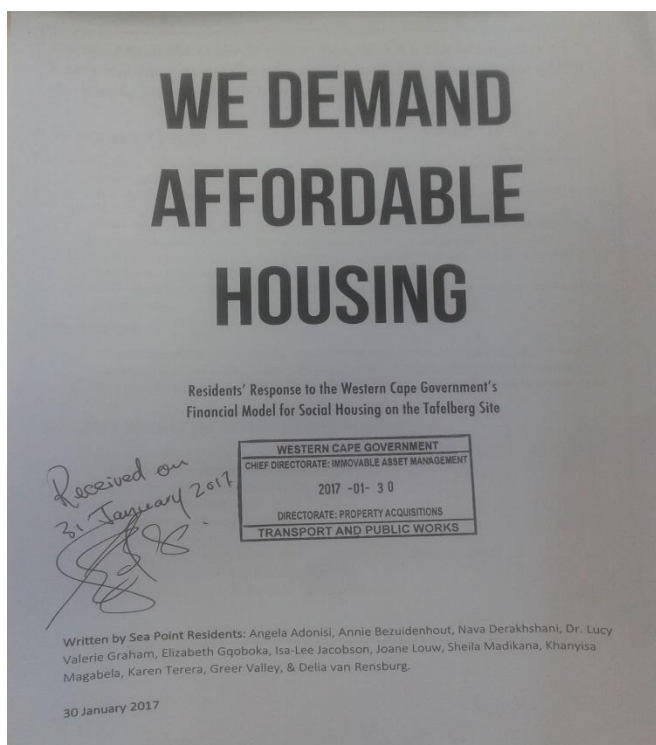


Figure 4.9: RTC's submission in response to the provincial call for comments on the Tafelberg Financial Model for Social Housing (Reclaim the City, 2017, online)

As has been highlighted in the discussion thus far, RTC and NU use both direct and indirect strategies to engage with the different spheres of government within invited spaces.

Participation within these spaces is aimed at holding the State accountable, demanding affordable housing, or establishing narratives and counter-narratives.

4.4 Radical Activism in Invented Spaces

RTC and NU utilise invented spaces in their engagement with the State to resist and disrupt accounts of injustices. Existing invited spaces of participation often do not empower the poor and working-class communities to have any real power to demand or influence change within their communities (Majola, 2022). As such, creating urgency for social change often requires inventing spaces that force the State to address citizens' needs. Invented spaces challenge the existing status quo and empower the public to demand change (Miraftab, 2004). An example of such spaces is RTC's occupations.

The occupation of abandoned government buildings by RTC can be described using Tattersall and Iveson's (2021) concept of prefiguring. Tattersall and Iveson (2021) describe prefiguring as a strategy that not only enables the public to voice their needs but also shows that a solution to that need is possible. By occupying the Woodstock Hospital and the Helen Bowden Nurses Home, RTC protest and demonstrate their need and demand for well-located affordable housing within Cape Town's inner city. For RTC and NU, the term 'well-located' is used to refer to areas that are close to social and economic amenities and opportunities. As RTC Participant D (interview, December 14, 2022) says:

“People who live or work close to the city should be able to access affordable housing, close to where they work. And that is something that we see happening in many different parts of the world, except in Cape Town.”

By occupying empty buildings in strategic locations, RTC with NU prefigures their demand for a city that works for everyone. Their demand is not for free housing but for affordable housing options that cater for low-income earners in the city. Affordability is used by RTC members to imply the ability to pay for housing and basic needs from one's earnings (comfortably). As Participant C (interview, November 30, 2022) notes:

“[W]e can take the two cents that we are having in earning (*sic*), then we pay from that two cents. And we pay also what we need to pay for, electricity, my rent, my water and that is affordability that we are talking about.”

Action within invented spaces as demonstrated by RTC often engages in a type of activism that utilises “radical actions” (Johnston and Gulliver, 2022, p. 47). *Radical action activism* is described as the “actions which operate outside conventional, legal, or [institutional] channels of change” (Johnston and Gulliver, 2022, p. 47). These actions, such as the occupation of government properties, escraches and rallies as used by RTC are conducted within invented spaces of participation to challenge systems and authorities to demand change (Miraftab, 2004). By challenging the status quo, invented spaces also inspire hope and desire for change through their “imaginative” tactic (Miraftab, 2009, p. 4).

Radical activism in the form of the occupation of empty government buildings has been a major strategy used by RTC in their campaign for housing in Cape Town (Figure 4.10). RTC’s occupations for instance can be viewed as a strategy that is used to challenge the culture of ‘waiting’ on the State for housing (Oldfield and Greyling, 2015).



Figure 4.10: Display of placards at the RTC Cissie Gool House Co-Design Exhibition 2022

The practice of occupation speaks not only to the need for housing but also the urgency. This urgency is fuelled by a rise in rental costs and the increasing number of evictions of the poor and working class. As Participant C (interview, November 30, 2022) states:

“This movement fights for places to stay because of the evictions that happen a lot in Sea Point. And people being checked out. People have been checked out and then they don't have places to go.”

RTC's occupations also aims to challenge the State's argument that it is not feasible to provide affordable housing on certain inner city sites due to lack of space or the high rising cost of acquiring land. Table 4.1 provides examples of RTC and NU campaigns participating in both invited and invented spaces.

Table 4.1: Examples of RTC and NU's participation in invited and invented spaces

CAMPAIGN	AIM	STRATEGIES	
		INVITED	INVENTED
#StandWithBromwell	Resist eviction from Woodstock and Salt river relocation to Wolweriver.	Taking the City of Cape Town to Court to demand alternative housing in their evicted communities.	- Picketing - Rallies
#Tafelberg720	Support for the Western Cape Province's findings from Tafelberg side feasibility study in 2016.	Participate in the State's call for public comment.	- Organized rallies. - Protest the extension of public comment submission deadline
Objection of Lease of vast Golf Clubs and Bowling Green spaces.	Demand for State to stop the lease of Golf course in the inner city of Cape Town (Rondebosch, Green Point, Bellville) at nominal value and utilize space for affordable housing.	Technical submissions objecting renewal of lease.	Symbolic occupation of sites.

4.5 Facebook: A Space of Participation

The popularity of social media as a space of participation, as discussed by George and Leidner (2019), is observed in the social media activism of RTC and NU. RTC and NU engage with the public and the State, primarily, in their land and housing campaigns on social media platforms, with Facebook being one of them. Facebook as a space of participation is central to both RTC and NU's campaigns. According to Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022):

“[T]he impact has really been more on Facebook because that's where speaking from like RTC side. That's where we have managed too, to gather like the poor and working-class people.”

Facebook plays a critical role in RTC and NU’s campaign by providing a space for sharing content - pictures, videos and texts - with a large following. This reach can even be amplified by paying a certain amount to boost a post, as stated by Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022):

“Facebook doesn't give you a lot of attention if like you are not paying, because that's how they make their money. So, if you don't boost your posts, you'll see that maybe only ten people viewed it and then only one person liked it. So, they don't push it as much because that's how Facebook makes money. So, we boost the posts with say 400 rands for it to run for four days.”

Boosting posts on Facebook widens the reach of the posts to other accounts that do not follow the poster by targeting Facebook users with interests similar to the content of the post. This strategy helps RTC to mobilise support. Facebook facilitates participation and engagement with the public across themes that promote demand for affordable housing in well-located areas of Cape Town (Figures 4.11 and 4.12). RTC and NU’s Facebook posts can be observed to be designed mostly to inform, update, or draw the attention of the public to relevant issues.

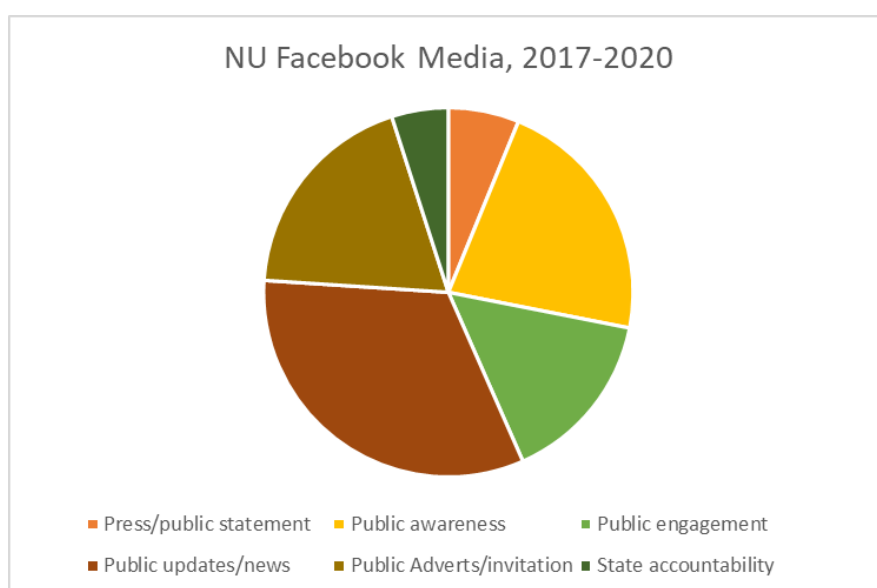


Figure 4.11: Themes across NU’s Facebook media posts, 2017–2020

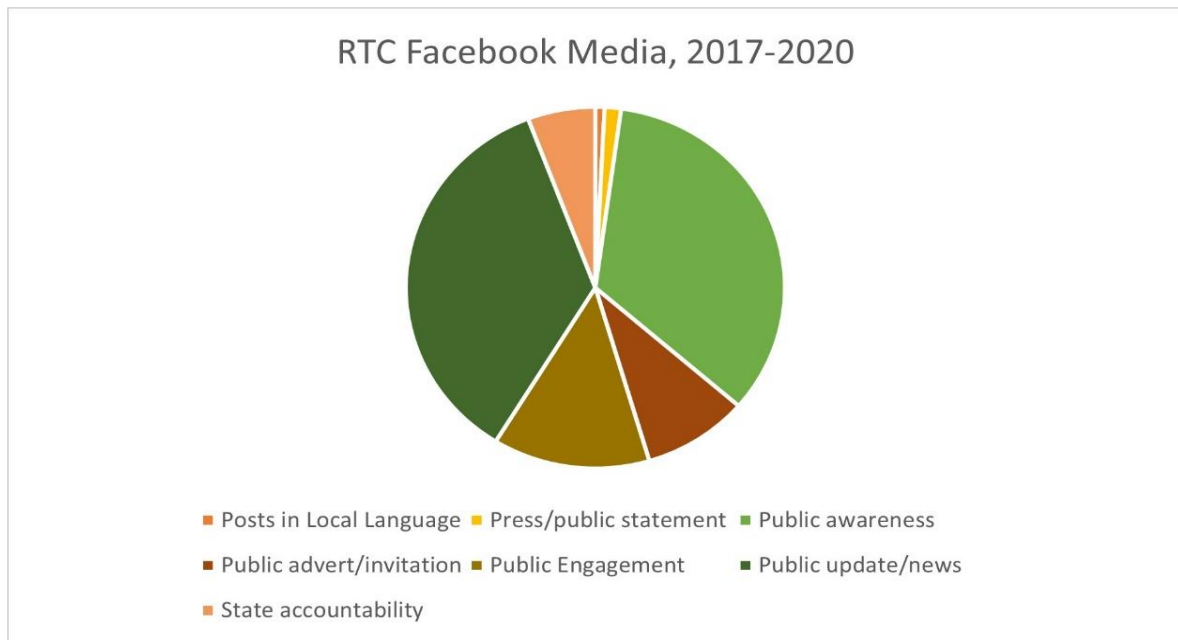


Figure 4.12: Themes across RTC's Facebook media posts, 2017–2020

Facebook posts complement offline campaigns that unfold simultaneously within invited and invented spaces of engagement (Miraftab, 2004). For example, the #StopTheSale campaign is one such campaign by RTC and NU where both invented and invited spaces of engagement were utilised both online and offline.

Citing the Provincial Department of Transport and Public Work's (PDTPW) lack of meaningful engagement with the public in its disposal of the Tafelberg site, RTC and NU got the PDTPW to halt the sale and reopen public participation through a court ruling in their favour. After the PDTPW republished the notice of disposal, RTC and NU mobilised public support through social and traditional media and public engagements with the residents of Sea Point, gathering a massive 937 submissions and 4 290 signatures on their petition to stop the sale. Signatures and written submissions were collected both in-person and online, using social media spaces such as Facebook (Figure 4.13).



Figure 4.13: Screenshot of RTC’s Facebook post on grassroots mobilisation in partnership with NU around the Tafelberg #StopTheSale campaign (Reclaim the City, 2016, online)

This and other events such as the allegations⁴⁰ of conflict of interest levelled against Gary Fisher, a public officer who was blocking the development of the site (Hirsch, 2016), resulted in the PDTPW conducting a feasibility study on the Tafelberg site. The feasibility study supported the arguments made by RTC and NU that the site had the potential to provide 270 social housing opportunities. However, the provincial cabinet still went ahead and announced its decision to proceed with the sale of the site in March 2017.

RTC and NU responded to this decision using, yet again, both invited and invented spaces of engagement. Within invented spaces, they organised a public meeting and decided to file a review application to object to the sale and also later occupied the Woodstock Hospital and the Helen Bowden Nurses Home to protest the sale. On Facebook and other social media platforms, the hashtags⁴¹ #OccupyWoodstockHospital, #OccupyHelenBowden and #OccupyItAll were also launched online in the campaign to protest the sale. In May 2017, RTC and NU also

⁴⁰ In 2016, Gary Fisher was accused by RTC members and supporters of manipulating the sale of the Tafelberg site to private buyers to benefit his investments in private property that was in close proximity to the Tafelberg site (Mzantsi, 2016, online).

⁴¹ Hashtags are a social media tool that “consists of words or phrases (with no spaces), preceded by a # sign (i.e., #SBW13 or #StanleyCup) that is used to tie various social media posts together and relate them to a topic” (Cormier, 2022, online).

challenged the State's decision within an invited space by applying to the Western Cape High Court to overturn the decision to proceed with the sale of the Tafelberg site. The case was later ruled in favour of RTC and NU in August 2020.

4.6 Digital Activism on Facebook

Facebook plays a significant role in RTC and NU's engagements with the State and the public across invented and invited spaces of participation. It constitutes a space for digital activism by facilitating offline activities that support the pursuit of a desired change or reform, as described by Karatzogianni (2015) and Yang (2009). This aligns with the notion of an 'augmented reality'⁴² as outlined by Jurgenson (2012). For instance, an appeal for donations posted on Facebook translates to supplies delivered at the occupation houses by supporters who encountered the post online (Figure 4.14).



Residents of Cape Town are 🙌 responding with support to occupations! Someone just dropped cleaning supplies at #AhmedKathradaHouse.

We need SUPPLIES and DONATIONS to sustain occupation through weekend 🙏 See below post for more info: <https://www.facebook.com/ReclaimCT/posts/974828339315137:0>



Figure 4.14: Screenshot of an RTC Facebook post showing the offline outcome of an online call for donation (Reclaim the City, 2017, online)

RTC and NU's online engagement aims to actualise this augmented reality (Jurgenson, 2012) by adopting a persistent perspective (Sivitanides, Shah and Mehta, 2013) to activism online. Participant B (interview, November 2, 2022) states:

⁴² Refer to Chapter Two.

“The intention of our social media is not so much, how much engagement did we get online? or how many retweets or whatever those kinds of vanity metrics are not necessarily valuable. What I want to know is if I put out an event on the ground, will people come? It's about trying to bring those together.”

Social media as seen above is aimed at complementing offline engagements with online posts sometimes used to create awareness about organized in-person engagements. Most in-person engagements as discussed so far are often shared on the Facebook accounts of RTC and NU to reach a wider audience. All of RTC and NU's social media accounts are managed by NU staff. The management of these accounts is carried out by the communications and engagement officer and the media officer at NU. According to Participant A, as part of the editorial process, all content requires final approval from the Executive Director of NU before it is posted (interview, October 31, 2022). However,, there is a collaborative relationship and an understanding between the two organisations with regard to social media content management. As Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022) states:

“And that's whereby we as RTC, are very proud of our work that we are doing with Ndifuna Ukwazi ... NU Law Centre because they are the people that are uplifting us. And they are the people that did show us the way, they are the people that did open doors for us, because of really to tell the reality that we didn't know some of us, we didn't know where to go, where not to go. But because of NU Law Centre people that work there, they are the people that show us where to go, what door will get opened for us, where ... what door do you need to go in. Where do you go to sit and talk to? Who is the person that you need to meet to set meetings with?”

The relationship in terms of support is, however, not one-sided. RTC mobilises its members for the public-facing aspects of the campaigns. As Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022) states:

“So, you'd find that RTC, like the strongest hold, it would be like the public-facing or public front, when it comes to [a] campaign. And then on our side [NU], it'd be I'd say, a think tank, providing like the information because we have researchers, they don't have researchers.”

The communications officer handles press statements and storyboards,⁴³ while the media officer handles video content. The management of RTC's social media by NU is a collaborative relationship that is necessitated by a lack of skill and resources on the part of RTC. As Participant D (interview, December 14, 2022) notes:

“The challenge is access to resources. Resources not just in terms of financial resources, resources in terms of skills development, knowledge development, networking with other communities, to be able to share knowledge to be able to acquire knowledge.”

Participant C (interview, November 30, 2022) elaborates:

“They [NU] let us see before they post for us. And they let us know what it is. They don't do it without us because of the relationship between us. It's working out very well as a partnership. But they don't do things that they didn't tell us are going to happen. Now. They tell us this is what they want to do. They ask permission from us. Can they do it? Can they put it on Twitter? Can they put it on Facebook? And we go through it first and we read through it first. And then when we see it works out, we let them then put it up for us.”

According to Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022), there are ongoing efforts to build capacity gradually within RTC and eventually hand over the management of their social media accounts; at the moment, RTC members send draft posts or go over drafts prepared by NU using WhatsApp.

While the content posted for RTC and NU is very similar in terms of the underlying messages on the existing need for well-located affordable housing, the content type differs. On their Facebook accounts, for instance, RTC has content that speaks more about people's struggles for housing and their lives as occupiers.

Other content on RTC's Facebook page is about the movement's engagement activities, such as protests, with the State or a public response to statements released by the State. NU's Facebook page, on the other hand, also boasts content on upcoming private developments that

⁴³ A storyboard in the context used by participants refers to social media post consisting of multiple slides.

lack inclusionary housing⁴⁴, planning tribunal rulings, updates on court cases, State policies and planned housing projects, calls for public participation and tenancy and land tenure-related research findings.

Sometimes RTC and NU's content overlaps across their 'resisting eviction and displacement campaigns' and 'land and housing campaigns'. Such content, however, does not always get posted in the same format. Participant B (interview, November 2, 2022) explains that NU's content sometimes gets too technical for RTC. Content is therefore edited into a more digestible format before it is posted on the RTC page. For example, in January 2018, NU won a case filed against the property developers FWJK before Cape Town's Municipal Planning Tribunal (Hyman, 2018). The ruling mandated the developers to include inclusionary housing in a planned high-rise development – 'Zero2One' – in the CBD. The ruling was posted on both RTC and NU's Facebook pages in different formats (Figures 4.15 and 4.16). While NU's post was a long text post, RTC utilised storyboards to post on the same topic.

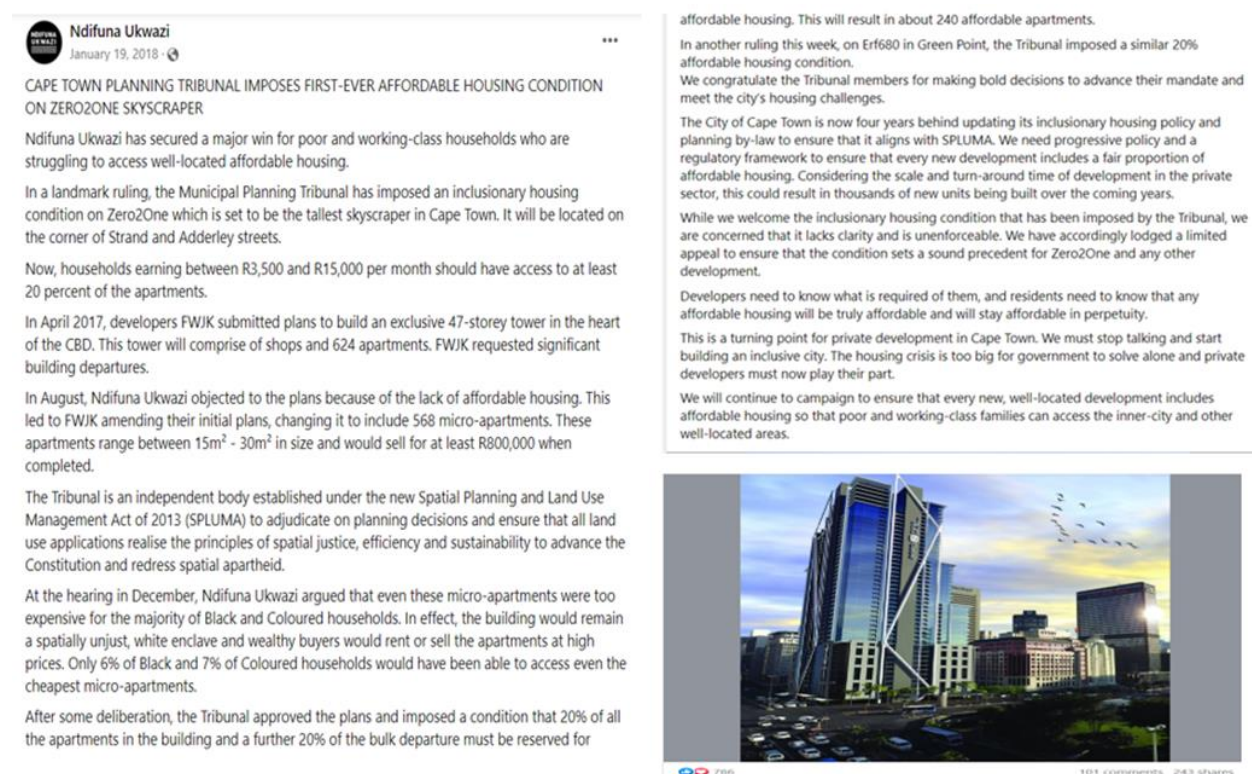


Figure 4.15: Screenshot of NU's Facebook post on the Zero2One tribunal ruling, 19 January 2018 (Ndifuna Ukwazi, 2018, online)

⁴⁴Inclusionary housing seeks to incorporate affordable housing within private sector developments at a value below market price in areas that will otherwise be unaffordable to lower income earners (Tissington, 2011).

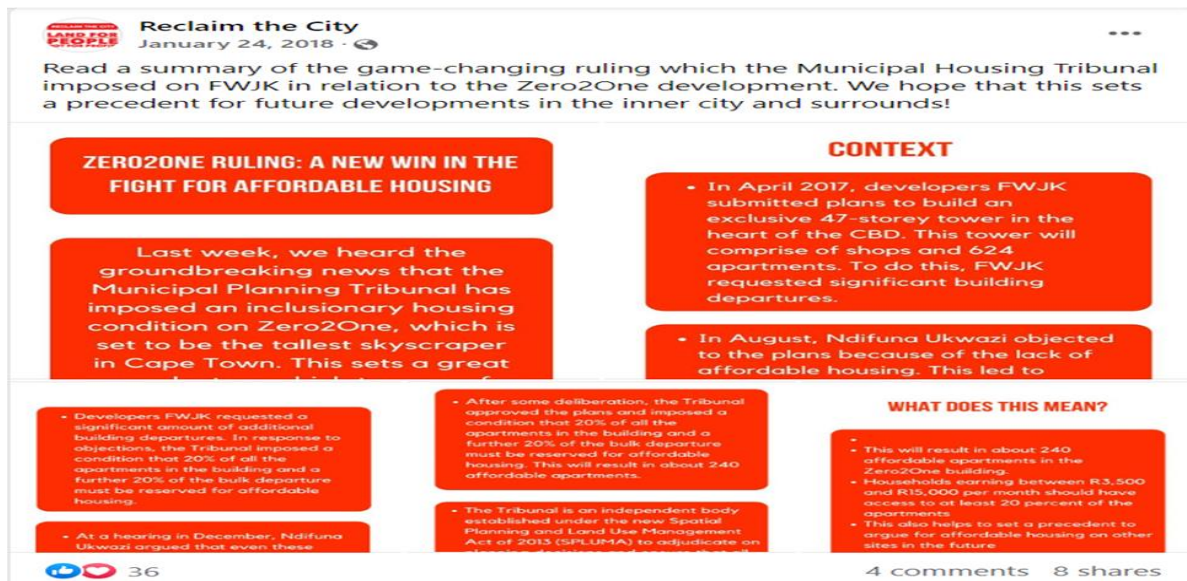


Figure 4.16: A screenshot of RTC’s Facebook post on the Zero2One tribunal ruling, 24 January 2018 (Reclaim the City, 2018, online)

The difference in formatting can be attributed to the differences in the audiences of the two pages. NU tends to attract audiences such as academic researchers or people interested in private development matters, while RTC in its role as a social movement tends to attract audiences mostly comprising the poor and working class who might not be interested in or understand housing (or spatial planning and land use management) jargon. Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022) states:

“So now when the information is written in like a researcher or academic [tone]... It's hard to land on the poor and working class who don't necessarily have the same privilege.”

The language used for each Facebook post impacts the public’s engagement with the posts. This necessitates that each page caters to its audience. As Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022) elaborates:

“If it's too technical, the people who are most likely to respond to what the topic is about, you would find that it's middle-class white people. And then it'll be like a drop in the ocean to find people of colour who have commented directly responding to the issue, either against or with. Whereas on RTC, you'd find [the content], like, not really thorough, like as on NU, but like maybe like a short paragraph, this much, someone saying that maybe they've gone through the same thing, or that's why they

don't want to vote for this DA [Democratic Alliance]. Yeah, so the audience is quite different in that sense.”

But while content format often differs on both Facebook accounts, the topics remain broadly the same as evident in the word clouds generated from an analysis of RTC and NU's Facebook posts (Figures 4.17 and 4.18). A word cloud is a graphical display composed of words that appear bigger in relation to their frequency within the data (Adu, 2019). This implies that, the bigger a word appears, the more frequently it was used across RTC and NU's Facebook pages between 2017 and 2020.



Figure 4.17: Word cloud from NU Facebook media posts from 2017 to 2020 (generated from NVivo (released in March 2020))

4.6.1 Advantages of Facebook for digital activism

The Facebook platform provides several benefits for RTC and NU's campaigns. In particular, it provides these organisations with spaces through which they can promote and support several aspects of their campaigns by sharing content that informs followers about campaign events and mobilises for support such as donations (Figure 4.19 and 4.20).



Figure 4.19: Screenshot of RTC's Facebook post updating followers about the occupation and demands (Reclaim the City, 2017, online)

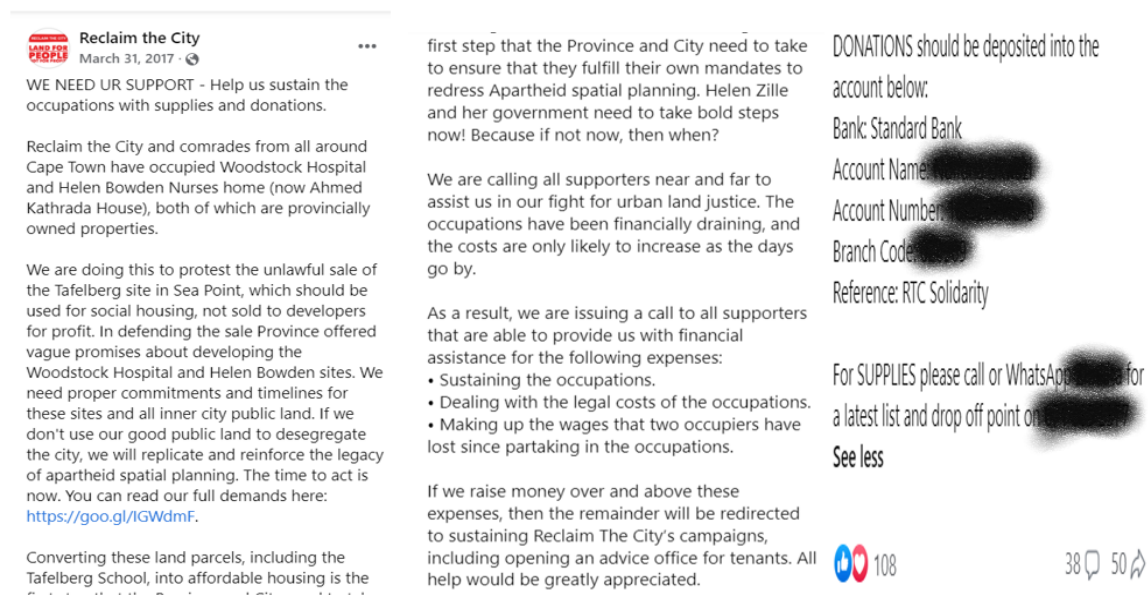


Figure 4.20: Screenshot of RTC Facebook post illustrating the mobilisation of the public to raise donations to support the occupation (Reclaim the City, 2017, online)

Facebook also enables networking and public mobilisation by expanding RTC and NU's audience beyond their immediate local context (Figure 4.21). For example, Figure 4.22 is a Facebook post in which RTC was requesting donations to assist residents in Pine Road who lost their homes in a fire.

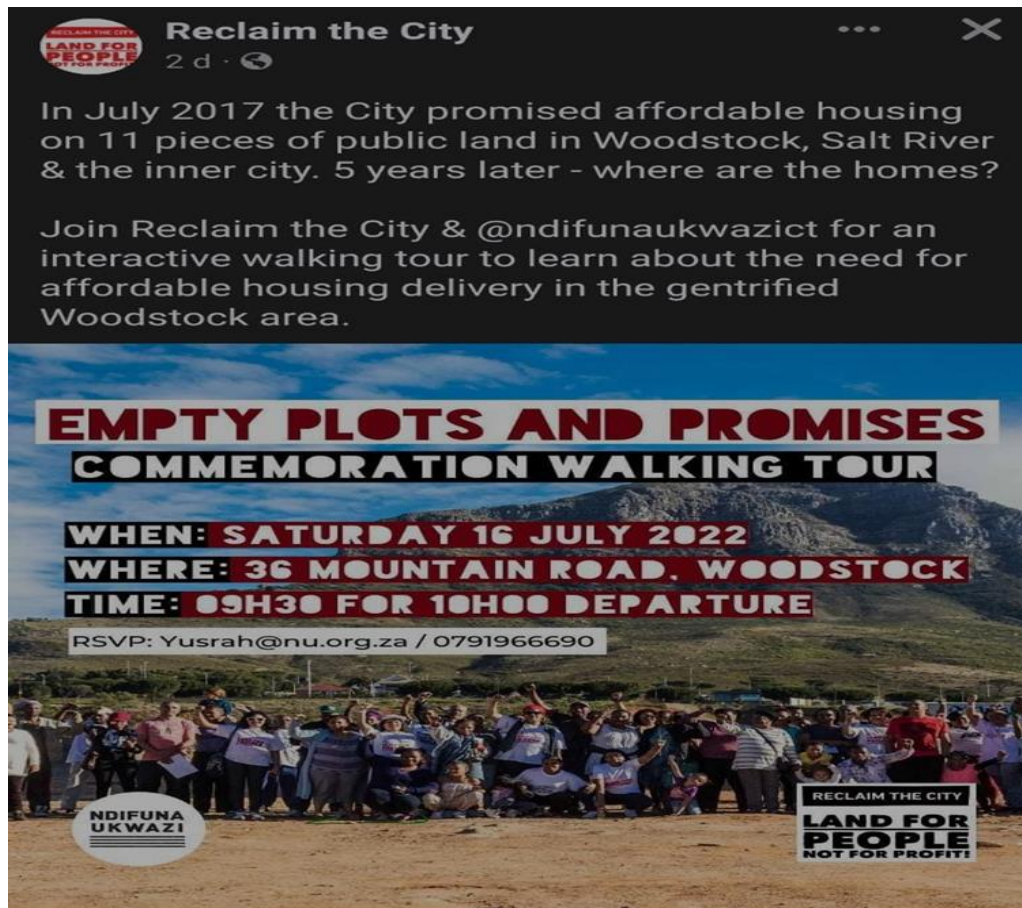


Figure 4.21: Screenshot of the RTC and NU Empty Plots and Promises Walking Tour, 16 July 2022 (Reclaim the City, 2022, online)

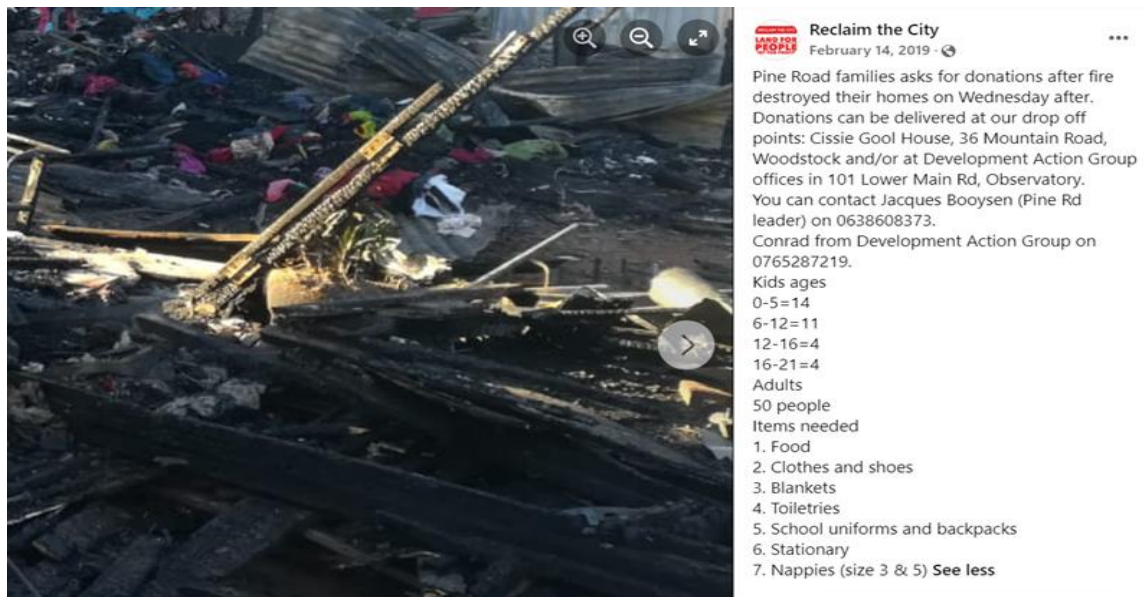


Figure 4.22: Screenshot of RTC Facebook post calling for donation for victims of fire outbreak at Pine Road, 14 February 2019 (Reclaim the City, 2019, online)

In-person events are simulcast online, sometimes in real-time. In so doing, the reach of organised events is extended (Figure 4.23). Events such as evictions are also shared in real-time to mobilise immediate support on the ground and gain assistance with resisting evictions. Thus, the use of social media is observed to have been incorporated into RTC and NU's engagement from a persistent perspective (Sivitanides, Shah and Mehta, 2013) to complement in-person engagements by spreading information to a wider audience at a faster rate. The goal of using Facebook as a space of participation in such instances seeks to increase in-person turnouts.



Figure 4.23: Screenshot of an RTC Facebook post of a live coverage of event organised in person, on 23 March 2017 (Reclaim the City, 2017, online)

For RTC specifically, Facebook is a space for sharing personal stories of housing struggles and their ongoing need for affordable housing. One poignant example is the ‘I am an Occupier’ video series. The video series captures the experiences of RTC residents living within occupations and contending with eviction and the lack of affordable housing in Cape Town’s inner-city areas. It brings attention to the impact of such displacement on families, lives and livelihoods. The series humanises the occupiers and counters the narrative of the City that the occupiers are merely criminals who want to jump the housing waiting queue (Plato, 2020, online; See figure 4.24).

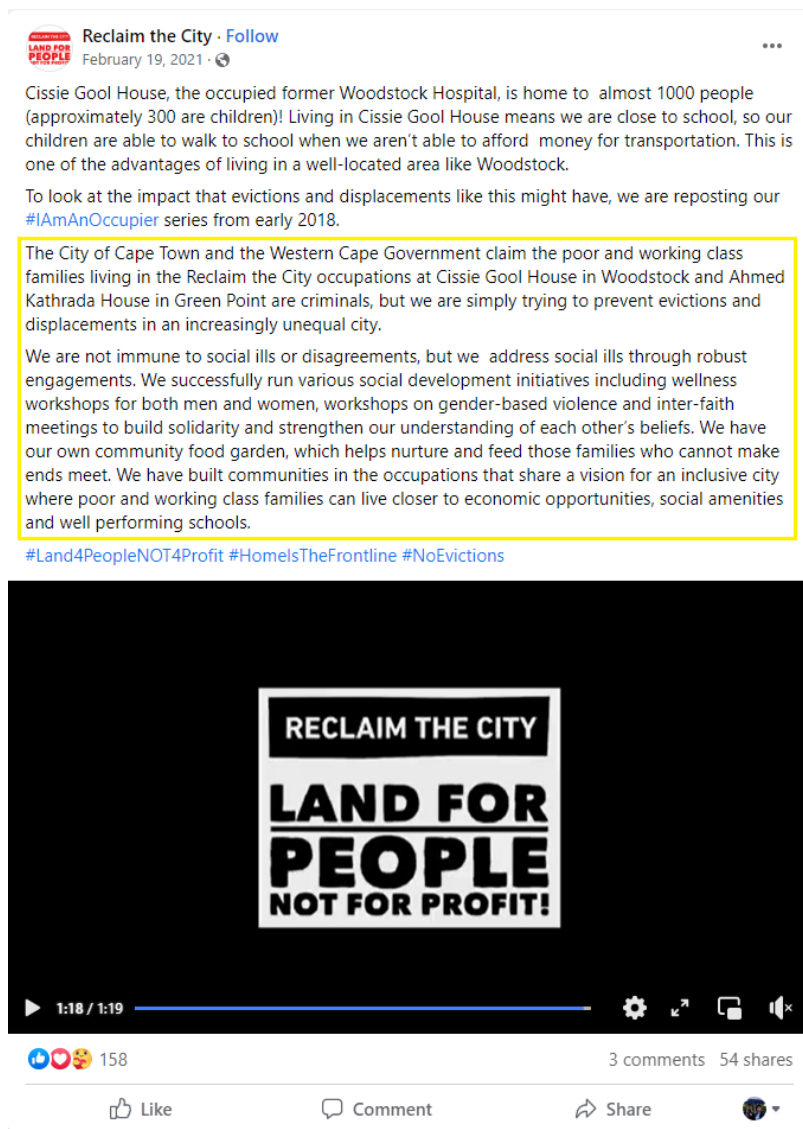


Figure 4.24: Screenshot of an RTC Facebook post denouncing being labelled as criminals (Reclaim the City, 2021, online)

The significant aspect as expressed by Participant D (interview, December 14, 2022) is that affordable housing should be developed in well-located areas.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting shutdown of in-person engagements, social media and other digital platforms became critical spaces that sustained RTC and NU's engagement activities. For instance, the Advice Assembly was moved to social media and became the weekly 'Advice Assembly Online' (Figure 4.25). This was, however, later changed to a radio programme due to the high data cost needed to participate on Facebook.

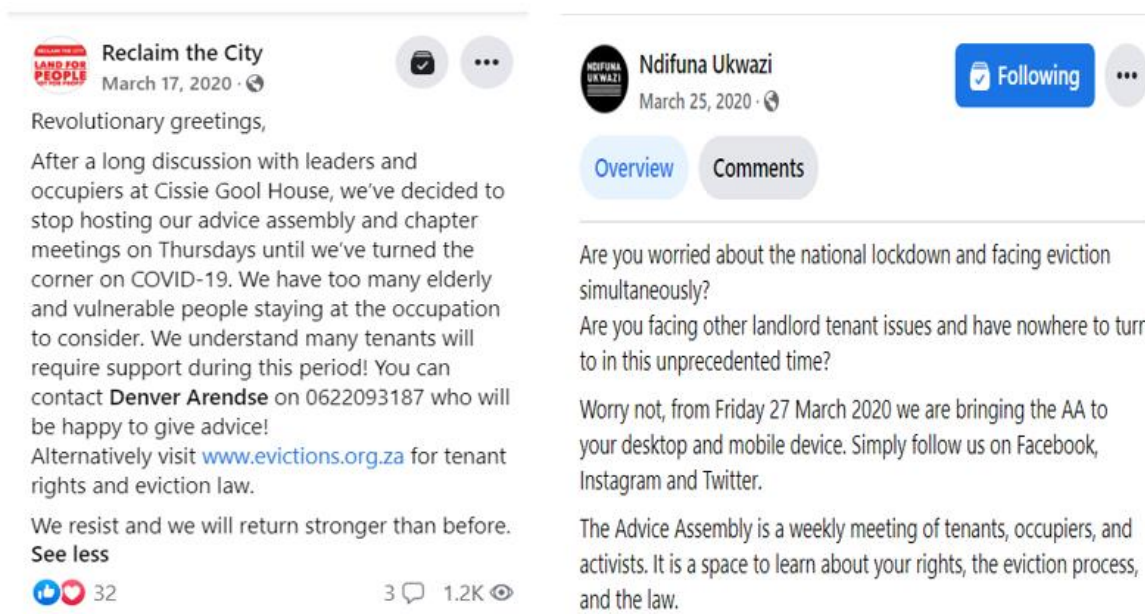


Figure 4.25: Screenshot of RTC and NU’S Facebook post temporarily ending Advice Assembly in person and moving it to Facebook.

Expenses, namely data costs, impact the extent to which RTC members themselves can engage with one another and the broader public on the RTC and NU Facebook pages. This is because available, albeit limited, resources for RTC end up being prioritised for other campaign-related costs at the expense of data to connect to the internet. As Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022) states:

“Sometimes they [RTC] manage to have like their own resources, but they’ll maybe like prioritize the resources for a campaign and not necessarily like, buying data.”

This limits their capacity to fully utilise the potential of Facebook and other online platforms as spaces of participation, as briefly seen with the adoption of the Advice Assembly Online. Platforms such as Facebook, however, remain a significant part of RTC and NU’s campaigns in terms of disseminating their campaign messages to the public. This is because as expressed by Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022), sharing messages online requires less effort in relation to resulting participation, as opposed to in-person public awareness activities such as pamphleteering.

Lastly, according to Participant B (interview, November 2, 2022), Facebook has not only facilitated the spread of their campaign messages but has also increased the public’s consciousness of affordable housing delivery in Cape Town (Figure 4.26).

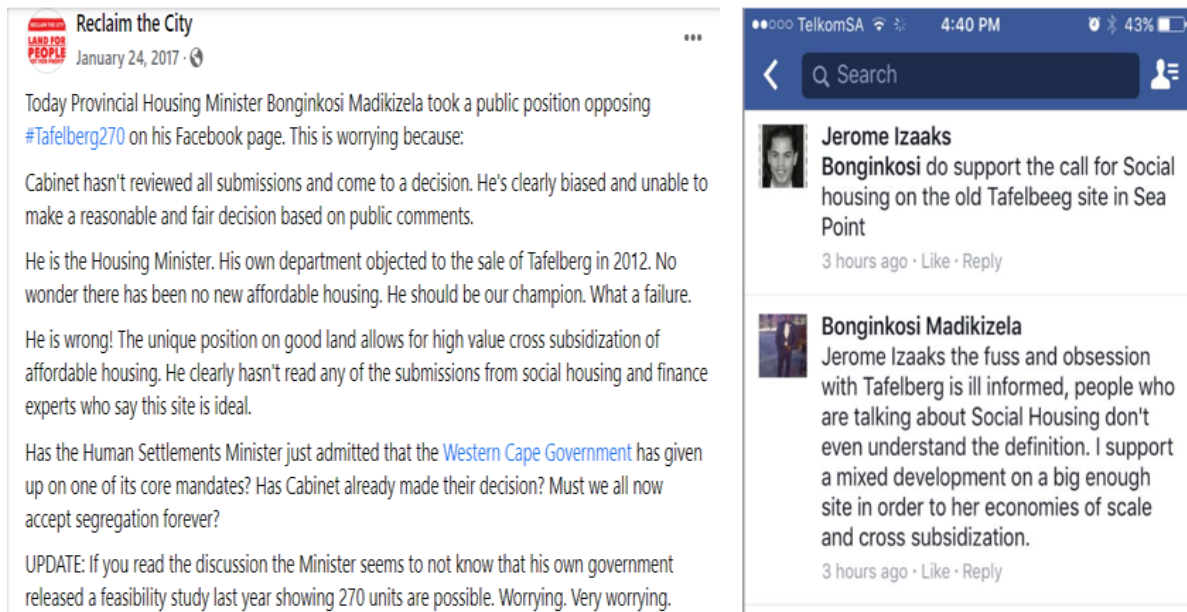


Figure 4.26: Screenshot of RTC Facebook post illustrating the use of social media to confront city officials and their (in)actions (Reclaim the City, 2017, online)

Citing an example of the public's increasing understanding of their rights when it comes to evictions, Participant B (interview, November 2, 2022) states:

“You can no longer evict, the people on the street will tell you that how law enforcement treats them is slightly different. Now, they are less likely to evict and harass them. They just verbally harass them now, but they don't, it's less physical because they know that this is going to be a big splash in the newspaper and or big splash on social media and they're going to have to, so it does, it does have an effect. And I think at this stage, people who are involved know what the PIE act is, the message is getting home that you can't evict someone without a court order.”

Digital activism complementing ground mobilisation, support, and pressure from activists, combined with the support of the public, makes it harder for the State to ignore demands (Odugbemi and Lee, 2011). To empower the public, NU, for example, shares its research and other information through pamphlets, media, radio, and social media. These different mediums are designed to enable the public to better understand the State's obligations and how to challenge them (Figure 4.27).



Figure 4.27: Screenshot of RTC Facebook post illustrating social media being used to challenge the status quo (Reclaim the City, 2016, online)

While petitioning the City’s position on the Unlawful Occupation By-law,⁴⁵ NU was able to get 8,500 signatures from the public through documented workshops and consultations to help communities understand how the by-law affects them. As Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022) explains:

“We just don't say sign here and then we leave, it's going to affect the people. So, we sit down, the video and photography work can show that we've been consulting with people, it can show that we've gone through this step so we can get the signatures. And people actually understand how this will criminalise them, how it will affect them.”

Additionally, the ability to share information quickly and in real-time helps in sustaining pressure and urgency on the State to fulfil its constitutional obligations on housing delivery. Facebook helps RTC and NU challenge the prevailing status quo and hegemonic practices that delay and derail the advancement of affordable housing delivery.

⁴⁵ City of Cape Town: Unlawful Occupation By-law, 2021 (City of Cape Town, n.d.).

4.6.2 Challenges of Facebook for digital activism

Digital activism is not without challenges, one of which is the challenge of effective monitoring and evaluation. The challenge with this is that it is difficult to measure how effectively social media informs offline engagements. As Participant A (interview, October 31, 2022) elaborates:

“When it comes to human resources [mobilisation], social media has been quite resourceful, impactful, spreading the information out there calling people to participate. But the disadvantages has (*sic*) been monitoring and evaluating. Because a ‘Like’ [Facebook Like] might not necessarily quantify to maybe let’s say you sending [a] petition. We have a good understanding of who follows us end and end. But the numbers [in actuality] aren't necessarily the same. Like on Facebook, NU has, I think 12 000 [followers] and RTC on Facebook has 14 000 [followers] But when we do petitions and stuff, they don't even get to 14 000 you know.”

Participation on Facebook mostly echoes George and Leidner’s (2019) description of clicktivism and metavoicing (Figure 4.28), where mobilised online support does not translate to ground support.

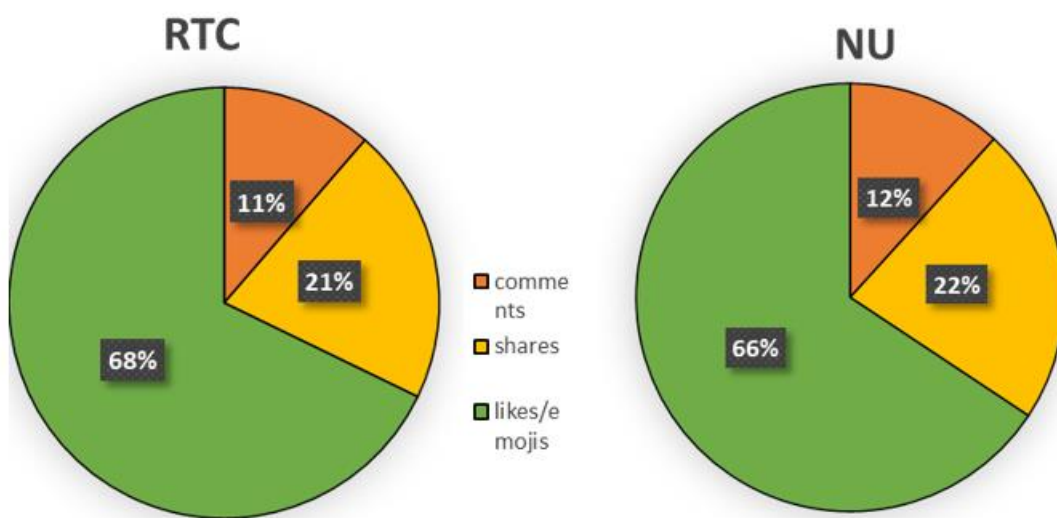


Figure 4.28: Illustration of clicktivism and metavoicing on RTC and NU’s Facebook media posts published between 2017 and 2020.

While the volume of comments might counter Carim and Warwick’s (2013) argument that social media largely projects ‘one-way broadcasting’, the participation observed is still mostly tokenistic. This is due, in part, to the fact that social media often does not support effective

two-way communication; the power to effect change remains low and the State hardly engages directly with RTC and NU's social media content, even though they follow their social media accounts. Participant B (interview, November 3, 2022) states:

“I think they see our stuff. I see a lot of politicians following our account. So not necessarily responding but just watching what we're saying. Yeah, so we are watched, definitely watched but not necessarily engaged.”

Noise as described by Murthy (2018) can also be a challenge on Facebook. Noise presents in the form of trolling which suggests NIMBYism in the comment section. NIMBYism, which stands for 'Not In My Backyard', points to the behaviour of individuals who do not deny the need for a project or development but will resist it being sited in their community. RTC and NU are faced with this phenomenon, which can disrupt participation, offline (Figure 4.29) and online.



Figure 4.29: Screenshot of RTC's Facebook post highlighting NIMBYism around Woodstock, 20 November 2017 (Reclaim the City, 2017, online)

Participant B (interview, November 3, 2022) elaborates:

“The people who engage with our Facebook the most are people who are against our work. And it's about maybe 5, 6, 7 people, same people over and over who come to our page and make troll-like comments. A few are from Sea Point and like Gardens, there's one guy from Table View, but the majority come from Gardens, town and Sea Point.”

Another major challenge with digital activism generally is the issue of digital inequality as noted by George and Leidner (2019) and Schradie (2018). Digital inequality is glaringly evident in RTC's inability in terms of digital skills and resources to manage their online accounts. Digital activism risks isolating the poor and working class from having a say online as they are unable to have equal access to connecting online. This also means effective participation for the poor and working class on Facebook and other digital platforms based on principles of fairness and competence, as described by Webler and Tuler (2000), becomes almost impossible within the existing context of digital inequality.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings of this research. First, RTC and NU as organisations were discussed, followed by their participation and housing activism within invented and invited spaces. Next, Facebook as a space of participation for RTC and NU was discussed. Finally, the associated benefits and challenges of Facebook as a space for digital activism were discussed.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the research findings outlined in Chapter Four. This summary is provided to signpost the answers to the main research questions, which are provided in the first section of this chapter. The chapter also addresses the subsidiary questions highlighted in the literature review in chapter two. This is followed by a reflection on this research project in relation to the set objectives as well as the significance of the research. The chapter concludes with suggested recommendations for further research.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This research aimed to understand how social media, namely, Facebook, is leveraged by RTC and NU in their various engagements with the State and the public on affordable housing delivery in Cape Town. This aim was reflected in the research objectives, which were:

- To determine the ways that RTC and NU use social media platforms as spaces of participation.
- To determine the limitations and advantages associated with the use of social media platforms as spaces of participation on affordable housing delivery issues in Cape Town.

Concerning the first outlined objective of this research, the findings show that RTC and NU organise campaigns promoting the provision of affordable housing in Cape Town's well-located areas using several complementary tactics. The findings show that social media is used by both RTC and NU in their advocacy and activism campaigns as a space of participation from an augmented perspective (Jurgenson, 2011). RTC and NU use Facebook to complement and reinforce their radical actions (Johnston and Gulliver, 2022) within offline invented spaces to create an augmented revolution (Jurgenson, 2012) in the digital space.

Facebook is used to mobilise the support of the public and challenge the State, using content that spreads information far and fast to educate and create awareness. Through this content, RTC and NU have shaped and continue to shape the narratives on affordable housing delivery in Cape Town, emphasising the importance of providing affordable housing in well-located areas of the City, close to economic and social opportunities. RTC and NU's respective

Facebook accounts are also used to consolidate grassroots lobbying through contents that are posted to create awareness and convey the need for support, mobilising the public to submit petitions, objections or submissions and participate in state-facilitated public engagements, such as calls for public comments on proposed policies and housing development projects.

Facebook is also used to mobilise public support in the wake of disasters or crises. For example, calls for donations are posted in the event of a fire outbreak at an occupation to assist those in need of clothes, shelter or food. RTC and NU also offer legal advice and representation, online and offline, under specified criteria, to tenants who are at risk of eviction or subject to unfair tenancy agreements. Facebook is utilised to post contents about RTC and NU's challenge to the State's position on housing-related matters such as the eviction of the homeless from the Cape Town CBD by the State without following legal procedures. In so doing, RTC and NU utilize social media platforms like Facebook to consolidate their campaign efforts to demand accountability from the State and assert pressure to ensure the constitutional mandate to deliver affordable housing and address spatial inequality is upheld.

Facebook is also used to facilitate online events that serve as an alternative space for engagements where in-person activities are unable to occur – as observed during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Also, RTC and NU do not engage meaningfully with the State through Facebook beyond tagging the City's Facebook account in published posts (see figure 4.27). Instead, engagement with the State and the private sector primarily unfolds within formal or invited spaces, such as the courts, and through public participation processes related to policy amendments and new housing developments. However, where meaningful engagement is absent, participation ensues within invented spaces through occupations and consolidated online.

The findings illustrate some of the limitations and advantages of using Facebook to advance RTC and NU's housing campaigns. A major limitation of social media generally is the associated cost of data and other digital hardware such as smartphones, computers, and routers. For NU, this challenge is more acute for the targeted audience of their social media posts, namely, the poor and working class for whom the recurrent cost of data needed to consume social media content is prohibitive. For instance, following long-form video content as offered by the online housing clinic requires large amounts of data. This is financially unsustainable for many poor and working-class RTC members and supporters.

For RTC itself, however, data and hardware costs present a significant challenge for both the organisation and many of its social media followers. As highlighted by Participant D (interview, December 14, 2022), RTC faces resource challenges “not just in terms of financial resources, [but also] resources in terms of skills development, knowledge development, [and] networking with other communities”. The cost needed to upskill members and consistently maintain a social media presence strains the organisation’s limited available financial resources.

This strain intimates that the participation that RTC and NU aim to encourage on platforms such as Facebook mostly ends up mobilising the middle class who can afford data and other digital resources. However, this is not to imply a pessimist’s perspective as described by Sivitanides, Shah and Mehta (2013) but rather, as with the persistent perspective (Sivitanides, Shah and Mehta, 2013), to acknowledge the challenges that come with digital activism alongside its benefits in improving existing offline mobilisation efforts. Social media for instance complements demonstrative democratic actions by providing a space for “expressive demonstrative function” (Kersting, 2013, p. 276) for members and supporters to affirm their alignment with a social movement’s cause. This also highlights the tokenistic and limiting nature of Facebook as a platform for meaningful engagements, as social movements are mostly limited to mobilizing, informing, and consulting (Arnstein, 1969) the public without the direct ability to shape State decision-making outcomes using such platforms alone.

Furthermore, RTC and NU have not yet been able to monitor the impact of social media on the success of their campaigns effectively. This is because online support in the form of likes, comments and shares does not always translate to actual support offline. This, as described by George and Leidner (2019), is due to the observation that actions that require minimal effort – online engagement in the form of reposting, signing a petition or liking a post – demand minimal effort from individuals and hardly transcends the online space in terms of impact. Consequently, online participation results in greater numbers of people showing support online by liking and commenting on contents than are observed offline where more effort is required (Participant A, interview, October 31, 2022).

Despite the limitations, social media provides several advantages for RTC and NU in their various housing campaigns. Social media enables a wider reach for campaign messages both locally and globally. Social media sustains the conversation on affordable housing delivery and the need for urgency in the public’s mind. It enables RTC and NU to share events and messages

to audiences beyond supporters who attend in person. It also enables organisations to build global support and collaborations. Social media serves as an archive where past published events can be accessed by the public and provides a space where RTC and NU communicate their position on issues through, for example, op-eds and press statements with the public.

5.3 Leveraging Facebook: Augmenting RTC and NU's Housing Activism

Facebook serves an important role in the campaign strategies of RTC and NU by complementing offline mobilisation and campaign efforts and expanding their reach beyond the Cape Town locale. A more informed public produces a more empowered public who can better demand accountability from the State. While effectively monitoring the impact of online participation can be challenging, and considering concerns like clicktivism (George and Leidner, 2019) and effective participation, it is important to note that knowledge gained on Facebook can be applied in unexpected ways in the social and political actions of individuals beyond the digital world.

Facebook and other social media and digital platforms are complementing the efforts of social movements and sustaining conversations on social and political issues such as affordable housing.

Consequently, it implies that RTC and NU utilise Facebook to cultivate “connective action” (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012, p. 746) by providing content and collective action frames in a manner that allows for the production of a ‘public’ (Purcell, 2016) that supports the campaign for affordable housing. This public is not obliged to acquire membership but can personalise the collective action frames provided, such as ‘where people live matters’ or ‘land for people, not for profit’, and show support either by liking and commenting online or even showing support beyond the digital space. Growing this network is also highly dependent on the personal networks of followers and the Facebook algorithm and can be further enhanced by boosting or paying for content advertisement.

This connective action also impacts RTC and NU's engagement with the State on affordable housing, as a more informed public is better equipped to demand that the State delivers on its constitutional mandate. Facebook provides a space that complements RTC and NU's offline campaign efforts to counter, for instance, the cultural hegemonic practice of the State to evade meaningful engagement, as such, constituting digital activism.

While direct online engagement with State actors was observed to be lacking, RTC and NU's Facebook content that exposes, challenges or critiques State actions again produces a more informed public who can demand better participation in and urgency of affordable housing delivery. RTC and NU's activism on Facebook augments offline efforts, not necessarily reproducing offline actions but producing online repertoires and connective actions that align with organisational core values.

5.4 Recommendations

Given the increasing and complementary role that social media now plays in facilitating engagement between activist organisations, the State and the public, the findings recommend that social media be approached by social movements and advocacy organisations as an extension of their offline engagement when creating content and responding to calls for public comments by the State so that a meaningful two-way communication between the organisation and followers can be optimised. This, however, requires an effective monitoring and moderation strategy to guard against harmful comments that would derail the conversation and ensure a safe space for participants.

Second, tools such as Facebook polls and other third-party options can be utilised more often to engage the public online on housing issues while limiting the noise from trolling. This can empower the public to become more invested and involved in housing activism online by providing a space where they can contribute directly to addressing their housing concerns.

Third, social media can be further utilised by social movements and even the State to provide feedback to the public on the outcomes of participatory efforts and how they have contributed to shaping decision-making. By considering how previous efforts have been utilised, the public can trust that future engagements will be meaningful. While RTC and NU's Facebook accounts show evidence of such regular updates, for example, with court case proceedings, the impact on followers was not covered in the scope of this research.

Lastly, more effort can be made by the State to address digital inequality by investing in advancing digital skills and internet access, especially for the poor and working class. This can ensure that ongoing urban digital transformation efforts across all levels of government do not further widen existing inequality.

5.5 Avenues for Future Research

Given the scope of this research, several further avenues for research were identified during the research process, particularly during the data analysis phase. First, further research can be conducted to understand how the public perceives social media as a space for participation. This research examined the use of social media as a space for participation from RTC and NU's perspective but not from that of the public. As such, the findings do not indicate the perceptions of the public, that is RTC and NU's Facebook followers, or the State of social media as a space for participation. The nature of the content that these organisations utilise to facilitate engagement was also not indicated. It is for this reason, that future research must examine the perceptions of the public and the State on the use of social media as a space for participation in such important issues.

Second, research can also examine the associated challenges, from the public's perspective, of social media as a space for meaningful engagement and who constitutes this 'public' that social movements speak to in digital activism.

Third, the impact of social media on RTC and NU's campaign efforts on the ground needs to be examined. This was difficult to ascertain in this research because likes and comments on Facebook alone do not necessarily imply meaningful engagement. Nor do they necessarily translate into actual, physical support on the ground. Such research can help highlight the extent to which online participation influences mobilisation on the ground.

Furthermore, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown on social media engagement and the consequent impact post-pandemic can shed light on the nature of public participation in social movements when in-person engagements are disrupted.

Lastly, archived Facebook media – including content such as videos, photos and stories – can provide valuable data for future research (Moran, 2019), providing insight to the growth and challenges of the campaign.

5.6 Conclusion

Social media facilitates grassroots lobbying for social movements and advocacy groups at a faster pace and with a wider audience beyond those in their immediate geographical location. Events can be shared in real-time with members and supporters across the world. The use of

hashtags, as often used by RTC and NU, makes it easier to design and distribute posts about a campaign on social media, giving members and supporters a faster way to acquire all the relevant information.

The downside of this is the existing digital divide, where those without access to the internet and those who lack the technical skills to navigate social media become disadvantaged. Additionally, the third-party management of RTC's social media, for instance, can present a risk of miscommunication. A lack of resources and skills can also limit the ability of social movements such as RTC to fully utilise the potential of social media as an invented space of engagement.

Upon embarking on this study, the researcher gained an empathetic understanding of the issues facing the communities in which she worked. This is especially true because, as an international student her home country suffers from systemic problems which disenfranchise many members of society, particularly the youth.

In late 2020, Nigerian youths mobilised on Twitter around the #EndSARS campaign, garnering global support and drawing attention to the unjust treatment of Nigerians by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) of the Nigerian Police Force. For her, this event highlighted the potential of social media as a space for public mobilisation and public accountability on social matters, such as police brutality in Nigeria and affordable housing delivery challenges in Cape Town, South Africa.

Consequently, the use of a reflexive thematic approach (Braun and Clarke, 2021) in this study enabled the researcher to be mindful of her subjectivity, particularly in viewing social media as an essential tool in engaging with the data rather than as a hindrance to obtaining empirical data. Thus, acknowledging the “subjective I” (Kalu, 2019, p. 97), better helped her to navigate her position in the field as a female international student in a space where the subject matter is an ongoing struggle that is intimate and requires urgency for the well-being of those affected.

Lastly, reflexivity was essential in making the researcher's research journey one of learning and personal growth – a journey that does not end with this thesis but one on which she will continue to reflect in future academic pursuits and community engagements.

References

- Adu, P. (2019) *A step-by-step guide to qualitative data coding*. London: Routledge. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=D0933B44E780F756CEC643654A9B92AA> (Accessed: 2 January 2023).
- Ahmed, A. (2008) 'Ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions: qualitative versus quantitative', *ERIC* [Preprint]. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267736833_Ontological_Epistemological_and_Methodological_Assumptions_Qualitative_Versus_Quantitative
- Aiyar, Y. (2010) 'Invited spaces, invited participation: effects of greater participation on accountability in service delivery', *India Review*, 9(2), pp. 204-229. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14736489.2010.483370>
- Alexander, P. (2010) 'Rebellion of the poor: South Africa's service delivery protests – a preliminary analysis', *Review of African Political Economy*, 37(123), pp. 25-40. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056241003637870>
- Alharahsheh, H. and Pius, A. (2019) 'A review of key paradigms: positivism vs interpretivism', *Global Academic Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(3), pp. 39-43.
- Arnstein, S. R. (1969) 'A ladder of citizen participation', *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), pp. 216-224. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366908977225>
- Ballard, R., Habib, A. and Valodia, I. (eds) (2006) *Voices of protest: social movements in post-apartheid South Africa*. Scottsville: University of Kwazulu-Natal Press.
- Bardhan, P. (2002) 'Decentralization of governance and development', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 16(4), pp. 185-205. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1257/089533002320951037>
- Batt, R. and Kahn, L. (2021) 'Data transparency and methods in quantitative and qualitative research: letter from the editors', *ILR Review*, 74(5), pp. 1079-1082. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/00197939211032932>

- Beardsley, J. and Werthmann, C. (2008) 'Improving informal settlements', *Harvard Design Magazine*, 28.
- Bennett, L. and Segerberg, A. (2011) 'Digital media and the personalization of collective action', *Information, Communication & Society*, 14(6), pp. 1-30. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2011.579141>
- Bennett, W. L. and Segerberg, A. (2012) 'The logic of connective action', *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(5), pp. 739-768. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2012.670661>
- Berry, J. M. and Wilcox, C. (2018) *The interest group society*. 6th edn. London: Routledge. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=5AE4E6CB70CC01BC172D422EBDBA3C59> (Accessed: 6 May 2023).
- Bode, L., Singh, L., Davis-Kean, P., Abowd, J., Berger-Wolf, T., Budak, C., Chi, G., Guess, A., et al. (2020) *Study Designs for Quantitative Social Science Research Using Social Media*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/zp8q2>.
- Bond, P. and Mottiar, S. (2013) 'Movements, protests and a massacre in South Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 31(2), pp. 283-302. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02589001.2013.789727>
- Bond, P. and Tait, A. (1997) 'The failure of housing policy in post-apartheid South Africa', *Urban Forum*, 8(1), pp. 19-41. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03036607>.
- Booi, M. (2020) 'Building occupations by Reclaim the City a major obstacle to social housing in Cape Town', *Daily Maverick*, 8 November. Available at: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2020-11-08-building-occupations-by-reclaim-the-city-a-major-obstacle-to-social-housing-in-cape-town/> (Accessed: 6 May 2023).
- Bosch, D., Hazell, K. and Clarke, M. (2020) 'Poor working class losing ground in the battle for adequate housing', *Independent Online*, 8 August. Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/weekend-argus/opinion/poor-working-class-citizens-are-losing-ground-in-the-battle-for-adequate-housing-86a7125e-a842-4823-8d26-be1ea3fdf2d4> (Accessed: 22 May 2023).

- Bosch, T., Wasserman, H. and Chuma, W. (2018) 'South African activists' use of nanomedia and digital media in democratization conflicts', *International Journal of Communication*, 12, p. 2153-2170.
- Bradlow, B. H. (2018) 'Let them occupy', *Africa Is a Country*, December. Available at: <https://africasacountry.com/2018/02/let-them-occupy-housing-struggles-in-brazil-and-south-africa> (Accessed: 18 November 2021).
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2013) *Successful qualitative research: a practical guide for beginners*. London: Sage.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2021) *Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide*. 1st edn. SAGE Publications. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=DC108A61259BBD08172E13D2E6DB0BC4> (Accessed: 27 December 2022).
- Broughton, B.T. (2023) *Appeal Court finds Cape Town's emergency housing programme is not unconstitutional*, *GroundUp News*. Available at: <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/appeal-court-finds-cape-towns-emergency-housing-programme-is-not-unconstitutional/> (Accessed: 10 May 2023).
- Buffalmano, L. (2020) 'Why power dynamics is the most important self-help discipline', *The Power Moves*, 23 June. Available at: <https://thepowermoves.com/power-dynamics/> (Accessed: 2 February 2022).
- Byrne, D. (2022) 'A worked example of Braun and Clarke's approach to reflexive thematic analysis', *Quality & Quantity*, 56(3), pp. 1391–1412. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-021-01182-y>.
- Cammaerts, B. (2007) 'Activism and media', in B. Cammaerts and N. Carpentier (eds) *Reclaiming the media: communication rights and democratic media roles*. Bristol: Intellect, pp. 217-224. Available at: <http://www.intellectbooks.co.uk/> (Accessed: 5 June 2022).
- Carim, L. and Warwick, C. (2013) 'Use of social media for corporate communications by research-funding organisations in the UK', *Public Relations Review*, 39(5), pp. 521-525. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.08.006>

- Castells, M. (2001) *The internet galaxy: reflections on the internet, business and society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=2e9042cd16f73f71d30e109c718559d2> (Accessed: 5 January 2022).
- Chamakiotis, P., Petrakaki, D. and Panteli, N. (2021) ‘Social value creation through digital activism in an online health community’, *Information Systems Journal*, 31(1), pp. 94-119.
- Chambers, E. T. (2018) *Roots for radicals: organizing for power, action and justice*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=7506ED67C2721CB23F6C63296B027EBB> (Accessed: 10 May 2022).
- Charles, M. (2018) ‘Department reveals plans for dilapidated building on Darling Street’, *Independent Online*, 17 September. Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/departments-reveals-plans-for-dilapidated-building-on-darling-street-17107447> (Accessed: 3 May 2023).
- Charlton, S. and Kihato, C. (2006) *Reaching the poor? An analysis of the influences on the evolution of South Africa's housing programme*. Edited by U. Pillay, R. Tomlinson, and J. du Toit. South Africa: HSRC Press. Available at: https://uct.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay/alma990007925100904041/27UCT_INST:27UCT (Accessed: 18 November 2021).
- Chatora, A. (2012) ‘Encouraging political participation in Africa: the potential of social media platforms’, *Institute for Security Studies (ISS)*, 15 March. Available at: <https://www.africaportal.org/publications/encouraging-political-participation-in-africa-the-potential-of-social-media-platforms/> (Accessed: 27 October 2021).
- Christopher, A. J. (2001) ‘Urban segregation in post-apartheid South Africa’, *Urban Studies*, 38(3), pp. 449-466.
- Ciszek, E. (2016) ‘Digital activism: how social media and dissensus inform theory and practice’, *Public Relations Review*, 42(2), pp. 314-321. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2016.02.002>

- City of Cape Town (2021) *Unlawful occupation by-law*. Available at: https://resource.capetown.gov.za/documentcentre/Documents/Bylaws%20and%20policies/Unlawful_Occupation_By-law.pdf (Accessed: 22 May 2023).
- City of Cape Town (n.d.) *City of Cape Town link*. Available at: <https://www.capetown.gov.za/Family%20and%20home/Meet-the-city/City-Council/Policies-by-laws-and-publications> (Accessed: 5 May 2023).
- Clark, M., Hazell, K. and Mohapi, T. (2020) 'OP-ED: Cape Town is engaged in a war – against its own citizens', *Daily Maverick*, 17 August. Available at: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-08-17-cape-town-is-engaged-in-a-war-against-its-own-citizens/> (Accessed: 22 May 2023).
- Cormier, D. (2022) 'How to use hashtags in your social media marketing', *Constant Contact*, 19 August. Available at: <https://www.constantcontact.com/blog/how-to-use-hashtags/> (Accessed: 22 May 2023).
- Cousin, G. (2005) 'Case study research', *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 29(3), pp. 421-427. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03098260500290967>
- Cox, J.R. and Pezzullo, P.C. (2017) *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere*. Paperback. Sage Publications, Inc. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=fa9161d94f7b6976a6831a6e1979ca9c> (Accessed: 5 April 2023).
- Cross, C. (2008) 'Housing delivery as anti-poverty: is South Africa on the right track?', *The Southern African Housing Foundation International Conference & Exhibition*. Cape Town, October 12-15. p. 21. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236144314_Housing_delivery_as_anti-poverty_is_South_Africa_on_the_right_track
- Crossley, N. (2002) *Making sense of social movements*. Maidenhead: Open University Press. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=4ee37da50fab2bcfeebd87dad2070937> (Accessed: 4 February 2022).

- Damaskinidis, G. (2017) 'Qualitative Research and Subjective Impressions in Educational Contexts', *American Journal of Educational Research*, 5(12), pp. 1228–1233.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.12691/education-5-12-10>.
- Dean, B. (2021) 'Social network usage & growth statistics: how many people use social media in 2022?', *Backlinko*. Available at: <https://backlinko.com/social-media-users> (Accessed: 6 January 2022).
- Delgado, A., Lein Kjølberg, K. and Wickson, F. (2011) 'Public engagement coming of age: from theory to practice in STS encounters with nanotechnology', *Public Understanding of Science*, 20(6), pp. 826-845. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963662510363054>
- Dennis, J. (2019) *Beyond slacktivism: political participation on social media*. New York, NY: Springer International. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=a421b62a2642ea18152da798e9f789ba> (Accessed: 10 December 2021).
- Department of Government Communication and Information System (2020) *South Africa yearbook 2019/20*. Available at: <https://www.gcis.gov.za/content/resourcecentre/sa-info/south-africa-yearbook-201920> (Accessed: 1 June 2022).
- Department of Human Settlement (2017) *Housing delivery statistics*. Available at: <http://www.dhs.gov.za/content/housing-delivery-statistics-0> (Accessed: 29 October 2021).
- Devex (n.d.) *Ndifuna Ukwazi*. Available at: <https://www.devex.com/organizations/ndifuna-ukwazi-65613> (Accessed: 27 October 2021).
- Diani, M. (2000) 'Social movement networks virtual and real', *Information, Communication & Society*, 3(3), pp. 386-401. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691180051033333>
- Dovey, K. and King, R. (2011) 'Forms of informality: morphology and visibility of informal settlements', *Built Environment*, 37(1), pp. 11-29.
- Eidelman, T. A. (2021) *Reclaiming Cape Town: spatial justice and the (post)apartheid city*. Thesis. Available at: <https://ir.vanderbilt.edu/handle/1803/16733> (Accessed: 27 October 2021).

- Encyclopedia (2022) *Political Representation* | *Encyclopedia.com*. Available at: <https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/political-representation> (Accessed: 25 February 2022).
- Eyong, T. M. (2020) *The role of civil society organizations in assisting homeless citizens through participatory governance: a case study of Reclaim the City*. Available at: <http://etd.uwc.ac.za/xmlui/handle/11394/8119> (Accessed: 27 October 2021).
- Faris, D. M. and Meier, P. (2012) 'Digital activism in authoritarian countries', in A. Delwiche and J. Jacobs Henderson (eds) *The Participatory Cultures Handbook*. London: Routledge.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006) 'Five misunderstandings about case-study research', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2), pp. 219-245. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405284363>
- Fouche C. B., Strydom H., Roestenburg W. J. H., (2021). *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human services professions*. 5th edn, Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Furlong, A. (2017) 'Tafelberg sale to proceed: no social housing', *GroundUp*, 27 March. Available at: <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/tafelberg-sale-proceed-no-social-housing/> (Accessed: 3 May 2023).
- Gamble, J. (2020) *Adonisi and Others v Minister for Transport and Public Works Western Cape and Others; Minister of Human Settlements and Others v Premier of the Western Cape Province and Others*. Available at: <http://www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZAWCHC/2020/87.html>.
- Gaventa, J. (2006) 'Finding the spaces for change: a power analysis', *IDS Bulletin*, 37(6), pp. 23-33. Available at: <https://gsdrc.org/document-library/finding-the-spaces-for-change-a-power-analysis/> (Accessed: 10 December 2021).
- Gelling, L. (2015) 'Non-maleficence: the second ethical principle', *Clinfield*, 11 February. Available at: <https://clinfield.com/non-maleficence-the-second-ethical-principle/> (Accessed: 28 July 2022).
- George, J. J., & Leidner, D. E. (2019). 'From clicktivism to hacktivism: understanding digital activism', *Information and Organization*, 29(3).

Given, L. (2008) 'Probes and Probing', in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks California 91320 United States: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi:[10.4135/9781412963909.n340](https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909.n340)

GoogleEarth 29.11 2021, Arial Image of Somerset Hospital 1 (old Helen Bowden Nurses Home), -33.90293, 18.41577, Map Data © AfriGIS (Pty), Ltd Google. viewed 29 November 2021. Available at: <https://earth.google.com/web/@-33.90334128,18.41568658,27.5291276a,192.6145191d,35y,-104.37248131h,44.99576252t,0r>

GoogleMaps 22.11 2021, Somerset Hospital 1 (old Helen Bowden Nurses Home), -33.90293, 18.41577, Map Data © AfriGIS (Pty), Ltd Google. viewed 22 November 2021. Available at: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Somerset+Hospital+1/@-33.9031874,18.4152379,16.33z/data=!4m6!3m5!1s0x1dcc674e2a9b6f79:0x2d38a7460b89fb5f!4b1!8m2!3d-33.9030692!4d18.415643>

GoogleMaps 22.11 2021, Woodstock Community Health Centre, -33.93167, 18.44850, Map Data © AfriGIS (Pty), Ltd Google. viewed 22 November 2021. Available at: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Woodstock+Community+Health+Centre/@-33.9318,18.4462113,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x1dcc5de1d61629df:0x35ed7f37ebf96860!8m2!3d-33.9318!4d18.4484>

GoogleMaps 22.11 2021, Woodstock, Cape Town. -33.92957, 18.44962, Map Data © AfriGIS (Pty), Ltd Google. viewed 22 November 2021. Available at: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Woodstock,+Cape+Town/@-33.9262628,18.4442133,15z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x1dcc5da25b1b83cb:0x9528ebc70c50cb86!8m2!3d-33.929413!4d18.4497262>

Greenfield, A. (2018) *Radical technologies: the design of everyday life*. London: Verso.

Guest, G., Mitchell, M. L. and Namey, E. E. (2012) *Collecting qualitative data: a field manual for applied research*. London: Sage. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=a5c8fdf11898dcc21ac40bd5e37f165b> (Accessed: 20 June 2022).

- Gwaze, A., Hsu, T. T., Bosch, T. and Lockett, S. (2018) 'The social media ecology of spatial inequality in Cape Town: Twitter and Instagram', *Global Media Journal: African Edition*, 11(1), pp. 1-20.
- Hancock, D.R. (2006) *Doing Case Study Research: A Practical Guide for Beginning Researchers*. Teachers College Press. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=278f964814c6ef50ab485eb18b76b508> (Accessed: 8 November 2021).
- Hannan, J. (2018) 'Trolling ourselves to death? Social media and post-truth politics', *European Journal of Communication*, 33(2), pp. 214-226. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323118760323>
- Hart, R. A. (1992) 'Children's participation: from tokenism to citizenship', *Innocenti Essays*, 4, pp. 1-39. Available at: <https://ideas.repec.org/p/ucf/inness/inness92-6.html> (Accessed: 14 December 2021).
- Hirsch, M. (2016) *Leaked documents show province 'lied' about Tafelberg*, *Atlantic Sun*. Available at: <https://www.atlanticsun.co.za/news/leaked-documents-show-province-lied-about-tafelberg> (Accessed: 4 May 2023).
- Hornby, A. S. (2010) *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary*. 8th edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=3123f9e1c98167f986406328ea1833c9> (Accessed: 7 August 2022).
- Housing Development Agency (2014) *Guidelines for the identification of well-located land for human settlements*. Available at: http://www.thehda.co.za/uploads/files/HDA_Land_guidelines.pdf (Accessed: 22 November 2021).
- Hunjan, R. and Pettit, J. (2011) *Power: a practical guide for facilitating social change*. Dunfermline: Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. Available at: https://www.participatorymethods.org/sites/participatorymethods.org/files/Power-A-Practical-Guide-for-Facilitating-Social-Change_0.pdf (Accessed: 29 October 2021).
- Hyman, A. (2018) 'High hopes crash down over affordable housing', *TimesLIVE*, 19 January. Available at: <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2018-01-19-high-hopes-crash-down-over-affordable-housing/> (Accessed: 12 May 2023).

- Ismail, S. (2014) 'The politics of the urban everyday in Cairo: infrastructures of oppositional action', in S. Parnell and S. Oldfield *The Routledge Handbook on Cities of the Global South*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Jackson, E. (2013) 'Choosing a Methodology: Philosophical Underpinning', *Practitioner Research in Higher Education*, 7(1), pp. 49–62. Available at: <https://ojs.cumbria.ac.uk/index.php/prhe/article/view/154>
- James, P., Nadarajah, Y., Haive, K. and Stead, V. C. (2012) *Sustainable communities, sustainable development: other pathways for Papua New Guinea*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780824861209>
- Jamshed, S. (2014) 'Qualitative research method-interviewing and observation', *Journal of Basic and Clinical Pharmacy*, 5(4), pp. 87–88. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4103/0976-0105.141942>.
- Johannesson, P. and Perjons, E. (2014) *An introduction to design science*. 2014 edn. New York, NY: Springer. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=835bc443d1dd771f90709cba23fea298> (Accessed: 26 June 2022).
- Johnston, J. and Gulliver, R. (2022) 'Advocacy and activism'. Available at: <https://uq.pressbooks.pub/publicinterestcomm/chapter/advocacy-and-activism/> (Accessed: 5 April 2023).
- Jones, C. (2010) 'Archival Data: Advantages and Disadvantages for Research in Psychology', *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 4(11), pp. 1008–1017. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2010.00317.x>.
- Joyce, M. (2010) *Digital activism decoded: the new mechanics of change*. Utrecht: International Debate Education Association. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=432db3b16fcc3eae2855e81502d49c4c> (Accessed: 8 November 2021).
- Jurgenson, N. (2011) 'Cyborgology: digital dualism versus augmented reality', *The Society Pages*, 24 February. Available at: <https://thesocietypages.org/cyborgology/2011/02/24/digital-dualism-versus-augmented-reality/> (Accessed: 27 December 2021).

- Jurgenson, N. (2012) 'When atoms meet bits: social media, the mobile web and augmented revolution', *Future Internet*, 4(1), pp. 83-91. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/fi4010083>
- Kalu, F. A. and Bwalya, J. C. (2017) 'What makes qualitative research good research? An exploratory analysis of critical elements', *International Journal of Social Science Research*, 5(2), pp. 43-56. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijssr.v5i2.10711>
- Kalu, M. E. (2019) 'How does "subjective I" influence a qualitative research question, theoretical approach and methodologies?', *Global Journal of Pure and Applied Sciences*, 25(1), pp. 97-101. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4314/gipas.v25i1.13>
- Kamer, L. (2022) 'South Africa Facebook users by age group 2022', *Statista*. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1028389/facebook-user-share-in-south-africa-by-age/> (Accessed: 28 July 2022).
- Karatzogianni, A. (2015) *Firebrand waves of digital activism 1994-2014: the rise and spread of hacktivism and cyberconflict*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=4eb92c3ee4f45602ee3770c1e4447f34> (Accessed: 8 November 2021).
- Kaun, A. and Uldam, J. (2018) 'Digital activism: after the hype', *New Media & Society*, 20(6), pp. 2099-2106. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817731924>
- Kemp, S. (2021) 'Digital 2021: global overview report', *DataReportal*, 27 January. Available at: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-global-overview-report> (Accessed: 6 January 2022).
- Kersting, N. (2013) 'Online participation: from 'invited' to 'invented' spaces', *International Journal of Electronic Governance*, 6(4), pp. 270-280.
- Kindon, S., Pain, R. and Kesby, M. (2007) *Participatory action research approaches and methods: connecting people, participation and place*. Abingdon: Routledge. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=44485eef59b2bec84b88cf63bd14ac7f> (Accessed: 10 December 2021).

- Kirchherr, J. and Charles, K. (2018) 'Enhancing the sample diversity of snowball samples: Recommendations from a research project on anti-dam movements in Southeast Asia', *PLoS ONE*, 13(8), p. e0201710. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0201710>.
- Korstjens, I. and Moser, A. (2017) 'Series: practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 2: context, research questions and designs', *European Journal of General Practice*, 23(1), pp. 274-279. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375090>
- Kreiczer-Levy, S. and Donyets-Kedar, R. (2019) 'Better Left Forgotten: An Argument Against Treating Some Social Media and Digital Assets as Inheritance in an Era of Platform Power', *Brooklyn Law Review*, 84(3). Available at: <https://brooklynworks.brooklaw.edu/blr/vol84/iss3/1>.
- Landman, K. (2010) 'A home close to opportunities in South Africa: top down vision or bottom up demand?', *South African Journal of Town and Regional Planning*, 56, pp. 8-17.
- Lanegran, K. (1995) 'South Africa's Civic Association Movement: ANC's ally or society's "watchdog"? Shifting social movement-political party relations', *African Studies Review*, 38(2), pp. 101-126. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/525319>
- Legal Practice Council (2019) *Code of conduct*. Available at: <https://lpc.org.za/legal-practitioners/code-of-conduct/> (Accessed: 12 May 2023).
- Legal Resources Centre (2021) *Right to protest*. Available at: <https://lrc.org.za/right-to-protest/> (Accessed: 5 February 2022).
- Leibbrandt, M., Woolard, I. and Woolard, C. (2007) *Poverty and inequality dynamics in South Africa: post-apartheid developments in the light of the long-run legacy*. Available at: <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Poverty-and-Inequality-Dynamics-in-South-Africa%3A-in-Leibbrandt-Woolard/bafc8017ad00deee7e867378ee70333c71336dca> (Accessed: 5 February 2022).
- Levers, M.-J. D. (2013) 'Philosophical paradigms, grounded theory and perspectives on emergence', *SAGE Open*, 3(4). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244013517243>

- Lifvergren, M. (2011) *The Facebook revolution: a content analysis on the British mainstream media coverage of the protests in Egypt*. MA Thesis. Leicester: University of Leicester. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/1313162/The_Facebook_Revolution_A_Content_Analysis_on_the_British_Mainstream_Media_Coverage_of_the_Protests_in_Egypt (Accessed: 27 December 2021).
- Lundy, L. (2018) 'In defence of tokenism? Implementing children's right to participate in collective decision-making', *Childhood*, 25(3), pp. 340-354. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568218777292>
- Luton Law Centre (n.d) 'What is a Law Centre?', *Luton Law Centre*. Available at: <https://www.lutonlawcentre.org.uk/what-is-a-law-centre/> (Accessed: 12 May 2023).
- Mabin, A. (2005) 'Suburbanisation, segregation and government of territorial transformations', *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*, 57, pp. 41-63. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1353/trn.2005.0030>
- MacArthur, J. L. (2016) 'Challenging public engagement: participation, deliberation and power in renewable energy policy', *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, 6(3), pp. 631-640. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13412-015-0328-7>
- Majola, M. (2022) *Informal settlement upgrading in Cape Town: understanding participatory governance in Ramaphosa Informal Settlement*. University of the Western Cape. Available at: <http://etd.uwc.ac.za/xmlui/handle/11394/9270> (Accessed: 7 May 2023).
- Makasi, T. (2021) 'Can you be held liable for your social media posts?', *Mondaq*, 7 September. Available at: <https://www.mondaq.com/southafrica/social-media/1108766/can-you-be-held-liable-for-your-social-media-posts> (Accessed: 5 January 2022).
- Manti, S. and Licari, A. (2018) 'How to obtain informed consent for research', *Breathe*, 14(2), pp. 145-152. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1183/20734735.001918>
- Marutlulle, N. (2021) 'A critical analysis of housing inadequacy in South Africa and its ramifications', *Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review*, 9. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4102/apsdpr.v9i1.372>

- Matheson, S. D. (2011) *The informal housing crisis in Cape Town and South Africa*. Thesis. Columbus: Ohio State University. Available at: <https://kb.osu.edu/handle/1811/48953> (Accessed: 14 April 2022).
- Mazouz, H. (2020) 'philosophical underpinning of qualitative inquiry', p. 7. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344015631_philosophical_underpinning_of_qualitative_inquiry/references
- McKay, F. (2016) 'Social media, public tokenism and asylum seeker activism: can Facebook provide 'meaningful' support?', *Bang the Table*. Available at: <https://www.bangthetable.com/blog/social-media-asylum-seeker-activism/> (Accessed: 27 January 2022).
- McLeod, S. (2007) *Case study research method in psychology*. Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/case-study.html> (Accessed: 27 June 2022).
- Melki, J. and Mallat, S. (2014) 'Digital activism: efficacies and burdens of social media for civic activism', *Arab Media and Society*, 19, pp. 1-15. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335974350_Digital_Activism_Efficacies_and_Burdens_of_Social_Media_for_Civic_Activism
- Mensah, I. and Ernest, A. (2013) 'Community participation in ecotourism: the case of Bobiri Forest Reserve and Butterfly Sanctuary in Ashanti Region of Ghana', *American Journal of Tourism Management*, 2, pp. 34-42. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5923/s.tourism.201304.04>
- Merriam, S. B. and Tisdell, E. J. (2015) *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. 4th edn. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=3BE70676B0F1EBEC3715622B204E77AE> (Accessed: 21 June 2022).
- Miller, B. (2019) '19 advantages and disadvantages of qualitative research methods', *Green Garage*, 23 March. Available at: <https://greengarageblog.org/19-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-qualitative-research-methods> (Accessed: 26 June 2022).
- Mills (editor), A.J., Durepos (editor), G. and Wiebe (editor), E. (2009) *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*. SAGE. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=fe69a070575f84337999f6e9dfd05dfa> (Accessed: 28 June 2022).

- Miraftab, F. (2004) 'Invited and Invented Spaces of Participation: Neoliberal Citizenship and Feminists' Expanded Notion of Politics', *Wagadu*, 1.
- Miraftab, F. (2009) 'Insurgent planning: situating radical planning in the global south', *Planning Theory*, 8, pp. 32-50. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095208099297>
- Mitlin, D. and Mogaladi, J. (2013) 'Social movements and the struggle for shelter: a case study of eThekweni (Durban)', *Progress in Planning*, 84, pp. 1-39. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.progress.2012.12.001>
- Moran, J. (2019) *Is your Facebook account an archive of the future?* Available at: <https://natlib.govt.nz/blog/posts/is-your-facebook-account-an-archive-of-the-future> (Accessed: 10 May 2023).
- Moravcsik, A. (2019) *Transparency in qualitative research*. London: Sage. Available at: <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781526421036>
- Mottiar, S. and Bond, P. (2012) 'The Politics of Discontent and Social Protest in Durban', *Politikon*, 39(3), pp. 309–330. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02589346.2012.746183>.
- Murthy, D. (2018) 'Introduction to social media, activism and organizations', *Social Media + Society*, 4(1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305117750716>
- Mutsvairo, B. (2016) *Digital activism in the social media era: critical reflections on emerging trends in sub-Saharan Africa*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=fa37014ddfde15bd5ca37dbd12b5f8ed> (Accessed: 8 November 2021).
- Mzantsi, S. (2016) 'Zille adviser accused of Tafelberg "corruption"', *Independent Online*, 22 July. Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/news/zille-adviser-accused-of-tafelberg-corruption-2048178> (Accessed: 14 August 2023).
- NapoleonCat (n.d.) *Facebook users in South Africa – May 2021*. Available at: https://napoleoncat.com/stats/facebook-users-in-south_africa/2021/05/ (Accessed: 28 July 2022).

National Forum On The Legal Profession (2017) *Legal practice act: code of conduct for legal practitioners, candidate legal practitioners and juristic entities*. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/documents/legal-practice-act-code-conduct-legal-practitioners-candidate-legal-practitioners-and> (Accessed: 12 May 2023).

Ndifuna Ukwazi (2017) ‘Did you see this?’, *Facebook*. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/NdifunaUkwazi/posts/pfbid0KiaFsMBNhR3S6bvjvV8k2DBHaWExEWkMepzuFQmMGS4kCRq37DpdBpUGSsssRrr3l> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).

Ndifuna Ukwazi (2017) ‘Our team of Researchers...’, *Facebook*. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/NdifunaUkwazi/photos/1430572833627966> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).

Ndifuna Ukwazi (2018) ‘CAPE TOWN PLANNING TRIBUNAL IMPOSES FIRST-EVER AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONDITION ON ZERO2ONE SKYSCRAPER’, *Facebook*. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/NdifunaUkwazi/photos/1784109141607665> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).

Ndifuna Ukwazi (2018) ‘We need YOUR help to #StopTheLease!’, *Facebook*, 21 February. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/NdifunaUkwazi/photos/1819712571380655> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).

Ndifuna Ukwazi (no date) ‘What we do’, *Ndifuna Ukwazi*. Available at: <https://nu.org.za/what-we-do/> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).

Nelson, M.P. and Vucetich, J.A. (2009) ‘On Advocacy by Environmental Scientists: What, Whether, Why, and How’, *Conservation Biology*, 23(5), pp. 1090–1101. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1523-1739.2009.01250.x>.

Neshapriyan, M. (2018) ‘Social media and freedom of speech and expression’, *Legal Service India E-Journal*. Available at: <https://legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-426-social-media-and-freedom-of-speech-and-expression.html> (Accessed: 5 January 2022).

Ngidi, N., Mtshixa, C., Diga, K., Mbarathi, N. and May, J. (2016) ‘“Asijiki” and the capacity to aspire through social media: the #FeesMustFall movement as an anti-poverty

- activism in South Africa', *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development*. pp. 1-11. Available at: <https://repository.uwc.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10566/6537/2909609.2909654.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Niekerk, B. van (2018) 'Housing as urbanism: A policy to discourage urban sprawl and provide well-located and affordable housing in South Africa', *Town and Regional Planning*, 73, pp. 68–82.
- Nikuze, A., Sliuzas, R. and Flacke, J. (2020) 'From closed to claimed spaces for participation: contestation in urban redevelopment induced-displacements and resettlement in Kigali, Rwanda', *Land*, 9(7), p. 212. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/land9070212>
- Noble, H. and Heale, R. (2019) 'Triangulation in research, with examples', *Evidence-Based Nursing*, 22(3), pp. 67-68. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1136/ebnurs-2019-103145>
- Nowell, L.S. *et al.* (2017) 'Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1), p. 1609406917733847. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>.
- Odugbemi, S. and Lee, T. (2011) *Accountability through public opinion*. World Bank eLibrary. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-8505-0>
- OECD (2020) *Social housing: a key part of past and future housing policy*. Available at: <http://oe.cd/social-housing-2020> (Accessed: 30 October 2021).
- Oldfield, S. and Greyling, S. (2015) 'Waiting for the state: a politics of housing in South Africa', *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 47(5), pp. 1100-1112. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X15592309>
- Oswald, D., Sherratt, F. and Smith, S. (2014) 'Handling the Hawthorne Effect: The challenges surrounding a participant observer', *Review of Social Studies*, 1, pp. 53–74. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.21586/ross0000004>.

- Ozkula, S. (2021) 'What is digital activism anyway?: Social constructions of the "digital" in contemporary activism', *Journal of Digital Social Research*, 3, pp. 60-84. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.33621/jdsr.v3i3.44>
- Patel, R. (2008) 'A short course in politics at the University of Abahlali baseMjondolo', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 43(1), pp. 95-112. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909607085587>
- Patel, S., Sliuzas, R. and Georgiadou, Y. (2016) 'Participatory local governance in Asian cities: invited, closed or claimed spaces for urban poor?', *Environment and Urbanization ASIA*, 7(1), pp. 1-21. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0975425315619044>
- Perrin, A. (2015) 'Social Media Usage: 2005-2015', *Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech*, 8 October. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2015/10/08/social-networking-usage-2005-2015/> (Accessed: 11 September 2023).
- Pezalla, A. E., Pettigrew, J. and Miller-Day, M. (2012) 'Researching the researcher-as-instrument: an exercise in interviewer self-reflexivity', *Qualitative Research*, 12(2), pp. 165-185. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1487941111422107>
- Plato, D. (2020) 'Maverick citizen: right of reply: it is vital that Cape Town is able to protect public land from invasion, says city's mayor', *Daily Maverick*, 9 September. Available at: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-09-09-it-is-vital-that-cape-town-is-able-to-protect-public-land-from-invasion-says-citys-mayor/> (Accessed: 21 May 2023).
- Purcell, M. (2016) 'For democracy: planning and publics without the state', *Planning Theory*, 15(4), pp. 386-401. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095215620827>
- Reclaim the City (2016) 'Dear supporters of Reclaim the City', *Facebook*. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=799497253514914> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).
- Reclaim the City (2016) 'This is Ndabeni in 1901 and Wolwerivier in...', *Facebook*. Available at:

- <https://www.facebook.com/ReclaimCT/posts/pfbid0K2gqvPKKYvLq9QsYQ3PhQvHq69kgwtLnprtUWdvgtPb8HtcrrahT3i5JyP5RWS3ql> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).
- Reclaim the City (2017) 'We should call this out for what it is: NIMBYism!', *Facebook*. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/ReclaimCT/posts/pfbid0N1K69VKgjnK9ttkwqJ7gbFbwgotdtsSfGqwj755dyfX57eAAthuY76g2VMxrV3T1l> (Accessed: 10 July 2023).
- Reclaim the City (2018) '104 Darling Street clean up', *Facebook*. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/ReclaimCT/videos/1086663404841251/> (Accessed: 3 May 2023).
- Reclaim the City (2019) 'The City of Cape Town visits our occupation', *Facebook*. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=396151854472123> (Accessed: 4 May 2023).
- Reclaim the City (2021) 'Our Journey to School', *Facebook*. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/ReclaimCT/videos/329799985112833/> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).
- Reclaim the City (2022) 'Press Release', *Facebook*. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/ReclaimCT/photos/pb.100064911391213.-2207520000/2580181518779803/?type=3> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).
- Reclaim the City (2023) *RTC – Land for people not 4 profit*. Available at: <https://reclaimthecity.org.za/> (Accessed: 3 May 2023).
- Regoli, N. (2019) '18 advantages and disadvantages of purposive sampling', *ConnectUS*, 2 April. Available at: <https://connectusfund.org/6-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-purposive-sampling> (Accessed: 23 July 2022).
- Resnik, D.B. (2020) *What Is Ethics in Research & Why Is It Important? - by David B. Resnik, J.D., Ph.D., National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences*. Available at: <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/bioethics/whatis/index.cfm> (Accessed: 25 July 2022).
- Richards, R., O'Leary, B. and Mutsonziwa, K. (2007) 'Measuring quality of life in informal settlements in South Africa', *Social Indicators Research*, 81(2), pp. 375-388. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-006-9014-1>

- Ringel, S. and Davidson, R. (2020) 'Proactive ephemerality: How journalists use automated and manual tweet deletion to minimize risk and its consequences for social media as a public archive', *New Media & Society*, p. 1461444820972389. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444820972389>.
- Robinson, L., Cotton, S. R., Ono, H., Quan-Haase, A., Mesch, G., Chen, W., Schulz, J., Hale, T.M. and Stern, M. J. (2015) 'Digital inequalities and why they matter', *Information, Communication & Society*, 18(5), pp. 569-582. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1012532>
- Rowe, G. and Frewer, L. J. (2005) 'A typology of public engagement mechanisms', *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 30(2), pp. 251-290. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243904271724>
- Ryan, G. (2018) 'Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory', *Nurse Researcher*, 25, pp. 14–20. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.2018.e1466>.
- Sali, C. (2017) 'A view from the ground: state-civil society relations in South Africa', *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*, 5 October. Available at: <https://za.boell.org/en/2017/10/05/view-ground-state-civil-society-relations-south-africa> (Accessed: 13 April 2023).
- Schradie, J. (2018) 'The digital activism gap: how class and costs shape online collective action', *Social Problems*, 65(1), pp. 51-74.
- Selander, L. and Jarvenpaa, S. (2016) 'Digital action repertoires and transforming a social movement organization', *MIS Quarterly*, 40(2), pp. 331-352. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.25300/MISQ/2016/40.2.03>
- Selmezi, A. (2012) 'Abahlali's vocal politics of proximity: speaking, suffering and political subjectivization', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 47(5), pp. 498-515. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909612452703>
- Selmezi, A. (2014) 'Dis/placing political illiteracy: the politics of intellectual equality in a South African shack-dwellers' movement', *Interface: a journal for and about social movements*, 6(1), pp. 230-265.

- Sharma, G. (2017) 'Pros and cons of different sampling techniques', *International Journal of Applied Research*, 3(7), pp. 749-752. Available at: <https://www.allresearchjournal.com/archives/?year=2017&vol=3&issue=7&part=K&ArticleId=4130> (Accessed: 23 July 2022).
- Simon, M. K. and Goes, J. (2013) *Scope, limitations and delimitations*. Available at: <https://ders.es/limitationscopedelimitation1.pdf> (Accessed: 19 November 2021).
- Singh, D. (2019) 'Understanding philosophical underpinnings of research with respect to various paradigms: Perspective of a research scholar', *INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, NIRMA UNIVERSITY*, p. 16.
- Sivitanides, M., Shah, V. and Mehta, M. (2013) 'The era of digital activism', *International Journal of Information Technology, Communications and Convergence*, 2(4), pp. 295-307. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJITCC.2013.059409>
- Sleep, L. and Tranter, K. (2018) 'Social media in social security decision-making in Australia: An archive of truth?', *Media and Arts Law Review*, 22(4), pp. 442–463. Available at: <https://law.unimelb.edu.au/centres/cmcl/research/publications/media-and-arts-law-review/2018-media-and-arts-law-review>
- The Presidency (no date) *Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki, Mr, South African Government*. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/about-government/contact-directory/thabo-mvuyelwa-mbeki-mr-0> (Accessed: 16 September 2023).
- South African Government (1996) *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* | South African Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution-republic-south-africa-1996> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).
- South African Government (1996) *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 - Chapter 2: Bill of Rights* | South African Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/chapter-2-bill-rights> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).
- South African Government (2013) *Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act 16 of 2013* | South African Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/documents/spatial-planning-and-land-use-management-act> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).

- South African Government (2022) *Coronavirus COVID-19 Alert level 1 | South African Government, South African Government*. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/covid-19/about/coronavirus-covid-19-alert-level-1> (Accessed: 12 September 2023).
- StatCounter Global Stats (2022) *Social media stats South Africa*. Available at: <https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/south-africa> (Accessed: 28 July 2022).
- Statistics South Africa (2022) *60,6 million people in South Africa*. Available at: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=15601> (Accessed: 28 July 2022).
- Stein, L. (2009) 'Social movement web use in theory and practice: a content analysis of US movement websites', *New Media & Society*, 11(5), pp. 749-771. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444809105350>
- Stella, M. (2021) 'Tokenism is the biggest pitfall to racial justice and we need to solve it', *The City Journal*, 16 May. Available at: <https://thecityjournal.net/opinion/tokenism-is-the-biggest-pitfall-to-racial-justice-and-we-need-to-solve-it/> (Accessed: 27 January 2022).
- Swilling, M. (2013) 'Beyond cooption and protest: reflections on the FEDUP alternative', in M. Van Donck, M. Swilling, E. Pieterse and S. Parnell (eds) *Consolidating developmental local government: lessons from the South African experience*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, pp. 501-509. Available at: https://sasdialliance.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/M.-Swilling_beyond_cooptation_and_protest.pdf (Accessed: 2 July 2022).
- Tattersall, A. and Iveson, K. (2021) 'People power strategies in contemporary housing movements', *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 22(2), pp. 251-277. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19491247.2021.1893120>
- Thukwana, N. (2020) 'Government is ending free housing projects – here's what it will offer instead', *News24*, 3 December. Available at: <https://www.news24.com/news24/bi-archive/government-is-calling-for-the-downscaling-of-housing-projects-heres-how-it-will-work-2020-12> (Accessed: 7 November 2021).

- Tilly, C. (2006) *Regimes and repertoires*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=fb3603de6935ef74e6cfd7ff74218f4> (Accessed: 4 May 2023).
- Tilly, C., Castañeda, E. and Wood, L. J. (2019) *Social movements, 1768–2018*. 4th edn. London: Routledge. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=096CF677011AA74FFD0FDEF788315FEB> (Accessed: 1 May 2023).
- Tissington, K. (2011) *A resource guide to housing in South Africa 1994–2010: legislation, policy, programmes and practice*. Johannesburg: SERI.
- Trenchard, T. (2022) *Inside South Africa's 'hijacked' buildings: 'All we want is a place to call home'*, WJCT News. Available at: <https://news.wjct.org/2022-12-24/inside-south-africas-hijacked-buildings-all-we-want-is-a-place-to-call-home> (Accessed: 3 May 2023).
- Turok, I., Scheba, A. and Visagie, J. (2020) 'Social housing and spatial inequality in South African cities', *UE-AFD Research Facility on Inequalities Policy Brief*, July.
<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11910/15670>
- Turok, I., Visagie, J. and Scheba, A. (2021) 'Social inequality and spatial segregation in Cape Town', in M. van Ham, T. Tammaru, R. Ubarevičienė and H. Janssen (eds) *Urban socio-economic segregation and income inequality. The Urban Book Series*. Cham: Springer, pp. 70-90. Available at: <http://www.centreforsustainablecities.ac.uk/research/social-inequality-and-spatial-segregation-in-cape-town/> (Accessed: 14 April 2022).
- Tuval-Mashiach, R. (2016) 'Raising the curtain: the importance of transparency in qualitative research', *Qualitative Psychology*, 4(2), pp. 126-138. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000062>
- Van Rooyen, J. and Lemanski, C. (2020) 'Urban segregation in South Africa: the evolution of exclusion in Cape', in S. Musterd (ed) *Handbook of urban segregation*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, pp. 19-35. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788115605>

- Viljoen, N. (2021) 'Focus on filling housing gap', *News24*, 1 March. Available at: <https://www.news24.com/news24/SouthAfrica/Local/Peoples-Post/focus-on-filling-housing-gap-20210301> (Accessed: 5 June 2022).
- Wahid, R., Pribadi, F. and Wakas, B.E. (2020) 'Digital Activism: Covid-19 Effects in Campus Learning', *Budapest International Research and Critics in Linguistics and Education (BirLE) Journal*, 3(3), pp. 1336–1342.
- Washinyira, B.T. (2020) 'Activists occupy Rondebosch Golf Course, demand land redistribution', *GroundUp*, 29 February. Available at: <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/housing-activists-occupy-rondebosch-golf-course-demanding-land-redistribution/> (Accessed: 1 May 2023).
- Webler, T. and Tuler, S. (2000) 'Fairness and Competence in Citizen Participation: Theoretical Reflections from a Case Study', *Administration & Society*, 32(5), pp. 566–595. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/00953990022019588>.
- Western Cape Government (n.d.) *Social housing*. Available at: <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/service/social-housing> (Accessed: 1 November 2021).
- Williams, J. (2008) 'Nonparticipant observation', in L. M. Given (ed) *Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. London: Sage, pp. 561-562. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265280500_Nonparticipant_observation (Accessed: 28 June 2022).
- Wingfield, M. M. (2019) *Tracking the many meanings of activism and occupations: an ethnographic study of 'RTC' in Woodstock and Green Point, Cape Town*. Master of Arts in Social Anthropology. Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10019.1/107065> (Accessed: 1 November 2021).
- Woodside, A. (2010) *Case study research: theory, methods and practice*. Bingley: Emerald Group. Available at: <https://za1lib.org/book/914206/6e1c4d?dsource=recommend> (Accessed: 5 November 2021).
- Wouter, K. (2021) *Eight levels of public participation*. Available at: http://www.coastalwiki.org/wiki/Eight_levels_of_public_participation (Accessed: 28 January 2022).

- Xie, I. and Stevenson, J. (2014) 'Social media application in digital libraries', *Online Information Review*, 38, pp. 502–523. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-11-2013-0261>.
- Yang, G. (2009) 'China since Tiananmen, online activism', *Journal of Democracy*, 20(3), pp. 33-36. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.0.0094>
- Yin, R.K. (2018) *Case study research and applications : design and methods*. Sixth edition. SAGE Publications. Available at: <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/book/index.php?md5=e82418db120c171268b08ba825136799> (Accessed: 8 November 2021).
- Young, J. (2021) 'Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation', *Twitter*, 20 April. Available at: https://twitter.com/Juliet_Young1/status/1384604477697761281/photo/1 (Accessed: 21 January 2022).
- Zainal, Z. (2007) 'Case Study As a Research Method', *Jurnal Kemanusiaan*, 5(1). Available at: <https://jurnalkemanusiaan.utm.my/index.php/kemanusiaan/article/view/165> (Accessed: 2 November 2021).
- Zald, M. N. and Ash, R. (1966) 'Social movement organizations: growth, decay and change', *Social Forces*, 44(3), pp. 327-341. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/44.3.327>
- Zhao, X., Salehi, N., Naranjit, S., Alwaalan, S., Volda, S., and Cosley, D. (2013) 'The many faces of facebook: experiencing social media as performance, exhibition, and personal archive', in *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. New York, NY, USA: Association for Computing Machinery (CHI '13), pp. 1–10. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1145/2470654.2470656>.
- Zikode, S. (2009) *Meaningful engagement*. Available at: http://abahlali.org/taxonomy/term/conference_presentation/conference_presentation/ (Accessed: 2 November 2021).

Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Clearance Certificate



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Faculty of Science
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
South Africa 7701

E-mail : shari.day@uct.ac.za
Tel: 021 650-2880

15 December 2021

Saratu Musa Mshelia
Department of Environmental and Geographical Sciences

#Reclaimthecity: The Use of Social Media to Engage the State & The Public on Social Housing Delivery in Cape Town, South Africa.

Dear Saratu Musa Mshelia

I am pleased to inform you that the Faculty of Science Research Ethics Committee has approved the above-named application for research ethics clearance, subject to the conditions listed below.

- Restrictions on involving human participants in research must be adhered to, given current concerns about the spread of Covid-19. Please ensure that you are aware of and comply with UCT policy on this, as communicated by management.
- Implement the measures described in your application to ensure that the process of your research is ethically sound; and
- Uphold ethical principles throughout all stages of the research, responding appropriately to unanticipated issues: please contact me if you need advice on ethical issues that arise.

Your approval code is: FSREC 112 – 2021

Yours sincerely

Signed by candidate

Dr Shari Daya
Chair: Faculty of Science Research Ethics Committee

Appendix B: Participant Consent Form

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
PRIVATE BAG X3
RONDEBOSCH 7701
SOUTH AFRICA

RESEARCHER/S: Saratu Musa Mshelia
TELEPHONE: +27-71-074-3089
E-MAIL: Dwhsar001@myuct.ac.za
URL: www.africancentreforcities.net



Informed Voluntary Consent to Participate in Research Study

Project Title : #RECLAIMTHECITY: THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO ENGAGE THE STATE & THE PUBLIC ON SOCIAL HOUSING DELIVERY IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA.

Invitation to participate, and benefits: You are invited to participate in a research study conducted, which aims to understand how Ndifuna Ukwazi and Reclaim the City are leveraging social media platforms to engage the State and the public on social housing delivery in Cape Town. I believe that your experience would be a valuable source of information, and hope that by participating you may gain useful knowledge.

Procedures: During this study which will be online via Zoom or Microsoft Teams or in person, you will be asked to provide your insights on how the social media platforms are used within your institutions to engage with the State and public on Cape Town social housing delivery.

Recording: We will record audio as part of the study. The recordings will be used only to transcribe the interviews afterwards. If you object to this, please indicate below.

Risks: There are no potentially harmful risks related to your participation in this study.

Feedback: You will receive feedback about the results of this research by receiving a copy of my final dissertation upon completion.

Disclaimer/Withdrawal: Your participation is completely voluntary; you may refuse to participate, and you may withdraw at any time without having to state a reason and without any prejudice or penalty against you. Should you choose to withdraw, the researcher commits not to use any of the information you have provided without your signed consent. Note that the researcher may also withdraw you from the study at any time.

Confidentiality: All personal information collected in this study will be kept private in that you will not be identified by name. However, affiliation to institution will be required for data analysis.

What signing this form means: By signing this consent form, you agree to participate in this research study. The aim, procedures to be used, as well as the potential risks and benefits of your participation have been explained verbally to you in detail, using this form. Refusal to participate in or withdrawal from this study at any time will have no effect on you in any way. You are free to contact me, to ask questions or request further information, at any time during this research.

I agree to participate in this research (tick one box) ☐ Yes ☐ No _____ (Initials)
I agree to be audio-recorded ☐ Yes ☐ No _____ (Initials)
I agree to the use of properly anonymized audio recordings in the following way –
For Interview Transcription ☐ Yes ☐ No _____ (Initials)

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Name of Researcher

Signature of Researcher

Date