



How Can Critical Consciousness Influence Community Driven Development as Social Innovation?

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ABSTRACT

This research sought to understand how unsustainable popularised models of development which focuses on funder priorities and current organisational strategy while excluding the community's input in core decision-making regarding funding, development, and resource allocation (Everatt, 2005; Pham, 2018; Wilkinson-Maposa, 2017) can be restructured to include the community. The researcher framed the research under the Community Driven Development (CDD) approach, which has emerged as an innovative, inclusive, and sustainable approach to facilitate and drive community development. The approach acknowledges that the community is the heart of the transformative process, favouring decentralisation and leading from the community's perspective (Asmorowati, 2011). In particular, CDD supports the idea that to get to the root cause of problems/oppressive inequalities, the community identifies and formulates critical questions and subsequently derives a unique set of objectives to accomplish the objectives (Torjman et al., 2012).

Despite the encouraging goals and motivations behind CDD, critiques of community-led development doubt its efficacy (Pham, 2018). Ironically, CDD evaluation of the impact and success of a project goes against its values of inclusivity and participation. Instead, it is a top-down, pre-determined concept designed by outside stakeholders, with local community members having no say in what or how evaluations are measured (Pham, 2018).

In response to the shortcomings of CDD, the researcher included the constructs of critical consciousness (CC) into the research since CC also has emerged as an antidote to social inequalities (Shin et al., 2016). Grounded in the educational pedagogy developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, critical consciousness enables marginalised communities to navigate and resist unequal and oppressive structures and systems by critically reflecting on their perception of reality and taking action to overcome this (Heberle et al., 2020). Community-driven development expands from the CC approach and can be viewed as the action part of CC because of the progressive, inclusive, and integrative principles and practices that shift the power, decision-making, and resources to the hands of the community. Like CC, CDD focuses on the intrinsic elements of self-determination and human rights (Casey, 2018).

As CDD and CC follow similar fundamental philosophies, drawing parallelism between both can unlock innovative and sustained processes. However, related literature on critical consciousness advances extensively on critical reflection; but limited research focuses on community action as an essential component of consciousness (Hope & Bañales, 2019; Watts et al., 2011).

Broadening on this discussion, the researcher wanted to explore the emergence of innovation characteristics, particularly social innovation, which can reform the developmental landscape. Social innovation can be seen as an effective way of responding to the challenges and inequities marginalised societies face (Avelino et al., 2019) by creating new ways of doing, creating knowledge, and arranging resources to develop creative solutions to social inequities (Nordberg et al., 2020). However, how CC manifests in CDD macro organisations through communities is unclear. Moreover, although there are several intersectionalities between CC and CDD, CDD organisations are still an underexplored field of research. In focusing on Critical consciousness as a tool for social innovation and exploring how it emerges in an organisational and community setting, this research shed light on the mechanisms, processes, and outcomes driving community development change. By focusing my research on CDD, which is driven by community action, it is hoped that my research will gain valuable insights and future pathways in CC and CDD, including barriers and transformative potential for social innovation.

The research question is: How can Critical Consciousness Influence Community Driven Development as social innovation?

This research fulfilled the conditions of using the case study strategy since the research question is explanatory in asking a “how” question related to a contemporary phenomenon (how can critical consciousness influence community driven development as social innovation?). The research used multiple sources of evidence (semi-structured interviews, observations, and documents) as tools for gathering data. The unit of analysis in this study was the community driven development project undertaken in a specific context. This study is an embedded multiple case study design of three community-driven development projects. The participants include donors or funders, various stakeholders of the organisation facilitating the

community-driven development project, and community members and beneficiaries of the CDD project. This research inquiry used the thematic analysis process documented by Braun & Clarke, 2006, which was an iterative, recursive, and reflective process.

The process of thematic analysis revealed several themes and sub-themes. Five factors emerged from the empirical evidence to answer the research question, how can critical consciousness influence community driven development as social innovation? The factors were immersion in the community, courageous conversations, restoring dignity, holistic views and support, and evolving models. Additionally, the researcher uncovered five ways social innovation is enhanced through CC: developing new configurations of social practices, shifting the power to communities, restructuring resource flows, flexible systems, and revolutionary roles.

The research answered the research questions with several conclusions, namely, that CC-infused holistic models are critical in CDD and that CC can be unidirectional. Action catalyses critical reflection in CDD that CC, through immersion, unveils and accelerates CDD processes. Moreover, CC enhances organisational reflexivity and permeability, positively impacting CDD and restoring power to the community by restructuring roles to include senior citizens as change agents in CDD.

The research complements the literature on critical consciousness by focusing on all dimensions of the process, including action, which is generally an under-researched topic. Additionally, in interviewing heterogeneous actors across the development arena, a holistic view of problems and innovative solutions as social innovations was revealed. A further contribution to the research is the understanding of how community based organisations and not-for-profit organisations are driving social innovations through the elements of critical consciousness. As a result, all stakeholders can critically reflect on oppressive systems and co-create transformative action to dismantle social practices and rebuild communities.



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ACRONYMS

CC - Critical consciousness

CDD - Community driven development

CBO - Community based organisation

NGO - Not-for-profit organisation

SI - Social innovation

ABCD – Assets-based community development

VDA – Village development association



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research area and problem statement

The popularised model of providing aid and developmental paradigm to marginalised communities is unsustainable as it is predominantly focused on funder priorities and current organisational strategy while excluding the community's input in core decision-making regarding funding, development, and resource allocation (Everatt, 2005; Pham, 2018; Wilkinson-Maposa, 2017). While this method of aid and development giving can solve immediate goals, such as short-term hunger alleviation, it fails to be sustainable. At the same time, it creates and perpetuates structural and systemic oppression by fostering dependence by the individual for ongoing handouts while failing to solve deeply rooted societal oppression (Everatt, 2005). As a result, many social purpose organisations, while having good intentions and seeking to create positive change in a community, still choose to focus on a service delivery model which inadvertently disempowers the community by creating and sustaining the opposite outcomes that were sought (Everatt, 2005; Patton, 2015). Another prevalent issue is that many leaders assume they have superior knowledge and experience. Therefore, it is common for western 'experts' to define the problem facing the community and proceed to dictate the solution, only for the answer to be of no real value or significance or create other issues (Bhawuk et al., 2018).

Furthermore, community development in marginalised communities is traditionally viewed as fixing the multitude of problems and addressing the weakness presented in marginalised communities without acknowledging the strengths in that community or how these can be used as advantages in overcoming oppressive inequalities (Torjman et al., 2012). This practice has typically been the place, and marginalized communities have traditionally been excluded from participating in innovation and development processes and initiatives (Heeks et al., 2013). The needs-based approach generally views marginalised communities as deficits or recipients, and here the primary purpose of development funding is diluted to providing solutions to meet the need (Pham, 2018). Consequently, a relationship is created where communities depend on the funder; they don't perceive themselves as change agents and instead hold on to the belief that they are incapable of independence and only 'outside' donors can assist the community (Mathie

& Cunningham, 2003). Thus both the funder and community operate under perverse conditions where both rely on each other for significance. Indeed, participation from the local communities is therefore considered a central and vital component to sustainable community development since all aspects of importance, including health, education, sanitation, access to resources, etc., require local knowledge, local experience, and action (Coonrod, 2015). There is a great need for a radical shift in viewing the culture of marginalised communities as invaluable assets instead of deficits (Cadenas et al., 2020). In order to change the rhetoric commonly preached by development foundations, there is a need to ask hard questions about the purpose of their existence and who is being served in the process (Wilkinson-Maposa & Fowler, 2009). One could suggest that the first step in creating inclusive and sustainable communities would be the most obvious: to ensure that communities are participating in shaping their destiny.

In contrast to the traditional top-down development driven by some social purpose organisations (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2021), Community Driven Development (CDD) has emerged as an innovative, inclusive, and sustainable approach to facilitate and drive new developments for community development. CDD acknowledges that the community is the heart of the transformative process, favouring decentralisation and leading from the community's perspective (Asmorowati, 2011). In particular, CDD supports the idea that to get to the root cause of problems/oppressive inequalities, the community identifies and formulates critical questions and subsequently derives a unique set of objectives to accomplish the objectives (Torjman et al., 2012). As a result, CDD projects are expanding significantly as a model of community development and are supported by international aid organisations, including the World Bank (Wong & Guggenheim, 2018)

Despite the encouraging goals and motivations behind CDD, critiques of community-led development doubt its efficacy (Pham, 2018). They argue that despite having objectives of inclusivity and participation from all community members, it is inevitable that the project will be taken over by one social class, leading to minor to no participation by marginalised individuals (Wong & Guggenheim, 2018). Additionally, some authors might argue that not all aid that CDD provides is beneficial to communities. In some countries, the influx of scarce resources serves as an opportunity for unscrupulous behaviour by some individuals and could

lead to civil conflict (Casey, 2018). As a result, urban elites or political entrepreneurs emerge who create not-for-profit organisations simply to obtain funding and not for the intended social purposes (Platteau, 2004). On the other hand, it was found that the community was accepting of malpractice of funds by community leaders because the community believed that any improvement (albeit small) that resulted from the work done by the leader was better than no improvement (Platteau, 2004).

Interestingly, it becomes clear that even if all the hallmarks or CDD were present in a project, i.e., self-organisation by the community, in-depth capacity building, and responsiveness to the needs of the community, CDD projects do fail due to internal disputes within the community level organisation (Everatt, 2005). Ironically, CDD evaluation of the impact and success of a project goes against its values of inclusivity and participation and instead is a top-down, pre-determined concept designed by outside stakeholders, with local community members having no say in what or how evaluations are measured (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2021; Pham, 2018). Given the mixed evidence of CDD projects, it is perhaps helpful to shift the focus of development from economic or material profusion and reframe development to focus on other factors that impact community activities and how this drives development (Asmorowati, 2011). In this way, CDD can potentially transcend its limitations and reveal unknown possibilities for the self, other community members, and broader stakeholders (Jakimow & Harahap, 2016).

In response to the shortcomings of traditional processes and policies used in development projects, critical consciousness (CC) also has emerged as an antidote to social inequalities (Shin et al., 2016). The approach is used extensively in various social sciences as an effective tool of liberation by allowing communities to take an active role in transforming inequalities. Grounded in the educational pedagogy developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, critical consciousness enables marginalised communities to navigate and resist unequal and oppressive structures and systems by critically reflecting on their perception of reality and taking action to overcome this (Heberle et al., 2020). By engaging in critical questioning, communities will unveil the dominant social narratives that underlie oppression and understand how their experience of marginalisation is not accidental (Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015). Critical reflection focuses not only on understanding the community's oppressive structures but also on harnessing the strengths within the community to empower and encourage active

engagement in driving solutions (Jemal, 2017). The use of CC has been identified as an essential tool in the development and empowerment of individuals who are marginalised by race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, and any other factors (Heberle et al., 2020).

Interestingly, critical consciousness can also attenuate the effects of privilege in individuals working in development organisations by forcing leaders to become critically self-aware to understand their intentions, assumptions, values, and place in society (Bhawuk et al., 2018; Straubhaar, 2015). At its core, CC is a movement of liberation where trust, autonomous decision-making powers, freedom, faith, hope, and dialogue are recognised as fundamental pre-conditions to attaining CC (Freire, 2011). In CC, the shifting of power, influence, and decision-making thus moves from the social purpose organisation/NGO/donor/government, which traditionally makes decisions for the community and oversees the allocation of resources, to the community, now responsible and accountable for taking action to solve social inequalities.

Community-driven development expands from the CC approach and can be viewed as the action part of CC because of the progressive, inclusive, and integrative principles and practices that shift the power, decision-making, and resources to the hands of the community. Like CC, CDD focuses on the intrinsic elements of self-determination and human rights (Casey, 2018). and CDD projects are well known for their ability to combat infrastructural problems in marginalised communities (Fonchingong, 2018). As CDD and CC follow similar fundamental philosophies, drawing parallelism between both can unlock innovative and sustained processes. However, earlier literature on critical consciousness advances and prioritises *critical reflection* extensively, but contemporary literature on CC research calls for the re-entering of action since there is limited research that focuses on community *action* as an essential component of consciousness (Diemer et al., 2021; Hope & Bañales, 2019; Watts et al., 2011).

Broadening on this discussion, CC can be seen as an innovative, inclusive, and empowering approach that embeds many innovation characteristics, particularly social innovation, which can reform the developmental landscape. Social innovation can be seen as an effective way of responding to the challenges and inequity marginalised societies face (Avelino et al., 2019). At its core, social innovation is a new way of doing, creating knowledge, and arranging resources



to develop creative solutions in response to social inequities (Nordberg et al., 2020). However, how CC manifests in CDD organisations through communities is unclear. Although there are several intersectionalities between CC and CDD, CDD organisations are still an underexplored field of research. By focusing on Critical consciousness as a tool for social innovation and exploring how it emerges in an organisational and community setting, this research will shed light on the mechanisms, processes, and outcomes driving community development change. By focusing my research on CDD, which is driven by community action, it is hoped that my research will gain valuable insights and future pathways in CC and CDD, including barriers and transformative potential for social innovation.

1.2 Research Question

1. How can Critical Consciousness Influence Community Driven Development as social innovation?

Multiple embedded case studies were designed to explore and understand the research question. Participants included community members, general managers and founders of NGOs, project team leaders, NGO employees, CBO founders, and municipal representatives from local municipalities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants either online or in person due to the geographic location of participants (Case study A participants were situated in the Eastern Cape of South Africa) and the participants' preferences.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

My research will concentrate on three streams of academic research. Firstly, critical consciousness emphasises activities based on critical reflection, efficacy, and action to combat oppressive societal norms. The second is community-driven development, an innovative, sustainable strategy that shifts power dynamics and asymmetrical resource allocation from traditional funding models. This model allows community members to recognise inequalities, assess the community's needs, take action, and design and implement changes to overcome inequalities. And finally, social innovation to create and re-imagine new possibilities to combat inequalities. I hope to explore and understand how integrating critical consciousness in community-driven development can influence social innovation. The following section will explain the constructs of critical consciousness.

2.1 Critical consciousness:

Various definitions of Critical Consciousness exist in the literature. CC is described as the ability of an individual to reflect critically and participate in changing their social situation (Watts et al., 2011). In other words, critical reflection is awareness of systemic historical inequities and oppressive systems. Critical action is confronting and participating in change-related behaviours to resist and defy inequity (Diemer et al., 2021; Heberle et al., 2020). Recently, two additional components have been included by recent authors in the definition of CC. The first is motivation, or a sense of efficacy, which is viewed as a precursor to action and is described as the belief in one's self and capabilities to effect change (Diemer et al., 2021; Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015). The second is collective identification, whereby solidarity with one's community catalyses a collective positive change (Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015). In essence, CC is the sense of efficacy that emerges as the world's reality is unveiled, igniting a yearning to take action.

CC proposes that to achieve liberation, an individual must critically reflect and act on that reflection. This awareness is essential because if one is unaware of the injustices and takes no action to change the oppressive systems, then a cycle of inequity is maintained (Jemal, 2017). In ascertaining the level of development of CC in an individual, an indicative factor of a higher level of consciousness is the ability to understand how macro-attributions, systemic, historical, and structural inequalities impact one's personal, family, and community (Hope & Bañales,

2019). Oppressive systems can include racial, sexual, gender, and other oppressions, contributing to physical and mental difficulties for individuals living in these systems (Heberle et al., 2020). Reflection in isolation from action is incomplete and vice versa (Jakimow & Harahap, 2016). In order to develop oneself, the action of producing moral experiences – after critical and conscious reflection- illuminates the potential for self-becoming. Entrenched here is the ability to self-organise and take risks, crossing over the barriers of limit situations, all-important acts that fundamentally change a person's conduct, referred to as the economy of effect (Jakimow & Harahap, 2016).

In analysing CC, it is common to find that individuals in communities, although plagued by all kinds of systemic and other oppressions, decide not to participate in change-related behaviours to overcome these oppressions. This perceived non-action by the individual could be due to the individual's false perceptions of reality leading to non-action (Freire, 2017). Freire proposed that the reason for these behaviours lies in the emergence of two other types of consciousness: mythical and naïve (Freire, 2017). Mythical consciousness is the belief in an outside force (such as religion or mythical beings) that controls all aspects of the individual's life, including the social and economic aspects (Choi et al., 2015). Naïve consciousness suggests that an individual possesses an awareness of the inequity, but due to the false perception that the individual has regarding reality, a fatalist view is preferred (Hernández et al., 2005). In addition, Freire suggests that where individuals are comfortable and secure in domestication and tend to avoid risky situations having a fear of freedom. This behaviour is described as having a fear of freedom (Freire, 2017). Fear of freedom can also be a reason for an individual's preference for not taking responsibility and accountability and perpetuating reliance on people or systems to solve problems on their behalf. When done authentically and with an accurate perception of reality, it is shown that the ability to critically reflect and take action can lead to a process of transformation and liberation, both within the individual and within the oppressive system of which the individual is a part of (Freire, 2017). CC thus catalyses a strong sense of self-determination in individuals so that systemic and structural oppression can be overcome (Diemer et al., 2020). Furthermore, CC can quickly become the catalyst needed to allow all individuals in the CDD process to critically analyse and find the efficacy to take action based on this process of critical consciousness and become a transformative social innovation. In analysing the sources of language and the structure of

thought, we can begin to understand the factors impacting critical reflection (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

Although grounded in educational pedagogy, CC has been used extensively in various disciplines. CC has surfaced favourable results in family therapy by helping individuals understand how their interfamilial tribulation was rooted in structural and political oppression (Hernández et al., 2005). Additionally, CC, a training tool to create culturally appropriate and competent counselling outcomes for victims of Hurricane Katrina, allowed for the emergence of cultural competence in all participants (Goodman & West-Olatunji, 2009). Furthermore, the use of CC has yielded positive results in creating trans-inclusive schools by raising students' critical reflection regarding the discrimination and marginalisation of transgender students and taking relevant action to change the socially oppressive norm (De Pedro et al., 2016). Subsequently, the use of CC has led to enhanced socio-emotional outcomes such as enhanced mental health and increased civic and political engagement (Rapa et al., 2020). Long-term studies assessing the impact of CC from youth to adulthood also showed favourable results in that marginalised adults obtained higher status and higher-paying occupations (Diemer et al., 2020). Therefore, CC is adaptable and can be used in various social constructs and disciplines.

Despite the significant benefits associated with CC, a significant critique is that there is no clear category of what or who constitutes an oppressor or an oppressed and that individuals can be both an oppressor and oppressed simultaneously (Schugurensky, 1998). For example, a person could be defined as privileged in one social category (e.g., being a male) but oppressed in other social contexts (e.g., being a person of colour). Although this intersectionality makes clear separation complex, it is worth noting that oppression dehumanizes and domesticates both the oppressor and the oppressed (Freire & Ramos, 2017). However, the process of reflection can combat this complexity by enabling individuals to critically examine how they are located in different social contexts (Pitner & Sakamoto, 2005). Another critique focuses on Freire's overly simplistic dualistic view, which does not take in the complexity of the real world and raises concerns that it is unsustainable (Schugurensky, 1998).

Additionally, it is essential to understand the various elements that restrict and resist the process, as elements might appear when conducting research. Critical reflection is central to

the theory of CC, which involves critical inquiry, self-awareness of personal beliefs, behaviours, perceptions, values, ideologies, and interpretations, and awareness of how these are perpetuated at all levels in society (Jemal, 2017). One study found that many individuals were not self-reflecting effectively due to various factors, including the lack of high-quality possibilities for self-reflection, diversion tactics, inability to account for privilege, and denial of reality (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). In the process of achieving CC, it is vital to recognise that all individuals are deemed intelligent and capable and that the traditional ‘expert’ or leader will have to relinquish or share the power associated with that title to truly know and understand the community (Freire & Ramos, 2017). However, this shifting of power in traditional hierarchical social constructs can trigger defensive and anxiety-provoking behaviours, which can impede the development of CC (Pitner & Sakamoto, 2005). Furthermore, leaders who naively think that their education and experience alone will illicit change will effectively exclude the community and continue the process of systemic oppression (Straubhaar, 2015). In contrast, the primary goal of solving social problems lies in trusting the community to create their narrative to find sustainable solutions (Bhawuk et al., 2018).

The essential points raised above can be used in understanding how CC can be used as a tool for transformation for community development.

2.2 Community Driven Development

“The fundamental tenet is that sustainable impact and enduring change does not lie on the provision of resources. Rather, it rests in people’s lives being changed by themselves and not by others” (Wilkinson-Maposa & Fowler, 2009)

Community driven development (CDD) is not a new phenomenon. The concept of community empowerment, self-reliance, and efficacy date back to Aristotle, Gandhi, and, more recently, Paulo Freire, who all emphasised the importance of community members taking action to break oppressive systems (Mansuri & Rao, 2004; Wilkinson-Maposa, 2017; Wong & Guggenheim, 2018). In analysing the history of CDD, it is worthy to note that the principles and practices of democracy serve as an incipience for CDD, which gives operational control of social goods to communities while concurrently creating an environment that sustains accountability, empowerment, inclusivity, and participation of marginalised communities for sustained and

upward development pathway (Casey, 2018). CDD also stemmed from the success of initiatives such as participatory budgeting, which pivot around the pillars of participation from the marginalised community, and increased access to information and governance (Saguin, 2018). In recognising the benefits associated with community participation and social capital, the foundation of CDD quickly anchored into acknowledging a multi-dimensional view of societal inequalities that recognises that social transformation is not linear. Invariably, multiple tangible and intangible factors stem from the social, political, and economic environment that will influence the process and the outcome. (Saguin, 2018). How this relates to power dynamics is essential for CDD practitioners and community members to understand. Since decentralisation in the form of democratic processes and procedures might force systems to become reorganised, it is possible that the sources of power remain the same and still significantly influence the community and outcomes (Fritzen, 2007).

CDD differs from traditional project management and development approaches in that the community is actively involved in all areas of project management, including making strategic decisions on what project to run with, how will procurement of resources take place, implementation, and accountability of the project (Casey, 2018; Yalegama et al., 2016). Furthermore, proponents of CDD are explicit and ambitious in the agenda to shift the power to the community to create a sense of agency in marginalised communities and ensure that the community is in control and responsible for all stages of development, from planning to making critical decisions on the direction of funds (Mansuri & Rao, 2004). For these reasons, CDD has found firm roots in previous international development plans and focuses on decentralisation and adopting a holistic attempt to solve multiple social, economic, and political deprivations (Saguin, 2018). As a result of these participatory initiatives, social outcomes, including welfare and economic outcomes, have steadily increased in marginalised communities, leading to the World Bank pushing a broader agenda for increased community participation and decreased government's role in delivering public services (Saguin, 2018). The process of meeting community needs through development can be viewed from three models. At the periphery lies the exogenous model, which assumes that progress is only possible from outside the community; the endogenous model could be likened to the ABCD model in that it recognises the local assets and potential in the community. (Nordberg et al., 2020). The neo-endogenous model is a combination of previous models but includes a variety of other elements, including

dynamic participation and interaction between the macro and micro environments, enhancing social capital, and strengthening the power of communities (Nordberg et al., 2020).

Against the backdrop of the euphoria surrounding CDD, it is essential to accept the multi-dimensional nature of society and the context of each matter in CDD projects (Pham, 2018). In order to understand the development and ensure its outcomes are successful and sustainable in the community, it is necessary to understand its multiple intersectional elements. For decentralisation to successfully achieve its goals, the CDD planning, design, and implementation must centre firmly on understanding the community (Everatt, 2005). Similarly, it is imperative to note that many variables influence the success of a CDD project. These include the different contexts, social values and norms, culture, and general behaviours within a given community, the life cycle of the project, and the type of project, which play a role in the success of a CDD project (Yalegama et al., 2016).

CDD projects are advantageous in that both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries can be positively impacted by the project, which can increase income for everyone in the community. A case in point is a CDD project in Nigeria that assisted beneficiaries in acquiring assets for agricultural usage. The CDD project showed an increase in the income for beneficiaries (from direct usage of the asset)and non-beneficiaries (through employment and milling services), as well as the use of infrastructure (Nkonya et al., 2012).

2.3 Definition of community:

A community could also refer to groups of people who are similar in where they reside geographically or in ethnicity and the expected norms resulting from the relationships within the community, which distinguishes them significantly from other groups (Asmorowati, 2011; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). In addition, the term community refers to individuals residing in a geographical area and any group with shared convictions and values, including interest-based, scientific, and professional organisations (Nordberg et al., 2020). A naïve understanding of the term ‘community’ almost always fosters an idea of a group of individuals working together as a cohesive collective, where all members are equal, which implies that all individuals in the community have equal rights and access to benefits (Saguin, 2018). However, the reality is that many individuals in communities are excluded (women,

marginalised, etc.), and the additional element of class preferences unhinge the community's cohesiveness (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

In every community, the intersectional ties and bonds that connect each community member to each other and other stakeholders is an important asset that can be harnessed to mobilise the community into achieving CDD goals, sharing valuable information, and increasing cooperation of community members (Stănică & Ioana-Gabriela, 2017). The norms that promote collective action are referred to as social capital, and a lack of this resource could impact CDD projects (Casey, 2018). The enhancement of social capital increases trust, inclusiveness, reciprocity, mutual assistance, increased mobilisation, and stakeholder connectivity in communities (Fonchingong, 2018; Yalegama et al., 2016). Interestingly, in many marginalised communities, factors such as trust and ability, belonging to a social group, access to social networks, and cooperation between community members already existed before CDD projects (Casey, 2018). Social capital can also fluctuate depending on the state of the economy, where, in times of large-scale production and economic growth, social capital was found to be taking place more along the class lines, as opposed to along group ethnicity, kinship, and localness (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). All of these intersectional variables make the task of defining 'community' extremely difficult. Additionally, individuals living in communities also belong to other helices, such as public organisations, businesses, and industries, which can bridge the gap between the community and external players in community development (Nordberg et al., 2020).

2.4 CDD stakeholder models:

International development has expanded over the years and encompasses various actors from traditional bi-lateral and multi-lateral aid agencies (e.g., World Bank) to mega philanthropists, multi-national firms, celebrities, and the global public (Wilkinson-Maposa & Fowler, 2009). This section will discuss the relevant actors in CDD by focusing on stakeholders directly involved in CDD projects in communities.

Community-based organisations (CBO)

CDD projects are implemented in various partnership models. The first is within the partnership between the community-based organisation (CBO) and the local or municipal government; the second is within the partnership between the CBO and private organisations

and NGOs, and the third is within the collaboration between the CBO and central government or major funders (Yalegama et al., 2016). Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) consist of individuals from a community that are part of an autonomous, democratically self-organised formal group with basic formal structures, including a leadership team that renders services to members of that group (Arcand & Wagner, 2016). Membership to the group can be exclusive and rely on fulfilling some criteria, for example, paying a registration fee or in agricultural CBOs, ownership of land, or even contributions in kind such; or inclusive, whereby the services rendered benefit the entire community (Arcand & Wagner, 2016; Fonchingong, 2018). In most instances, communities are facilitated through the CDD project. The CBO's primary function is to provide assistance with grant blocks and serve as a vehicle that drives social facilitation (Casey, 2018).

Additionally, CBOs are an essential link between the community and external stakeholders and play a significant role in enhancing economic and social capital for the group. Many CDD projects use CBOs to channel funding directly to communities to allow for greater decision-making power by the members of the community (Arcand & Wagner, 2016). A similar example is seen in a well-project in Uganda where communities self-organised a water use committee whose members were trained in water management and collected fees for ongoing maintenance (Krause, 2009). Thus, the impact of CBOs cannot be underestimated since the gamut of activities carried out by CBOs influences the community directly. These activities range from providing social support, collective marketing, financial support and training, environmental protection, assisting with healthcare and schooling, and even extending to providing a pension fund for widowed women (Fonchingong, 2018).

External facilitators:

External organisations (Public enterprises/NGOs, etc.) facilitate communities in various ways, and their role cannot be underestimated. These include providing technical support, financial assistance, and access to information, which are critical factors relating to the empowerment of the community through self-organising and cooperating with external stakeholders (Yalegama et al., 2016). In fostering a climate of information symmetry, these facilitators were instrumental in unlocking the community's key strengths and actively promoted community members' participation by providing rich information (Casey, 2018). Communities can better self-organise and partner with stakeholders when information is transparent, and there is

adequate financial and operational support from the CDD Project (Yalegama et al., 2016). Echoing this point, it was found that in some CDD projects, like in the Democratic Republic of Congo, when there was a lack of facilitation from external facilitators, evidence showed no positive outcomes for public services, health, and schooling. In contrast, after a subsequent grant that included intense facilitation records, how a positive impact on the quality of health, education, and infrastructure for the community (Casey, 2018).

Some CDD projects can range from months of dedicated training from a facilitator to less intensive weekly and daily training (Casey, 2018). However, it is worth noting that when the project leader from the CDD project maintains a strong connection with the locals, this leads to sustainable solutions that are easily adopted by the community (Nordberg et al., 2020). Additionally, project staff from CDD projects were instrumental in empowering communities and fostering a climate of knowledge transfer by sharing information with the community, including technical knowledge such as project management, financial literacy, and infrastructure development, as well as training on soft skills such as attitudes, public speaking, mastering resilience and motivation (Yalegama et al., 2016). Furthermore, facilitators are integral to understanding the rules underpinning development from the perspective of external stakeholders such as government bureaucracies and the community (Everatt, 2005). External facilitators' monitoring and control before, during, and after the CDD project was a critical success factor for many community members. For instance, while providing capital for communities for CDD projects is one tangible aspect that can lead to project success, non-salient factors such as teaching the community how to use the funds and how to manage a project are just as crucial in ensuring the success of the CDD project (Yalegama et al., 2016).

Despite the benefits relating to external facilitators, it is essential to note that as much of a positive impact these external facilitating organisations have on the community, the organisation needs to step back and allow communities the ability to connect in their terms and its primary purpose. To achieve true democracy, foster independence, and expedite change, the organisation should serve as a link or a node to other resources (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). Perhaps the most significant role of external facilitators would be to support communities through active facilitation and not create an environment of dependence and prescription.

Facilitators can activate the community as drivers of social innovation by recognising and tapping into latent resources (Nordberg et al., 2020).

2.5 Factors influencing CDD success

2.5.1 Participation of community members:

Community empowerment can be seen as the nucleus of CDD in that all decisions relating to the project selection, implementation, procurement, and monitoring are made by the community themselves (Yalegama et al., 2016). Despite these ambitious goals by CDD actioners, it is surprising that several studies highlight the lack of voice from women in communities. For example, in Sierra Leone, when examining participation behaviour in communities after CDD initiatives, it was found that men still spoke more frequently than women, and even in instances where there was an increase in women's participation, there was no real influence on project choices for the future (Casey, 2018). Furthermore, it was found that some CDD projects can be counterproductive to female empowerment and lead to new forms of exclusion and gender discrimination when the programme design and implementation do not take into consideration the valuable contributions of the female community members (Arcand & Wagner, 2016). At the same time, questions emerge regarding just how adopted CDD principles are by the community beyond the end of CDD-funded projects. The results show that although some communities follow procedures while implementing the project, they do not embrace the principles of CDD beyond that (Casey, 2018). One suggestion for CDD projects to become powerful catalysts for empowerment includes addressing gender and other social inequities as part of the development outcomes (Fonchingong, 2018).

Other significant barriers to participation include a lack of education for women in communities, which leads to a feeling of inferiority or lack of self-confidence and an inability to participate in the design and sustainability of the project or negotiate with external stakeholders (Everatt, 2005; Fonchingong, 2018). Worryingly, some women are trapped in the fallacy that because men contribute more financially, they should have a greater say in community affairs (Fonchingong, 2018). Similarly, research has shown a lack of participation in some communities due to the lack of ability to design and shape the CDD project (Buntaine et al., 2018). Encouraging research in Village Development Associations in Cameroon (VDA) highlighted that apart from the traditional VDA's dominated by men in leadership positions, it

was interesting to see the emergence of separate parallel VDAs exclusively for women, which led to increased sustained participation from women in the community (Fonchingong, 2018). Against this backdrop, it is worth noting that an increase in participation from marginalised communities in CDD projects does not automatically mean an increase in empowerment or agency from the community unless the community is well aware of their rights and agency (Pham, 2018).

2.5.2 The opportunity cost of participation

An interesting concept regarding the opportunity cost of participation came up in assessing marginalized communities' participation levels. The opportunity cost could be defined as a time/participation tax; this concept alludes to simply that the disenfranchised community members do not have the luxury of time as a resource, which may negatively impact participation (Buntaine et al., 2018; Casey, 2018). Women, in particular, are less likely to participate due to the added duties of working during peak periods in the agricultural calendar and taking care of family responsibilities such as collecting scarce resources like water in rural areas (Fonchingong, 2018; Krause, 2009; Saguin, 2018). As a result, although a core element of decentralisation, participation can become a regressive tax if the CDD project focuses on quotas for the poor to participate (Casey, 2018) or if the marginalised community is expected to contribute financially to a project (Everatt, 2005). Questions can then be asked about how much participation is necessary to empower and create sustained changes for the community, especially for women. As a result, it must be noted that empowerment is related to political and economic reforms and having the time to align, organise, and transform systemic inequality (Fonchingong, 2018).

Additional barriers to the participation of community members in CDD projects include the lack of information or withholding of information by village project teams, the feeling that opinions raised in meetings are disregarded, nepotism, and favouritism regarding benefits distribution (Buntaine et al., 2018). Moreover, lack of monitoring of CDD projects and input from the community in designing and implementing the project (Buntaine et al., 2018). Some research points to the interfamilial struggles of physical abuse, lack of weak reproductive rights for women, and laborious, physically demanding work as barriers to participation (Fonchingong, 2018). Furthermore, the country and context of the CDD project can drastically reduce participation. For instance, in post-war communities, increased violence and lack of

safety for women led to a substantive decrease in participation in meetings (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). In designing a CDD project, it is thus essential for all stakeholders, especially the community members, to understand how these and other fundamental barriers to participation can be overcome.

A lack of participation from community members due to other obligations is a serious issue that needs attention in the developmental space. On the one hand, some projects try to ensure participation by putting quotas for women or marginalised to participate. Inclusive quotas may seem logical; however, it fails to consider participation tax as the marginalized, especially women, do not have the luxury of contributing to these CDD meetings. Even if women could participate, the social, gender, and discriminatory structures might prevent women's voices from being taken seriously. Therefore, the structural and systemic barriers need to be considered and used as a starting point for sustainable transformation, which is where CC comes in. Disregarding this fact can inadvertently lead to other social ills; for example, in one CDD project, it was widely acknowledged that the marginalised community could not participate due to other obligations, which led to the CBO actively seeking out participants from friends and family to join as a last resort to get participants which led to the community accusing the CBO of nepotism which earned the displeasure of community members (Jakimow & Harahap, 2016)

2.5.3 Project cycle/CDD context

It is crucial to consider the type of CDD project being developed, influencing participation, perception, and outcomes. For instance, CDD projects that focus on excludable goods, such as the allocation of resources to specific individuals in the community and not others (based on some criteria), may result in reduced participation, in contrast to projects that focus on public benefit might increase participation (Buntaine et al., 2018). Preferences for CDD projects vary within each community, but some communities tend to favour projects enhancing infrastructure (roads), water, health, energy, electricity), and livelihoods (Casey, 2018).

2.5.4 Transparency of information

Some research points to the village project team (facilitators) as the root of problems in information dissemination and elite capture control since information is withheld or used to benefit their agendas and favour certain community members, such as families and friends

(Buntaine et al., 2018). As CDD projects aim to make development a participatory and democratic process, it is vital to research how democratic the selection and participation of the village project team is (Fritzen, 2007). On the other side of the coin, fascinating research in Uganda hypothesised that if communities were given information regarding how the programme worked, it would be expected that the community members would increase in should participation (Buntaine et al., 2018). However, this was not the case, and it was found that increased knowledge does not automatically equate to increased participation, and information alone is not a singular strategy for empowerment (Buntaine et al., 2018). Building on this point, it was found that information sharing without including the community in decision-making creates a backfire effect, whereby there is still a decrease in participation but an increase in the awareness of exclusion which inadvertently leads to continuing systemic and gender inequality (Buntaine et al., 2018). Similarly, in projects whereby NGOs' external facilitation to increase participation by women leads to women being excluded because the process is perceived as being formal (Fonchingong, 2018). Thus, transparency of the process and making decisions with the community instead of for the community leads to more significant support from community members before the project by identifying problems that had not yet surfaced during the CDD project and after the project (Yalegama et al., 2016).

CDD advocates argue that if a community is given control over its resources, this leads to greater utilisation and maintenance in the long term. However, this is not necessarily the case, as shown in one study in Kenya, where it was found that more than 50% of CDD-funded boreholes were not in use or maintained, regardless of community mobilisation (Casey, 2018). Therefore, CDD projects focusing on one-time or light-touch funding are unsustainable. Unraveling sustainability includes understanding that the issue of ownership and control can also impact the CDD project as the external influence comes from donors, which in some cases is the government, leading to certain goals, some of which are against community goals (Everatt, 2005). Moreover, Aid organisations may also embellish and exaggerate successes while not disclosing malpractice and embezzlement due to the real risk that funding will most likely be redirected or stopped if this information is made public (Platteau, 2004). Furthermore, donors could adopt a superior mind-set, instill unreasonable demands, and focus on silo (vertical) thinking (Hodgson et al., 2017).

Critiques of community-led development argue that despite having objectives of inclusivity and participation from all members of the community, it is inevitable that the project will be taken over by one social class, which would lead to little to no participation by marginalised individuals (Wong & Guggenheim, 2018). Not all aid that CDD provides is beneficial. In some countries, the influx of scarce resources serves as an opportunity for unscrupulous behaviour by some individuals and could lead to civil conflict (Casey, 2018), which is evident in the rise of urban elites or political entrepreneurs who create not-for-profit organisations to obtain funding and not for the intended social purposes (Platteau, 2004). In other instances, it was found that the community was accepting of malpractice of funds by community leaders because the community believed that any improvement (albeit small) that resulted from the work done by the leader was better than no improvement (Platteau, 2004)

2.5.6 Elite capture and control

As alluring as the concept of increased participation of marginalised communities in all governmental budgeting and planning processes is, unfortunately, not the only factor necessary to facilitate change. Underneath the panacea of participation lies the reality of influences relating to elite capture by those who control and dominate the development process to serve their agenda and for their benefit (Saguin, 2018). Elite capture is defined as the accumulation and amassing of development resources by elite individuals for personal gain, which inadvertently negatively affects and disempowers the marginalised community leading to increased social ills (Buntaine et al., 2018; Saguin, 2018). The elite status in a community could stem from various sources, including wealth, professional occupation, gender, politics, membership in social organisations, and civil servants (Fritzen, 2007). In attempting to solve the problem of elite capture, many solutions have emerged, including co-opting the elites to ensure that some benefit will eventually arise for the community (Saguin, 2018). However, this process of working with elites, referred to as elite control is not an ideal mechanism for sustained community participation and ultimately leads to lower levels of community participation (Saguin, 2018). Surprisingly though, in one CDD project in Indonesia, where the majority of board members were classified as elite, it was found that there was a strong positive impact and greater mobilisation of the community as opposed to democratically selected board members in other districts (Fritzen, 2007). Referred to as ‘benevolent capture,’ this implies that elite individuals take action to benefit the marginalised in the community which, in essence, could reduce the risk of elite capture and find ways to facilitate a more constructive role of the

elite for the community may be a way to reduce elite capture (Fritzen, 2007). While in some countries, external risks, such as the effects of corruption and bribery as a means for resource mobilisation, are blatantly obvious, it is important to realise that not all community leaders are pillaging funds for self-fulfilment (Platteau, 2004). For instance, in the Cameroon grasslands, an elite group of women's contributions provided much-needed assistance through their vast networks, offering farm tools, improved technology, and grants to women in the community (Fonchingong, 2018).

2.5.7 Social capital barriers

Additionally, it was found that social capital may be high on the horizontal platform in the community but not upwards when reaching out to seek assistance from Government and NGOs (Casey, 2018). Various reasons are possible for this variance in behaviour. It is important to note that just like any other asset, social capital can decrease or change depending on the conditions and contexts in that communities are entrenched (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

2.5.8 CDD funding flow

Donor aid to fund CDD projects in developing countries tends to be made up of two distinct elements, namely, the grants given to communities and the resources aiding in the process of social facilitation, which explicitly promotes participation, inclusion, and transparency of marginalised members of the community (Casey, 2018). In some countries, using grants requires a co-payment from the community, which can be useful in fostering independence in community members. Some might argue, however, that this inadvertently creates a gap for elite capture to creep into CDD. For example, in Nigeria, marginalised community members were asked to make a 30% contribution towards acquiring an asset, but they could not afford the co-payment, which resulted in community members actively seeking wealthier elites to go into rental agreements (Nkonya et al., 2012). Ironically, the goals of CDD to create independence and target the poor paradoxically led to the dependence of marginalised community members on elite capture.

2.5.9 The economic impact of CDD

Although CDD has shown improved economic and income for the marginalised community, it has not enhanced social outcomes such as participation, trust, and governance, which are the pillars of CDD (Saguin, 2018). Against this backdrop, it is essential to note the measuring

impact on economic well-being can be subjective. In a study on a CDD project in Afghanistan that focused on developing irrigation and transport in the region, impact results showed no tangible impact in the area in terms of assets, income, or consumption, surprisingly the perceptions of people living in that area were favourable in terms of how they felt the project impacted their economic well-being (Casey, 2018). On the other hand, CDD projects have been known to increase the economic income for beneficiaries due to the spillage effect; non-beneficiaries also showed an increase in income indirectly linked to the CDD project (Nkonya et al., 2012). It is interesting to note that some CDD grants require villages to compete for the grant, which invariably leaves some communities without funding (Casey, 2018).

2.6 CDD evaluation

In measuring the impact of CDD projects, there is usually a macro-level view that focuses on the performance of the country as a whole in terms of policy and institutional policy, or micro, which focuses on the impact that is measured at the local or community level (Yalegama et al., 2016). However, a different perspective is to understand that any community is made up of complex constellations of issues that impact the daily lives of the community members. Focusing on or shining the spotlight on any particular issue in isolation, and trying to rectify it, will not cause, maintain and sustain the shift needed for deep-rooted transformation. Take, for instance, one of the primary goals of many CDD projects eradicating poverty. Poverty is multi-dimensional and includes shame and humiliation from the inability to afford necessities, voicelessness, and deprivations of health, education, income, empowerment, and capabilities (Pham, 2018; Saguin, 2018). This definition highlights the importance of viewing poverty as holistic and intersectional, which is crucial in addressing and solving the issue of hunger and the many layers that are crossing and layering poverty for marginalised people. In evaluating CDD programmes, the capability approach can be used as a tool to measure basic capabilities such as elements such as values, quality of life, justice, empowerment, freedom from violence, social capital, time autonomy, and political participation and agency (Pham, 2018)

2.7 Appreciative Inquiry

CDD is particularly under-utilised in South Africa, and NGOs are slow to adopt the principles of CDD (Everatt, 2005). Various reasons for this can be found in the literature. It must be emphasised that the core purpose of external stakeholders, particularly CBOs, is to help communities build upon the assets and capabilities to translate them into agency. While this

may seem like a purely logical outlook, the assets presented in communities may not be quantifiable in terms of monetary value, making researching and evaluating the impact of CDD a complex task. Things like confidence, dignity, honour, networks, and reputational influence are difficult to measure, and even more challenging to convince external donors that these are outcomes because donors are usually interested in scaling in terms of linear financial growth (Hodgson et al., 2017).

As a starting point for reframing how assets are mapped in communities, we turn to the concept of Appreciative Inquiry (AI), which focuses intensely on finding out the locus of knowledge creation and construction for the community and knowing how communication and thoughts, both personally and collectively, surface. Central to this theory of AI is the ability to use positive memories to create a community action plan, which can stem from previous stories of community successes and mapping out community assets (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). The appreciative inquiry principle's purpose is to guide the community into acknowledging and understanding that they are not deficits destined to a life of misery and suffering but agents of their destiny. A 'heliotropic principle assumes that when elements of hope and positivity surround people, this nourishes life and propels a move in a positive direction by focusing on strengths and capacities. (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

In shifting the power to communities and actively strengthening the marginalised community's agency, self-dependency, and capabilities, it is worth noting that this does not mean making redundant the wide variety of external stakeholders' resources (Wilkinson-Maposa & Fowler, 2009). What is needed is the inclusion of innovative approaches that enhances the capabilities of all actors in the development and social arena and that improve all aspects of life, including social cohesion, social welfare, health, education, and the environments in which the community is a part of (Nordberg et al., 2020). In fact, CDD projects fail due to a lack of knowledge of the capacity of the community, the market in which the community operates, and a lack of monitoring and evaluation in all phases of the CDD project (Yalegama et al., 2016). Against this backdrop, we can explore the concept of the Assets-based community development (ABCD) approach, which forges a new outlook for communities to self-organise and focus on recognising the strengths and resources (as opposed to only recognising deficits) in the community serves as a catalyst into finding innovative and positive pathways for new

opportunities, new sources of income, and new areas of production (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

The following section will discuss social innovation as a possible approach to include in the development arena.

3. Social innovation:

Development in marginalised communities generally focuses on distributing resources and developing the capabilities of people to attain objectives. The development literature is inundated with projects that focus on helping communities fill capability gaps, such as financial literacy and other gaps; these are undoubtedly necessary skills to learn and benefit both the individual and the project outcomes (Yalegama et al., 2016). However, the research has a missing element separate from the project and developmental goals but deeply intertwined with human goals, which is the acknowledgment and understanding of how a person, through community-driven developmental projects, can enhance self-becoming through a set of experiences. Research suggests a need to reframe development so individuals can re-imagine actualisation (Jakimow & Harahap, 2016). This reframing can assist in developing novel solutions that confront the complex, interrelated, multi-level ‘wicked’ problems faced in society. Social innovation can be introduced as developing innovative ways to meet communities’ social needs (such as marginalisation or other welfare issues) via collaboration and enhancing social relationships (Nordberg et al., 2020). Moreover, social innovation is referred to the change in a social system brought about by the innovation of any product, process, project, programme, or platform that seeks to dismantle routinised practices and beliefs and resource flows, and authority within the social system (Avelino et al., 2019).

Social innovation is also seen as a catalyst for change and leads to collective action from the community through self-organisation and self-governance and results in greater socio-political capability, access to resources, and empowerment as a result of changed behaviours and awareness from the community (Domanski et al., 2020; Nordberg et al., 2020). Social innovation relates strongly to the action element of CC, which highlights community involvement in changing systemic structures as crucial to attaining higher levels of CC (Freire, 1970). It is worth noting that the aim of social innovation is concerned with the characteristics

of the community and the embeddedness of social innovation in micro, meso, and macro institutional conditions (van Wijk et al., 2019). Social innovation at the micro-level can assist individuals in becoming more agentic by understanding their and other viewpoints and stimulate reflectivity to challenge any perspectives that are pre-historic, discriminatory, and stagnating innovation (van Wijk et al., 2019). At the meso level, the shared interactions and experiences between various actors form a foundation whereby tensions can surface to renegotiate structures and ways of doing to create a tectonic shift that creates new pathways for co-creation through social innovation (van Wijk et al., 2019). And finally, at the macro level, the focus is on how institutional contexts enable or constrain social innovation (van Wijk et al., 2019).

Contrary to technological innovations, social innovations focus on changing the social practices otherwise understood as routinised behaviour by all actors in various social contexts to solve problems and better satisfy the needs of communities (Domanski et al., 2020). In researching community driven social innovation for rural development, Nordberg et al. found that community development is generally viewed as a macro-economic model, with innovation usually stemming from spaces with dynamic interaction with universities, companies, and public organisations. But what was glaringly absent from these interactions was the inclusion and input of the community whose social needs need to be met (Nordberg et al., 2020). Additionally, in scrutinising business interventions in the development and social sphere, it was not uncommon to find businesses that deflect attention or serve to uphold and maintain existing power and resource flows (van Wijk et al., 2019). Therefore, drawing these concerns together, it is evident that social innovation in marginalised communities cannot be introduced or implanted by external stakeholders, regardless of the vast wealth of resources they transfer. Instead, social innovation requires localised innovation and action (Domanski et al., 2020).

Social innovation seeks to fundamentally transform and shift the traditional and dominant ways of thinking in institutions, resource flows, and authority in a project, process, or programme (Avelino et al., 2019). When analysing the concept of social innovation in the different pieces of literature, including sociological, technological, and design thinking, it is proposed that social innovation leads to restructuring power relationships by participation, engagement, and collaboration of previously marginalised communities (Ayob et al., 2016). Moreover, Social

innovation is a positive consequence of new forms of collaboration between government and citizens where the relationship dynamics shift from the traditional top-down rigid hierarchical relationships and involve all stakeholders in idea generation and implementation (Ayob et al., 2016). A further significant characteristic of social innovation is the observation of transformative change in the social practices of how society decides and acts on relevant matters, both individually and collectively (Avelino et al., 2019). The result of social innovation is ultimate empowerment and more impactful societal change. Despite the euphoria of social innovation, it must be noted that social innovations can fail to be useful. Therefore, the solutions may not be a good enough alternative to the problems faced in society (Mulgan, 2006). Additionally, social innovations can lead to additional stress and innovation fatigue, influencing the project's success (van Wijk et al., 2019).

4. Reframing development: The link between CC and CDD and Social Innovation:

The top-down approach used by development foundations and other stakeholders in CDD needs to be dismantled to ensure that the community being at the core of power is not just mere rhetoric and shifts to actionable and sustained change. An alternative is acknowledging the capabilities, local norms, and values from the community perspective, which should be the nucleus of all CDD design, planning, implementation, and development foundations that should mold to fit the community instead of creating change that surpasses the timeline of the CDD project. Additionally, CDD literature suggests that a critical measure of success was how impactful the development foundation was regarding creating dependency aversion and leaving the community in a better space than before the influence of external stakeholders (Wilkinson-Maposa & Fowler, 2009).

Building on this point, we can deduce that what is needed is an increase in the community's capacity to make transformations themselves. CC acknowledges this fact which is why one of the central theories of this pedagogy is the process of critical thinking to understand and acknowledge the causes of inequality and the history of its roots. CC links with social innovation in that it compels all actors in all social spheres to adopt an ongoing attitude of reflexivity that constantly questions the opportunities and the problems created by individual, social, political, and organisational structures (van Wijk et al., 2019). After carefully considering the issue as a whole, action should follow. This action will be the change required

for the long-lasting dismantling of structural and systemic inequalities to pave the way for new alternatives embedded in social innovation. Echoing this point, we turn to a recent CDD project in Cameroon that highlighted an unexplored actor in the development space seemingly invisible to the development literature; systemic inequalities (Fonchingong, 2018).

As highlighted, CDD projects may have ambitious and progressive goals, but taken in isolation from other factors, they can leave the community in a worse state than before (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2021). In particular, communities need to raise their critical consciousness by conducting an in-depth understanding of the root causes of the inequalities, bondages, and repression caused by the past and present systems and structures (Wilkinson-Maposa, 2017). If development actors are serious about shifting the power to communities, the laudable and impressive goals must be matched with concrete, critical action. As discussed, CDD posits that the community exercises control over *all* aspects of planning and resource investment based on the needs of society (Wong & Guggenheim, 2018). however, it must be stressed that the action element of being critically conscious is not merely taking action to fix infrastructure or gain capabilities and skills (Wilkinson-Maposa & Fowler, 2009). Critically conscious individuals must challenge and dismantle imbalances of power, resources, strategies, and mind-sets in the development arena to revolutionise and reconfigure development (Wilkinson-Maposa, 2017) The process of shifting the power; communities change from merely being consumers to designers and eventually producers of community needs (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

Embedding the constructs of critical consciousness into community driven development can lead to innovative and sustainable solutions to the multiple, complex societal issues communities face. As a result, the researcher will answer the research question below to understand better the influences and barriers in all three streams, i.e., Critical consciousness, community driven development, and social innovation.

“How can critical consciousness influence community driven development as social innovation.”

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Philosophy

Philosophy flourishes from two words forming the foundation of research: Philo, meaning love, and Sophia, meaning knowledge (Brinkmann, 2017). Combining the words in the literal sense is important when undertaking and linking research and philosophy. The aim of research is to establish, discover, predict, describe, and generate knowledge to develop an understanding of the phenomenon; however, each researcher has a unique system of thought or philosophical underpinnings/paradigms that guide how the researcher develops a research strategy, formulate the research question, conducts the research, and even how the research findings are interpreted (Birks, 2014; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Rodríguez et al., 2018). Therefore, research philosophy/paradigms are the evolving of the research assumptions born from each person's mental model, knowledge, worldview, values, insights, and the nature of truth and how this is garnered (Rodríguez et al., 2018). These philosophical paradigms are frameworks or systems that shape how knowledge is viewed, interpreted, and generated from that perspective (Birks, 2014; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Philosophy fractionates into various categories, including metaphysics, ethics, politics, science, logic, mathematics, language, law, and art (Birks, 2014). It is beyond the scope of this research to discuss all the categories in philosophy; hence, only the concepts relevant to the qualitative research will be addressed. The main philosophical assumptions are: assumptions regarding what is real in society and the nature of what exists in that reality (ontology); how we make sense and how knowledge is gained regarding this reality (epistemology), the nature and approach of carrying out the systemic inquiry (methodology) and the nature of the values, moral and ethics systems (axiology) (Birks, 2014; Maxwell, 2012; Mertens, 2016; Rodríguez et al., 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 2013). These assumptions form the vessel in which the researcher's philosophical assumptions are contained.

3.2 Research paradigms:

The table briefly outlines the leading theoretical paradigms that guide conventional inquiry and their characteristics.

Research Paradigms	Characteristics of paradigm	Phrases associated with the paradigm	Basic methods
Positivism	Propounds the idea of a single reality that can be tested in which cause probably determines effects or outcomes.	Experimental Semi experimental Correlate Reductionism	Quantitative or qualitative
Postpositivism	Assumes that multiple theories and multiple realities can influence research, challenging the theoretical framework. (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006)	Theory analyses Causal comparison Determination Normative (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006)	
Interpretivism/ Constructivist	Proposes that reality is socially constructed and that research is ingrained with the human experiences from participants' complex views and values. (Birks, 2014). Advances the idea of multiple realities that are constructed, emphasising the need to view these constructs as a whole to create meaning and understanding (Lincoln & Guba, 2013)	Naturalistic Phenomenological Hermeneutic Ethnographic Meaning by various participants Includes social and historical architecture Theory generation Symbolic interaction (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006)	
Transformative/Critical theory	Unlike Interpretivism and constructivist, which do not focus on social injustices and marginalisation, the transformative paradigm is imbued with political agendas and contains action agendas for transforming the lives of participants, organisations, and the researcher. (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006)	Freirean philosophy Critical Race Theory Neo-Marxist Participatory related Issues relating to empowerment Political ecosystem Race-related issues Non-conventional sexual theories Feminist theories (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006)	Qualitative or quantitative
Pragmatism	Focuses centrally on the research problem and uses all paths to solve the research problem. It rejects the notion of applying a single scientific method and has no philosophical loyalty to any other paradigm. (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006)	Focused on problems Real-world application Pluralist approach Multiple theories	Mixed methods

TABLE 1: Research Paradigms, characteristics, phrases associated with paradigms, methods, and data collection. Adapted from (Birks, 2014) (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Rodríguez et al., 2018; Kumar 2011)

The table below is adapted from Lincoln and Guba (2013) and outlines the various ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological assumptions in relation to each of the paradigms identified above.

Paradigm	Ontology	Epistemology	Axiology	Methodology
Positivist	Naïve realism supports the idea of one reality independent from the researcher and can be studied in detached parts.	Naïve empiricisms state that reality can be studied objectively through observation and experiment.	Purports the idea that research can be carried out without the inclusion or influence of values on the research.	Scientific method uses theory-based hypothesis to deduce predictions, test predictions, and conduce if the theory explains the behaviour or does not, which leads to the researcher keeping, disposing, or altering the research.
Interpretivist/Constructivist	Advances the idea of multiple realities that requires the research to be studied in its entirety.	Seeking out subjective beliefs borne out of the relationship and interaction between the researcher and researched.	Value's imbued.	Attempt to understand the lived experience of research participants to create meaning and action.
Transformative/ Critical theory	Historical realism is acutely aware that the reality is shaped by other factors such as social, political, economic, cultural, ethnic, and gender values.	Subjectivist with a focus on emancipation from all forms of oppression	Research inquiry is initiated and guided by the researcher's values.	Characterised by dialogue.

TABLE 2: Various ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological assumptions in relation to leading research paradigms. Adapted from Lincoln and Guba (2013)

In unraveling the different philosophical paradigms and ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological assumptions as tabled above, it becomes clear that the positivist and post-positivist paradigms are not the best fit for this research. Both strongly advance a univocal view of reality with links to colonialist impositions that do little to consider and engage in alternate views of reality (Romm, 2019). The interpretivist paradigm differs from the positivist and post-positivist in that it advances meaning-making of the social existence of participants rather than viewing it as cause and effect relationships. However, like positivist and post-positivist, it is focused on the recognition of facts, with a clear separation of these from the researcher to create objectivity (Romm, 2019). In contrast, the constructivist

paradigm recognises that objectivity can never be fully realised, as researchers as humans are not able to separate emotions and values, and thus the focus should be on ‘managing subjectivity’ (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). A significant critique of the constructivist paradigm is that it does not seek to understand or explain the root causes of the issues faced by the participants in the research and does not offer solutions to combat these social conflicts (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). A similar critique can be stated for all the paradigms mentioned above as they stop short of stimulating social action, increasing social justice, inclusive, emancipatory, placing importance on the lives of the marginalised, and linking the research inquiry to action that can be taken (Romm, 2019).

Embedded in this research are principles of critical consciousness, how these principles manifest within the stakeholders of the community-driven development project, and how this leads to social change. Within this background, it is perhaps not unusual for the researcher to ask the question of how can the concepts of critical consciousness be embedded into the entire process of designing the study so that the research itself can lead to social transformation. ‘Wicked’ problems, including all forms of oppression, violence, poverty, issues relating to health, lack of adequate services for marginalised individuals, and environmental and political unrest, are not linear in their causes and characteristics. It stands to reason that research into these multi-dimensional, cross-cutting complex issues needs to be conducted within a framework that goes beyond mere description and explanation of the issues raised but also becomes a catalyst for change. Mertens (2016) advances an alternative paradigm referred to as a transformative paradigm that evolves beyond problem description and focuses on developing meaningful relationships with the full gamut of stakeholders, including the marginalised community as well as those in power, on obtaining a unique and comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted ‘wicked’ issues facing that community.

Additionally, the transformative/critical paradigm aims to emancipate participants of the research by highlighting and making them aware of the various forms of oppression, which then catalyses action that emerges from the deep dialogic nature of this paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Although my research goals include involving the community as participants in the research, the community is not involved in defining the problems or having input in the research methodology decisions of the study, which is a crucial factor in the transformative

paradigm (Romm, 2019). So while my study has transformative/critical elements in the research, it also has elements of the interpretivist/ constructivist paradigms. Lincoln and Guba (2013) propose an interesting alternative that encourages the interbreeding of paradigms or for research inquiries to embed multiple paradigms, such as an interpretative critical approach. Within this background, the best option would be an interpretive, critical inquiry approach that uses social change (in my research, social innovation) to understand how critical consciousness influences community-driven development.

This study is therefore embedded within the interpretive critical/transformational paradigm framework, and the researcher took heed of the following philosophical assumptions and characteristics while designing and conducting the research study

- The transformational ontological assumption recognises various opinions about the nature of the reality and that these differences erupt from the different social positionalities (Mertens, 2016). What is of vital importance is for the researcher to understand where the reality emerges from and how differential power relations in marginalised contexts determine what is real and what the consequences are for relying on a specific version of reality (Mertens, 2016). Notably, the aim of the research is not to make generalisations but to develop working hypotheses (Lincoln & Guba, 2013).
- The transformational epistemological assumptions build from the ontological and axiological assumptions, of which vital importance is the researcher's ability to be aware of diversity and cultural ambits within the community being researched so that relationships are cemented in trust (Mertens, 2016). This will be accomplished by including participants from marginalised communities whose voices are heard and placed at the research's forefront. Additionally, the researcher will conduct ongoing authentic dialogue with participants before, during, and after the research to create an atmosphere of reciprocity, trust, and mutual respect for all participants and, in doing so, becomes an indicator of the quality of the research (Lincoln & Guba, 2013).
- The research will also advance the immersion and inclusion of cultural knowledge by ensuring community members involved in the project implementation and are subsequently beneficiaries are interviewed to provide a rich and expansive understanding of the cultural knowledge. Furthermore, to gain an understanding of the complex cultural and social contexts (Mertens, 2016), the researcher will also

respectfully build relationships with privileged members of the community, including donors and funders of community driven development projects.

- Although there is no prescribed methodology in the transformative paradigm, the framework needs to ensure a continuous stream of information from diverse sources used throughout the research process (Mertens, 2016).
- As this research is embedded within specific contexts and time, it is impossible to determine cause and effect relationships between relationships (Lincoln & Guba, 2013).

3.3 Research approach

The research approach of a study can either be deductive or inductive. Deductive logic uses the findings of the study and connects it with previous theoretical premises and could include testing of hypothesis using elements of validity and reliability to test the quality of the research (Hammond & Wellington, 2021). Inductive is more fluid in nature and includes observation of empirical statements of a particular experience, analysing to look for patterns, and create a more generalised theory about the experience (DeCarlo Matthew, 2018). In observing and identifying patterns emerging from the phenomena, I will elevate the understanding of CC as a whole, which is appropriate as an inductive strategy (Patton, 2015).

As my study included actively searching out subjective experiences from various participants involved in a community driven development project to build understanding, enhance knowledge, and generate meaning of how critical consciousness influences community driven development, the study used a qualitative approach (Leavy, 2017). Qualitative researchers aim to collect data in a natural environment, with great sensitivity and respect to participants in the study and the contexts they are in, and develop patterns in the research using the inductive approach (Creswell, 2007).

Cresswell (2007) expands on the characteristics of qualitative research as follows:

- The research is collected in the natural setting where the participant is immersed in the investigated issue by engaging directly with the participants. In this study, the face-to-face interviews were conducted online at a time and place suitable to the participant.

- The researcher is primarily involved in collecting data, analysing the information, and interviewing participants using instruments developed themselves and not by other researchers. In this study (see Appendix A), the researcher developed the research instrument by conducting an in-depth literature review of the main themes in this research, namely, critical consciousness, community-driven development, and social innovation.
- Inductive data analysis is used to develop a set of themes or patterns that emerge from the data.
- The research's primary focus is on creating and understanding meaning from the participant's view relating to the issue or inquiry under investigation.
- The research plan is loose fitting and characteristic of emergent design rather than a rigid plan, as this may change during fieldwork. A case in point here was the plan for the researcher to interview all participants individually. While this plan worked for participants in organisational settings when it came to interviewing community members, it was not practical, and it was not uncommon for several community members to join the interview.
- The research uses a theoretical lens through which to view the inquiry. In this research, the interpretative/transformational lens was used.
- The research uses a holistic approach in that it takes in multiple and organic perspectives from various stakeholders in the community driven development process to develop a complex understanding of the elements under research. This will allow me as an investigator to explore in-depth, meaningful characteristics of events occurring in real-time real-life events (Yin, 2009). In line with the interpretative/transformational approach, the research is not constricted to cause-and-effect relationships (Lincoln & Guba, 2013) and instead focuses on the complex interactions of the various elements.

3.4 Research strategy

Various research approaches/strategies can be used in qualitative research, namely, narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and Case studies (Creswell, 2007). Narrative research focuses on using a single individual's stories to create meaning arranged in chronological order, such as participants' biographical and autobiographical works (Creswell,

2007). This approach was not appropriate for this study as it includes multiple participants. In narrative research, the researcher's ability to 're-story' the version of events related to by participants leads to competing narratives (Creswell, 2007). Phenomenology focuses on a particular phenomenon (for example, grief) and reduces individual experiences of that phenomenon to describe the essence of the experience for all participants (Creswell, 2007).

One of the primary critiques of why the phenomenology approach was inappropriate for this study was that in phenomenological research, participants are carefully selected as having experienced the phenomenon so that a common set of experiences can be revealed (Creswell, 2007). In contrast, this study includes various stakeholders in the community driven development process, i.e., donors, various individuals from NGOs or CBO, and community members who participated or are beneficiaries of the project; each individual might have varying opinions of how/what they experienced.

The grounded theory approach expands on the phenomenological approach, which advances beyond the description of participants' lived experiences. Here, a theory is generated that is 'grounded' in data based on the views of a large number of participants who share in the same process, action, or interaction but do not necessarily share patterns of behaviour (Creswell, 2007). The theory is accomplished using a back-and-forth method whereby the researcher collects data in the field, then analyses the data and continues the process until a theory develops that is constructed in all its complexity (Creswell, 2007). The grounded theory approach does not apply to this study as the primary outcome is not based on developing a theory. In contrast to the grounded theory approach, which does not place emphasis on the emerging patterns of behaviour from a group, in the ethnographic research approach, the group or 'culture-sharing group' with its accompanying values, beliefs, languages, and ways of behaving becomes the focal point of the study, and the researcher is immersed in the daily lives of participants, primarily through observation (Creswell, 2007). The ethnographic approach does not apply to this study due to the fact that the researcher's goal is not to study and detail each aspect of participants' lives to produce a cultural kaleidoscope of the group that is embedded with the participant's view (etic) as well as the view of the researcher (emic) (Creswell, 2007).

A case study can be defined as an integrated description and analysis of a phenomenon encompassed by some boundaries in a single setting (Yazan & De Vasconcelos, 2016). Stake (2006), however, makes a clear distinction between studying and understanding the phenomenon as an entity (noun) versus studying the functioning (verb) of the phenomenon. He argues that case study analysis requires an in-depth understanding of the Case first before focusing on functioning and activities and the methods used in the operation of the Case (Stake, 2006). We can build on this definition by taking into consideration the opinion of Yin (2009), who provides a holistic definition of the case study method in that it includes:

- An in-depth investigation of a contemporary phenomenon,
- with many variables of interest,
- whereby a set of contextual conditions exist that are not clearly differentiable from the phenomenon being studied
- and using various sources of evidence (documents, interviews, observations, etc.)
- along with previous theoretical developments that will guide the data collection and analysis

Dul & Hak (2008) add to this definition by including the investigation phenomenon in its real-life context as it is occurring or has occurred in the past, in an environment whereby manipulation is not possible, and uses qualitative analysis of the scores obtained from each Case. In differentiating and choosing between the various strategies/approaches, Yin (2009) puts forward three conditions that a researcher can use to help guide choosing the most appropriate method. The first is to analyse the research question in which various categories of research questions exist, namely “who,” “what,” “where,” “how,” and “why” – each with differentiating rationales; the second condition is to ascertain the degree of control that the research has over events, and the final condition is to establish if the research is focusing on events that are historical or contemporary (Yin, 2009). Building on this, case study research is deemed appropriate if the research topic is broad-ranging, multifaceted, and complex, with limited theory available, and whereby the context of the Case is of paramount importance (Dul & Hak, 2008). This research fulfils the conditions of using the case study strategy since the research question is explanatory in asking a “how” question that is related to a contemporary phenomenon (how can critical consciousness influence community driven development as social innovation?) using multiple sources of evidence (semi-structured interviews,

observations, and documents) as tools for gathering data. A detailed description of the context of each case study will be recorded, which will aid in developing a deeper understanding of communities' historical and cultural positions (Tracy, 2010), which will be discussed later in the chapter.

3.5 Unit of analysis:

Hammond & Wellington (2021) define the Case as the unit of analysis that is of interest to the researcher. The Case could be based on an individual, an entity, an event, a political system, institutions, etc. (Yin, 2009; Hammond & Wellington, 2021). The unit of analysis in this study is the community driven development project undertaken in a specific context. The researcher hopes to understand how critical consciousness influences the community driven development project as social innovation.

3.5.1 Background on project case study A:

The NGO supports the social processes and develops strategies for inclusive cities, facilitating engagements with formal role-players like the state and providing finance for marginalised communities, supporting the development of savings, information- gathering and community led development strategies. The NGO is committed to community-driven development and partners, conducts deep participatory methods, and invests in community mobilisation, capacity building, and community-based planning.

The project inception and development took shape due to the inclusion of upgrading of informal settlements being centred on multiple stakeholder input. Housing and human settlement development in Cape Town has moved from 'government delivery' to harnessing various development partners in pushing a goal for incremental upgrades to informal settlements (Amin & Cirolia, 2018). An informal settlement consists of informal dwellings built without the necessary architectural planning on land that is not considered residential land (Hendler & Fieuw, 2018). The project focus was planning incremental upgrading of an informal settlement situated in the Western Cape in a process called reblocking. Reblocking is a relatively new concept developed to reconfigure spaces in informal settlements using in situ (on-site) reorganising instead of relocating residents to other areas (Kiefer & Ranganathan, 2020). Besides the physical improvements of reblocking, such as flood aversion and access to municipal services (Kiefer & Ranganathan, 2020), reblocking assists communities in driving

development goals by encouraging more profound and participatory relationships with Government, maintaining various forms of civic organisation and capacity building skills. At the start of this project, The Provincial Department of Human Settlements and the local Municipality developed Terms of Reference for the NGO, including several critical milestones for incremental upgrading to Informal settlements.

The project has completed all the requirements for the terms of reference, but the NGO is still supporting the community with new projects, including piloting two concrete double-story structures in the informal settlement. As part of gaining and sharing knowledge and experience, the community visits other upgraded settlements and shares information on building materials used, the development of saving schemes, and other general information.

3.5.2 Background case study B:

This CDD project consisted of planning and constructing a Children's Centre used as a multi-purpose platform for a wide variety of community initiatives, including youth-centred activities, and serves as an extension of the local crèche in the area.

The project was funded and facilitated by an International NGO that supports capacity building community driven development initiatives in South Africa. The building is classified as an "eco-building" due to the unique building method that involves filling biodegradable bags with soil and binding agents stacked on each other to form a sustainable, low-cost structure (Canadell et al., 2016). The inspiration and initial concept were developed by Iranian architect Nader Khalili, who was inspired by 13th century Persian poet Jala Ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi, Rumi which takes into consideration the natural elements of air, water, fire, and earth, along with rural architecture to create a safe and sustainable shelter using materials naturally found in an area (Kamal & Rahman, 2018).

The building was built using local and recycled materials (soil, cement) and other resources found in the area. The finished structures are several solid cylindrical domes that are stable and well insulated to aid natural cooling and heating that blends in with the local architecture. The building is fire-proof, earthquake-proof, and solar-powered and uses a unique gutter and underwater ground system to harvest rainwater.

The community was involved in the design phase, and the unique landscape of the informal settlement created an organic design brief. Approximately 30 members from the community, including women and men of varied ages, were given extensive training by building specialists

and completed the project in just over six months. The community was involved in the design process, and an organic view of the area and how the informal settlement was created served as a starting point for the design brief, and the builders included both women and men of all ages.

3.5.3 Background case study C:

The organisation is an NGO using community-led development principles in all processes and projects. Since its inception in 1962, the organisation has been committed to fighting the symptoms and causes of oppression and social inequity. One of the core virtues of the organisation is the belief that the community knows best what they need and how to solve the wicked problems in society. As such, the organisation does not lead the community development process and instead provides holistic support to the community to enable the community to reach its full capabilities. The organisation supports many programmes throughout Cape Town, including early childhood development, after-school programmes, and senior citizen¹ wellness programmes. Although the organisation focuses on core programmes, the work done by the organisation expanded in many different fields, including providing disability care, foster homes, shelters, economic empowerment, food security, and youth development. The organisation partners with various stakeholders to create mutually beneficial and co-creative relationships that enhance people's lives in marginalised communities.

Description of programmes:

- Afternoon assistance for children after school: Many children in informal settlements are left unattended after school and fall victim to abuse by community members, which impacts the child's development and causes trauma. A group of women in the community seeing the effects of children being alone decided to open their homes and provide care and support for these children after school. The NGO assists these women by providing a full suite of holistic support to the women and children.
- Senior citizen well-being. Here, the NGO creates an environment where hundreds of senior citizens from marginalised communities can come and access senior clubs. Here, senior citizens can access a range of activities addressing health, nutrition, psychosocial support and cognitive stimulation, social interaction, and even entertainment. The

¹ A senior citizen is defined as any individual who has reached the age of 60, signifying retirement from employment (Sikhosana, M. L., & Ntini, 2021)

NGO also provides home-based care whereby fieldworkers walk door-to-door throughout Cape Town's townships, searching for senior citizens in need of support. The fieldworkers include nurses and social workers who provide seniors with regular health check-ups, delivery of chronic medication, assistance in getting to and from the clinic, help to access government grants, and inform senior citizens about their rights in society.

- Craft and design entrepreneurial business support for senior citizens. Community members pay homage to their culture and skills and create unique items sold to a broader market. The NGO assists with funding the necessities required to produce the work and provides infrastructure and a safe place for the community to work and sell the products.

All projects are ongoing, and the NGO uses the community's needs to pivot into any new or parallel projects.

3.6 Case study design:

Yin (2009) differentiates between single-case and multiple-case designs, each with unique rationales. The single-case design is appropriate if the researcher is testing a well-formulated theory; if the case is so unique that it warrants documenting; if the case is typical in that it generally represents other cases; if the case is revelatory; or if the researcher is conducting a longitudinal study (Yin, 2009). Here the researcher selects one case study that encapsulates the issue being researched (Creswell, 2007). Multiple case studies are selected when the researcher identifies the issue/phenomenon being researched and chooses multiple cases to illustrate the issue/phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Multiple case studies are preferred over single case studies and are deemed more robust and compelling and allow the researcher to compare or contrast or explore the phenomenon in depth using various case studies (Farquhar, 2013; Yin, 2009). Within both single and multiple case studies is the possibility of the researcher having more than one unit of analysis, called embedded units (Yin, 2009). This study is an embedded multiple case study design of three community-driven development projects. The participants include donors or funders, various stakeholders of the organisation facilitating the community-driven development project, and community members and beneficiaries of the CDD project.

3.7 Participant selection

Since quantitative and qualitative approaches have different logics that underpin their strategies (Patton, 2015), selecting the appropriate sample for a research inquiry is critically important, especially in qualitative research, as it affects the ultimate quality of the study (Coyne, 1997). In qualitative research, the focus is on obtaining information-rich cases specifically selected to obtain an in-depth understanding and illumination of the research inquiry, referred to as purposeful sampling (Patton, 2015). Additionally, purposeful sampling is used to work within and fit the practical considerations, limitations on time and resources, and the nature of the questions being asked (Emmel, 2014). Within the realm of purposeful sampling, Patton (2015) shares forty various sampling strategies that can be used in qualitative research, but due to the nature of the present study being embedded in community driven research, snowball sampling was selected to identify information-rich interviewees who could refer additional contacts for the research (Creswell, 2007). The ‘snowball’ metaphor highlights the compounding and dynamic characteristics of the snowball sampling approach. It is when the researcher gains access to key informants through the details passed on from other informants (Noy, 2008). In this research, the researcher first identified organisations/projects/individuals that met the criteria for engaging in a community driven development project and contacted key individuals. During the introductory meeting, the purpose of the research and all other relevant information was shared with the individual, who then suggested who might be the best fit for interviews going forward. Given that this research inquiry will interview both the marginalised community members and the funders of the project, the snowball sampling approach fits with this research inquiry as it can be particularly helpful to obtain information from ‘hidden populations’ of marginalised and social elites (Noy, 2008).

For all case studies, the researcher conducted online research on CDD projects in South Africa and internationally. Thereafter, contact was made with relevant persons from NGOs and academics involved in the different CDD projects. The initial contact people became key informants and introduced the researcher to the other participants, including community members and government officials.

3.8 Participant access:

Before commencing any research, it is necessary to seek permission from the relevant ethics board and participants (Creswell, 2007). The University of Cape Town's Ethics committee granted permission to proceed with research. Furthermore, all participants in the study were provided with an overview and background of the research, procedures, risks, benefits, and consent forms detailing confidentiality issues and highlighting the participant's right to withdraw from the study at any time. This process was repeated at the beginning of each interview, ensuring that participants were informed and comfortable before the interviewing process began.

3.9 Data collection:

The word data is plural of datum (a singular specific piece of information) and refers to the information gathered by the researcher to answer the research questions (Court et al., 2018). In qualitative research, data can be collected through interviewing participants, observation, or analysis of relevant documentation; whilst quantitative methods rely on statistical and numerical methods, including questionnaires and tests (Court et al., 2018). Although current quantitative research provides a substantial body of knowledge that contributes to measuring critical consciousness, which includes using scales to measure the levels of critical consciousness (i.e., Low, medium, or high) across participants with large sample sizes with generalizable outcomes (Diemer et al., 2020), my study is not focused on measuring levels of critical consciousness but focuses on how critical consciousness influences community driven development as social innovation. Furthermore, when planning research methods, it is advised that researchers consider the time, resources, and research interests available to make a robust and relevant case for their research (Diemer et al., 2020). As I intend to interview community-driven development participants from various organisations and communities, each participant will have specific contexts and systems with unique perspectives. Therefore, using a standardised quantitative scale will not allow for additional problem probing or clarification by the researcher to get to the richness and depth of the information necessary to develop a complete picture of how critical consciousness manifests (Diemer et al., 2020).

Furthermore, current quantitative scales do not cover unique intersectional marginalization forms (Diemer, 2020). This is an essential factor to consider as my research interviewed various

stakeholders with multiple realities and perceptions in the CDD organisations, including the leader (C.E.O), project leaders or field workers, and community members. This intersectionality between the different stakeholders with various social identities will offer unique insight into how CC can manifest in the marginalised community, how it operates, and what it means to privileged populations (Diemer, 2020). Therefore, this study will use documentation and observations of participants during interviews and semi-structured interviews as sources of data collection.

This study uses the case study approach, of which a characteristic feature is the collection of data using multiple sources for data collection (Yin, 2009). Examples of data collection include interviews, documentation and audio-visual materials, archival records, physical artifacts, participant observation, and direct observation (Asmussen & Creswell, 1995; Yin, 2009). The advantage of using multiple sources of data collection is that it allows for triangulation of the data (from diverse sources), which increases reliability and leads to the conclusiveness of the research findings (Morgan et al., 2017; Roulston, Kathryn & Choi, 2018). The following section will explain the chosen methods, the rationality behind each method, and how the researcher overcame the disadvantages associated with each method.

The first instrument of data collection was documentation. Documentation is the analysis of documents relating to the research inquiry to study the natural behaviour of individuals to build an in-depth understanding of the Case (Tharenou et al., 2012). Significantly, documentation analysis is used to corroborate other sources of data collection used in the inquiry, which allows for triangulation (Yin, 2009). Various forms of documentation exist, including private documents (emails correspondence, letters, notes, journaling, diaries) and public documents (newspaper or mass media information and formal studies relating to the research) (Creswell, 2007; Tharenou et al., 2012; Yin, 2009). One of the main disadvantages of using documentation is that the information analysed was not explicitly created for the current research inquiry. Failure to acknowledge this early on could result in the researcher being misled by the documentation unless the researcher keeps in mind the original aims of the documentation (Yin, 2009).

The documentation used in the case studies included the following:

The documentation used in case study A included the analysis of Provincial Frameworks for Informal Settlements, minutes of meetings for community meetings, including all stakeholder meetings with the community, the municipality, and NGO, minutes of meetings for all capacity-building workshops, strategic planning documents, design review documentation, enumeration reports (draft and final), community-based planning reports, building reports, images of processes, workshops, models, service mapping in the informal settlement and closeout reports.

The documentation used in case study B and C included additional research-specific correspondence with participants, previous formal research done in the community, public documents relating to the research topic, detailed notes made before, during, and after the interview process, mass media articles on the CDD project, images of area and architect design plans, images of community driven project in different phases with community members and images of the completed project.

The second instrument used for collecting data in the present case studies was observation during the process of conducting interviews with participants. The rationale behind observation in this setting is when the researcher wants to understand the interaction of participants in a group and where respondents are unaware of the various elements of the interaction (Kumar, 2011). Observations can be classified as either structured or unstructured. The former is when the researcher uses pre-determined theory to discretely and objectively record physical and verbal behaviour, and the latter is used to understand participants' context and cultural behaviour (Mulhall, 2003). Unstructured observation is useful in understanding interactions between groups and illustrating the context of the environment, all leading to a greater understanding of the whole picture (Mulhall, 2003). The typology of roles in unstructured observation is the complete observer (here, there is no interaction with participants, and the role of the researcher is not revealed), the complete participant (the researcher is immersed in the social situation, but the role of the researcher is still not revealed) (Mulhall, 2003).

Additionally, the observer can be a participant (where the role of the researcher is revealed and undertakes intermittent observation along with interviewing) and finally, the participant as an observer (the researcher is immersed in prolonged activities within the social situation and whose role is revealed) (Mulhall, 2003; Kumar 2011). The most appropriate form of

observation for this research was the observer as a participant. The recording method used was narrative recording, whereby the researcher makes notes during the interaction and records a description using their own words (Kumar, 2011). To counter some of the disadvantages associated with observational research, namely observer bias and incomplete observation (Kumar, 2011), the researcher integrated the recorded observations into the analysis phase along with the semi-structured interviews to form part of the study as a whole (Morgan et al., 2017). Additionally, the researched voice recorded the interactions to ensure that details were not missed during the interview. The researcher made detailed notes of participants and their interactions with others, including making notes on the synergy and dynamic of the group members, language barriers, and environmental analysis during and after the interviews as a form of reflexive journaling, which helped to triangulate data. The researcher also engaged in reflexive journaling to document previous working experiences in the NGO sector. In acknowledging that previous experience could lead to interviewer bias, the researcher used reflexive journaling and suspended judgement to ensure objectivity.

The third instrument for data collection is the interview. The interview method was chosen primarily due to its advantages of understanding complex phenomena (in this case, critical consciousness in community driven development) and collecting in-depth information that can be supplemented with observations (Kumar, 2011). Interviews are used across various disciplines and can be described as accumulating information through individual interactions (Kumar, 2011). Interview interactions are different from natural conversations in that there are usually ethical guidelines, a pre-determined topic of discussion, and explicit rules regarding the role played by each party in the interview (Hammond & Wellington, 2021). The table below highlights a compendium of the various forms of interviews.

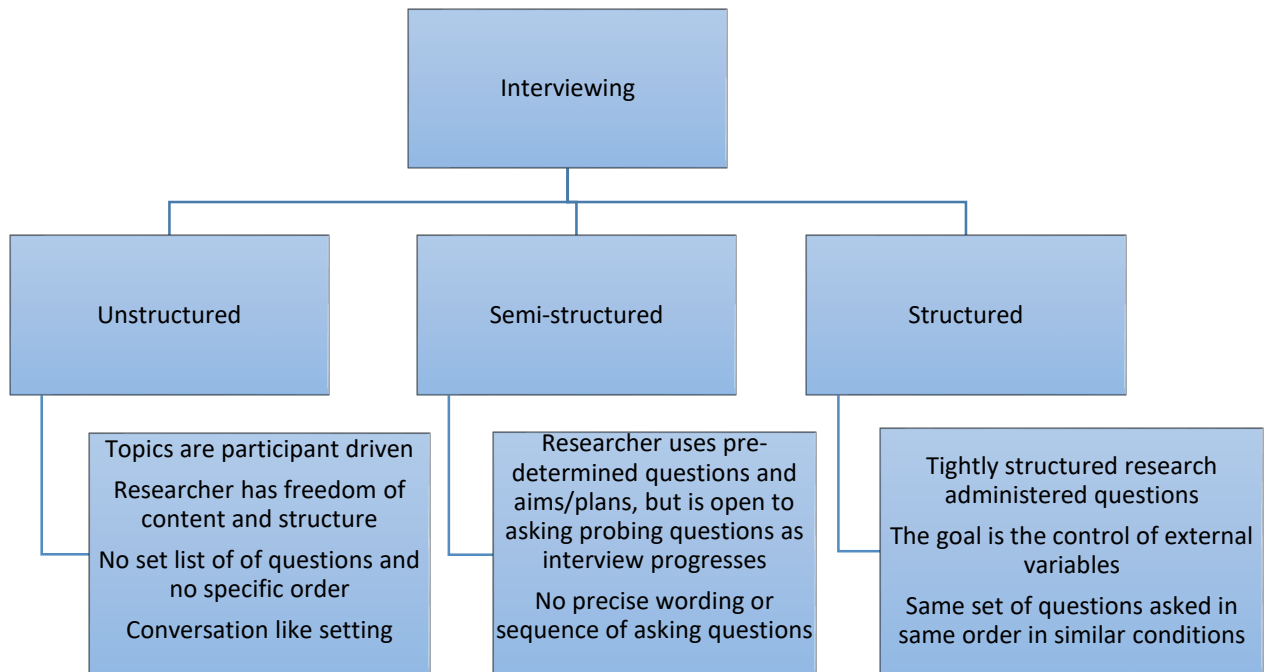


FIGURE 3: Types of interviews in research. Adapted from (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Court et al., 2018; Hammond & Wellington, 2021; Kumar, 2011; Roulston, Kathryn & Choi, 2018; Salmons, 2015)

This research inquiry conducted semi-structured individual interviews online with some participants and face-to-face focus group interviews with community members. In some instances, conducting online interviews is an appropriate way to understand a phenomenon; however, it is essential to acknowledge that participants will need to have some technology access (Salmons, 2015), including an internet connection and familiarity with online platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom. A focus group interview can be a small or a large group of participants whereby the focus is directed towards a collective activity (in this case, the CDD project), with the primary aim for the researcher to interpret and understand the full range of participants responses (Liamputtong, 2015). The researcher initially proposed to conduct individual interviews with each participant; however, concerning the interviews with community members, the researcher chose to conduct focus group interviews. Focus group interviews are not unusual in the CDD context since it is collective. In a focus group interview, it is suggested that the environment be non-threatening so that participants can feel comfortable discussing their opinions (Liamputtong, 2015).

Moreover, focus group interviews shift the influence to the participants rather than the researcher and are an appropriate form of data collection when working with communities

(Acocella, 2012). Therefore, the researcher adjusted the initial research design to suit the needs and wants of the community. In conducting focus group interviews, a significant disadvantage is that participants may conform to socially acceptable and desirable answers that may not reflect the true nature of the topic under discussion (Acocella, 2012).

The interviews were conducted in three phases:

Phase 1: Interview with the Funder of the CDD project (NGO/CBO/MUNICIPALITY).

Phase 2: Interview with NGO/CBO supporting community driven development project.

Phase 3: Interviews with community members involved in the CDD project.

Overall the sample in the study was based on individual or focus group semi-structured interviews and consisted of twenty-two (22) participants. The researcher interviewed one (1) NGO founder, one (1) CBO founder, one (1) general manager of an NGO, two (2) municipal representatives, four (4) NGO employees, two (2) CDD project team members, and nine (9) community members. The table below indicates the different roles and positions within the participant group.

Case study A		Case study B		Case Study C	
A1	NGO Project team member	B1	Founder NGO	C1	NGO General Manager
A2	NGO Manager	B2	NGO founder and Manager	C2	NGO employee and community member
A3	Municipal representative	B3	NGO General Manager and community member	C2	Community member
A4	Community representative	B5	NGO employee and community member	C4	Community member
A5	Community member	B5	NGO employee and community head		
A6	Community member	B6	NGO employee and community member		
A7	Community member	B7	Community member		
A8	Community member	B8	Community member		
A9	Community member	B9	Community member		

Figure 3: Roles and positions of participant group

Semi-structured interviews were held either on a one-on-one basis or in a focus group. All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and checked for errors.

3.10 Data Management:

Data management refers to how the researcher aims to collect, categorise, store, file, and retrieve documentation relating to the research while ensuring the data's safety, confidentiality,

and security (Lin, 2009). This research used documentation, observations, and semi-structured interviews as instruments in data collection. As this research focuses on community-driven development, interviewing community members in marginalised environments is essential. To ensure proper data management and confidentiality for all participants, the researcher used the three principles of data collection for case study research, as Yin (2009) suggested. The first principle places emphasis on the triangulation of data by using multiple sources, with the primary aim being that the facts presented in the case study research inquiry have more than one source of evidence (Yin, 2009). This research used documentation (public records, academic articles, mass media, archival records) and private (email correspondence, social media correspondence), semi-structured interviews (conducted online via Microsoft Teams and Zoom), and observations (detailed notes during interviews) to create a rich database of sources. The second principle relates to how information is organised and documented.

Case study database: All raw data for each Case was allocated to a separate folder to create a formal database for each case study. The following information was categorised and chronologically saved on the database:

- All information relating to administrative elements in the study (dates, duration, place of interview)
- Context (demographics, geographic location, history of area)
- Case study questions asked during the interview
- Case study notes were dated, scanned, and saved before, during, and after the interviews.
- Transcription notes (raw and cleaned data)
- Public data (surveys, academic journal articles, etc.)

Retention of data: Raw data will be stored for this research and, after that, permanently destroyed.

The final principle relates to creating a chain of evidence by creating a report with sufficient citations to the case study database and clear cross-referencing to ensure the reliability of the case study (Yin, 2009).

3.11 Data analysis:

Data analysis is inspecting, arranging, testing, and synthesizing the collected data to proffer a conclusion to the research inquiry (Yin, 2009). Simply put, data analysis is the art of reducing data into patterns or themes that makes meaning and builds new knowledge on a phenomenon (Vanover et al., 2021). Transcription is the act of intentional listening to what people say to turn into forms of text that expand knowledge, build associations, and deepen insight into research episodes, all while considering other aural dimensions such as silence and linguistic competence (Vanover et al., 2021). The development of online transcription tools may have many cost and time-efficiency benefits. Still, despite the euphoria, there are also risks associated with these tools. The suggestion is that researchers should use them as the basis for the first draft of many additional rounds of engaging with the raw audio data (Vanover et al., 2021). All interviews were audio-recorded using a mobile phone recording app due to cost-effectiveness and ease of transferring data to software transcription programmes. The researcher also took detailed notes of interactions during the interview. Transcribing data was undertaken using the software programme Otter.ai which allowed for quick and cost-effective transcription of interviews. Each participant in the interview was labelled according to one of the three study number systems. For example, in case study A, each participant in the interview was categorised as A1, A2, A3, etc. This method was followed for the rest of the case studies. The researcher then cleaned up the data by listening to interviews and correcting any spelling or other mistakes with the transcription. This process assisted the researcher in ensuring accuracy and becoming more knowledgeable with the data (Vanover et al., 2021).

The method used to analyse data depends on the type of study (in this case, a case study), research goals philosophical assumptions of the researcher (Vanover et al., 2021). As outlined previously, this research inquiry followed the inductive analysis approach, which actively searches for patterns and themes in the data (Patton, 2015). Case study research can include content analysis, the process of analysing text to make meaning and search for patterns and emergent themes (Yin, 2009). Here a distinction needs to be made regarding what constitutes a pattern and a theme. The former is a descriptive finding, while the latter is categorical and interprets the meaning of a pattern (Patton, 2015). For Clarke & Braun (2018), themes are not merely a collection of what participants said but the process of actively creating themes that capture the hidden meanings below the data surface. It is for this reason that an essential

instrument in data analysis is the researcher, who needs to be consciously aware of any subjectivity and personal biases they inhibit so that the research inquiry is not dotted with false information, assumptions, biases, and overconfidence (Nowell et al., 2017; Vanover et al., 2021). As such, the researcher used intentional decision-making to firstly clarify reasons for identifying codes, thereafter identified and defined initial codes, counted incidences of codes, and conducted searches to analyse the presence of multiple codes to generate themes that connect to the original research design (Vanover et al., 2021; Yin, 2009).

A popular method of producing detailed and complex descriptions of data is the thematic analysis method which is described as analysing, categorising, delineating, and communicating themes in the data (Nowell et al., 2017). Thematic analysis is instrumental in a research inquiry with multiple perspectives from different participants. Here, the researcher aims to illustrate differences or similarities in the data, to show some unanticipated discovery or finding or relationships between how the different parts of the analysis work together, leading to a better understanding of the different themes (Harding, 2019; Nowell et al., 2017). An important note, however, is to accept that thematic analysis is not dependent on quantifiable measures but rather to what extent the theme relates to the inquiry's overall research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This research inquiry will use the following six-step process as documented by Braun & Clarke, 2006. Although presented as linear, the research was an iterative, recursive, and reflective process that moved between phases.

The following table highlights the phases (phase 1 to phase 6), the relevant literature regarding the phases, and how the researcher carried this out in this research.

	Description of phase	How this manifests in literature	How it manifests in this research inquiry
Phase 1	Familiarisation with data	Transcription of data Read and re-read data Inspect data Note-taking during data collection	Data collection and immersion Data immersion by prolonging time with data Data is stored chronologically in a secure database Comprehensive note-taking during data collection and analysis

Phase 2	Generate initial codes: 'coding' is the systematic identification of issues, similarities, topics, and differences in the data (Vanover et al., 2021).	Systematically work through the data set Code <i>interesting</i> features of data Code as many potential themes and patterns time permitting Code data with inclusivity of context Codes may be matched with data extracts It is important to note that data extracts can have various themes and can be coded once, multiple times, or even uncoded (Braun & Clarke, 2006)	Use symbols, highlighting, circling to mark raw data Triangulation of research with other data Reflexive journaling which entails self-examination and documenting key decisions in data analysis and the rationale for making decisions (Harding, 2019). Creating an audit trail of code generation
Phase 3	Searching for themes	Sort codes into themes Combine all relevant coded data extracts into themes Various classifications of themes can emerge, including main themes, sub-themes, and miscellaneous themes	Visually representations using mind-maps and tabulations to create a thematic map. Triangulation of data
Phase 4	Reviewing themes	Refinement of candidate themes Review data at coded level, and if coherent patterns emerge, the next step is to measure the individual themes to the entire data set (multiple case studies) of research inquiry. Themes may be collapsed into other themes, broken down into additional themes, or unrealised due to a lack of data supporting the theme.	Begin cross-analysis
Phase 5	Defining and naming themes	Refer to collated data extracts for each theme. Provide a definition, name, and detailed analysis of each theme and overall themes. Provide an account and narrative(story) of each theme Read through data and coding at least twice	Write a detailed analysis of each theme Document theme naming
Phase 6	Producing the report	The report should have a concise, plausible, convincing, and interesting write-up on the story of the data Use of data extracts as evidence of prevalent themes Transition from narrative writing to clearly persuade and demonstrate a valid argument with regard to the research question	Richness in the description of contexts Epistemological position of the researcher is clearly consistent with the language and concepts of the report

FIGURE 3: Detailed analysis and description of the six phases of thematic analysis and how this manifests in the literature and current research report Adapted from (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017)

The process used to analyse all data sets was thematic analysis. The procedure followed is documented below.

Firstly, each data set was analysed, and critical and relevant information was highlighted from transcription and transferred to a Microsoft Word document. The researcher ensured each sentence was assigned a numerical value, so that cross-referencing and accuracy of the data

were maintained at all times. Initial coding began as the researcher grouped the data set according to common themes that emerged as initial codes 1.

The process was repeated for all data sets and labelled accordingly. After the generation of initial code 1, the researcher began searching for themes, and all relevant coded extracts from all data sets across case studies were combined. Themes were reviewed, and some themes collapsed into other main themes using a process of placing all themes onto a landscape page and connecting the themes. The themes that were unrealised due to insufficient evidence to support the data were identified as miscellaneous and removed from the final data set. These themes were labelled as initial themes 1. The Detailed analysis for each data extract was written and defined, and a detailed analysis for each theme was made. At this stage, themes were labelled as final themes, and a detailed explanation of why each theme has meaning was given. Recurrent analysis of data and coding were done to ensure accuracy.

For example, in case study B, the research revealed an initial code 1 for reasons for joining the organisation as follows:

“And there were children eating alongside dogs and pigs, and not going to school. And there were a lot of children on the rubbish dump. And I just thought I had just thought I must try and make it better” **B2.** (initial code 1).

Upon reviewing the extracts across all case studies, this coded piece of data was placed under the theme ‘moment of lift or unveiling’ (initial themes 1)

After detailed analysis for each data extract was defined, the researcher placed this theme into the broader theme of the restoration of dignity (final theme)

The last step was writing the report below, designed to demonstrate a valid argument relating to the research question.

3.12 Case study reporting:

Considering that this research inquiry focused on multiple case-study analyses, Yin (2009) suggests using a report format used specifically for multiple case studies. The research report consisted of one cross-case analysis covering each cross-case issue, with the information retrieved from each case serving as an evidentiary base only, but information from each Case will be integrated and cited into the relevant section/issues.

3.13 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Cape Town. Ethical consent and informed consent forms were sent to all voluntary participants (Appendix C & D). These included acknowledging their rights to withdraw from the research and rights to anonymity throughout the research process. Participants were also aware of potential risks that might affect them during the study.

Critical consciousness can trigger sensitive topics such as culture, identity, and structural and systemic inequality. As a researcher, I ensured that I was aware of any signs of unease with the line of questioning and regularly asked respondents if they were comfortable answering questions. Participants were informed that they could stop the interview at any time without needing to give explanations or repercussions. Participants had the option of requesting a transcript of their interview and were reassured that if the participant wished not to have the data used, it would be permanently destroyed with immediate effect.

Furthermore, due to the nature of my research in critical consciousness in community driven development, the research might have presented a critique for the organisation and the community, which could affect external funding and relationships with stakeholders. In order to mitigate this, I removed any personal identifiers in the data to ensure confidentiality.

The researcher ensured that all names of participants were alphabetised and assigned a number depending on the case study. For example, case study A's participants were numbers A1, A2, A3, etc. In instances when participants were describing a person's experience, the name was changed to a different name to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

The following safeguards were implemented in each phase of the research:

Physical safeguards: Data was stored in password-protected computers and files installed with anti-virus software.

Administrative safeguards: The principal researcher was only allowed access to all information relating to participants.



Research design safeguards: Data Collection, transcription, and coding were only undertaken by the principal researcher, ensuring confidentiality. Furthermore, data was stored without any direct identifiers or personal identities so that the data collected could not be linked to the individual or organisation.

Publication of research: Participants were informed that the research would be available on Open Access via the University of Cape Town's dissertation list. Furthermore, the research may be used for publication in academic articles or other media.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter will report on the research findings and present the data analysis of the findings to answer the research question, which was

“How can critical consciousness influence community driven development as social innovation?”.

The process of thematic analysis revealed several themes and sub-themes. The following paragraph will explain in detail the themes that emerged from the evidence gathered (documentation, observations, and semi-structured interviews) and will be supported with direct quotations from the interview process.

Five factors emerged from the empirical evidence to answer the research question, how can critical consciousness influence community driven development as social innovation? The factors are

1. Immersion with community
2. Courageous conversations
3. Restoring dignity
4. Holistic views and support
5. Evolving models

In the context of this research and to answer the research question, a brief recapping of the main elements in the research question will be discussed briefly to explain the researcher’s presentation of the major themes in the data analysis. Critical consciousness refers to the processes of how marginalised communities, through three constructs of critical reflection, motivation/efficacy, and critical action, raise consciousness by becoming aware of the inequalities and systemic oppression present in their lives (Watts et al., 2011). This awareness motivates an individual or collective participation in critical action to challenge and dismantle oppression and social inequalities (Diemer et al., 2021). The data analysis will answer the research question by categorising the themes under the constructs of critical consciousness, i.e., critical reflection, efficacy, and critical action. It must be noted that the constructs have traditionally been theorised to flow sequentially from critical reflection to perceived efficacy

to critical action. However, contemporary research suggests that this process is not unidirectional and that, in some situations, critical action may be a precursor to critical reflection. (Diemer et al., 2021). The analysis will end with a separate section dedicated to social innovation and show how it manifests in the research to answer the research question.

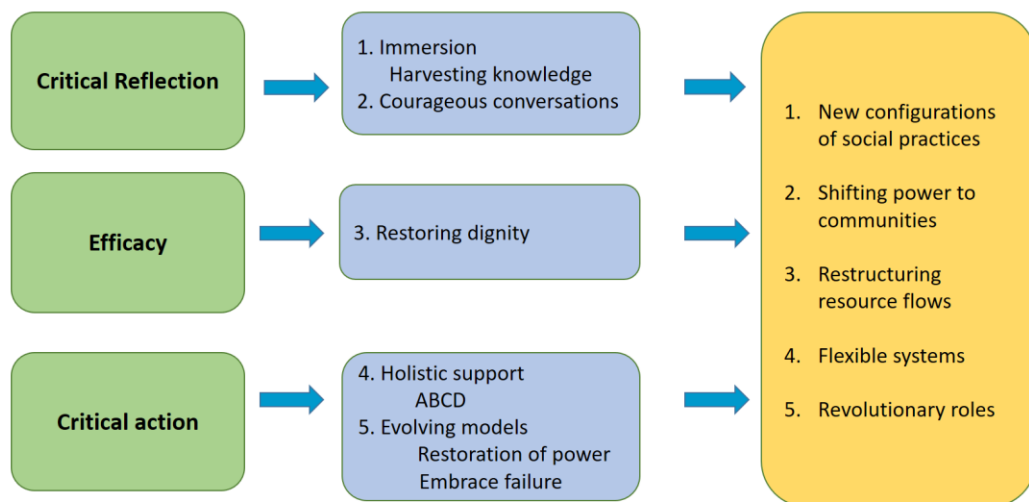


FIGURE 2: Researcher's graphical representation of themes emerging in data analysis

4.1 CRITICAL REFLECTION

Critical consciousness refers to the processes of how marginalised communities, through three constructs of critical reflection, motivation/efficacy, and critical action, raise consciousness by becoming aware of the inequalities and systemic oppression present in their lives (Watts et al., 2011). This awareness motivates an individual or collective participation in critical action to challenge and dismantle oppression and social inequalities (Diemer et al., 2021). As a result, critical reflection is central to the theory of CC, which involves critical inquiry, self-awareness of personal beliefs, behaviours, perceptions, values, ideologies, and interpretations, and awareness of how these are perpetuated at all levels in society (Jemal, 2017).

4.1.1 Immersion in the community

The process of immersion actively links to the first construct of critical reflection, whereby transformative change can only occur when there is a deep engagement in the community's reality and an understanding of the complexities, culture, and oppressive systems that impact human development. In particular, immersion is a necessary pre-condition for transformative change. It prevents cultural invasion whereby the specific views held by a community are not respected or held in esteem. Like with most community driven development, in order to know the community and understand the needs of the community, stakeholders need to undertake a process of immersion with the community to understand what was done in the past and what are the current and future goals of the community. Broadening on this is the idea that immersing into the community is an act of transformation. In immersing into the reality of a situation, stakeholders cast away assumptions, biases, and pre-determined ways of doing and being and enter fully into the reality facing communities. Immersion is done to understand the reality and multiple complexities and layers a community faces. Without complete submergence into the reality of the community, the actions taken for transformation risk being inaccurate, incomplete, and, ironically, may cause more suffering to the community since it does not address the reality of the situation. Accordingly, through the act of submergence, the unveiling of reality can begin, and the process of transformation can take place by looking into the lived reality of the community in detail and entering their world, perceptions, behaviours, and ways of being. The process of immersion covers many areas in community driven development. Critically though, the single most crucial process is, to begin with, a clear intent of allowing the community the dignity of leading the process. All case studies revealed an element of immersion through data collection surveys within the community as a starting point for all development work. However, what is exciting and socially innovative is how these surveys were carried out, i.e., processes and the project's ultimate goal. The following section will describe immersion in the context of harvesting knowledge with communities.

Harvesting knowledge

Harvesting knowledge refers to collecting information regarding a community, including the current issues, demographic, geographic, health and welfare, employment and other pertinent statistics, cultural norms, values, etc. In case study A, The NGO working with a particular community first engages in dialogue, community profiling, and household enumeration to

obtain information about the community in the informal settlement. This process is done even before project goals are discussed and determined, and the NGO's first step is to build mutual respect and trust with the community.

And that's always been our approach that when we go into a settlement, we first find out what they are doing. We also do a long history of community profiling at the settlement level and then household enumeration. So you can see how data plays a very important part in formulating a kind of partnership agreement. (A2)

Additionally, the NGO offered support services to the community to obtain detailed information on the community for the incremental upgrading of the informal settlement. Here, the NGO trained community members on collecting and analysing data using android devices, administering questionnaires, verifying data, and mapping socio-economic amenities to help determine project goals.

And that essentially means that from our organisation's side, we provide professional support. Because we're an NGO, we use the money to support the social movements to strengthen those existing structures in this area. Through that process, we train communities to collect their own data, analyse that data, and then identify project priorities. (A1)

Through the data collection process, a dual outcome occurs whereby the emphasis is on building social capital and giving agency and autonomy to communities, as well as quantifiable data that can be used for reporting purposes.

The analysis further reveals a hidden advantage of the method used to collect data in the community.

Even though for training and skills, the idea is to create a form of support, and even with the data collection, we don't count, you know, the number of shops we are actually collecting people. (A1)

It is incredible to hear how valuable the community is seen through the lens of the NGO. The emphasis is firmly rooted in the principles of CDD and CC by giving the community agency

and autonomy in their development without controlling the process. As a result, the community remains a powerful voice in the development process.

It's about bringing people into the organisation and trying to give people agency and say, look, you can actually be at the forefront of the development process. (A2)

As a result, the NGO successfully turned a data collection exercise into an exercise of human connection between the organisation and the community and community with each other. This process shows that integrating the community into the project has a deeper level of social capital processes that ultimately spill over into autonomy and empowerment for the community.

We see an example of this as shared by one community member who revealed that his confidence increased by undertaking data collection within his community and being able to share this knowledge with the local municipality.

So it has given a kind of guidance and leadership. So knowing that if I'm talking to the municipality at those partnerships meetings, I'm talking about something that I know. (A4)

Moreover, when the community is involved in each phase of the project, the outcome is a deep level of participation from all areas in the community and guaranteed project success in terms of outcomes.

The community based planning process was at a deep level of participation because we got representation from every section in this area to be part of the design process where they looked at block level. And we managed to get input from each household at the time and had a very deep level of participation. (A1)

As a result, the process resulted in a socially innovative positive consequence that allowed community members to form new, improved, data-driven collaboration with the municipality.

A similar approach was followed by the CBO in case study B who conducted research by initially meeting the community informally and following this with quantifiable data collection. The founder of the CBO went to all households in the informal settlement and collected data on the community. However, when analysing how the survey was conducted, it is apparent that the process was unique, intimate, and fun.

And then we went door to door on my birthday; it took four days or more. And we hung out because it was my birthday. Doing shots with people, it was a party! It was one of those things where we did like 20-hour days and got out before sunrise. And we left way after sunset. It took all day; it was the most draining thing. And everyone loved it. Everyone felt so respected. And it was so important just to have that face-to-face, shake everybody's hand and see their house; everyone wanted to show us their houses. And show us what's in their yard and their garden and have us meet their kids, and everyone felt really touched to be able, you know because so many people in the community had been ignored by this other non-profit that was playing favourites. So they were like, a lot of people were like, the biggest gift was just having you hear my story like nobody's ever asked. And it was just; it was a really emotional fun time just to meet everybody. And it was a party because they were partying. (B1)

Although the CBO succeeded in achieving the necessary data, the process used to immerse *with* the community achieved something more valuable than quantifiable information. They managed to make people feel respected by hearing their stories. In viewing their gardens and showing off their children, the CBO caught the essence of a proud parent or caregiver. In sitting with the community, in their time, their homes, the CBO connected worlds and created a platform for humans to connect with humans.

Moreover, the outcome of a survey entrenched in dialogue with the community resulted in a new understanding of the complex issues in the community. By tapping into the crux of the issues, these can rise to the surface.

But in any case, we brought our survey to the people, and we told them, here's what we're hearing here. And so we sought community consensus through a very literal

way, which is asking every single person what's going on, like, listen, the people think HIV is your biggest problem. We're really seeing that it's TB and diabetes. They were like, yeah, that sounds right to us. (B1)

In this case, the immersive experience with the community revealed other hidden health-related issues which contribute significantly to the mortality rate of the community. Had it not been for the process of immersion and dialogue with the community, these hidden health issues may have been misrepresented.

One of the most interesting aspects of the outcome of the survey was that the process unveiled several causes of oppressive systems, ultimately increasing the community's mortality rate.

But one of the real challenges is that death has been, you know, we've had so many staff members die. And now the mortality rate, we've counted before. And it's really sad. (B1)

The reasons for this increased mortality rate were shocking. According to the founder of the CBO, the community that resided nearby citrus farms was being exposed to harmful chemicals that polluted the soil with pesticides. Additionally, farmers spray pesticides from the air, drenching everything in its path. Moreover, there is a strong suggestion from the community that the drinking water is contaminated and very likely to be unfit for human consumption.

I think it's related to, I mentioned, the toxic dump. But so, the toxic dump I mentioned before, what I forgot to mention is that they drop pesticides from the sky from helicopters. And because citrus fields surround the area, and when the helicopter comes over, you just get wet, literally wrenched with pesticides. You know, when you have a place where people were dying, disproportionately young, and it's unique in the area, it doesn't take like Erin Brockovich to connect these dots. You got poison in the sky and poison in the ground. But so that's been a big obstacle is just mortality. It's, it goes hand in hand with when you work with really vulnerable populations. (B1)

This hostile environment and lack of medical care created the perfect breeding ground for death, which spurred the CBO to dig deeper into other causes of mortality.

Upon closer inspection regarding the possible causes of many illnesses facing the community, another disturbing revelation was made by the founder of the CBO when chatting with a local Dr who was providing medical care to the community. In this meeting, the Doctor, who was providing health services in the entire area of nearby informal settlements, revealed a disturbing and demeaning attitude regarding the marginalised community and ignorantly stated that people are sick in this area due to being possessed by the devil.

And he's actually the only doctor in the whole area. So all of these problems about medical care and disability getting denied, and people not understanding their pills. There's a person (responsible), and he's the person. And he goes, I'm saying that these people are inhabited by the devil, so I have to pray to Jesus. And I don't even like to give them medicine because Jesus is the only one who can help. He just keeps going on and on about how he has to talk in 'tongues' to his patients. And I'm like; You're the only doctor for ten thousand poor people! Yeah, I'm the only public doctor. I'm like, wow, this is this explains a lot. (B1)

It is unfathomable that this belief and behaviour are prevalent today. Especially in areas where communities are already marginalised and suffering from oppressive systems, an added layer of oppression is placed upon them, veiled as religion, but in reality, a pathetic excuse for religion. The views of this medical practitioner blatantly refuse to acknowledge the real causes of diseases and illnesses in the community, which impacts the mortality rate and, ultimately, any community driven projects.

As a result, many community members pass away, often at a young age, due to the community living in toxic environments without access to proper medical care affecting the functioning of the CBO since many trained community members pass away.

We have tried for years to build the capacity of the NPO. We've built boards of directors (of residents from the area) and taught financial literacy courses and how to do non-profit accounting, but people keep dying. (B1)

Ultimately, immersing with the community and revealing underlying oppression allowed radical and creative innovations to assist the community's needs. Eventually, the CBO set up a mobile health clinic to help with the unmet health needs of the community.

We worked with a med student to organise a mobile clinic to address the real health needs. One of the big problems was that they people didn't understand their medication, and they felt like the local clinic was too far and that the nurses weren't explaining to them what things were and how much to take up. Somebody in America pays for a mobile clinic, drives in, and ensures they hired a nurse from the community. So now you've got a local nurse, you know, you live a few doors down, you can go to her with questions. It sorted out everybody's medication. So you know, it was this whole this is your problem. Okay, let's come up with a solution as a community. (B1)

As a result, it can be seen how immersion in the community allows for the de-layering of societal issues, which leads to finding innovative, inclusive solutions *with* the community. In this scenario above, innovation re-focused on finding and hiring the skills within the community to solve the issues being faced by the community.

Similarly, in case study C, the theme of immersion into the community is present from the organisation's inception, with the founder's efforts starting in the 1960s. The theme of immersion extends to the policies and processes of the organisation and even extends to the staff component. An interesting and unique perspective that is different from the other case studies is that the NGO immerses in the community and the community into the organisation. As the majority of the staff population (90% of staff) are members of the communities being assisted by the NGO, this allows the NGO to obtain information about the community that is practical, reliable, accurate, and timely.

And we take a lot of guidance from our staff; our staff are people who live in the community, so it's 85 to 90% of our staff live in the communities that they serve, so they have an ear to the ground, they come from the very circumstances that they are trying to mitigate now with our participants. (C1)

This process of immersing the community into the organisation allows for hearing about the raw, unfiltered factors that impact the community and taking relevant action to combat the issues facing communities.

So they understand what is happening and often come to us and say, but we are not looking at this and not looking at that. And they would, for example, say that so many seniors at home are not being looked after and cannot come to the club. And that's how this program started. (C1)

As a result, the staff members can provide crucial information relating to the community that would otherwise be missed.

Interestingly, the immersion process also extends to *how* work is carried out in the organisation. On the one hand, the organisation provided the infrastructure in the form of a building to provide senior citizens a safe space to conduct a suite of activities and access health care, but for those senior citizens in the community that need assistance but can't come to the centre, the staff members immerse into the community.

So our community based workers would then go door to door to find out where these seniors are, if they want to be supported by our organisation in any way, and what they need, so their needs are community rehabilitation. And you see amazing results see people coming in from being bed-bound and not having any joy in life coming to the centre to volunteer club joining a club. (C1)

It is heartening to see how the organisation places importance on creating access for all community members. Even when community members could not reach the services provided by the organisation, it was clear that a restructuring of resources occurred to make access available to all.

Equally astounding is that the founder of the organisation, who is now 80 years old, is still actively immersed in the informal settlement community, even though she is not from the community.

But Shiela is the first one in the townships every morning. She's there, and we get called at seven in the morning to say, I'm here now, and you know what's going on and what are we doing? We are still trying to wake up, and she's in the township, meeting with people late at night and at weekends. (C1)

The founder's presence in the community shows that the commitment to working with the community transcends time and traditional working hours. Moreover, immersion is valuable because being present in the community creates relationships of trust and mutual understanding and provides assistance as required by the community.

However, immersion in a community, especially in areas where crime is a factor, carries some degree of risk. But deeper analysis into safety reveals something spectacularly innovative how immersive the organisation's management was willing to go. When the staff at the NGO complained about being victims of crime, the general manager and founder decided they were ill-equipped to advise on practical solutions as they had no idea regarding the complexities of life in marginalised areas. As such, they plan on walking the road with staff and the community, both figuratively and physically.

A lot of our people are mugged in the morning. So we all sat around discussing like big deals about staff safety. And I said to Shiela, you know what guys, I feel so, what's the word I used, like a fake and a fraud. I'm sitting here talking about my staff; I have no idea where they live. So Shiela and I are going to go at six in the morning when they get up and go with them to work. And actually see where they go to, where they walk that's not unsafe. So then we understand. That is the only way you actually know what's happening. You can't sit on a Zoom and decide how I'm going to get staff safe and what is safe for them. I don't even know how they get up in the morning. You know what it means to leave their home and make their way to work. (C1)

Walking the journey is indeed brave and highlights something even more unusual. The top-level staff of the Ngo is willing to sacrifice their safety to ensure others are safe. There is courage and commitment to immersing with the community.

In case study B, we witnessed how a community member acts as a bridge connecting the NGO and the community. The participant is employed as the Principal of the crèche and resides permanently on the premises of the CDD project. As a result, she acts as an important resource due to her availability all day and night and acting as a heart of social capital in the community.

I live here in the centre; we have a flat whereby I live in. So every time, even on weekends, I'm here. So I'm the one who communicates with everyone. I will try my best to do whatever they need. I will be there for them anytime. 11 o'clock, 12 o'clock (B4)

Another staff member confirmed that the Principal is there for the community in all circumstances.

If there is any problem, she's everything. She's a police officer; she's a Doctor. When there is a problem, they call her. Even if someone passes away, they will call her. She knows what someone must do when someone passes away. She will be told Malume just passed away; you must go there and assist. (B3)

In her immersive position, the Principal of the crèche is socially innovative in the multitude and flexibility of roles and immersive ability to navigate relationships and provide support to the community and the NGO.

Submerging in the community also includes cultural immersion by acknowledging, attaining, and sustaining the local knowledge and wisdom of the community and incorporating it into any development project. In forming relationships with other stakeholders, the CBO in case study B actively partners with a primarily religious organisation, who, although prescribing to the catholic faith, actively sought alternate treatments for illnesses faced by community members.

And so we're working alongside that organisation. They're the only Catholics I've ever worked with that will take people to Sangomas (traditional healers) and stuff like that. They're, they're really unconventional. (B1)

This practice shows that the ability to respect and honour a community's traditional medications can and should be incorporated into development.

With regards to the community driven development projects, immersion can extend to environmental immersion whereby the building material required for projects and the culture of the community in terms of traditional housing architecture was integrated into project plans. The first step in environmental immersion was conducted through a profoundly immersive and participative process involving input from all stakeholders.

We started looking into building methods that could be taught that were more sustainable and would fit in with something that would fit a semi-traditional. And so this was just sort of a way of trying to get something, working with architects that kind of fit the culture along with the communities need for work that they could be trained to do (B1)

The inclusion of the community's culture and the need to create a safe space for the community also extended to the environment and building materials that could be harnessed using local and sustainable materials.

It's very well-intentioned. The idea is that you can build something with materials that are from that immediate area. And it will be in a permanent structure that needs very little maintenance, harvests water, it's cooler in the summer and hotter in the winter because of the thickness of the walls. Those domes are like a meter thick, like solid, dirt concrete and in there. Those domes harvest rainwater and run on wind power and solar power. I mean, you're off-grid, and it was also the idea of creating safety (B1)

It becomes clear that environmental immersion is a process of understanding the local community's needs and resources and harnessing these resources to create innovative, sustainable outcomes.

Factors impeding immersion

In contrast to the deep levels of participation, it can be deduced that when participation is reduced to a light touch or a tick-box exercise, the outcome does not truly satisfy the community's needs. In this scenario, a municipality was given funding to provide services to the community. Still, due to time, budgeting, and other deficits, the resulting service was inadequate and resulted in a process that was non-immersive.

One of the things was that the community always said you just come in, and you bring the toilets wherever you want to; you have no regard for what we want (A3)

It must be noted that the municipality does not act without regard for the community. There are rigid systems in place regarding financial resource allocation due to the budgeting process used by the municipality, which in turn had a reverberation affecting decisions undertaken by the community.

For example, the municipality uses a model based on zero-based budgeting, whereby any money that is not used up in a specific year is not returned to the municipality for the following year. Eventually, a situation arises, possibly before the end of the financial year, that prompts the municipality to spend the money urgently.

We have a budget that runs from July to June. And in that period, obviously, you have a certain allocation, in terms of zero-based budgeting, you know, it is basically a case of using it or losing it. From outside, we said we have a budget that we have to spend. So if I don't use it, I lose it. So I'm just putting the stuff in. So through conversation, we sort of hit common ground where people thought this would be the best position for, let's say, an ablution facility. (A3)

The approach starts inversely with budgets drawn up for upcoming development projects; after that, the municipality goes to the community and fixes or implements changes without in-depth and sustained dialogue with the community. Additionally, this process is embedded in a time-pressured environment. It can be argued that the result is beneficial because the community has some needs being met. Still, this model does not help service other, possibly more urgent, and necessary needs facing the community.

COVID-19 and its impact on immersion

Other situations can impact immersion with the community. Recently, the entire world was engulfed in a precarious COVID-19 pandemic, which halted many development initiatives due to lockdown restrictions. For certain communities, this proved a challenge, and the community

members could not meet face-to-face. Virtual meetings over WhatsApp proved difficult, even when the NGO provided the funding for the calls.

When the lockdown happened in 2020, we came to a point where we were kind of closing out that project. But the last thing we needed to do was have a community-wide meeting. And we need to give the plan to the municipality to, you know, hand it over, right? We tried very hard to have some general meetings. And I remember myself, you know, starting Whatsapp groups, having these Whatsapp Video calls, CORC providing airtime for this. I was calling leaders. But it wasn't possible because people couldn't gather, and I asked leaders if they could just go around, if possible, maintain social distancing. But it wasn't the same level as what we did in the previous when we could have big gatherings and get people's input. (A1)

Therefore, the pandemic led to a disconnect and impacted communication between the community and the organisation.

I always find that there is value in having face-to-face engagement. You can kind of test people's moods and also speak more openly. They're more comfortable and engaging, whereas virtually, I feel like is a disconnect. (A1)

In analysing the relationship between the community and the local municipality, the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic timelines played a role that impacted the level of participation in the community. The community stated that there were partnership meetings and a generally good relationship with the municipality before the pandemic.

Before the pandemic, we have had a good relationship with the Municipality in terms of having partnerships, and we had those meetings. And there were guys that were elected to sit with Municipality on the partnership meetings. But the failure was that we'll call it COVID-19, whereby we don't have to sit, and then things faded away about what we talked about (A4)

In contrast, another community member believed that the municipality's role needed to be more immersive and that the municipality needed to go to the community and not the other way around.

But I think if the municipality can come down and meet with us, talk with us. Not the community must go up to them to the municipality because the problem is down here; it's not there. I think on my side that can work for us; it can help our communities (A5)

The frustration of the community member shows that there is not only a lack of communication but a lack of understanding and very little on-the-ground immersion and communication between the municipality and the community.

In a surprisingly contrasting an optimistic scenario, the community shared an experience regarding a previous worker from the municipality who went above and beyond his duty and ensured that he was available to assist the community. He was iconic in that he was available to help the community at any time, regardless of the inconvenience.

There was a guy from the municipality who wanted to work with the community. That guy, you can call him at seven o'clock and say can you come and see the community, and the guy will be here. And then Municipality decided to chase him away. I don't know what he has done, or maybe I don't know. Because he was the guy leading the MOU, he didn't care whether you could call him at night when you had a problem, so that guy would be there to support you. (A4)

The statement is profoundly important to the development work in communities since it shows that regardless of static processes within the structure of bureaucracy within the municipality, a single person can make a monumental change in the community. However, this person's influence and support were short-lived, and the community was unaware of the reasons for his exit.

The community also shared their experience and appreciation with the NGO supporting the area. The NGO was seen as a pillar of constant support since the NGO was immersed with the community during the project after completion.

This organisation has been very supportive from day one in this area. She (the project manager from the NGO) is here whenever we need her. That's the kind of person I'm looking for from the government side. (A5)

It can be summarised that the process of immersing into the community is a vital and critical pre-condition for working with communities in development.

To conclude on the theme of immersion, it can be deduced that immersion in the community also allows you to understand the community's issues in-depth and reveal what is important to them, their needs, and plans for the future. Moreover, it is necessary to immerse in the community to obtain an unfiltered account of the experiences the community faces and the causes of the multiple forms of oppression, some of which need several processes of de-layering. Setting up spaces of mutual trust and actively seeking out skills and resources from the community allows all stakeholders to critically reflect on the root caused and sustained causes driving all forms of oppression and paves the way for transformative action and addresses the critical issues.

Perhaps it might be helpful to end this theme of immersion with the following quote from Che Guevara's writings, which highlights how his relationship with the community as a medical doctor and guerrilla had the positive consequence of significantly affecting his ideology through the process of immersion.

“As a result of daily contact with these people and their problems, we became firmly convinced of the need for a complete change in the life of our people...communion with the people ceased to a mere theory, to become an integral part of ourselves. Guerrillas and peasants began to merge as a solid mass. No one can say exactly when, in this long process, the ideas became a reality, and we became a part of the peasantry.” (Freire & Ramos, 2017).

4.1.2 Courageous conversations

A fundamental tenant of critical reflection is to engage in dialogue where there is the courage to confront, observe and see the unveiling of the world. Merriam-Webster defines courage as the

“mental or moral strength to venture, persevere and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty. (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Although immersing yourself into the community compels all stakeholders to engage in dialogue, what distinguishes courageous conversation is the creation of spaces and opportunities for deep, meaningful dialogue that welcomes doubts, suggestions, critiques, and uncomfortable discussions that dive unafraid into community issues. These courageous conversations aim to create a space for authentic thinking as a construct of critical consciousness in pursuit of sustaining meaning for human life. In some situations, the action that is taken, however risky, is necessary to ensure the quest for courageous conversations; however, the participants in the research showed exemplarity of courage in actively seeking conversations with all members of the community, including gangsters.

Informal settlements are plagued by violence and other social dysfunctions (Jiusto & McCauley, 2017). These factors severely affect the community's ability to access the necessary resources provided by the CBOs and NGOs. The issue of criminality in informal settlements posed a problem for the organisation in case study C since the community was unable and afraid of the repercussions of the criminals. Here, we witness how the general manager, together with the founder of the NGO, came up with an unconventional and courageous solution, which is to engage in dialogue with criminals and gangsters.

We're going to walk toward criminals. We're not running away from them anymore. We're actually going to say to them, what you're doing is wrong for the community. And please, can we work together? So it's, it's a bit sort of bold, but we need to work towards them. We can't run away from them anymore. It doesn't work (C1)

This fearlessness to approach criminals and work together with them to benefit community development is inspiring. Moreover, it shows a commitment to inclusivity for whole community development, including the unusual process of working with criminal elements, which are community members.

A central tenant of courageous conversations is that they welcome doubts and suggestions and that the pleas of the community are listened to, respected, and acknowledged, even if it goes against the current work that the NGO is doing. In fact, even when these suggestions are a harsh critique of the NGO, this is not taken personally; in fact, the opposite ensures, whereby localised and innovative solutions are co-created as the direct result of critique conversations.

When Shiela first went into the townships, there was this one woman who said to her, you are working with children, but what do you do for seniors? And it was challenging, and she said to Shiela, if you're not going to help us, you must leave today.

Ok, Shiela said, show me. And she took Shiela to the first senior she came across in the township, and it was somebody who was wearing a catheter and sitting in absolute pain because the grandchildren were around and pulling on the tubes. And that's when the ideas of (seniors) clubs started. We need to get them into an environment where they are safe during the day and where there is access to all kinds of things while we work with the families to say how you look after your elderly in their home. (C1)

The founder wasn't offended by the community member's request, and listening to the real concerns of the community member gave birth to one of the projects whereby the NGO started providing a safe place for senior citizens. Even before the interaction, it is apparent that both women created a relationship of mutual respect and trust. They were not afraid to listen and challenge reality to take appropriate action.

The act of courageous conversation also extends to relationships with government institutions. In one scenario, the NGO received funding for providing food for community members from the National Government, but the caveat was that the NGO was also instructed to collect personal information in the form of ID number verification of each person standing in the line.

Government is also very set in what it can and cannot do. So once they decided on a plan of action for the next five years, that's what they're gonna go. It's like inflexible to a large degree. But when we work with them, for example, when we did the kitchen, the kitchen sites for the government, we would say to them, it's not possible for us to get, for

example, they want I.D numbers for everyone. Imagine that! Hundreds of people on the line! Everybody must give an id number and a name. And we said this is not going to happen if you want to work with us. This is what we can do. We can get names and count people in the line, but there's no way we can ask people for ID numbers. And that's an inflexible criterion for them. And they changed their mind and said, ok, fine. And so we saw, we are able to convince them that things can be done differently and we can achieve the same outcome. (C1)

The above example illustrates that not only is the NGO willing to have courageous conversations with static, rigid, and bureaucratic institutions, but it is also willing to risk losing funding from these institutions to stay true to its way of doing what is best for the community.

Building on the point of courageous conversation with stakeholders, we witness a practice that goes against the grain of traditional, not-for-profit organisational practice; usually, the donor of funds and the recipients of the funds never meet, and the organisation acts as a buffer between the stakeholders. However, in promoting a culture of rising voices, as opposed to a culture of silence, the NGO in case study C makes a great effort to ensure that the voices of the community are heard unfiltered by all stakeholders, including funders. In an interesting and novel process, donors and the recipients of the funds meet face-to-face via Zoom. The NGO provides the airtime to connect so that the donor and the community member talk directly to each other regarding funding needs. The role of the NGO is to sit in as an observer in the meeting and holds space for a courageous conversation to take place and where the NGO is held accountable to donors and the community. The community can share authentic information regarding their needs and experiences.

We've had so many successful 'community connect.' We call them community connect meetings, where we sit on a zoom, and the participants are there. And the donors are there from all parts of the world and the UK. America, from the Netherlands. And they ask them (the community) questions, and they talk to him and just sit there, and we don't participate in the conversation. And they (the community) answer, speak, and know what they're talking about. It is incredible. They are on their bed, in the shack; I mean, all of them have smartphones. And we'll give them data. And they can zoom in, they literally sit in the shack, and I sit in my home, and people are there wherever they are, and we all

have this conversation, and then nobody is less powerful or important than the other everybody is there on an equal footing. We don't dominate the meeting. We don't coach the meeting. (C1)

These conversations have overwhelming themes of respect, trust, transparency, and authenticity. The NGO is happy to connect donors with beneficiaries and is open to hearing critiques from all stakeholders.

The theme of courageous conversations is also witnessed in another project that the NGO is involved in relating to early childhood development. Here, the general manager described how the NGO actively participates in early childhood development forums with the community. The purpose of the meeting is two-fold. On the one hand, it is listening and trying to solve issues that are present in society that affect early childhood development. Still, the other, perhaps more important, is for the community to be given a platform to air any grievances regarding the NGO.

And so there's this forum, this early childhood development forum, where people sit and talk about their issues and about us, about how we work with them and how we might not work with them, right? You know, how we did this and what gave us the right to do that. And so often we are in community meetings, where they challenge us, and a lot of the times we can come to an agreement, and sometimes also which we use very precious. I will say; actually, we are not budging on this one. You can walk away if you want to, but this is our stance on it. Also, use them precious. Mostly, we get to a consensus. What can we do? How can we do it? And often it gets tense, you know, very tense, and we are a little bit afraid, but we go through, and we have the meeting. We don't shy away from those conversations. Not at all. No matter how difficult it is, no matter what we're going to hear about ourselves. We go. If anything comes out, that's not beneficial to us as an organisation. We will listen, and we will absolutely listen. If we need to change, we change; if we need to fix things about ourselves, we do that. (C1)

Courageous conversations include accepting critique and finding solutions that benefit everyone. Still, the analysis also showed that courageous conversations could sometimes say no to certain requests from the community. This refusal to accommodate all requests is not to

be confused with arrogance on the part of the NGO but rather equates to experience and resources available regarding the situation and seeking outcomes that benefit all stakeholders. In instances where it is impossible to assist a person with their request, it is possible that the conversation may lead to an awareness of additional issues faced. In conversation with staff from the organisation, of which a majority are from the informal settlement community, the NGO engages in active listening to the requests from staff.

So we listen to our staff; they come with the most unreasonable request. And we don't dismiss him; we say, let's listen to you and speak about it. And I mean, a lot of the times, we can't honour your request, but there would have been a conversation and an awareness raising and maybe linking to something else. And maybe a point place for you to start to get there. We can't give that. But it's a point to start to. Nobody's ever dismissed that's what it is. (C1)

Clearly, the organisation intentionally creates a safe space for requests and dialogue. There is an inherent and profoundly respectful atmosphere of dignity and respect undergirding the process. As a result, it may happen that saying no to certain requests actually raised awareness to understand other inter-connected issues that may be hidden in plain sight and would not have been discovered without the courageous conversation.

Courage was also witnessed during dialogue with a staff member and a member of the board of the NGO, who is privileged and unaware of the tone and underlying bias in communication. As a result, the staff member approached the board member and attacked the issue with gentleness to make the person aware and create space for changed behaviours.

Some people, particularly one person who does not understand the position of power and privilege, and so I had to bring it down a few tones to say, I think it's great that you speak up, great that you write all these emails, but the tone is wrong, you know, you, your approach to it is wrong. So we speak about that. And she is powerful because she is connected, white, privileged, and not overtly racist. But there is this subconscious and unconscious bias. It comes through, not even all the time, but at times, so it's my role to recognize that. And then to challenge her on that, speak to her about it, and make her

aware of it. Without having a big confrontational meeting with the whole team where everybody's sort of going in and whatever. So you manage that. (C1)

It is heartening to see that the action taken by the staff member was drenched in humility and grace, the hallmarks of courageous conversations.

In case study B, it was refreshing to see how dialogue was encouraged in community meetings and the emphasis on critical, liberating dialogue was encouraged by the founder of the NGO.

Well, I think firstly, we've encouraged everyone to say, I mean, no one must hold back. And no one must take offense. Okay. We encourage people to get angry in meetings, and you know what you say and respect each other's differences. And we respect each other for who we are. (B2)

It is encouraging to note that community members are encouraged to engage in dialogue to the extent that allowing anger to surface is encouraged in meetings; however, there is still a deep level of respect prevalent for all stakeholders.

However, it must be noted that facilitating dialogue through courageous conversation is not a delicate process. The founder's experience in case study B initiated meetings with the community and found that it served as a platform for dialogue to bring to the surface the years of oppression being faced.

So we had a few community meetings where things went wild, people started screaming and crying, and there was weird energy. Being the ones speaking to the crowd and kind of like, you're feeding off their energy, but they weren't mad at me. And so it was like, what do you do to channel the anger of a mob? (B1)

Against the backdrop of unmet needs, raw frustration, and hopelessness that is prevalent due to oppressive systems, it is almost expected that participating and facilitating dialogue becomes a complex and multi-layered process requiring an attitude of respect, reflection, and courage.

Moreover, courageous conversations are also those where the truth is not sugar-coated for audience members, specifically donors. In this instance, the founder of the CBO in case study B, having acknowledged the community's authentic needs and was aware of the contradictions and oppressive systems present in the funding environment, decided not to partake in any funding experience of the NGO it supported if it meant downplaying community issues.

And someone asked a question (to the founder of the NGO) like, what's your biggest challenge? And she was like, all children need is food and love. I like made a face. How can you say that? Like, you know, that's not true. But it's like, but it sounds good. She said it before, and somebody gave her money. I'm not good at what they do. Put on a mask and tell the happy story with a touch of sadness. I have not been the outward-facing person for the CBO for a long time. Because I don't say what donors want to hear. I say what the people want to hear. You know, in the community meeting, it's about getting the crowd to feel heard. (B1)

The authenticity portrayed by the founder of the CBO is inspirational. However, there is a real danger that funding resources can quickly dry up if CBOs and NGOs don't romanticise and neatly cover up the root causes of oppressive systems to portray a palatable picture. However, this is where standing in solidarity with the community and not playing to the tune of feel-good corporates ticking corporate social investment boxes is paramount.

An additional essential element of courageous conversations is that it is steeped in patience, humility, empathy, and love for other humans. These characteristics were discovered in all case studies. In case study C, senior citizens discussed one of their reasons for joining the NGO's community development project: participants felt like they could share their problems and struggles and advise each other on how to solve them.

So we sit here, speak, share our problems tell each other our struggles. (C3)

So you just give each other advice on coping with your troubles and how to cope with the children. When somebody comes here crying, she's got a problem. We just calm her down. Then we'll sit with her and ask what the problem is, and she tells us. If you can manage to soften her and speak to her for some time, she's going to be alright. (C4)

Community members portray awareness and observation and are patient with other community members who require help. Moreover, the senior community members showed patience in conversing with each other and creating space for dialogue and vulnerability, which showed me that being patient is a valuable commodity for community members.

In case study A, time and patience were essential elements when partaking in any leadership position in the community. When community members approached each other for advice or guidance, the process was not rushed, and thorough explanations of issues were discussed.

Whenever someone comes to you (that) doesn't understand what you're doing. Then be flexible to explain to him what we are doing and what you want to achieve. So don't be like an aggressive person. And they were the ones that said to me can you just advise me with something like this? I said great. That's why I am not getting tired of somebody that is coming (to ask). (A4)

Being patient links directly with critical consciousness whereby, in situations whereby certain community members may not be critically reflective as yet, there is never an attempt to try and control or manipulate others. Instead, patience is the key to waiting for the unveiling of reality by the people, who will then determine how to carry out the transformative change.

As discussed previously, the senior citizen community members in case study C have the autonomy to decide on rules that form the basis for any issues that may arise within the clubs they participate. Interestingly, closer analysis reveals that the structure created in implementing rules is not necessarily meant as a punishment but for healing and objectivity. Perhaps, one of the most significant rules of the club is if you have a problem with another member, you embolden yourself to report the matter to the club assistant, who, with the executive committee, will problem-solve. This policy forces participants to seek out just and appropriate measures to solve problems instead of not saying anything or engaging in meaningless, harmful assumptions.

And then, if you did something wrong, we have a way to tell you; we must talk to you, call you and tell you and warn you. (C3)

Interestingly, even when certain group members were engaged in inappropriate actions, the action involved dialogue deeply entrenched in empathy and seeking appropriate help. In one instance, a group member was caught stealing club inventory on multiple occasions. As part of the rules set out in the club, the member is given a warning, then if the problem persists, a written warning, and then a suspension from the club. However, the community members paused, observed the reality at some point in the process, and took corrective healing action.

She used to steal and take everything, but then we talked to her (and told her) you know that you are not supposed to take club things. But in the long run, I said no, man, this is not normal. That's not stealing. We said she's got something. There is something wrong with her. (C3)

What follows is a remarkable act of non-judgment and non-shaming; the community member was referred to a social worker and, within time, received the much-needed help required and was still an active participant in the senior's club.

One of the more poignant moments was when the participants, when referring to the rules, showed a great understanding of how the actions of group members are fractals for more significant societal issues and can be solved by getting appropriate assistance using a specific structure for dialogue.

We must have a structure we can go to because maybe that person also has a problem. So that's why she's acting like that. So we come in a gentle way and attack the problem. Because people come with their attitudes, we must attack them gently because they don't know. (C3)

The extract highlights the community member's courage to engage in dialogue. Still, even more incredible is the acknowledgment that any problem that surfaces has a root cause. Hence, the action is a gentle attack on a person's consciousness, the purpose being to make the other

person aware or unveil their actions. The resulting action is, therefore, not authoritative, prescriptive, and damaging to the person; it is gentle and patient with an intent to focus on the problem, not the person.

In its simplest form, critical reflection is akin to an intervention in reality to separate and incinerate false perceptions and false causes of oppression. Although immersion into reality acts as a catalyst for a critical intervention in reality, the analysis showed that questioning oneself and reality was an essential initial step in the art of courageous conversations. Case study A revealed something spectacularly important yet straightforward to do: the ability to conduct courageous conversations with oneself and then take action after the unveiling occurred in an individual capacity. When asked about the main reasons for participating in the project, one of the community members showed high critical reflection, efficacy, and action and took ownership of her actions. She could relate her disdain at waiting in vain for the municipality to help her. Out of sheer frustration and exasperation, she decided to join the meeting with the community members.

You know, I'm always saying that, even to the others, the time I was staying in my house and waiting for the municipality to give me that ticket to do for me. Until I decided to join this group to see what they're doing, and then I want to be part of this. I started to change that day when I was in the meeting. (A5)

The process of expelling untruths, even though it was housed inside a person's own thoughts, is indeed an act of courage and is an essential step in critical reflection. Furthermore, the community member realised that she had spent a large portion of time under the assumption that the current members of the group were receiving vast sums of money from the municipality and were corrupt. Upon realising she challenged herself, she attended the group meeting to witness the reality for herself.

I was always saying this; He is eating (stealing) the money. He is eating (stealing) money from the municipality because the municipality gave us like this and that. I did not know that this (project) is not coming from the municipality. Then I just sit like this and listen,

Oh. Which means I was like, I was cheating myself that he is eating that money for us, but there is no money here. (A5)

Once revealed to the community member, the reality was sobering but not devastating. In fact, it ignited a motivating force to bring transformative change to the community.

If we need things, we have to stand up by ourselves and fight, not fight like a physical fight, but fight, what we need to fight for the changes in our communities, like, I think we'll get to where I get this. (A5)

When the community member realised she was a victim of her own assumptions, she became motivated to take action to engage in action that benefits the community.

Factors impeding courageous conversations

On the other hand, while the analysis has, until now, described the importance of having conversations and dialogue, the following section highlights scenarios, the impact of not engaging in conversations, and how community development is affected by this. All case studies reflected on fractured communication, miscommunication, and lack of communication in varying degrees with local municipalities and community members and within municipalities and national government.

The community members in case study B revealed that they had a complicated relationship with the local municipality. Due to the lack of service delivery and lack of meaningful dialogue, the result was a breakdown of communication. Although the community tries to dialogue with local municipalities, the reality is that many promises are made with little action, which leaves the community disillusioned and wary of the municipality's plans.

Yeah, you know, so we don't have a good relationship with them; we fight every day with them. Even now, they promise that they will build infrastructure. They said to us that they will put water and sewage pipes next year so that people can have basic services, but we don't trust them anymore. We know there's a lot they promise us, but it's just empty promises. (B3)

In addition, participants revealed that the local counsellor was usually not present during community meetings.

We do have meetings with the community and talk about anything that is bothering anyone, and then our counsellors are never there, but we do it without him. Even for our HIV talks, I do it myself with them. (B4)

The absence of the local counsellor does not stop the community from discussing important issues or information sessions. However, this is not an ideal or sustainable situation. There is an almost desperate need for help from the local municipality and all stakeholders to invest more resources and skills into developing the area.

When analysing the dialogue between the local municipality and the community, it became evident quite quickly that there is a lack of clear, concise, thorough dialogue on all levels in the process.

In case study B, the informal settlement community was located nearby and, in some areas, on top of a previous rubbish dump site. The location poses problems for the community's health, but deeper analysis shows that the fractured communication and goals between government departments impact the lives of the community.

And now the mortality rate, people just keep dying. I think it's related to the toxic dump. And I found in between our meetings that the government is actively reapplying to keep the area as a dump, while a different branch of government is actively investing in becoming RDP houses. So it's just two branches of the government not talking to each other, which is very common. (B1)

Disastrously, it is evident that miscommunication between government departments moves from just beyond clerical issues to becoming a source of increased mortality rate for the community and delayed infrastructure development.

Similarly, the lack of concise communication between government departments in case Study A shows how this impacts community development. The national government sets the stage for developing goals and guidelines on upgrading and community development, and local

municipalities then use this model to implement the upgrading of informal settlements. However, the problem arises when there is a lack of definition and guidance on how and what constitutes the achievement of the goals. In this particular municipality, it becomes clear from the initial analysis that the meaning of upgrading from national government guidelines is unclear.

However, that (the national directive to upgrade) was, shall I say, a void return. Put it that way because everybody was now screaming and shouting, upgrading, but nobody actually said, what do you mean with upgrading? Does it mean bringing a couple of taps and you've upgraded the area? Does it mean that if you bring a hospital or school close by that, you've upgraded the area and that educationally now, really everybody is now sorted out and moving on? Or does it mean that you uplift the entire community and have some sort of social upliftment, which is a longer-term kind of intervention? (A3)

This lack of clarity and dialogue creates uncertainty within the municipality and filters down the community. According to one community member, one of the underlying problems with the current project was that the government has shifted its policy on informal settlement and is not providing resources to build houses. However, this message was not communicated clearly to the community, resulting in many community members being aggrieved and agitated.

People, how long is our democracy now, say since 1994? And if you are told that you're going to get a house since the inception of our democracy, and all of a sudden, there is a shift in housing. But it's not communicated very clearly to say we are not building houses. Because that's political suicide. It's very difficult, and I can imagine, even to convince myself to say, like, I can imagine someone that would be waiting has been sold a dream and ideal. And that's been a promise (A1)

Despite the ongoing challenges faced, it must be noted that the municipality in case study A is not complacent or non-committed to the transformation of informal settlements. However, in shying away from direct dialogue with communities and using NGOs as a buffer for communication, the paradox is that the municipality did not discuss crucial and critical information with the community.

Because outside of here (with other stakeholders), the Municipality speaks about the plan in such a collaborative, passionate way, and if they could speak like that with the community, to say you know we are trying; you have to submit applications. I know that these things take time. Just telling this community, look, we submitted an application for environmental authorisation has so power rather than not saying anything and going silent for months. (A1)

The lack of accurate, authentic dialogue impacts development in the community, and the municipality's lack of being forthcoming with information leads to many issues, such as assumptions being made and community members distrusting each other's intentions.

The two pilot projects that I am in, you know, I'm in a frying pan. I'm in a frying pan because it kind of came in an atmosphere where there's a political atmosphere saying that these houses are being built by certain political party. So, it was not easy to be honoured to be able to start with these two pilot projects. Because people started to complain, saying that we're expecting houses from RDP from the government, not knowing that the government is turning (away) from building houses. So you have to make them understand on a daily basis. (A4)

It can be deduced that there is a fundamental defect in communication and dialogue throughout the development process and specifically within municipalities and communities. This lack of dialogue leads to disunity, assumptions, hopelessness, and perpetual community suffering. Although NGOs and CBOs are actively immersed in the community, the reality is that they have financial constraints which impact the scale of the work being done. Additionally, political influence in development derails development.

To conclude on the theme of courageous conversations, it must be noted that in order to enhance and elevate critical consciousness, dialogue that dislocates and restructures processes to unveil multiple, complex oppressions that communities is encouraged. Importantly, all stakeholders need to understand that the uprising of raw frustrations, critique, laughter, patience, questions, curiosity, and doubt is, in essence, and diabolically, the birth of a new language of social peace. This new language catalyses transformative action, which leads to

the liberation of the marginalized community and the stakeholders. Antithetical to this, we witnessed how prescriptive, rigid dialogue that avoids courageous conversations with the community perpetuates and sustains multiple oppressions. At the crux of reality, we witness how a lack of essential services, the loss of the communities' dignity, and frustration at systems inadequacy cause the community to lose hope. Denying the community the space to engage in dialogue is essentially the action of keeping communities in oppression. It is the opposite of freedom and autonomy as it sustains a culture of silence and gives a powerful subliminal message that communities are undervalued. What is needed and what the community is desperately searching for is to be involved in all processes, to be heard and valued for their contributions, and to have their dignity restored. Dialogue needs to be immersive, and the municipality needs to take the time to immerse into the community and engage in courageous conversations.

4.2 EFFICACY

Efficacy in critical consciousness refers to the motivation that an individual or collective community has to engage in transformative action (Heberle et al., 2020). A sense of agency is created, catalyses transformative action due to the belief that the individual is willing and capable of changing oppressive structures (Watts et al., 2011). The following section reveals the restoration of dignity for all humans as a motivator that catalyses critical action.

4.2.1 Restoring/sustaining dignity

Marginalised communities living in informal settlements continue to face immeasurable struggles daily (Jiusto & McCauley, 2017). Upon inspection of the reality faced by these communities, it can be argued that although the oppressive regime officially ended in 1994, the systems in place currently fail to assist communities in accessing fundamental human rights, such as the right to sanitation, healthcare, housing, and safe environments. Each day, whether it is through incorrect actions or non-actions from municipalities, corrupt individuals, racist medical professionals, lack of infrastructure, and the neglect of marginalised communities, we witness the humanity of marginalised communities being stolen. As a result, at the forefront of any community development, there needs to be a firm agenda for restoring and sustaining human dignity for all. While the deprivation of human rights may have been reflected in the earlier process of critical consciousness, this section will focus on restoring dignity as a motivator for critical and transformative action.

The theme of restoring and upholding dignity is intertwined with many stakeholders and community members in all case studies. In analysing the municipality interviewed in this research, it is noteworthy that the theme of restoring and sustaining dignity extends to the goals within the ambit of community development. In the following example, the construction of a road in the informal settlement was catalysed by an unfortunate incident whereby a community member fell and could not get medical assistance due to the inaccessibility of proper roads. This incident impacted the municipality worker, and there was an immediate call to action to prevent these incidents and allow people to have a quality of life and dignity.

One day long, long ago, a woman fell in the street. And I'm not sure if you can picture one of these block streets. She fell on the gravel road, about 200 meters from the main intersection. It took the ambulance about two hours to get to her, so to lie two hours in that agony with a broken leg, people had to bring her eventually out with a wheelbarrow! So now you can just imagine that, on that gravel road, to be pushed in a wheelbarrow with a broken leg. So my thing was that, how do we get this community to have some sort of quality of life? So we started looking at it, upgrading the road to a proper one. Half the municipality thought what we were smoking something that must be green, and the other half thought it was near impossible; it took a bit longer than planned, but eventually, the road came in; nowadays, the road is used all the time. So it's something that added to the quality of life of that particular community because no person should be lying for two hours with a broken leg, you know, that's just unacceptable. And now, I don't think people can imagine that there was never a road. Or how important the thing that is so simple to use, for instance. Without saying my car has to be on the road, it's not the most important thing, yet, that changed the life and expectations of the community. (A3)

This is another example where the act of providing a road was simple on paper, but at a deeper level, it contributed to elevating levels of dignity for the community. In fact, the municipality places the concept of dignified living as one of the pillars it prescribes.

So, from a personal perspective, is that one of our pillars is dignified living. And that's where we come from; whatever we try to do, we try to see if we can really give you some sort of dignified living. Now, these versions of dignified might be smoking cigars from Cuba, that's a degree, but to another, it means having quick access to public transport so that I can get my work on time so that I can I don't have to lose my job. (A3)

The theme of dignified living is given further importance when analysing the success of a project within the municipality.

Success is measured in two ways. One is the municipalities view, and the other is my own; okay, in terms of the municipality, the funding is spent, and they are no problems with the funding, and the product is on the ground. That was a very successful project. But in my particular view, it is that quality of life that is important to me. (A3)

While it is heartening to hear the intention of the municipality to pursue a dignified living as one of its pillars, when addressing the community that the municipality is servicing, a more sombre reality is experienced on the ground and in the daily lives of people in that community. In case study A, when discussing their reasons for being a part of this project and community development, one of the Mothers in the group spoke of challenges faced by the community and how her children were being subjected to inhumane conditions. As a result, she became involved primarily to create a better future for them.

We sit in the stinking water of the drains now; we want something to change for our children; they're growing in a bad situation. (A5)

We are willing to see our community living in a paradise place because we don't have toilets (A6).

Another community member agreed with the sentiments shared by the community.

I still remember when he questioned us, saying what you like to see in this area? And I told him I will be glad if I can die seeing people living a normal life. (A4)

In envisioning a future, the communities request was to create a place where they could access a normal life and basic physiological needs, which tells us that community development is not merely service delivery but restoring and sustaining dignity.

In case study C, restoring and sustaining a person's dignity was profoundly personal and reflected the general managers' experience of being impoverished as a young child. The experiences she faced personally shaped her values and are imprinted in how the organisation assists the community.

And so, there is nothing noble about poverty, you know, if it takes away your dignity. I promise you they (the community) don't want handouts. They do not. There's no dignity in coming and standing in a line. (C1)

These undercurrent values are seen throughout the work undertaken by the organisation. One of the projects related to assisting senior citizens gets assistance to basic human necessities while holding on to their dignity.

So they (the senior citizens) are transported there; every club is fitted with a shower because seniors have little accidents on the way, or they don't have access to water, or nobody's bothered to clean them during the night. So they can come in, they can take a shower, put on a fresh pair of clothes, little bags of clothes, and nice smelling things and nice things there. And just sort of helping people hold on to their own dignity, you know. (C1)

The organisation's ability to view the restoration of the dignity of senior citizens as fundamental in all processes is commendable. It is a prime example of how community development can be transformative by providing access to fundamental human rights.

The quest for quality of life is a necessity for the senior citizens in case study C, who decided that they were unwilling to stand in long queues (due to their frail health and age) to vote during national government elections. After unsuccessful attempts to get the local counsellor to assist participants, one of the participants reflected that the process was flawed. She then contacted a national government executive who was so appalled at the situation that she immediately

apologised and catered to their request to have more easily accessible voting stations for senior citizens.

No, man, I just told myself. It's no good for that because at least they can make a place here for us to just for us. Because we are a number of old ladies. So I just found the head offices and the head office phone in Johannesburg, and the counsellor had a phone call from Johannesburg. I'm telling you, I used to see her (the Minister) on the TV. She was here to come and apologise. (C3)

It is apparent that the catalyst for making the phone call was due to the senior citizens' real difficulties and the local government's lack of willingness to support their needs. However, upon closer inspection, we can theorise that in attempting to sustain and restore the dignity of the senior citizens as a micro-phenomenon, we witness a re-structuring of a macro-phenomenon as a result of transformative action.

In finding ways to enable the restoration of dignity, it is evident that alternate thinking and doing processes are necessary to avoid the repetitive stripping away of a person's dignity. In analysing Case study 3, an interesting view of the NGO's role emerged, one that was inverted, as the organisation and its employees view its selves as beneficiaries of the community and not the other way around.

And that's why we say we (the NGO) are the beneficiaries of all of this; they (the community) are not the beneficiaries. It is truly understanding that people want to participate in their own lives. And when you are a participant and when you are not a beneficiary - because the beneficiary you give, and they hold out their hands, with participants- you connect and do together. It's about that. It's about giving all of this injustice a human face. (C1)

Furthermore, in investing in the community as active participants in their lives and not viewing the community as beneficiaries, a reconstruction of relationships is created based on co-creation, mutual respect, and shifting the power away from organisations to communities.

In unravelling the theme of restoring dignity as a catalyst for critical action, the analysis reveals another intangible but salient factor that influences the community's action and, in some cases, non-action. This is the hope in the belief of a future that can be different. Hope is a driving force, especially when situations are not ideal or the media constantly spew messages of despair.

You can easily get like so negative. Like I put on the news. I just can't because, obviously, like that media, always sensationalized, and yes, it is bad, but we can still fix it. You just have to have that bit of hope. (A1)

Hope is also one of the driving factors for giving communities autonomy and creating a space where people are empowered to take action against the status quo.

And when you see that community member stand up in a meeting or even in a meeting that we have with them and passionately say that what they want to see change. And so that, for me, just gives me hope because the hope is people still want to be at the centre of their development, and people at their core are kind, and that just shows that South Africa isn't broken. We can all fix it as a collective. So that's the hope, and I get it daily. (A1)

The focus on hope as a theme is integral to overcoming despair. Hope becomes the binoculars looking into the future because there is a possibility for change on the horizon, even if it is far away. Hope allows participants to change direction in thought and capabilities and envisage a better future for their loved ones and the community.

Hope, however, is multi-layered. For the individuals living in informal settlements, with multiple inequalities and facing a bleak current existence, hopelessness is a sombre theme that leads to non-action. This was found in the analysis of Case study B, where one of the staff members of the local NGO revealed a strong sense of hopelessness and acceptance of their fate in the community. This hopelessness is a theme that permeates the minds not only of the older generation impacted directly by apartheid but also the youth, who are victims of systemic oppression.

The apartheid system has a huge impact on why people are uneducated. So it's some kind of generational type of thing. (B3)

As a result of the lack of education, combined with a lack of employment opportunities, forces the youth into employment in nearby fruit farms to provide financial assistance for the family. As a result, the youth lack value for what education is worth.

Some don't see the value of education. So, if a child studies when they reach 18 years old, my parents will force the child to go to a local farm or nearby farm and find employment. So that that child can assist the parents in raising their other children. (B3)

The community lacks willingness and motivation even when educational opportunities exist in training and skills development.

Most of them don't see a future for themselves. Sometimes, we come with educational programs or skills development programs. If that program involves pen and paper, you will find less number of young people who will come and attend than typical training. So they don't see the importance, or the fundamental, or the vital point of being educated or being part and parcel of educational programs. (B3)

A similar experience occurs in other projects. For example, the NGO in Case study A provides the community with tools to start a savings group. But the lack of vision for the future is an obstacle to convincing the community to participate.

They don't get that as you are telling them now, like, guys, there is a savings group here. We have to save everything you have so that you can get to this. But it is not easy for those in the community. Maybe a lot of us understand that. But the community is not easy. It is not easy. We're trying to preach that about saving, especially for this project. But it is not easy. (A6)

The lack of action from the community members could be due to myriad factors, one of which is the lack of understanding regarding the necessity and benefits of the project and not being able to envisage a change in the condition currently experiencing.

In contrast, community members show increased interest when they see the project taking off the ground.

Most communities tend to understand by seeing something that is happening. You will find that you will get some questions, not necessarily at the beginning of the project, but later on in the project, you will get some budget-related questions from one or two people from the community. Because once they see that, it's a case of seeing is believing. Once you see that the project is starting to roll out, or you see the physical machinery on the ground, or whatever's needed to make this project work, you know, then people start asking because it becomes a point of interest. But whilst the sole paper-based, there's not much interest (A3)

The lack of enthusiasm during the planning phase of development is not unusual. It could result from multiple false promises by stakeholders and non-inclusive projects that discard or avoid deep participation with the community. As a result, the community may be hesitant to believe that a project will transpire until they see results on the ground.

On the other hand, the NGO in case study A had a unique and innovative way of ensuring the community can 'see' into the future and what completed projects look like using a unique and socially innovative way by presenting a model of what the future looks like.

We also like doing something called president-setting projects. And what we're trying to explore here, like we had amazing models and did a modelling exercise, where you could see someone walking down an upgraded street in the settlements. Obviously, it's very difficult for people to visualize what that looks like in reality (A1)

Additionally, the community was physically transported to other areas in Cape Town to see first-hand what other communities managed to achieve in building homes.

So we took the community and the design group, but they were actually just ordinary people from the community. So they went on something called exchanges. They looked at different upgrading projects in Cape Town. And we've done sandbag housing and a reblocking project in Cape Town, and they visited those settlements. And then, we try to extract the learnings from that exchange. (A1)

The exchange of information and visiting sites whereby projects were already completed created new relationships for sharing knowledge, skills, and experiences between the two communities. However, as informative and inspiring as these exchanges were for the small community members, the group revealed that the problem still surfaced, where the entire community needed to be provided with tangible evidence before being able to get their buy-in.

And I remember a leader saying it's all very nice to visit those settlements. But if they (the community) don't have any, almost an example, inside of their settlements, it's very difficult to just sell that idea. (A1)

As a result of this dialogue between the NGO and the community member, a new development project began. Here the NGO funded and provided support services for building two upgraded homes in the informal settlement. The homes are double-story and retrograded for plumbing services etc.

Factors impeding the restoration of dignity

In contrast to the examples above, it can be posited that when people are forced to keep living in despair, this leads to an action that is a culmination of dignity stripping, frustration, and neglect by systems that are meant to protect and preserve communities.

It's all about the fact that nothing has changed for the community since we had democracy; very little has changed. There hasn't been a single attention to the sewage infrastructure in Langa since democracy. And our centres, it's overflowing blockages we are constantly in contact with, with the city to fix that.

The result of little or no service delivery to marginalised communities is akin to a volcano brewing for many years without seeing any change to their daily living circumstance. As a result, the frustrations lead to a tipping point, culminating in protest action and, in difficult situations, burning down infrastructure.

It is people thinking that they are worth nothing and that the only way they get something is by burning things down. And really, when people start to do that, it's because they are discontented. The voice of the discontent when there's a riot and an uprising, who wants to burn down the school? But philosophically, you understand what it means to burn down a school, what it means for people that they can actually burn down a school in the community. But rationally, nobody wants to burn down a school. I mean, informal settlements have grown, and people putting up shacks have grown. How does that equate to dignity at all? And we have to stop blaming the people in the townships, you know, they're doing the best they can; they are surviving on a daily basis. And what do they say? Oh, these people are so resilient. Isn't that wonderful? They are tired of being resilient. You know, they want to get up in the morning, and there is running water. There isn't shit flowing past your home. And there isn't, you know, water in the in the houses, and the kids can walk to school safely. (C1)

Marginalised communities have their dignity stolen daily due to lacking services and humane conditions. Similarly, in case study B, during a community meeting, the particular community has been suffering in silence for years. The impact of the toxic environment reached a boiling point during one of the meetings with the CBO and the community.

And then we held community meetings were hundreds of people showed up; it was the most intimidating thing. Because they were at one point, it felt like we were going to lead a revolution. Because the farmer workers, they are being exploited and abused in so many ways. It's horrifying, what the, you know, that whole situation. They (the community) were like, we want to burn the farms down. And they laid it out; they laid out how abused they were, and how exploited and how you know, how citrus gets covered in mould. And when you pick it, the water, the mouldy water, hits you in the face, and you get really bad respiratory infections. And then the local clinic doesn't help you. And every

day you miss work and the picking season is really short. So it's like you can't miss work. So it's like people were dying, but it was farmers hitting people with their trucks, we heard everything in the crowd was getting like, really worked up (B1)

The undercurrent driving the wave of energy in the crowd was the frustration of constantly being lied to or having grand ideologies preached to the community without valuable, concrete action. As a result, the community was upfront with the CBO regarding their frustrations.

And they're like, we're watching, and when you promise, you better deliver because we're sick of being lied to. They were like just ready to bury people. (B1)

Before condemning people in communities to titles such as evil and brutal when these situations arise, it should be remembered that violence is a reaction to the oppression and violence created, maintained, and sustained by previous oppressive regimes and current oppressive systems. It was born out of the sheer desperation of not being heard, where your human dignity is stripped from you daily, and continuing oppression by systems deeply entrenched in keeping communities in poverty by not providing access to fundamental human rights. Therefore, the violence that remains is the same violence perpetrated in the community's pre-democracy. Unless the marginalised community cannot restore their stolen dignity, we will continue to witness the rising frustrations rising to the surface.

4.3 CRITICAL ACTION

Critical action focuses on challenging and disassembling systems that perpetuate oppression and inequality (Diemer et al., 2021). Therefore, failure to recognise the totality of the issues faced in communities is a form of cultural oppression whereby problems faced by marginalised communities are focalised and isolated from other communities. Communities do not live in silos, whereby the issues faced are neatly compartmentalised. As an interconnected web, it can be deduced that the movement of one individual or process ultimately affects the entire ecosystem on the web. The process of immersion into the community and conducting analysis and dialogue results in a totalised view of the community members' issues, leading to transformative action. To facilitate any assistance to community members, the system, its moving parts, and the cause and effect of all variables should be considered to overcome

barriers to access. However, gaining a totalised view of systems and social practices is not enough to merit social innovation. What is required is an action that not only dismantles oppressive systems but re-designs, re-structures, and re-combines resources and social practices, which create holistic systems that are more responsive to community needs and whereby the community are agents in the process of innovation in solving societies complex and wicked problems.

4.3.1 Holistic, inclusive approach

In case study C, all projects that the NGO is involved in have one central theme: the firm intends to gain a holistic view of the problem and re-arranging resources to assist individuals and communities in reaching their goals. In essence, the model followed in all of their projects is a quest to provide the tools for human completion. From the initial project involving the community's senior members to the after-school programme for children in marginalised communities and, more recently, the bridging programme for young adults, it is clear that breaking barriers to access by viewing the problem as in totality and providing resources for the whole person and whole community development is paramount to the goals of the NGO.

The following section details some examples of holistic support given to communities.

In case study C, The NGO supports women in the local community who have opened their homes in the afternoons to take of kids whose parents are working. These children would have been left at risk and unattended, so the community devised innovative solutions to ensure the safety of the learners. The founder of the NGO decided to support the community members and provide resources to assist the project. As seen by the expert below, the assistance given is holistic in its support.

We give funding equipment, follow up on children who need eye care, hearing care, any kind of intervention, and psychosocial support, so then we train these Mamma's on how to spot a child who may have a difficulty or mentally challenge, who may have a hearing problem or may have foetal alcohol syndrome on how to pick them up and then speak to a community based worker, or then bring it to our psychosocial team, which is a team of two social workers and a community social worker. And they follow a process when the child is supported, or the child gets screening for eye care, which is all for free, or for hearing, which we offer for free, and we get funding for it. And so that's what happens

with these children: make sure to go to school and so on. They've got a safe place; they can eat something they looked after in terms of the other needs of care, and so on. (C1)

The NGO also funds another programme aimed at the youth and partners with an external stakeholder to provide a bridging course to youth who have not completed high school. The four-month course is intensive, engaging, and empowering and creates pathways for the youth to obtain a matric certificate which opens avenues for further education or employment opportunities.

So with this program, we also will provide transport. So we set up a room with connectivity and laptops with earphones, and so 25 young people come there. And then, they get lectured by a computer from the University, and the programme also has transcendental Meditation. And so it is important, and it is compulsory that these young people also participate in that. And so we give them something to eat as well. (C1)

It is worth noting that although the costs of funding 'access' items are high and make up a large percentage of the NGO budget, this does not deter the NGO from continuing to provide wrap-around support to community members.

And for me, again, why do we do the transport and the eating, which are our main costs, the huge two costs? That's what access is all about. You can give a service or a product, but if you don't provide access, then you are actually giving nothing. So for me, the whole thing about access, if you're going to provide access, do it properly. If you're going to provide an opportunity, do the whole thing, or don't do it at all. (C1)

There is a deliberate and holistic attempt to ensure that the organisation ensures the whole person development in eliminating the real issues faced by the community.

Continuing with viewing solutions in totality, the NGO offers support to senior community members that focuses on well-being, which refers to the mental, physical, and socio-emotional health of the individual and community. The hope is that by providing these tools, the community will actively participate in change and challenge oppressive systems and structures.

So in the clubs, they will have access to health, exercise, to socialization, to legal information, to radio, and any kind of activity that will allow them to be to stay in touch with what is happening, to participate in what is happening, to challenge what is happening. And we encourage them to draw on the resources of the organization to strengthen their engagement with anything that goes on in their life. (C1)

Furthermore, this way of thinking flows into the organisation's process and policies relating to the staff contingent, which purposefully and intentionally ensures that staff has access to tools that sustain their dignity. The NGO also firmly supports staff members working for the organisation to become active participants in their lives and provides benefits and tools for upliftment.

But let me tell you, we are very careful to support people's aspirational goals. So we pay good salaries. We make sure we have all the benefits and pensions, and we make sure people are saving. So we allow people to study, we encourage people to study, we have generous study leave, you know. So, want people to study because aspirationally, you want to be what the future looks like? Just because you've worked with such poverty doesn't mean it must reflect poverty, and our organization must be what the future looks like. We have a very smart organization, beautiful desks, and a multimedia communications system in the boardroom. Because if we don't look like the future, what are we aspiring to? So we don't believe in sitting in dingy offices because we are an NGO. And we want people to be aspirational and inspirational about their vision, inspired by your work. But you must also grow as a person, your career, your family, both, you know, both. And otherwise, what do you do? You keep them in poverty, you give them a job, but you keep them in poverty. (C1)

In case study C, the support given to senior citizens is holistic and intentional in removing community access barriers. The examples below were communicated by the community members and revealed the extent of the holistic help they access with the NGO.

But when we arrived here, we were taught so many things that we didn't know. It's like, at home, you are abused. But you are unaware that this is abuse. (C4)

We were taught not to let other people abuse us. So we are trained. And more than that, we've got social workers that deals with our problems secretly. And we get medication; we don't even go to the clinic now. We only go to the day hospital once a year. Otherwise, the medication we used to go and stand there at the Day hospital for two hours is delivered here. The nurses come in and take our blood pressure. So we've got everything. Even spectacles, we don't have to go to Somerset hospital; we just go around the corner and get eye tested. So everything comes to us. (C3)

From providing transport to get the seniors from their homes to the centre and back, or seniors being able to get medications, eye tests, blood pressure checks, and social worker support in one central place, the NGO is well-intentioned in removing these barriers.

Research suggests that critical consciousness can positively impact an individual's well-being. (Maker Castro et al., 2022). However, we see the opposite if we have to analyse the NGO's support given to the community. The first step taken by the NGO is to create structures and processes that support the holistic well-being of the individual and communities as a first step. Therefore, in breaking down barriers to access, this process may clear up time and space for critical consciousness to be elevated and expanded.

ABCD/Holistic use of resources in the community

Critical reflection is necessary to obtain a holistic and complete view of not just the issues faced in the community but also acknowledging the skills, local wisdom and traditions, and, notably, the areas of strength in the community. As a result, these untapped resources can be transferred to critical action and be used to enhance community development. Also known as assets-based community development or ABCD, the idea is based on utilising the community's wide range of existing skills as resources for community development. An essential component of critical consciousness is the moment of unveiling, where individuals and community members recognise not only the causes of oppressive systems and people but they can transform and overcome their current situations using the skills present in the community in themselves. As a result, the community shifts the idea of being disempowered to recognising its wide net of resources and becomes empowered when these skills are utilised.

Community development recognises the skills of the community as assets that can be used in projects. In case study A, the municipality was intent on finding someone within the community who knew the community and the various skills set by individual community members.

So we said there are skills; let's just find a way to get to those skills and see what they can produce. Because obviously, you don't get a community of two thousand, you know, without skills. So we were actively looking for certain skills within the community and for certain people who could identify those skills. Because obviously, as an outsider, you're looking in. You don't know the intricacies of the community itself. You don't know the skills that are in the community. But there are people who know certain things. (A3)

In case study B, ABCD also leads to community inter-generational employment. When analysing the skills in the community, it was interesting to see that there wasn't an age limit or minimum level of skills criteria used.

It (the project build) created jobs across so many different age groups. So they employed old ladies to make sandwiches and old men to do a task that you could do standing along plates. And then the young men were very acrobatic, you know, often the, I forget what it's called up, on the scaffolding and stuff. So they had jobs for everybody. (B1)

Using the skills of the community, the project managed to make everyone feel included and participate in the project, even if it was a relatively simple task undertaken by an older member of the community.

Perhaps the most significant example of having an intense faith in humankind is highlighted in a situation where the founder of the NGO in case study C visited an informal settlement many years ago and encountered criminal elements that threatened her safety. Her actions highlight the ability to tackle the problems of criminality and poverty with courage and ultimately help access skills.

Did I tell you about the time that they wanted to take a car away from her? (the founder). So she was in the townships. And she doesn't speak Xhosa, but she can understand a little. And these three guys were sitting on the side, and they were saying, we're going to take this woman's car, we're gonna steal it. And she understood that, so she went up to them and said you know what, you can take my car. But tomorrow, you will have sold this car, and you will have nothing. Can't we rather do something where you know you have money every day? And they looked at her like, what! She asked them, what can you do? And they said we can clean the bins. So she said, ok, fine, meet me here tomorrow, put on nice clothes and meet me here. And then she came back the next day. And she said, come, let's go shopping. They bought brooms, buckets, and cloths, and that bin-cleaning business is still ongoing. That is our organisation; I'm not lying. (C1)

Instead of being negatively affected by the experience, the founder displayed extreme courage. Still, the analysis also shows that as someone who spent most of her time immersed in the informal settlement, the founder recognised the complex layers of poverty and crime and decided to attack the problem boldly, not the people. What transpired was something incredibly bold, humbling, and inspirational and which shifted the power back to the community members to re-construct a better alternative to stealing for a living.

Factors impeding ABCD

It is worth noting, however, that even though there are a wide variety of skills present in the community which can be accessed, there are situations in which community members are unwilling or unable to contribute to a project without any monetary compensation. This is due to the poverty faced by the marginalised community. In case study A, the NGO was clear that the processes followed in the organisation did not include paying anyone for their time as volunteers on the project; this could be one reason that impacts project participation.

People need to earn money, right, our process doesn't allow it, and we don't give people money. It's a voluntary process; you must be passionate about your community. But if opportunities arise, no, they lose interest if they find a job or if they're not in the process. (A1)

The issues surrounding payment and seasonal work are significant as it impacts the outcome of community driven development by the lack of participation from the community due to valid reasons. One suggestion the NGO brought up was to encourage the local municipality to employ community members to get a financial benefit associated with their participation.

I don't know, like, if they (the community) could not be employed somehow by the municipality for it. Even if (the municipality) asked them to do something like settlement, growth management, or there's some kind of monetary, something that could support them somehow, because they're largely unemployed. (A1)

The reality is then more straightforward in that it points to the fact that although the community might want to support the project and have good intentions and the necessary skills to participate, an added employment issue contributes to community members not being involved or flitting in and out. Additionally, marginalised communities face the reality of poverty, which also plays a vital role in community development.

So that's why I think they (the community) are not as committed even though they do care what happens in a settlement; the bottom line is that they have to put bread on the tables. I also feel like that is a big, and it's not just in this area you find it quite often, it's a big area where, they just, they like slip out, and maybe they find a job, and they come back. (A1)

Community driven development, by nature, needs to have the input and participation from the community to be successful, but the research shows that the lack of participation is since the community requires payment to afford basic living necessities. If not, the community had no option but to accept employment which impacts participation.

In case study B, community members echoed a similar sentiment regarding the lack of participation from community members. In an area with stark poverty, it is not unusual for community members to want payment or some assistance to alleviate poverty for any work they undertake, especially concerning the community centre.

We tried that (volunteering), but it didn't work. People don't want to work for free, you know. So, for example, if we want people to clean the centre, we need to give them something we can give them food, clothes, or 100 Rands a day. They don't come and do something for free. So we are currently facing that type of problem. (B3)

An important consideration for current and future development is that poverty is a significant cause of community members' non-participation. To combat this, stakeholders in the development arena need to consider this seriously.

Case study B chose to pay the volunteers during the project build in contra-distinction to the abovementioned examples. As a result, it was interesting how participative the community was, which led to a successful implementation and outcome for the project build.

And I was; it was an insane amount of hours, and they got paid very well. I forget what it was a multiple of the rate that you make. And the feedback was very, very positive. The people, they loved it! (B1)

Although this project was successful in terms of community participation because of the volunteer payment, it must be noted that this was a once-off project that was unique in that the building was for the whole community's benefit. Ongoing projects in community driven development may have smaller budgets and unique projects that may only offer assistance to a certain group within the community, influencing participation and success of outcomes.

4.3.2 Evolving models

Traditional planning methods usually include a vision cemented in actionable plans implemented within a timeline. Although this method is used in some of the NGO's strategic planning and fundraising portfolios, it becomes apparent that many of the projects undertaken in the organisation in case study C start by focusing on community needs and then actively pursuing and arranging resources to fund the needs of the community. As a result, the evolving nature of the model is disruptive in how it approaches societal issues by virtue of its ability to

be adaptive and pliable in re-designing and re-structuring resources based on the needs of the community.

Although the organisation focuses on core foundational programmes, the model can quickly and effortlessly spiral to other projects identified as necessary to support the community. This model can expand, grow and switch directions easily due to a myriad of factors.

So things happen very organically, we are a strategic organization, but a lot of the stuff is like organic and kind of, and what's the word in the moment? And it's just; it's how we kind of think. So this is what we are doing. Now, what? We have people in the club; they are sitting there; now what? You know. And they want it, and then we go and raise funds. (C1)

This might come across as a haphazard model of planning. However, analysis shows that the organisation focuses on specific core foundational programmes, the senior's project, and an afterschool project that ensures children are safe and taken care of after school.

And then the other we call these foundational programs because we really want to keep these as springboards for any other work that we might have to do. (C1)

Although the organisation currently focuses on these core foundational programmes, it is clear that there is a willingness and a platform for multiple projects to spring from the core programmes.

In case study C, an example of evolving models can be shown with the inception of another community project. As with the senior project's inception, the idea of child education and safety in communities culminated when the organisation's founder recognised the need to take care of children after school as they were at risk playing in the street while their parents were working. Although the project was not a part of the core foundations of the organisation at the time, the need required the project to start immediately, despite scarce resources.

The other one is early childhood development, which is also based when Shiela stepping into the township and finding children and initially just started off as looking after children taking care of children, wherever they were, you know, in a home in a tree or whatever, and allowing mothers to go out to work while children are safely cared for. And that evolved into early childhood development; I think we now have one of the most respected early childhood development programs in the Western Cape, recognised by the government. (C1)

It is heartening to note that the project that started with minimal resources, armed with a steely determination to provide much-needed resources to the community, eventually became one of the province's most respected childhood development programmes. This is a testament to the community running the programmes and the NGO's support in adjusting and realigning resources to help the community. As a positive consequence, the evolving model focuses on creating systems that can change direction quickly, focusing on other factors that become accurate markers of success.

And this is the thing about our organisation, is not an emphasis on the programs that we run, but it's an emphasis on the infrastructure, the systems, and the agility of the system to adapt and change. And the awareness that what is relevant today may not be relevant tomorrow. So, for me, it's the fact that we are agile and responsive. And we have both the credibility and the capability to work with the community. So it doesn't matter what the program is; we're not focused on what we do. (C1)

Similarly, the organisation clearly distinguishes its purpose to create a bridge between the community and opportunity.

So we act as a catalyst, connector, or facilitator to people who can do for themselves but are challenged by access. It's not only the idea but how do you access the opportunity to express their idea when you are living in poverty? (C1)

The bridge that the NGO is symbolic and practical. The NGO acts as a pathway to be used by the community members to access tools and services that will enhance the quality of their lives.

And to draw on the resources of the organisation to strengthen their engagement with anything that goes on in their life. So that's why I say we connect, facilitate, facilitate, catalyse; we don't decide. (C1)

It reveals that the organisation's ability to assist the community is undergirded by an atmosphere of deep respect for the community in every aspect, including placing the community at the apex of the hierarchy of importance, especially relating to ensuring autonomous decision-making by the community.

It was interesting to see how this evolving model also extends to donor relations. It is clear that there is a deep level of trust between the NGO and donors, but we also see something else, the ability to change directions and pivot extends to donors. Here we see donors who, when funding projects, understand and trust the organisation to use the money donated to make decisions based on what's best for the community.

We only take funding that we can honour. We don't take funding that we can't honour because we pivot so quickly. We want to have the ability to say to donors that this is how we need to change what we're doing because what we thought would work for communities is no longer working. Also, over the years, our donors have come to trust us; if we want to change from the one thing, we raise funds for this, but actually, it's not working; can we use it for that? So we will negotiate and have a conversation with our donors. They usually agree that we could change and use the funding for something else. (C1)

It can be deduced that there is a deep level of trust and understanding of complex layers of societal issues by the donor and organisation, allowing funding to quickly change directions based on community needs. As a result, to have flexible evolving micro-models(organisation), it can be deduced that there needs to be a larger flexible evolving macro-model (donors) that supports and nourishes the micro-model.

Restoration of power to marginalised communities

Critical consciousness as a construct focuses on the restoration of power to marginalised communities. However, it is evident that before this process can occur, an element of trust needs to be secured and maintained with the environment. Trust is therefore seen as a critical pre-condition for revolutionary change, and all stakeholders involved in community development must work actively to build an environment that sustains mutual trust. A fundamental tenant of this theme is that communities must be trusted to make decisions relating to all aspects that impact their existence. Within the realms of community-driven development, this includes making decisions relating to the project's inception, the budgeting guidelines, discipline among members, etc. Significantly, it is imperative that outside stakeholders do not control these processes. The result would be akin to an extended form of oppression whereby the community's inability to act causes more suffering and frustration. It must be remembered that the hallmark of oppressive people and oppressive systems is to control the way people think and act. To combat the desire for control, the community needs to be trusted to use their wisdom, skills, creativity, and social capital to drive innovative community driven development and build horizontal relationships of mutual trust with all stakeholders.

In analysing the various case studies, perhaps, a great example of restructuring power as a basis for community driven development is ensuring that the community is placed at the heart of all decision-making. It is noteworthy to see how and to what extent this is being done in all 3 case studies.

In case study C, senior community members take autonomy over all processes that govern the social and entrepreneurial clubs they formed. The clubs consist of elected representatives who form executive committees that oversee all matters in the various clubs.

They (the seniors) decide the rules of the club, they manage discipline in the club, they will decide, you know, when somebody's out of order when they cannot come to the club, so there's this kind of autonomy that happens in the club. And the seniors are also managed by the executive committee. So, for example, when we decided to open up the offices and come back from Covid, it wasn't our decision as to what happened in the club; it was the senior's decision about vaccination. And so they had a meeting with their members, and then the executive committee communicated to the chairperson to say that

only vaccinated people would be allowed in the clubs. And that's autonomy. That's agency, you know, that is people being truly allowed to decide what happens to them and putting people at the centre of their own development of their own growth. (C1)

It is indeed noteworthy to see how community governance in senior citizen communities empowers and gives a deep and sustained autonomy to the participants.

A similar theme is seen in Case study A, whereby the NGO makes a clear intention at the start of the project not to go into the environment with a pre-determined plan and instead provide the support required by the community to take ownership of the process.

But whenever we start any programme, we never come to a community and say, here's a project, and this is what you can expect because that's more like a top-down approach, so we have a like a bottom-up approach (A1)

And that's the model of our organisation based in terms of, you know, creating that self-dependence to avoiding or kind of saviour thing just come in and figure out all the answers. (A2)

Again, we observe how the organisation portrays a fundamental respect for the community's resources and acknowledges the multiple intelligences, values, and cultures embedded in the fabric of the community. Refreshingly, the organisation is against 'saving' the community and focuses on actively engaging with the community.

In case study B, The CBO showed awareness that the community needed to make decisions about their needs and goals. In fact, this was one of the reasons for the birth of the CBO and its accompanying values.

The problem is nobody trusts the people who have the needs to solve their own problems. And so that's why we started the CBO to totally just lead from behind (B1)

As a result, the CBO stepped back and allowed the community members to oversee not just the administrative elements of the project but also the issues faced, including discipline.

During the build, somebody, I think, went to jail for like attempted murder. Again, when you're working with truly vulnerable populations, you have crazy curveballs come your way. You know there are fights, somebody got hurt, somebody got stabbed, somebody else went to jail. So what do you do? And how do you handle somebody that shows up late every day? And the answer is, you know, let the community handle it. And so they had people they sort of elected to be in more senior positions. (B1)

It is interesting to note that the CBO stood back and allowed the community to decide on the issues of equity and fairness, not by standards dictated by the CBO but by the community themselves. The action undertaken by the CBO shows exemplary respect for the community and a deep and sustained level of trust.

Additionally, the community decides not only on how to discipline but on the principles of fairness they have determined as appropriate.

For instance, if you had a community meeting, maybe they elect somebody that a different community meeting wouldn't have elected. So we were just there to make sure that fairness was maintained. But fairness as determined by them. So it's like, cultural relativity and everything trying to just moderate from behind while still getting the job done. (B1)

Ultimately, the community is at the forefront of decision-making and is given the autonomy to solve problems in a manner that they deem fit. The community also had full decision-making power over the funds allocated to the project.

You know, let the community solve their own problems and have some power and agency in solving their own problems. They have to have ownership over everything, including the funds. (B1)

Moreover, the community controlled the process of identifying skills and distributing work for the project build.

I remember the people elected everyone. So it was like the community came together and kind of was like these are the people that should do this. These two people should do that.

(B1)

Ultimately, the CBO's role was to facilitate and assist when required and assist in a supportive role in creating a horizontal relationship of mutual trust. Perhaps, even more, inspiring is that the role of the CBO is seen as a place of safety and where the community can call on for assistance.

*Because all of our projects are community-led. We're never the heart and soul of something. We're just sort of cheerleaders, and it's really just being like a safety net. It's watching. The whole theme of this is creating the sort of safety net. **(B1)***

Even if the circumstances prevail, where there may be a higher level of knowledge, skills, and experience that is different from the community, this can never be imposed on the community. The goal is to become infinitely faithful to communities and create a firm, unshakable bond to access help whenever required.

Embrace failure

Perhaps it is due to inverting, going against the status quo, and turning traditional models of development upside down; we witness another element of an evolving model's ability to question and rearrange the ideas of success and failures in community development. Evolving models are not afraid to be displaced; in fact, analysis shows a strong dispensation for the evolving model not only to welcome failure and displacement but welcoming its discarding and accept its mortality with great dignity and even exuberance. Going back to critical consciousness, it is accepted that true liberation of marginalised communities cannot occur in environments where models contain elements of possessiveness or prescription.

In all case studies, analyses reveal that evolving models are socially innovative in its structural flexibility and in how they portray no possessiveness of outcomes or people; this is a necessary and central theme of liberation. As a result, the lens of viewing success and its measurement takes on a new and interesting perspective whereby the process becomes more significant than

the output. This was a recurring theme in all case studies signifying the understanding that successful projects fail, and this is part of the process.

All the best projects fail. Yeah, there's something if a project is successful; it's almost necessarily successful because it's so western or so marketable. But there's almost a duality of how marketable and measurable something is versus how authentic and meaningful it is. There is a pattern, at least in my experience, with the more creative projects and the more passion projects that don't receive the same kind of success as the ones you read. (B1)

The non-possessiveness of outcomes and concentration on authenticity, passion, and meaning is truly evolutionary compared to traditional outcomes-based projects. More broadly, organisations working in the development space need to understand that it is common and almost expected to 'fail,' This lack of success in a project should be looked at as a learning experience instead of a failed experience.

I think along with the leading from behind and letting things fail is this idea that part of the nature of dealing with historically oppressed and underrepresented is and that there is going to be a problem for these for corporates, churches, and NGOs to understand, is that it also means letting community-based projects fail. And you have to have the freedom to fail on your own and learn. My favourite project we've ever been involved with, it failed. (B1)

Freedom to fail is an interesting concept that rewires how community development projects are viewed. As a result, the CBO is clear that although problems exist, there should be an understanding that some projects will fail, no matter how innovative and creative the idea is.

In a similar context, in case study A, the municipality is aware that measures of success can change depending on the interpretation of success. However, it remains focused on uplifting the community through various interventions, including clinical-based services and educational services.

Oh, from our side, we do embrace the failures because otherwise, you can't get better. So, what the municipality tried, And I'm not sure if we were successful, some people think we were. But I think it's a very temporal kind of thing that your success today is not necessarily a success in a couple of years later, but what we've tried to do is we've tried to uplift the community through various interventions. (A3)

This way of processing failure challenges the usual methods of measuring success and asks valuable questions for development. In embracing failure, it could be linked to the ability to take risks and focus on the process instead of the outcome. This view of thinking is innovative in *how* it encourages construction and deconstruction by allowing the process to fall apart and come back together. Perhaps, a new word is needed for the development world, and instead of failure, it could bloom. Projects should be allowed to bloom, and even if it blooms once every ten years and dies, the process of getting to the point of blooming should be what is essential. Not necessarily worrying about the scalability of seed dispersal after blooming.

In case of study C, the non-possessiveness of outcomes was present in almost every project and was used as a base for creating autonomy and empowerment in the community. For the first project, the NGO provided funding to a community member to start a design project whereby a seamstress was given a container and machinery and sent on a business administration course to help start the project. The project was intended as an income stream for a design programme facilitated by the NGO but had to quickly adapt to and change course due to the community member's empowerment.

We have just spent, I think, almost 300,000 Rands setting up a woman with a container and machinery because she's a seamstress; she was supposed to work with us with our design program and be the main sort of designer for that. So we invested all this money, and we put her on a business administration course. So we've been to her house a month ago. We talked to her and asked so, where are we now? And she says, I now know how to cost my products. And I now understand that I've been undercharging you for my work. So we sat there and said, ok, reality check. And, she said, I should be charging this and that and that. And I want to go on my own. I don't need you. And we are like, and so we exit. Perfect! You keep the container, but we do have a proviso that the container can

only be used for that purpose. But she becomes so empowered and has been with us for many years. Isn't that a beautiful, audacious thing to do? And so she's no longer working for us, and we still use her when we can. If people want to move on, we help them exit and move on. (C1)

It is indeed beautiful to witness the extent of the non-possessiveness of outcomes by the NGO, but perhaps even more astonishing is the underlying expectation and hope of the NGO to accept that individuals will change in the process of becoming, and if the change creates less dependency on the NGO, it is viewed as a beautiful outcome.

A similar theme is seen in another project which grew from the desire of one of the community members to start their own frail care centre for seniors. As in previous examples, the NGO helped the person exit and assisted her with resources.

And then Thumi in Langa. Also, the project of ours started off, and we supported her, and then she decided that she now wants to be independent. And then she also had enough, like you guys want to take over, I want to be on my own. But what I did before I left was to get the government involved to say you need to oversee because you know, it can become a situation because they are frail people that need to be looked after. And Thumi needs to understand what she's doing. (C1)

In this instance, the NGO supported the community member by enlisting the help of an external stakeholder to ensure that the proper processes were followed since the frail senior centre needs to comply with governmental policies on health provision.

In another innovative project of the same NGO, visually impaired members of the community were trained in aromatherapy and pottery skills. The project was overseen by an employee of the NGO who was also a community member who decided that she would like to leave the organization's employ and pursue her own business while using the organisation's resources, including funding, infrastructure, and social networks.

And then Janice was the program manager. And she was employed by us; we paid a salary. And then she came to us. I want to do this on my own. I don't want to work with you anymore. And we helped her exit. We facilitated her exit with our project that we raised millions of Rands and people that we trained and exited her. So she runs her own thing now, you know. So they now earn an income; they have clients operating in Claremont. But she now has her own clients who came through us. Listen to this audacity, but she's so beautiful. She has her own clients, clients overseas, and she makes all kinds of things using our connections. And she's just carrying on with them, and we have nothing to do with it. (C1)

It becomes increasingly evident that the NGO focuses more on the process than on the initial outcome. In a standardised business environment, success is measured by achieving goals. Looking at the examples above, it is clear that, on paper, the tangible goals changed directions through the actions of courageous and empowered community members. However, instead of viewing this as a failure, being regimented and possessive of outcomes, the shift in direction is regarded as “beautiful.” Overall, one can deduce that in the process of providing access, the realisation is that individuals will and should become empowered to take action that may be incongruent with the initial plans of the organisation. Perhaps social innovation is the ability to encourage the mortality of dependence and embrace change, creating a new sustainability metric where focusing on process takes precedence over initial plans and outcomes.

The question can then be asked what then is the role of an organisation working in the development arena in marginalised communities? From the examples highlighted in case study C, it is evident that the NGO supports and bridges the community to the resources they require to reach its goals and, as such, serves as an abode of nourishment in all areas of human completion.

So we really act as a catalyst, or a connector, or a facilitator to people who can do for themselves but are challenged by access. (C1)

In the process, a deconstruction and a reconstruction emerge, one that changes the community member and the processes, people, and systems utilised by the NGO. Additionally, there is no

element of possession of people or outcomes; the end goal is the joy of seeing an individual use the tools provided by the NGO to become more empowered and independent.

Yeah, but people leave us. Really very confidently, you know we can do this on our own. The important thing for us is that the people can carry on without us. There's an infrastructure; there is a commitment, a willingness, and an awareness that they can do this themselves. We have incubated so many programs; they are just flourishing and carrying on. We don't own anything. We truly don't own anything. (C1)

Something genuinely remarkable emerges when focusing on the how and not the what. The entire concept of failure is viewed as a starting point for something different instead of defeat or contention. The examples above showed that the outcome, although different from the initial plans, is considered a success if it means that individuals become empowered. In redefining measures of success, perhaps, the accurate measurement of success cannot ever be measured by the outside stakeholders but by the community. In essence, if development starts with the initiatives and plans from the community, the reasoning is that the community will determine any success relating to the project.

When working directly with a community or with individuals, the people are the ones coming up with initiatives, so they're also the ones who determine if it's successful. (B1)

Oppressive systems and people thrive on control to maintain a false perception of power. To initiate and sustain a truly transformative change, what is needed is an innovative approach that is not afraid to evolve to succeed. As paradox as this sounds, the case study analysis above shows that even though projects may have 'failed' in terms of the initially proposed outcome, they succeeded in creating an individual or collective empowerment process and were thus ultimately successful.

The following section will detail the social innovation elements that are presented in the research.

4.4 SOCIAL INNOVATION

The following section will describe how the constructs of critical consciousness influence community driven development as social innovation. The constructs of critical reflection are micro-phenomenal in that it leads to changed behaviours of individuals and community that impacts the macro-phenomena systems through transformative action. Furthermore, critical reflection elevates both an individual's and society's understanding of the social structures they are impacted by and which they impact. As a result, we witness a desire and motivation to take action in deciding how to combat wicked problems and recognise the community's strengths. This action is transformative in dismantling, dislodging, and dislocating oppressive practices and systems. Equally important is the ability of the action to reconfigure and restructure new configurations of social innovations. The researcher uncovered five ways social innovation is enhanced through new configurations of social practices, shifting the power to communities, restructuring resource flows, flexible systems, and revolutionary roles.

4.4.1 New configurations of social practices

The analysis reveals that social innovations can simultaneously be disruptive, bold, intimate, and humble. Organisations entering the community development space immerse with the community to allow the process of unveiling deeper societal issues, complexities, culture, strengths, etc., and enables one to dive into the heart of the issues in society. As a result, the true nature of wicked problems can be understood from an intimate and unique perspective, and innovative ways can be found in *how* to combat these issues. We see an example of what this looked like in case study B when the CBO spent countless hours truly immersing with the community, visiting their homes, sharing food, admiring gardens, and meeting their children, only to find out multiple hidden issues camouflaged by varying degrees of incorrect information on the community. The CBO uncovered a failing health system and inadequate medical professionals who were inherently working against the community and slave-like working conditions that actively caused the mortality rate to increase. This information was not found in previous research on the community. As a result, the CBO was able to implement the hiring of a mobile clinic using the services of a nurse from the community, which made a positive and transformative change to the community and with the community. Building on this point, we can argue that immersion accelerates development in creating a fast-track understanding of the issues faced in society. Take, for example, case study C; when confronted with the fundamental issue of the safety of staff being able to come to work, the general manager and founder wasted no time in planning to immerse into the reality of staff's lived

experience by going into their homes early in the morning and travelling with them to understand the non-obvious factors that impact the safety of the staff. As a result, the process of finding innovative, sustainable solutions is accelerated.

Unravelling the elements of empowerment and dialogue, we witness the most intriguing process of conversations with courage which alter social practices. These are no ordinary conversations among stakeholders; these conversations are nourished with humility, empathy, and time. In addition, these conversations willingly encourage critique and allow for doubt, suggestions, and accountability to a seat at the development table. More importantly, though, these conversations are heavy enough to allow frustrations to rise to the surface, allowing the voice of the voiceless to be heard and respecting the frustrations and anger that communities feel. At the same time, gentleness is infused in the process while focusing on the problem, not necessarily a person. We see clear examples in case study C of how the willingness of the NGO to engage in courageous conversations with criminals alters social relations by creating unique co-creative relationships with impactful stakeholders in the community.

Similarly, when the founder of the NGO overheard criminal elements discussing stealing her car, she approached them with courage and hope. She offered a sustainable long-term co-creative solution to fund a bin-cleaning business, which is still in existence decades later. Drawing on the idea of creating new forms of collaboration amongst all stakeholders, we also saw how community members and donors sit together and discuss issues faced in the community without the interference of the NGO acting as a buffer between the two stakeholders. This action contradicts many traditional donor/community relationships. The process creates new collaboration with the donor and community directly, allowing for unfiltered, raw, concrete, authentic issues to rise and for innovative and sustainable solutions to be discovered and implemented. Moreover, the process allows the NGO to be challenged and accountable to the community and donors for the actions and non-actions that impact the community.

A further influential element of social innovation can be found in witnessing how individuals and communities wrestle with the social structures they are a part of and which impact them. Whether it is in the form of courageous conversation with senior citizens in case study C calling

up the National government to complain about the lack of services, or the CBO in case study B, who refused to play along with the false narratives of community issues to obtain funding, or the NGO in case study B who fights with the local municipality daily. We also witness a duality of how individuals and communities wrestle with social structures and the impact *they make* on social structures. In particular, we saw how one of the community members in case study A admitted that she had to wrestle with her unconscious bias towards other community members whom she assumed were stealing money from the municipality. She then took action to combat her assumptions and simultaneously committed to being part of the process of change. As a result, a reconstruction of the thought process was developed, which impacted micro and macro change in the community.

4.4.2 Shifting the power to communities:

We can build on this point by stating that in actively pursuing co-creative experiences with all stakeholders, we witness social practices evolving into new relational dynamics where the power is shifted to the community. Although community driven development, in essence, is fundamentally focused on giving back power to communities, we see multiple examples of organisations going further than a tick-box exercise and shifting power back to communities in a deeper and more transformative way. In case study B, the community was involved in all project areas, from its inception, design, and build. The community was autonomous in creating policies for employment and discipline, and the process's fairness was determined by the community, not an outside organisation. We see a similar process in case study C, where the senior citizens had full autonomy to decide on the rules and practices for the clubs they were a part of. In the process, the senior citizens showed how through the process of observation, humility, and positive change principles, they could assist another member who was always stealing items to reach the necessary help required and not be admonished and treated with shame. As a result, discipline can become a positive consequence of the community working together for human completion. In restructuring relationships and creating alternative organisational interpretations of inclusion within the community, the NGO in case study C not only immersed into the community but allowed the community to immerse into the organisation by employing staff from the community, which made up a staggering 90 percent of staff. On the surface, one can easily see how this process makes sense in that it allows for a deeper understanding of the reality of issues faced by the community; however, if you look deeper, we see several manifestations of social innovation appearing. One of them is the ability

of the staff members to decide and take ownership of *how* decisions are made and *how* work is done in the organisation.

On the one hand, we witness that staff can share their experiences which leads to realistic and innovative change for the community. Moreover, staff members are equal decision-makers in solving the issues faced by their communities, as they understand the intricacies of societal norms and practices, culture, the impact of crime, and the urgent needs of the community. In case study A, the data collection process advanced from being a typical quantitative exercise to one where the community was empowered to collect, analyse and report on the data collected and, at the same time, build valuable social capital within the community as a positive consequence. This change in social practice allowed for the collective empowerment of the community when dialoguing with the local municipality regarding upgrading and developing the informal settlement.

4.4.3 Restructuring resource flows:

Both critical consciousness and community driven development place communities at the centre of liberation and development. As agents of change, communities are held in a position of esteem as innovators and thriving and powerful sources of skills and resources. Resources refer not only to tangible elements such as money, infrastructure, and material goods but also include the intangible element of time, intellectual property, social capital, and information (Nilsson Warren, 2019). As a result, of the research, we witness the restructuring of resource flows as a socially innovative process that uses knowledge, skills, culture, and community environment as assets in development. In all case studies, we saw how community members were fundamental producers, designers, participants, and recipients of community driven development projects. In case study B, the communities used their various construction skills to build a community centre. In case study A, we see how the data collection was possible through the social networks and customs inherently found in informal settlements. This resource became a source of intellectual property for the community to use and leverage with the municipality to upgrade informal settlements. In case study C, we witnessed the birth and expansion of businesses and social clubs run solely by the senior citizen community.

Additionally, the CBO supports senior citizens and other community members and provides infrastructure, funding, and skills development initiatives. More importantly, it provides clients, networks, and connections to powerful, previously unreachable individuals and

markets to ensure the business's success. Moreover, the CBO provided disruptive funding in that community members were allowed to change direction from objectives and branch out independently from the organisation. In fact, even though CBO investment of large sums of money into a project, it was gleeful in letting the community member further their hopes without any possessiveness of outcomes.

4.4.4 Flexible systems

We saw how the evolving models of flexible systems step outside the boundaries of primary functions, core programmes, mission, and vision statements. As a result, organisations become more responsive, reflexive, interactive, and inclusive in solving many community issues. In case study C, one differentiating and innovative practice implemented was viewing communities as holistic beings. This translated to restructuring and redistributing resources to create flexible, responsive, and customisable systems that are multi-focal in addressing the myriad of problems marginalised communities face. The CBO offers a suite of wellness packages to senior citizens and provides skills development in all facets, including how to write a will, run a business, and even recognise and combat the various forms of abuse. This holistic resource channel spreads to other projects, including the after-school programme for children who were given meals and access to necessary facilities such as testing for hearing, sight, and learning difficulties. Additionally, the college programme for marginalised youth included the provision of transport, food, tuition, and transcendental meditation for the holistic health and well-being of the community. But perhaps, at a micro-phenomenal level, it can be deduced that the CBO, being multi-focal and providing the community with holistic resources, gives the community the precious gift of time, which can be used for other essential tasks.

In pivoting ideas of success and failure, we see how societal definitions of success and failure were turned upside down and focused on people and processes instead of rigid outcomes. In case study C, we saw several examples of this rising to the surface, from the community member who was sent on a business course and after that decided not to work with the NGO but still used the organisation's resources for the visually impaired project, which yielded similar outcomes from the community. What could be perceived as the possible failure of project outcomes is seen as successful if the community member becomes empowered and autonomous in the process and carries on without the NGO. Upon close inspection of how this impacts donor funding, we see that what is truly remarkable is that the donors support the

organisation's ability to pivot and that there is a deep level of trust amongst all stakeholders. Blurring lines of success and failure examples can also be found in case study B, where the founder of the CBO was candid, sharing that most of the projects he invested in, and the most creative ones, failed to meet the desired outcomes. In fact, there was an understanding that most community projects fail. A similar sentiment was echoed by the municipality working with the community in case study A; here, there was a strong belief that to succeed, community projects need to fail. This re-definition of success and failure shows a more creative, passionate, humbling, and authentic side to community development that disrupts how failure and success are viewed.

In case study B, we also discovered how traditional medicine was used concurrently with western medication to respect and acknowledge the multiple forms of healing in communities. The use of traditional healers reveals a flexible and innovative in seeking healing and holistic well-being. Even though what constitutes healing may be vastly different from the organisation and its founder, there was an acknowledgment, respect, and inclusion of the community's way of healing to be incorporated into ways of doing by the CBO

4.4.5 Revolutionary roles

One of the most interesting social innovations observed in the research revealed the ability of roles to be adaptive, flexible, and disrupt norms. This can be best explained by giving two examples of how functions in the community were disrupted to create new roles laden with purpose and value. In case study C, we saw how women in informal communities decided to open their homes to keep neighbourhood children safe and off the streets. What started as an act of empathy turned into role flexibility whereby the community started legitimate aftercare programmes and was trained and upskilled by the NGO, switching the roles played by the women in the community.

In altering societal interpretations of value and worth, we see another inspiring example of how social innovation is manifested. We can refer to this demographic development as a form of inclusion that becomes a game changer in community driven development. Senior citizens have often overlooked members of society, but the research clearly shows that this group of individuals, when given the tools for human completion, the results are incredible. The senior citizens are entrepreneurial, courageous, and one of the most inspiring, humble, self-organising

human beings with a magnanimous potential for social change. The senior citizens in case study C created several self-sustaining businesses, oversaw clubs across Cape Town, created and maintained discipline policies, and led skills and development training for new community members. This demographic development is a social innovation that smashes and alters social norms and re-energizes and replenishes the worth of senior citizens. Not only are the senior citizens' agents of change, but they are also exemplary in creating a myriad of solutions and innovations to combat societal issues. They do all of this with a twinkle in the eye, walking courageously and gently simultaneously.

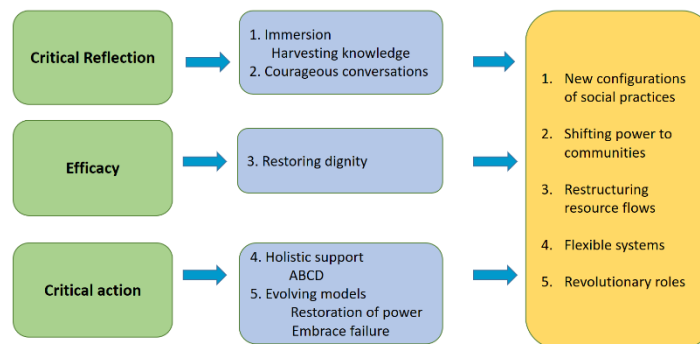
Additionally, the NGOs supporting the senior citizens view them as innovation leaders who hold power over resource distribution, authority, and decision-making. An interesting note is that the founder of the NGO is a senior citizen who breaks social norms by immersing herself in the community till today – at the beautiful age of 80. Continuing with demographic development, we witnessed how intergenerational work carried out by the community members in case study B was socially innovative in bridging generational divides. During the project build, grandparents, their children, and grandchildren were able to pool their skills and resources to complete the project efficiently. As a result, intergenerational employment also seeks to dislocate stereotypes of who is considered valuable and worthwhile and instead recognise previously overlooked skills and strengths of each individual and how these can be used in community development projects.

When analysing community driven development, we discover a social innovation in the revolutionary roles carried out by CBOs and NGOs. These organisations are unique in their ability to be flexible, authentic, responsive, accountable, and present in the community while creating bonds of mutual respect and trust. In case study A, we see how the CBO preserves and sustains relationships with the community on the one hand while simultaneously preserving and sustaining the relationships with the local municipality on the other. It is a delicate balance of respecting a bureaucratic entity's rigid policies and practices while bridging the gap between the community and the municipality.

4.6 Conclusion Chapter 4

This chapter presented the research findings to answer the question of how critical consciousness can influence community driven development as social innovation. The research

findings included a detailed explanation of the analysis used to determine the main themes presented in this chapter. Five themes emerged that linked to the constructs of critical consciousness in the context of community driven development. As a result, the researcher was able to explore social innovations that emerged from the research and diagrammatically presented these as follows.



The section ended with understanding the emergence of social innovation elements as influenced by critical consciousness through community driven development.

The research consisted of heterogeneous actors across the community driven development space and included individuals and organisations with varied roles, positions, and authority. All case studies revealed similar themes; however, the research also focuses on distinct offerings and factors that impede the development of themes.

It is evident that the theme of immersion, both in the community and *with* the community, is present in all case studies. The process of critical consciousness suggests that to transform a reality; there is a need to immerse into reality. As a result, one can become critically aware of the many complex layers and influences that create, maintain, and sustain multiple oppressions. However, the analysis shows that the process is not easy; it can be intimidating and requires great courage to navigate conversations with community members that can quickly become heated and possibly turn violent. Dislocating oppressive systems is not an easy, quick process, and even when communities are aware of oppression, some may choose not to act due to their desperate need to keep employment, even though the employment threatens their health and

safety. As a result, we see the emergence of new holistic models in development that provide whole community development instead of focusing on one or two systemic failures. We see how the institutional embedding of social innovations thread seamlessly with the values and goals of the community, the not-for-profit and community based organisation, and donors too. As a result, we see how focusing on the whole person, and community development leads to holistic well-being, elevating critical consciousness.

Even though community driven development advocates for community inclusion, we see that light touch and tick-box exercises are not enough. Communities need to take back their power, but inclusion needs to cross barriers, break roles, reconceptualise the past, present and future developments, and re-imagine and re-align purpose *in* the community and *with* the community. Immersion on the ground is deep and runs through the community's veins. We see how evolving models are born through courageous conversations, restoring dignity, and providing holistic support. These evolving models for community development are revolutionary in that it pivots ideas of success and failure and concentrates on processes, empowerment, and restoration of dignity instead of rigid outcomes. Critically, the models actively pursue mortality and dependence from the community, which many CDD projects fail to achieve.

The research analysis reveals the duality of community development. Organisations and individuals who want to nourish social innovation in community driven development need to understand and pursue the duality of being. We witnessed how community members were confident enough to be outspoken against oppression and humble enough to observe its causes and one's contributions to it. We observed how organisations could think strategically and use intuition and awareness to restore dignity to guide policy and ways of doing. We saw how community based and not-for-profit organisations embraced creativity and were socially innovative within the community as well as in places of stagnation, red tape, and bureaucracy with local governmental institutions. We saw the birth of systems that were agile, flexible, and permeable while, at the same time providing indestructible, solid, unyielding support, care, and nourishment to communities. We discovered the importance of courage in conversations that compel actors to be strong enough to challenge people, processes, and systems. However, the ability to be weak to be criticised and held accountable is equally important. We saw how

immersive experiences accelerated development through conversations, paradoxically while being patient and observing the reality of the environment.

These conditions create environments that develop and sustain social innovations. In developing new configurations of social practices with the community, we saw that deep and meaningful inclusion of community members to solve society's wicked problems extended to actively seeking co-creative relationships with all stakeholders, including criminals. In shifting the power to communities, we observed how governance, policy-making, and autonomy of decision-making were exclusively done by the community members. Critically, we observed how the immersion of the community into an organisation was a considerable step in empowering the community to make decisions within the organisation. In restructuring resource flows, we noted how communities moved from being consumers and passive recipients of development projects to becoming intellectual property owners, designers, producers, and creators of unique and inclusive processes and projects in community development. At the same time, we witnessed the importance of flexible systems that smashed traditional ways of doing and offered holistic and multifocal support to communities while acknowledging and immersing the cultural and ecological environment of the community. In redefining concepts of success and failure, we saw how organisations were able to create environments of non-possessiveness of outcomes while pursuing alternative definitions of success and failure. In doing so, community members were empowered to use the resources within the organisation to lead their own development. Finally, we examined the elevation of demographic development in senior citizens quickly became a game changer in the community development arena. Additionally, intergenerational opportunities for employment that included older members of the community integrated with the younger members of the community resulted in the completion of the building project.

Against the backdrop of the multiple social innovations, the research also delved into understanding factors that obstruct, delay, frustrate, and interfere with achieving the elevated level of critical consciousness in community driven development. Miscommunication and unclear policies and definitions of upgrading from the National Government to local municipalities and communities caused confusion and doubt with impacted community development. As a result, communities were untrusting of the local and national government's

ability to provide services which gave birth to tensions and strained relationships with stakeholders. Concerningly, the research showed the full extent of how miscommunication within governmental departments not only interfered with community development; it also caused an increase in the mortality rate of individuals due to the sustained efforts to keep the informal settlement situated on a toxic dump site instead. As a consequence of the ineffective action from the governmental level to restore the dignity of the community, we see how this raises the levels of frustration that ultimately lead to violent protest action and the burning of governmental buildings. Another significant barrier in community driven development that impedes participation is the element of a time deficit that marginalised communities face. Pressurised to find employment with limited or no formal educational background, communities usually find seasonal employment in the Winelands and citrus farms. This time deficit impacts community development in several ways. When the community is employed, they are unable to commit to any CDD projects in time or skills contributions. When they are not working, they cannot contribute financially towards CDD projects due to the lack of income. Additionally, marginalised communities face the harsh reality of poverty and being able to put food on the table. The research showed that even when there was a level of skills available, they were unwilling to do the work for free and requested remuneration.

To conclude, the research analysis was able to answer the research question in finding multiple socially innovative avenues within the constructs of critical consciousness for community driven development to pursue and sustain. The result of which restores the dignity of society, breaking traditional ways of thinking and doing, and is inclusive and empowering to marginalised community members. As a result, innovative ways to combat the multiple, hidden, and obvious wicked problems can be tackled with courage, and solutions can be found that are inclusive and empowering to all actors.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The research sought to answer the question, “How can critical consciousness influence community driven development as social innovation.”

5.1 Main research contributions

The main research contributions are discussed below.

5.1.1 CC-infused holistic models are critical in CDD.

My research adds valuable insight into the literature. The three case studies comprised diverse participants in gender, race, age, roles, and social class and included marginalised community members *and* privileged individuals. As a result, the unique and diverse participants in the research allowed the researcher to see commonalities, social innovations, and distinctions that were only made possible due to the diversity of participants, organisations, and environments using a cross-sectional lens. Although we see cross-sectional participants in the CDD, CC, and SI literature, the focus is not as comprehensive and inclusive as my research (Kim et al., 2021). The SI literature focuses on organisational perspectives on risk avoidance and gaining benefits and usually ignores other actors (van Wijk et al., 2019). In addition, literature on critical consciousness has mainly focused on marginalised individuals in the United States, primarily focusing on one demographic age, i.e., youth or children (Diemer et al., 2020; Heberle et al., 2020; Maker Castro et al., 2022; Shin et al., 2016). Moreover, there is little or no research conducted in CC that is qualitative, multi-case, and cross-sectional (Heberle et al., 2020). My research includes varied participants in age, roles, and geographies that can shine the spotlight on the demographic development of the youth and senior citizens and, as a result, shifts interpretations of worth of using the community's skills, knowledge, and values.

This research showed that embedding a holistic lens in community development is not constrained to observing and analysing the multiple forms of oppression. Equally important was the ability to view the possibilities for innovation, unique talents, untapped resources, and social capital as a solid strategy for current and future development (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). My research places suggest that it is through these holistic lenses that social innovations are born. Although innovation in the term social innovation annotates newness and inventions, this study shows that social innovations are not necessarily new but found in the crossroads and intersections of varied stakeholder engagement across multiple sectors. As a result, social innovations are the new configurations of ideas and resources that were previously compartmentalised— ideas that may indeed have been old but, when looking at a new lens, presents a unique understanding of the holistic problem to catalyse a social innovation

(Mulgan, 2006). Hence, this research adds to the literature by offering a holistic view of the complex issues and innovations within the community, organisation, and supporting organisations (NGO/CBO).

This research emphasizes the theme of the restoration of dignity as central to achieving CC. Marginalised communities suffer from a myriad of social deprivations, resulting in various forms of issues such as drug, alcohol, and other forms of abuse. As a result, individuals and families not only struggle with poverty and the lack of basic human needs not being met but with interfamilial issues in relationships as a result. As a result, there is a need to see the link between micro-phenomenal aggregations and how it links to macro-phenomenal aggregations. In both case study B and C, we heard of the issues prevalent in the community, including alcoholism and drug abuse. Instead of victim-blaming the individual (Watts et al., 2011), the literature on CC shows that it is essential to unveil the oppressive lineage that was inherited by the community.

Moreover, the community needs reassurance that the quest for wholeness and restoring dignity is not necessarily an individual pathology but the result of the remnants of the oppressive systems and brutality, which still impact society in other ways and forms (Hernández et al., 2005). It is precisely why this research adds to the literature by placing holistic models at the epicentre of development. These models need to spread like roots that run widely into the depths and breadth of the community, recognising that the past is inextricably linked to the present and linked to the future (Choi et al., 2015). Marginalised communities need to be reminded that they are not broken but instead were wounded casualties in the war of oppression; they need to be reassured that they are not unknowledgeable but instead were denied the opportunities and resources to achieve their full potential and capabilities and they are not undignified when raising frustrations but have every right to break the culture of silence due to their dignity having been stolen. Critically, any perspective that does not recognise the historical, current, and future oppressions, the cause and effect (Watts et al., 2011), it has on society, it can be argued that it merely feeds into the culture of silence and act as arms of domination and suppression of communities.

In both case studies, B and C, we saw how the organisations included providing meals to the community to alleviate hunger. In contrast, the literature on critical consciousness does not necessarily consider general civic engagement and volunteering, for example, in soup kitchens, as a form of oppressive systemic dismantling since this action does not consider the analysis of the systems that oppress (Diemer et al., 2021). However, my research shows that the constructs of critical consciousness are elevated and sustained by organisations that nourish the community's holistic needs, including providing meals, skills development, creating spaces for dialogue and growth, and infrastructure, including showers and clean clothes for senior citizens.

Moreover, the research pushes the agenda that organisational embedding of the constructs of CC through catering to the holistic needs of the individual and community impacts, influences, and elevated CC. Looking below the surface of needs being met, we see that the underlying current is the restoration of dignity. A person's dignity is restored through simple acts such as having a shower and clean clothes after a bathroom accident for senior citizens in case study C or listening to the health concerns that the community experience through the citrus farmers' mistreatment and brutality in case study B. What we are seeing is space for the elevation of CC. CC literature frequently refers to individual or collective reflection and efficacy as catalysts for transformative and critical change (Diemer, 2020). However, this research pushes the agenda that organisational embedding of CC constructs and praxis through immersion, restoring the community's dignity, and creating holistic, flexible models leads to creating spaces and relationships that lead to micro-praxis individual or collective action in the community. This action then influences and elevates the critical consciousness of the community.

Marginalised communities can sometimes manifest behaviour of internal subordination, which influences the choice to implement changes to their experiences (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2021). One can argue that if the social innovation presented to the individual is deemed too risky and obstructs the attainment of basic physiological needs, such as putting food on the table for families, then the outcome will be non-action. We see examples of this in the research whereby in case study A, the need for employment greatly overshadowed the need for involvement in community development projects. Turning to social innovation literature, we see examples

whereby communities failed to reach the desired outcomes, and the continuing invoking of newness resulted in innovation fatigue (Mulgan, 2016).

5.1.2 CC can be unidirectional, and action catalyses critical reflection.

Critical conscious literature posits that, in general, individuals will not engage in transformative action that challenges social structures if they know and understand very little of it (Diemer et al., 2021). However, my research shows the opposite. Individuals engaged in mobilising action were catalysed to act due to myriad factors, including restoration of dignity to ensure transparency, unhappiness with the political climate, and witnessing one catalysing moment of children playing on a dump.

“Children were eating alongside dogs and pigs and not going to school. And I just thought, I must try and make it better.” B2

“And I started with government, and I was so disillusioned. So I left after like five years. I didn’t have any job to go to, but I knew that I couldn’t be there anymore” A2

“So my story comes from that I said no, it’s important to me because the way I see the way I’ve been suffering and that’s something I need to change” A4

This ties in with social innovation, which states that action can sometimes precede understanding (Mulgan, 2006). It is the acknowledgment deep in the heart of an individual that screams *something* needs to change – without knowing the how, what, where, why, or when.

5.1.3 CC, through the process of immersion, unveils and accelerates CDD processes.

My research shows that immersion within the community accelerated development by allowing stakeholders to engage in courageous conversations. In the process, we see many important issues, hidden or obvious, rising to the surface and breaking the culture of silence ingrained and forced on marginalised communities in South Africa (Nel, 2014). Courageous conversations allow for the sharing of experiences and reflect on biases through dialogue as a catalyst for changing societal inequality and dislocating oppressive systems, which is an important step for CC, CDD, and SI (Choi et al., 2015; Diemer & Li, 2011; Nilsson, 2015;

Wilkinson-Maposa, 2017). As with any dialogue, there is a possibility of the meeting overflowing with frustrations and desperation for change. Critically, this research shows that the intensity of emotions felt by community members must be given the space, security, and freedom to speak. The reason is that the emotions relate directly to restoring the community's stolen dignity. However, merely reflecting on the oppressions and developing an expansive understanding of the complex factors without developing efficacy to act will leave individuals demotivated and even more frustrated (Watts et al., 2011).

CC finds similarities in the literature on social innovation in that it calls for deconstructing and reconstructing dominant ways of thinking and doing (Hernández et al., 2005). However, an interesting perspective is to ask whose culture the deconstruction is being done. Suppose the process of CC or SI leads to dislocating the traditions and culture of a marginalised community by only imposing western standards of ways of doing and thinking or enlightenment. In that case, it is possible that this action inadvertently leads to cultural invasion and perpetuates oppression (Bowers, 1983). A primary goal of all actors is to understand how the structure of thought, through language and experience, shapes the actions of communities. To expand on this concept, we put forward that cultural knowledge, for example, healing practices, cannot be imposed by Eurocentric practitioners and instead should be inclusive of traditional ways of healing (Hernández et al., 2005). In case study B, we witnessed conflicting examples of inclusive healing with traditional healers being incorporated into the strategy and long-term plans of the organisation with the community. In contrast, we saw how the privileged medical doctor within the community not only refused to treat patients with some decorum of dignity; he was convinced that the devil possessed the patients. As a consequence, the community continued to suffer.

An interesting outcome of the research was the process of reflexivity, self-awareness, and critical consciousness-raising not only for marginalised community members but for actors representing the NGOs and CBOs who were privileged. Building on this, when analysing the literature on CC, there is a wave of research on marginalised individuals and communities, but it is unclear on the role of privileged individuals working with marginalised communities to create transformative action (Diemer et al., 2021). Critical consciousness may pose a problem for individuals who are privileged because any innovation to enhance CC may conflict with

the constructs and conceptions they house within themselves (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). As a result, there is a need to understand how privileged individuals can acknowledge oppressive structures while simultaneously re-configuring new social systems while co-creating with marginalised communities. The research adds to the literature and gives a unique perspective on how privileged individuals can co-create with marginalised communities by dislocating and dismantling the same oppressive systems that sustained and were favourable to them. We see multiple examples of this in the process of immersion accelerates understanding of oppressive structures for all stakeholders, including privileged and marginalised communities. Critically, in immersing in the lived reality of marginalised communities, all stakeholders can engage in dialogue, share experiences, and focus on the root cause of oppression while finding innovative solutions for social advancement based on the community's needs.

5.1.4 CC enhances organisational reflexivity and permeability, which positively impacts CDD.

Shifting focus to organizations' immersion into the community, the process of immersion needs to become an intentional awareness exercise in the lived reality of the community. However, intention and good ideas are not enough. What is required is an awareness of the boundaries, conflicts, and inequities present *in* the organisational virtues, culture, processes, and policies that inadvertently obstruct and stagnate community development. And who better to raise the consciousness of these conflicts than the community itself? This is why the organisation needs to allow itself to adopt an approach of permeability. It must allow itself to be punctured by the community in the same way it punctures the community. This is done through courageous conversations which force all actors to observe, think, reflect, and act on how they impact the community. One of the more meaningful examples of permeability is the infusing of the community into the organisation as staff members, as seen in case study C. As a result, the organisation's entire system of processes, policies, resource allocation, decision-making, and other vital factors strongly reverberates the community's voices and echoes into the organisation.

Apart from the unveiling, the research shows that the organisation's virtues and values align with communities in all case studies. Specifically, we see elements of hope, trust, humility, empathy, dignity, and morality run through the organisation and community veins. Interestingly, we see how the organisation can expand these virtues to other stakeholders like

governmental institutions, signalling that the virtues held by the organisation are solidified in every action taken and do not bend and change to the tune of mightier stakeholders. The literature refers to this as the embedded agency of the organisation (Nilsson, 2015), which is unique in that it shows the possibility of driving social purpose and social innovation while engaging and building relationships with more prominent institutional stakeholders.

My research adds to the CDD literature by presenting how CBOs and NGOs play a vital role in the success of CDD project processes and outcomes. This support is essential since the research on CDD project failure shows that one of the factors included the lack of mentors and support structures for the community to call upon (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2021). This research shows a theme running in all case studies is the safety net of support offered by the organisations in a non-possessive and non-dominating way. Although an influential thought on social innovation is that to grow the innovation's scale, the process needs to outgrow the founders whose initial radical, passionate, creative risky character might not be appropriate for scaling (Mulgan, 2006). This research, however, shows examples in all case studies where the founders were the catalysts for getting the project off the ground, but the organisation gave communities resources to lead development. At the same time, the organisation simultaneously created a safety net to catch anyone needing help and resources. As a result, while there was no cold turkey exit from the founder or originators once the idea took off, instead, we witnessed how from the very beginning, the founders and organisational support were locked in an ocean of non-possessiveness, trust, and faith in the community to lead their development. Critically, this non-possessiveness lies at the heart of critical consciousness.

The research describes evolving models' evolutionary and revolutionary abilities to be flexible, adaptive, customisable, and permeable in community development. Just as the organisation immerses in the community with its values, process, and culture, we see examples of the community immersing into the organisation with its values, processes, and culture. Boundaries are permeable and include all actors in the community. Significantly, in case study C we saw the inclusion of criminals as stakeholders in re-configuring social practices. Social innovation literature supports permeable and flexible systems in recognising that rigid organisations serve only to destabilise organisations (Nilsson, 2015). This simply means that organisations are immersing into the community to engage in courageous conversations that seek to unveil

oppressions and co-create new social practices, res-structure resources, shift power to communities, and embrace revolutionary roles which cross boundaries.

Social innovation literature posits that several levels of social innovation practices precede the adoption of the idea by the community and society (Mulgan, 2016). In case study C, we observed how the organisation, after listening to the communities' needs through immersing in the lived reality of the community, quickly launched a project into the community and obtained funding thereafter. This initial launch period of the project, engulfed in uncertainty, resistance to the idea, and minimum resources, is almost expected to fail, sometimes miserably (Mulgan, 2016). This research shows multiple examples from participants who embraced the notion of failure as a by-product of the community development and social innovation process. The individuals in the organisations embrace the notion of flexibility and agility in planning. As a result, there is an awareness that what is successful today will not necessarily be successful tomorrow. Conceding with the literature on positive institutional work, it is apparent that to stay relevant and engage with communities, organisations need to focus on processes and projects that customisation and adapt to varied contexts (Nilsson, 2015) and accept that mortality is inevitable.

Another significant area in the literature relates to creating space for transformation. SI research focuses on organisations that create interactive and experimental spaces where heterogeneous actors can meet to discuss and debate topics to develop a shared understanding, identify opportunities, and mobilise transformative change (van Wijk et al., 2019). The research in this study showed various examples of how organisations were instrumental in creating these interactive spaces. Moreover, interactive spaces moved beyond basic infrastructure and included cultural, philosophical, and environmental immersion from the community into the space. As a result, the space became a hub of energy to catalyse social movements whereby experiential situations can be shared between individuals (Nilsson, 2015). In case study B, the CDD project consisted of building a community centre using the community's resources and skills and incorporating Rumi's philosophy into the building design, resulting in a unique building structure. In case study A, the NGO built a centre for senior citizens intending to create a safe space from the criminality and abuse faced in the community, which pivoted to becoming a place of social interaction, healing, learning skills, fostering entrepreneurial goals, and having

a whole lot of fun. The notion of creating a place that transcends physical atmospheric elements to become a space of healing, social interaction, fostering relationships, and sharing resources are supported in the literature (Meshram & O’Cass, 2013).

A deeper analysis reveals that these spaces give the community something valuable – time. In catering to the holistic needs of the community, we see how time is an additional resource being provided by the NGO in case study C to senior citizen community members. While the popular opinion may be that senior citizens may have an abundance of time since they are not employed (Sikhosana, M. L., & Ntini, 2021), it must be noted that this additional time may, in fact, lead to isolation and loss of social networks. In fact, senior citizens have the perception of limited time (Kahlbaugh & Budnick, 2021); therefore, the quantity of time is not as important as the quality of time available to create rewarding and fulfilling experiences.

When analysing the participants in the other case studies, it was clear that marginalised communities suffer significantly from time deficiency to insufficient systems in health and other sectors that force people to wait in long queues. Moreover, marginalised communities work long hours, so volunteering for a CDD project might exclude many individuals. Moreover, as many community members live in dire poverty conditions, CDD projects that require the community to contribute considerable money to a project might lead to non-participation. This research revealed how community members were unwilling to participate in a volunteer savings group for future development in case study A. The reasons could plausibly be due to time and money constraints that prevent participation.

5.1.5 CC restoration of power to the community by restructuring roles to include senior citizens as change agents in CDD.

The senior citizens’ population is a generally undervalued demographic sector of society regarding community development (Sikhosana, M. L., & Ntini, 2021). Moreover, the vast majority of literature on senior citizens focuses on the dire health and needs of senior citizens. While these are essential factors to consider, there is a lack of research on how senior citizens’ wealth of knowledge and skills can lead to transformative social innovation in all areas of community development (Sikhosana, M. L., & Ntini, 2021). My research shows how senior citizens transverse many roles, including motivational speakers, advisors, mentors, activists,

entrepreneurs, mediators, crafters of unique art, storytellers, singers, and governance and policy experts. This research is important for future literature since it focuses on co-creation with senior citizens as a necessary step for inclusive community development and social innovation. The senior citizens' population is growing exponentially, and in 2034 will outnumber the youth (under 18 years) and is projected to increase in population from 6 million to 19 million senior citizens (Kahlbaugh & Budnick, 2021). These statistics show that a dominant ageing population with multiple skills, wisdom, and knowledge needs to be integrated into all community development policies and considered essential stakeholders.

When evaluating other forms of systemic oppression, it can be deduced that ageism as a negative stereotype is a severe obstruction to attaining a full and rewarding existence for senior citizens (Kahlbaugh & Budnick, 2021). As a result, senior citizens' participation and inclusion in development projects decreased (Sikhosana, M. L., & Ntini, 2021). My research revealed that previous to joining the NGO and the senior citizen clubs, many senior citizens were not valued in their homes and community, which can lead to the internalisation of ageism. Upon joining the club, we see the demographic development consisting of restructuring resource flows and shifting power to senior citizens led to transformative change. This research posits that the constructs of CC can assist senior citizens to critically recognise the oppressive and stereotypical notions that obstruct their development and focus on how their embedded skills can be used to create social change.

Similarly, senior citizens in Case study B and C displayed abundant wisdom and complex cognitive attributes such as self-mastery, self-perception, empathy, concern for whole community development, and patience, are philosophical and infectious joyous. This wisdom is an untapped resource and can be transferred to other community members, including the youth. Building on this, we see how senior citizens and younger community members in case study B, through inter-generational contact, co-created and were able to build a one-of-a-kind building for the benefit of the entire community. And while there was little evidence in this research to show the continuation of the inter-generational contact spilling over to other projects, it must be noted that the quality of the contact and not necessarily frequency of the contact is important for future endeavours (Kahlbaugh & Budnick, 2021).

Shifting focus to senior citizen participants in this research, we detailed the main reasons for the individuals joining the NGO organisations clubs included social isolation, lack of social capital, and some were victims of various abusive situations. Consequently, when joining the clubs and creating a shared space with other senior citizens, the participants explained that access to information and self-organise were essential factors in why they continued to come to the club. Moreover, there was a level of trust not just with each other but with the organisation, which resulted in the birth of several entrepreneurial businesses. Despite the apparent benefits gained by the senior citizens and community, there is a significant gap in understanding the role and participation of senior citizens in community development. There is an urgency and a need for CDD practitioners to include the senior citizen demographic as important stakeholders, which can add immeasurable value to enhancing community development.

5. 2 Limitations:

Although the study was conducted in South Africa, the regions and typology of each area were unique and presented complex problems that may or may not apply to other research areas in South Africa or any other area. Additionally, the CDD project studies differed in whether the projects were at the seed phase of development, some were completed entirely, and some pivoted to other CDD projects. A limitation of this research could be that due to the heterogeneity of participants and varied stages of community development projects, there are valid concerns that the research may not be generalisable to the general population.

Another limitation of my research is that there is no measurement of the frequency of critical consciousness in the participant. Although various scales to measure the level of critical consciousness have been developed by researchers recently to provide an accurate measure of the levels of CC in individuals, have been developed, these did not apply to my research. One reason is that these scales were not designed to function in multiple complex social identities and intersectionality (Diemer et al., 2020), and the measurement of CC was predominantly quantitative as opposed to my qualitative, cross-sectional research and multi-case study analysis. Moreover, quantitative CC research has been known to measure the frequency of certain constructs of CC, such as critical action, but fails to measure the quality and meaning of these actions (Diemer et al., 2021). The research in this study sought to understand the lived reality of participants and explore transformative action as a result of the constructs of CC. In

the future, my research can add value and contributions to broadening the theory of CC, which can contribute to the development of future quantitative studies and measurement scales (Heberle et al., 2020).

Another limitation related to the dynamics within the focus group interviews. The focus group interviews with community members showed, on two occasions, a disparity of gender participation where male community members vocalised opinions more confidently than female community members. Additionally, the researcher observed that when the researcher asked specific questions, certain members influenced and spurred the discussion toward particular topics. In understating why this occurs, it is plausible that various factors could contribute to female community members' lack of participation. Apart from the influence of social constructs of culture, the researcher noted that many community members could not converse fluently in English. Subsequently, the researcher could not converse in isiXhosa or Zulu, a language most community members spoke. It is beyond the scope of this research to understand how these observations influenced the research. Still, in the future, it is recommended that a translator be hired to facilitate the conversation, that the researcher familiarises herself with the isiXhosa and Zulu language and terms learning simple words that might be relevant in creating a connection with the community. Additionally, the researcher should develop greater skills in facilitating conversations with community members whose participation was little or non-existent.

Another limitation of the research was the time spent with participants ranging from 1-3 hours. The time spent with each group largely depended on individual and environmental factors. For example, the community members chose the site when visiting the building project in the informal settlement from case study A. However, the site was a semi-completed structure without the basic furniture like chairs, and some individuals were sharing plastic crates to sit on in an unlit, cramped space. As the site was situated on a main road into the informal settlement, many vehicles passed, honking horns and loud music played by taxi owners. Another interview with community members was conducted during the lunch break of NGO staff and community members in a busy pre-school hall. As a result, it could be possible that snippets of valuable information may have been 'lost' in the chaos due to environmental distractions. It must be noted, however, that even with all the time pressures and distractions,

the community members were vibrant, joyous, and welcoming to the researcher. There was an urgency to share their stories and ensure their voices were heard far and wide so that the lives of the people in their community could be changed. A suggestion for future researchers could be to conduct multiple interviews with the community over time to ensure the information is rich and comprehensive.

Finally, the use of technology to conduct interviews over the internet using applications like Zoom was advantageous in allowing the researcher to access geographically dispersed participants. However, one crucial disadvantage was that the researcher assumed that the marginalised community in case study B would have easy internet and computer technology access. While the NGO provided these, it was apparent that the community was not familiar with or comfortable using the technology, resulting in many glitches due to loss of connectivity. This may have impacted the quality of responses in the analysis.

5. 3. Future research recommendations

The research revealed that as a positive consequence of meeting basic needs, we witnessed numerous examples where participants were motivated and took part in transformative action due to the organisation's support. An alternative option in the research suggests that one of the outcomes of critical consciousness is that it can positively impact an individual's well-being. (Maker Castro et al., 2022). However, suppose we have to analyse the NGO's support to the community. In that case, when participants were nourished in all areas of their well-being, i.e., physical, mental, and socio-emotional needs were met, we witnessed the rising and sustained elevation of the constructs of critical consciousness. It is recommended that future research could delve more into well-being to ascertain if creating spaces for well-being can elevate and nourish CC instead of initiating processes with CC to initiate well-being.

This research shows how through courageous conversations, CC empowers the community to engage in questioning, critiquing, and prodding societal issues. However, internalised oppression in marginalised communities can also be seated in how individuals and communities create meaning through language. As a result, it is essential to understand how language and the meaning of symbols impact CC and CDD. This research showed that dialogue

is critical in CC and CDD enhancement, but as much as talking and raising frustrations is important, there is a suggestion that silence through observation is a form of inquiry equally valuable (Nilsson, 2015). It is suggested that future research connects the language of thought construction as an important carrier of ideas that ultimately shape a person's ways of thinking and doing. More research is required to understand how language, symbols, and meaning impact CC and CDD.

For CDD to eliminate the disempowering elements (Carrick-Hagenbarth, 2021) staining its reputation, community development strategists and practitioners, NGOs, and CBOs need to develop holistic, innovative, flexible models of development that are rooted in co-creating with the community. As a result, incorporating the constructs of CC in CDD ensures the community is positively impacted, always at the forefront of its development, and power stays close to the ground (Wilkinson-Maposa, 2017). Although the research shows that CC embeddedness can lead to transformative change via social innovations in the community, what is needed is to understand how the transformation can cascade to organisations and large bureaucratic systems that have conflicting values, interests, and resources from the community (van Wijk et al., 2019). Future research could investigate how the institutional embedding of the virtues and values of the community can be done with authenticity so that everyone is on the right page to tackle the wicked problems in society.

This research did not use any measurement tool to identify and understand the level of CC present in participants before, during or after the project. Indeed, many of the CDD projects were completed, and the community were involved in new projects. Hence, tracking CC in a specific project was impossible and not necessary for this research. However, it might be helpful in future CC research to measure and track CC over a long period of time, ideally in a longitudinal study assessing how organisations are tracking CC in each stage of the project. Additionally, although this research was conducted in South Africa, a recommendation for future research is to understand the legacy of apartheid and the effects of its structured systems of inequity as a central theme and how this has been instrumental in mobilising marginalised groups to demand social justice and equality. Future research could encapsulate social identity formation, metaphysical colonialism, and the role of the education system in perpetuating or deconstructing colonialism (Maseko, 2018).

Another recommendation for future research is for communities and organisations to start quantifying and mapping out assets other than those that are tangible or easily recognisable. In this way, the community can develop a new lens to appreciate how knowledge, culture, and values can significantly impact community development. It is recommended that instead of only viewing tangible aspects such as capital as a contributing factor, future research could investigate the intangible factors in the community such as values, passion, access to social capital networks, unique insider knowledge of the community, and quantify how these can be mapped as assets (Wilkinson-Maposa, 2017). As a result, the community members can start valuing non-traditional elements and contribute more towards a CDD project.

5.3 Chapter 5 Conclusion

In this study, the researcher aimed to answer the question, “How can critical consciousness influence community driven development as social innovation?”. The study participants were heterogeneous individuals in various roles from various geographical locations across South Africa. The data analyses revealed several main themes which lead to several conclusions, namely, that CC-infused holistic models are critical in CDD and that CC can be unidirectional. Action catalyses critical reflection in CDD that CC, through immersion, unveils and accelerates CDD processes. Moreover, CC enhances organisational reflexivity and permeability, positively impacting CDD and restoring power to the community by restructuring roles to include senior citizens as change agents in CDD.

This research adds valuable insight into the academic literature in that it includes streams of research generally seen as separate, i.e., CC, CDD, and SI. As a result, the study can observe new insights, similarities, and barriers in all three areas to enhance our understanding of the social innovations embedded within the community and organisations. The research places emphasis on immersion into the community and reflexivity of all stakeholders as crucial entry points for CDD. As a result, immersion opens spaces for courageous conversations where the root cause of social issues and experiential surfacing of emotions can emerge. The research also places emphasis on holistic flexibility and permeability as key to CDD. For example, to stabilise an organisation, rigid rules and top-heavy practices will ironically lead to

destabilisation (Nilsson, 2015). As such, organisations need to understand that flexibility in values, work scope, and processes enhances CDD.

Moreover, there is a need to embrace the notion that success in one CDD project does not equate to success in another project or region. In fact, the definitions of success and failure need constant re-defining and viewing from the community's perspective and not the organisation's standards or metrics. Both CC and CDD emphasise the need for organisations to step back and allow the community to lead. This research shows numerous examples of how the community, through self-governance and self-organisation, is empowered using the tools and assistance organisations offer. Critically, we see how the spaces created in CDD projects were breeding grounds for social innovation and spaces that nurture relationships between diverse participants. As a result, the space creates mutual trust with community members and institutional trust with the organisation (Meshram & O'Cass, 2013).

The research further proposes that dialogue needs to be ingrained in every aspect of the process by creating feedback loops and spaces for critique, questions, observations and fun. Equally important is the understanding that courageous conversations allow emotions to surface, even if these emotions are intense and raise frustrations. This is an essential step in recognising the yearning for marginalised communities to restore their dignity, which, as a theme, should be at the epicentre of any developmental strategy. Another crucial element is for organisations to embrace flexibility as one of its greatest strengths, and being able to pivot and change to the needs of the community is a crucial factor. Although there is a need for some processes to confine to the rules of larger societal norms and regulations, such as legislation, organisations that are genuinely invested in shifting the power to communities will embrace and expect the failure of one or two or all processes and projects. This is considered part and parcel of any social innovation process before it is accepted into society (Mulgan, 2016).

However, perhaps one of the most significant takeaways experienced by the researcher was the undercurrent of hope and faith in humanity in all participants. From co-creating with criminals and hearing stories of future aspirations for children living in a marginalised community, it is undeniable that there is hope felt and believed that drives action. It is perhaps this hope that the researcher was excited to find, which catapulted her journey into this field of research. Previous



experiences working in the NGO sector highlighted the deep systemic oppressions and created an aura of cynicism within the researcher; however, in participating in this research project and meeting the participants, the researcher was encouraged and left amazed by the courage, perseverance, resilience and hope that still exists in community development. It was indeed an honour to be welcomed warmly into communities and organisations and hear their experiences and unique ways of doing in CDD. This research affirmed that community members are agents of innovation and that social change is rooted from the bottom up (Domanski et al., 2020).

6. References

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7. Appendix

Appendix A: Semi-structured interview questions



Appendix B: Praxis

Appendix C: Ethics consent form for participants

Appendix D: Informed consent form for participants

APPENDIX A: Semi-structured interview questions

1. Can you describe the project that you are currently involved in/or was involved in?
2. What do you think is the nature and cause of the situation?



3. Where does funding for the project come from?
4. How do you think that the stakeholders benefit from this project?
5. Can you describe what the most common ways of communication among the community are?
6. What are some ways in which the community is encouraged to participate in discussions/dialogue relating to the project?
7. Can you explain how decisions are made about the project?
8. Why do you think this project is important to you and other stakeholders?
9. How does the community decide on what resources they have and what they need?
10. What are some of the challenges you faced before starting the project?
11. How were these challenges addressed?
12. Can you explain what measures are put in place to ensure accountability?
13. Can you describe how connections/networks are formed in the community?
14. What is the role of these connections/networks on the project?
15. What solutions have been used in addressing these challenges in this project?
16. Can you explain how you measure the success of the project?
17. What has been the level of involvement with the local government in this project?
18. How do you feel about the impact that this project had had on the community?
19. What do you think are important steps for future developments within this community?

APPENDIX B: Praxis

Social purpose organisations working in community development need to be committed to immersing with the community as a necessary step in the co-creation of solutions to societies wicked problems. Immersion runs deep and runs wide. It includes knowing the intimate details of the community including:

- how the community interacts with each other?

- what is their preferred language?
- what is the meaning of symbols used in the language?
- what is their value system, how are bonds in the community created and how is it enhanced?
- what are the obvious and hidden wicked problems?
- how does the community have fun?
- how does their spiritual belief impact their day to day lives?
- how is education valued and pursued?

Included in this process, is the act of reflexivity for the organisation to understand how its culture, processes, policies and virtues, implicit or explicit are integrating, obstructing or enhancing community development. Important questions that organisations should be asking are:

- *Why* is the organisation wanting to work in community development
- What value, hidden or obvious does the organisation receive in this process
- Is the organisation will to change its ways of doing to suit the community
- Can the process of courageous conversation have a place in this organisation?
- Is the organisations boundaries permeable enough for the community to immerse into the organisation.
- How rigid are our goals and outcomes and can the organisation embrace failure as process?
- How aligned are outside stakeholders with the organisations values and process, are they equally committed to community driven development.
- How can we open up spaces for critique and hold the organisation accountable to the community?
- How agile are our systems to create feedback loops to create immediate change?
- Can the organisation redefine roles and include undervalued groups such as senior citizens into projects.
- Is the organisation willing to understand the historical context of oppression on current systems and processes?
- Is the organisation aware of the dominant western and Eurocentric knowledge, culture and values that it could be housing?
- How is the organisation ensure that it will not perpetuate cultural invasion and saviourship mentalities in marginalised communities.
- Is the organisation willing to elaborate on institutionalised processes and policies and how these contribute to internalised oppressions.

APPENDIX C: Ethics consent form for participants

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN INCLUSIVE INNOVATION



RESEARCHER INFORMATION:

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INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM:

Participant name:

.....

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by **Noor Jehan Docrat** as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MPhil Degree at the Graduate School of Business. I understand that the research is designed to gather information about **how can critical consciousness influences community driven development as social innovation** and that I will be one of approximately 25 of people being interviewed for this research.

Background and purpose of the research

My research will explore the nature of the relationship between critical consciousness and community driven development as social innovation in organisations and communities that are driving and facilitating community development. It is hoped that my research will gain valuable insights and future pathways in critical consciousness and community driven development, including barriers and transformative potential for social innovation

Ethics approval

Ethical consent for the study has been approved by the *UCT Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee*

Participation and confidentiality

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, that I will not be compensated and that I may withdraw at any time. After I sign the consent form, I am still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If I withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, my data will be destroyed. If I have questions at any time about this study, or I experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study, I may contact the researcher whose contact information is included above.

The interview will take approximately 60 - 120 minutes to complete and will be audio recorded.

I understand that I will not be identified by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.



Consent

I consent to participate in this interview, based on the terms outlined above and subject to the following additional condition of my own (if any).

Signed by interviewee

Date

.....

.....

Signed by Student

Date

APPENDIX D: Informed consent form for participants

Informed Consent Form for:

Organisational Head/Project Leader/Project Facilitator/Community member



in the community driven development field I am inviting to participate in research titled "How can Critical Consciousness Influence Community Driven Development as Social Innovation?"

Name of Principal Investigator: Noor Jehan Docrat

Name of University: University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business

Name of Project: Research title "How can Critical Consciousness Influence Community Driven Development as Social Innovation?"

Introduction

My name is Noor Jehan Docrat, an MPhil Inclusive Innovation student researching my dissertation. I am exploring social innovation in community-driven development, specifically focusing on how critical consciousness can be used as a tool for social innovation in an organisational setting. It is hoped that this research will shed light on the mechanisms, processes, and outcomes driving change in community development, and your input will be valuable to this process.

I am going to give you information and invite you to be part of this research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research. This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please feel free to ask me any questions, and I will take the time to explain.

Purpose of the research

Organisations play an important role in facilitating community driven development. This research will focus on your organisation's role during this process and how this can lead to social innovation. I want to understand the organisations/community's history, how resources are used and what impact is being made in the community. In understanding this, I will see how decisions are made, and the motivating factors that lead to action by your organisation and the community, also referred to as critical consciousness. Your input will assist me in understanding critical consciousness and understand how this impacts community development as a social innovation.

Type of Research Intervention

This research will involve your participation in an interview that will be approximately between one to two hours. The interview will be conducted online, and it will be audio recorded.

Participant Selection

You are being invited to participate in this research because I feel that your experience as the Head of your Organisation/ Project Leader/Project Facilitator/Community member can contribute much to my understanding and knowledge of community driven development and critical consciousness as a social innovation.

Voluntary Participation



Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. You may change your mind later and stop participating even if you agreed earlier.

If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be destroyed. Suppose you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study. In that case, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is included above. You will not be identified by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and your confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies, which will protect the anonymity of individuals and your organisation.

Procedures

I am asking you to help me learn more about how critical consciousness influences community driven development. If you accept, you will be asked to participate in an interview with Noor Jehan Docrat (Principal researcher).

During the online interview, I will ask you approximately 20 questions. Depending on the nature of your answer, I might ask you additional questions to gain clarity and understanding. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions during the interview, you may say so, and the interviewer will move on to the next question. No one else but the interviewer will be present unless you would like someone else to be there. The recorded information is confidential, and no one else will access the information documented during your interview. The entire interview will be audio-recorded, but no one will be identified by name on the tape. The data from the audio recorder will be transferred to a secure computer with a password known only to the Principal researcher. The information recorded is confidential, and no one else will have access to the audio recordings. The audio recordings will be destroyed after the completion of the research.

Duration

This research will take place over a period of two months, during which I will interview you once for a duration of between 60-120 minutes.

Risks

As this research is focusing on community driven development in marginalised communities, I will be asking you to share with us some very personal and confidential information on the history of the community, government interventions, organisational dynamics and other personal views, and you may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics. You do not have to answer any question or participate in the interview if you don't wish, which is also acceptable. You do not have to give us any reason for not responding to any question or refusing to participate in the interview. There is a risk that you may share some personal or confidential information by chance or that you may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics. However, we do not wish for this to happen. You do not have to answer any question or participate in the interview if you feel the question(s) are too personal or if talking about them makes you uncomfortable.)

Benefits



There will be no direct benefit to you, your organisation or community. Still, your participation will help me understand how critical consciousness can influence community driven development as a transformative social innovation.

Reimbursements

You will not be provided any incentive to take part in the research.

Confidentiality

To ensure confidentiality, the following safeguards any data and information that I collect from you will be kept private and stored in password-protected computer and files with installed anti-virus software.

All information you provide will only be accessed by the principal researcher, Noor Jehan Docrat. Data will be stored without any direct identifiers or personal identities so that and the data collected cannot be linked to the individual or organisation. This means that any information you provide will have a number instead of a name. The data will be stored for the duration of this research and, after that, permanently destroyed.

Sharing the Results

Please note that the research thesis will be available on Open Access via the University of Cape Town's dissertation list. Furthermore, the research stemming from the information and data you provided may in the future be used for publication in academic articles or other media.

Who to Contact

If you have any questions, you can ask them at any point before, during, or after the research interview. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact any of the following: Principal researcher: Noor Jehan Docrat, email: DCRNOO001@myuct.ac.za or njdocrat@hotmail.com. Mobile: +27 (81 873 3306), if calling internationally, please use call 0027 81 873 3306.