The Role of Social Capital in Urban Planning: Using Mixed Methods Research to Measure the Social Dimension of Sustainable Development

Caroline Osborne
PhD Research Candidate
Faculty of Arts and Business

Supervisors:
Dr. Claudia Baldwin
Dr. Dana Thomson

Context & Background

Summary of the Literature

Methodology and Methods

Conclusion
The Role of Social Capital in Urban Planning: Using Mixed Methods Research to Measure the Social Dimension of Sustainable Development

Caroline Osborne
PhD Research Candidate
Faculty of Arts and Business

Supervisors:
Dr. Claudia Baldwin
Dr. Dana Thomsen
The Role of Social Capital in Urban Planning: Using Mixed Methods Research to Measure the Social Dimension of Sustainable Development

Caroline Osborne
PhD Research Candidate
Faculty of Arts and Business

Supervisors:
Dr. Claudia Baldwin
Dr. Dana Thomson
Dimension of Sustainable I

Caroline Osborne
PhD Research Candidate
Faculty of Arts and Business

Supervisors:
Dr. Claudia Baldwin
Dr. Dana Thomsen
Context

- 7ha Case study site: Not-for-Profit;
- Unique; FBO different motivations; integrate with community;
- Ask residents: facilities/services/ - good? Needs improvement?
- Point of departure from MP: “Community as a commodity”; market analytics to future residents.
Aim of the Research

- To measure and understand social capital at a neighbourhood scale;

- To provide insight into how social capital can be measured and applied to deliver more socially sustainable planning outcomes; and

- To provide empirical data to inform urban and regional planning decision making processes.
**Approach**

- Analyse the structural and normative aspects of social capital as defined by Putnam (2004) and Szreter and Woolcock (2004).

- Mixed methods to build a picture around social capital as it relates to the other capitals in the community capitals framework of (Emery & Flora: 2006).
Trends Affecting How we Live and Plan...

- Globalisation (economic change);
- Urbanisation (spatial change);
- Population and demographic change (social change);
- Climate change (environmental change);
- Compact communities (structural change);
Why measure social capital?

Social capital and the urban environment can positively influence PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH and perceptions of SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING.

Contributes to enhanced SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT outcomes:

Contributes to COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Cities with strong social networks can facilitate greater INNOVATION: diverse economy


(Sociolands 2005; Chiswick and de Groot 2003; Duflo 2010; Bjg 2011; Lehtonen, 2006).

(Augis 2008; Hens 2010; Magid 2010; Wilheim 2011; Pettigrew 2012).
Social capital and the urban environment can positively influence PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH and perceptions of SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

(Dannenberg, Jackson et al. 2003; Jackson 2003; Northridge M 2003; Kent, Thompson et al. 2011).
Cities with strong social networks can facilitate greater INNOVATION: diverse economy

(Carillo 2004; Yigitcanlar 2012).
Contributes to COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

(Allen 2006; Flint 2010; Magis 2010; Wilhelm 2011; Poortinga 2012).

Contributes to enhanced SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT outcomes:

(Roseland 2000; Chiesura and de Groot 2003; Cuthill 2010; Biji 2011; Lehtonen, 2004).
How Social Capital is Defined

- Term widely used across disciplines: issues with definition, conceptual framework, measurement.

- "Connections among individuals embedded in social networks and norms of reciprocity and trust".

- Putnam (2000): Bonding (people who are like each other and share similar values) and Bridging Social capital (people from different backgrounds and values).

The existence and quality of these (civic and governance) relationships indicate the level of the ability to ADAPT AND DEVELOP

The density of these (civic) relationships contribute to RESILIENCE

Use of Social Data In Urban Planning

Response to SE disadvantage: missing potential for building resilience/adapt & develop capacity?

MPCS physically deterministic - design of ‘place’ where social interaction might be encouraged.

Literature suggests ongoing negative social outcomes with contemporary development i.e threats to social cohesion, weakening of family, community, democratic values and relationships.

Govt. agencies struggle to identify and provide appropriate social data to inform ongoing regional planning processes.

(Rosenblatt et al. 2009 Cuthill, 2010).
How can Social Capital be fostered?

What is required is engaged governance processes that include a diverse range of stakeholders to develop collaborative local responses (Cuthill, 2010).

- Community engagement;
- Planning for cultural diversity;
- Political engagement;
- Enhancing access and mobility;
- Urban design;
- Housing; and
- Indicators to identify and measure community strengths

(Department of State Development, 2006, "Queensland Strong Communities Handbook")
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaps in the Literature Reviewed</th>
<th>Proposed Research Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are limited means to measure social capital using a robust theoretical conceptual framework at a community scale</td>
<td>1. How can social capital be measured and understood at a neighbourhood level?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although the importance of place and social capital is well acknowledged, master planning approaches are predominantly physically and economically deterministic</td>
<td>2. How can a neighbourhood understanding of social capital be interpreted to influence planning outcomes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The social dimension of sustainable development is the most poorly defined, measured and implemented, therefore limited progress has been made in understanding it and how to improve it</td>
<td>3. How can community needs and planning frameworks be integrated to support the social dimension of sustainable development?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology and Methods

“Mixed methods explanatory sequential design”

• Using a single case study site on the Sunshine Coast - viable method in extreme or unique cases (Shakir 2002)
• Two Phases contained within a constructivist epistemology:
  • PHASE 1 - desktop exercise: understand local context AND social capital survey.
  • PHASE 2 - Focus groups with key stakeholders in the community (approx. 10)
Mixed Methods Explanatory Sequential Design (QUANT → qual)

Phase 1
QUANT – Social Capital Survey

Phase 2
QUAL – Focus Groups

Constructivist Epistemology

QUANT
- Context analysis
- SC Survey Tool to measure structural and relational aspects of construct

QUAL
- Focus Groups
- Master planning collaborative exercise
- Develop indicators

Data Gathering Techniques

Context Analysis
- Secondary data (ABS, ID etc.)
- Excel, SPSS,

Provides s.c measures for deeper investigation in Phase 2

Focus groups

Master planning

Reasons & Context
- Behind s.c results
- Explored in depth

Data Analysis Techniques

Connect & Interpret the meaning of the data between the 2 Phases

Deliver Outcomes & Recommendations
- Measure and understand social capital at a neighbourhood level
- Interpret how a neighbourhood understanding of social capital can influence planning outcomes
- Investigate an approach to integrate community needs and planning frameworks to create a broader suite of indicators to support the social dimension of sustainable development

Correlations
- Develop indicators based on community identified needs

'Collaborative multi-stakeholder processes to develop local responses'

'Develop indicators to measure community strengths' - & improvement

"Community Capitals Framework"
- ABS data: 7 capitals: (human, natural, built, political, economic, cultural, social)
- Systems thinking
- Interaction

Provide themes
- Services, facilities
- Social capital REs
- Correlations to REs
Mixed Methods Explanatory Sequential Design (QUANT → qual)

Phase 1
- QUANT – Social Capital Survey

Phase 2
- QUAL – Focus Groups

Constructivist Epistemology

QUANT
- Context analysis
- SC Survey Tool to measure structural and relational aspects of construct

QUAL
- Focus Groups
- Master planning collaborative exercise
- Develop indicators

Data Gathering Techniques

Community Capitals

- Qualify themes:
- Explain meanings/correlations
- Develop indicators based on community-identified needs

Collaborative multi-stakeholder processes to develop local responses
"Community Capitals Framework"
- ABS data: 7 capitals: (human, natural, built, political, economic, cultural, social)
- Systems thinking;
- Interaction

"Develop indicators to measure community strengths" - & improvement

Data Gathering Techniques
- Context analysis
- SC Survey Tool to measure structural and relational aspects of construct
- Focus Groups
- Master planning collaborative exercise
- Develop indicators

Data Analysis Techniques
- Provides s.c measures for deeper investigation in Phase 2
- Focus groups
- After focus group, with all key stakeholders
- Master planning
- Field notes, coding in NVivo

Connect & Interpret the meaning of the data between the 2 Phases

Deliver Outcomes & Recommendations
- Measure and understand social capital at a neighbourhood level
- Interpret how a neighbourhood understanding of social capital can influence planning outcomes
- Investigate an approach to integrate community needs and planning frameworks to create a broader suite of indicators to support the social dimension of sustainable development
Conclusion

How will my research answer the Research Questions??

- How can social capital be measured and understood at a neighbourhood level?
- How can a neighbourhood understanding of social capital be interpreted to influence planning outcomes?
- How can community needs and planning frameworks be integrated to support the social dimension of sustainable development?

Social Capital definitions of bonding, bridging, linking provide a robust framework to understand the structural and normative aspects of relationship networks, trust and reciprocity at the neighbourhood scale.

Data collected from community engagement in Phase 1 and 2 will be used to inform master planning and to develop a suite of community indicators which could measure achievements longitudinally.

An understanding of the structural and normative aspects of social capital could assist in measuring the success of interventions (i.e., community centres). Development of community level indicators will inform the master plan and could potentially inform a preliminary local area plan.
How will my research answer the Research Questions??

• How can social capital be measured and understood at a neighbourhood level?

• How can a neighbourhood understanding of social capital be interpreted to influence planning outcomes?

• How can community needs and planning frameworks be integrated to support the social dimension of sustainable development?
Social Capital definitions of bonding, bridging, linking provide a robust framework to understand the structural and normative aspects of relationship networks, trust and reciprocity at the neighbourhood scale.
How will my research answer the Research Questions??

• How can social capital be measured and understood at a neighbourhood level?

• How can a neighbourhood understanding of social capital be interpreted to influence planning outcomes?

• How can community needs and planning frameworks be integrated to support the social dimension of sustainable development?
Data collected from community engagement in Phase 1 and 2 will be used to inform master planning and to develop a suite of community indicators which could measure achievements longitudinally.
How will my research answer the Research Questions??

- How can social capital be measured and understood at a neighbourhood level?

- How can a neighbourhood understanding of social capital be interpreted to influence planning outcomes?

- How can community needs and planning frameworks be integrated to support the social dimension of sustainable development?
An understanding of the structural and normative aspects of social capital could assist in measuring the success of interventions (i.e., community centre).

Development of community-level indicators will inform the master plan and could potentially inform a preliminary local area plan.
Reference List


The Role of Social Capital in Urban Planning: Using Mixed Methods Research to Measure the Social Dimension of Sustainable Development

Caroline Osborne
PhD Research Candidate
Faculty of Arts and Business

Supervisors:
Dr. Claudia Baldwin
Dr. Dana Thomsen