Assessing the relationship between Urban Blight and City Attractiveness: The Case of Mthatha CBD.

By

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Declaration

I, Bulelani Mzamo, thusly declare that the entirety of the content submitted herein is my own original work (with the exception of where acknowledgements indicate otherwise), and that neither the entire work, nor any piece of it, has been, is being, or is to be submitted in this or whatever other university.

Author:

Signature……

Date……

Supervisor

Signature……

Date……

Dedication

The late ***Mbulelo Michael Mzamo*** *and* ***Nomahlubi Eunice Mzamo***

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The triumph and thrill of achieving a goal can be heart-warming, just as the completion of an academic objective can be earth-shattering and emancipating. With that said, any individual who has well fulfilled the requirements of a research project acknowledges that the amount of time dedicated to the development of one's personal acquaintance in addition to the overall body of knowledge on a topic can be discouraging, infuriating, and exhaustive, but nonetheless worth it!

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Acronyms

ANC – African National Congress

BBP – Better Buildings Programme

BRA - Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities

CBD – Central Business District

CID – City Improvement Districts

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GVA – Gross Value Added

HDI – Human Development Index

IDP – Integrated Development Plan

IMF – International Monetary Fund

JDA – Johannesburg Development Agency

JSE – Johannesburg Stock Exchange

KSDLM – King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality

LULU – Locally Unwanted Land Use

MIG – Municipal Infrastructure Grant

ORTDM – O.R Tambo District Municipality

RCG – Restructuring Capital Grant

RZ – Restructuring Zone

SHI – Social Housing Institution

SPLUMA – Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act

UDZ – Urban Development Zone

WTO – World Trade Organization

Abstract

This study interrogates the conception of urban blight in the context of Mthatha, which is a relatively small town as compared to big cities. The aim of this study is to establish and assess the relationship between urban blight and city attractiveness. This is motivated by the view that in existing discourse, the notion of urban blight is often presented within a confined paradigm of big cities and the problems they face. In so doing, the study argues that urban blight can apply even to smaller towns regardless of the fact that they are faced with different dynamics from the cities within which the concept of urban blight interrogated. In the context of Mthatha, one of those dynamics is the attractiveness of the town as it functions as a regional socio-economic hub in its district. Interestingly, upon employing qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques in complementary ways using primary and secondary data, the study finds that this attractiveness causes urban blight in the Mthatha CBD. This is based on the findings that demonstrate that this city attractiveness yields an overloaded landscape that generally fails to cater for the people that depend on it. This is attested by the fact that the attractiveness of the Mthatha CBD has resulted in the proliferation of an immense informal sector, which thrives through exploiting the infrastructure of the town. Evidently, this does not only overburden the infrastructure, but also brings about derogatory land uses and property encroachments that depress property values and accelerate the rate of deterioration of not only the properties, but also the infrastructure of the town. Eventually, this results in a blighted urban landscape that yields crime and poses a threat to the public for health and safety reasons. To curb this, the study proposes an urban regeneration that will target issues pertaining legislation and policy, infrastructure backlogs, housing delivery, local economic development and increasing the revenue base of the KSDLM as it is essential in improving the lives of the people of Mthatha.

Chapter 1: Background and Introduction to the Study

1.1 Background of the Research

The conception of urban blight is seldom the standard subject of inquiry but ironically remains habitually the stage whereupon the contention of urban planning, regeneration, renewal, and resilience develops (Robick, 2011). Nevertheless, considering the challenges faced by a number of today's urban centres globally; in the realm of urban planning, it is perhaps safe to accept that the notion of urban blight has somewhat become a unanimous issue whose essence remains intact. Concisely, this is due to the fact that regardless of the context; the concept itself potentially serves all sides of debate over urban redevelopment as it underscores exacting physical, social, and economic conditions that pose an endangerment of cities and a threat to public health, safety, and general welfare in urban centres globally (Gordon, 2003). Be that as it may, due to its complexity, and regardless of its rationality as a broader concept that generally shapes a geography of deteriorating neighbourhoods, blocks and streets as substandard; it must, however, be stressed that the application of urban blight to individual contexts remains very subjective and malleable. As such, Tolksdorf (2013) thus proclaims that in the conception of urban blight, there exists a cascade of information that advocates and encourages various theories explaining the roots and causes of urban blight.

For instance, in most of the First World cities (and some cities in the Third World) where the conception of urban blight has long been encapsulated in academic discourse, policy and legislation; the outset of urban blight has fundamentally been attributed primarily to urbanization vis-à-vis outmigration. Interestingly, in this respect, urban blight is hitherto largely understood as only enrooted in the processes of modernization such as the industrial revolution (among others). From this view, urban blight is understandably yielded by the subtleties concerning a substantial influx of people, which is (among other factors) largely responsible for suburban development on the urban fringe, thus resulting to urban sprawl. Rationally, this in turn leads to disinvestment in the city centre where outmigration occurs, subsequently resulting to depreciation in property values, coupled with the physical deterioration and dilapidation of the properties themselves together with supporting infrastructure.

Hence, inferring from the existing discourse on the subject, it is evident that a significant body of existing literature is principally centred on this view and this therefore appears to be the normative view on the causes and manifestation of urban blight. Be that as it may, what remains unchanged, as Izueke & Eme (2013) state, is that globally, urban centres (cities and towns in their entirety) exhibit an unimaginable diversity of not only historical origins, but also general attributes, economic structures, infrastructural levels, growth patterns and levels of formal planning. As a result, what is noteworthy and most important for this study, however, is that despite this diversity, a significant number of the issues these urban centres face, including urban blight, remain outstandingly familiar.

As such, in the Third World, particularly in Africa, apart from cities, there are also towns that arguably present substantial indications of urban blight even though the issue is rarely documented in such settings. Like some of these big and wealthy cities that are blighted, these towns are significantly characterized by an abundant physical decay of their urban landscape, which is primarily exhibited by deteriorating infrastructure alongside environmental degradation and (sometimes) neighbourhood collapse among other blight indicators (Mohapi, 2009). As such, what is most appalling herein, as Izueke & Eme (2013) state, is that in these towns, urban residents are arguably the most vulnerable victims of considerable environmental and health challenges related to inadequate access to clean drinking water, poor sewage facilities and unkempt solid waste disposal among other critical indicators of urban blight.

In the context of South Africa, such urban centres are arguably more common in the former Homeland/Bantustan regions, which were areas that were put aside for predominantly Black people. Understandably, these former Homeland towns trace their origins to apartheid planning, which was a direct outcome of separate development and the urgent need to not only keep different races in separate areas; but also to distribute development resources accordingly. According to Nhlapo *et al* (2011), rural-urban drift to these Homeland towns is however continuing to date; as such, increased urbanisation (though not much) is sustained not by the expansion of an industrial sector, but by participation in informal activities. Due to this, such areas tend to show minimal indications of development and/or urban sprawl, with however high urban decay, and ironically vast indicators of city attractiveness, which (according to this study) proliferate urban blight.

Therefore, construing from these observations; it is not surprising that these homeland towns show evidence of decline in services, infrastructure and economic activity while the actual population has not been declining, but however maintaining a transfer of rural poverty into these towns and a parallel explosion in informal activities (Nhlapo *et al*, 2011). As a matter of fact, these towns not only display a poor state of physical infrastructure and neglect, but are also confronted with a distorted urban land market, confusion and overlaps in tenure systems, together with conflicts between local municipal councils and traditional authorities over issues of land access.

With that said, what triggers this study is the fact that inferring from these observations, it is evident that the basic assumptions within which custom planning models are centred on are progressively coming under scrutiny for some of these assumptions are often inappropriate for the entirety of urban settlements in developing countries. According to Jarlov (2001) cited in Nhlapo *et al* (2011), this is largely due to the fact that the western concept of planning applied today is explicitly intended for a society of labour-based employment. However, in many towns and cities of the Third World, particularly in the former Bantustan regions, the majority of the economically active populace is without formal employment, just as in the case of Mthatha.

Therefore, in light of this, in failing to acknowledge the socio-economic influences of individual decision-making processes, as Nhlapo *et al* (2011) state, planning often appears to be out of touch with reality every time unpremeditated outcomes (such as urban blight) become a prevailing feature of the urban landscape. In line with the assertion by Brueckner & Hesley (2011) that the current discussion on the causes of urban blight and its potential remedies remains largely undeveloped; this study therefore derails from (but does not dismiss) the "normative" view on the causes and manifestation of urban blight in an attempt to further develop this discussion. By doing as such, it assesses the issue of urban blight in a different trajectory; that is, in a setting of a town, not a city, and in close relation to the notion of city attractiveness. Defensibly, this is instigated by the assertion by Robick (2011) that urban blight is best studied at local level mainly because the various external differences that distinguish the many forms in which urban blight manifests in different urban centres tend to easily obscure the common elements unifying the urban blight concept. More conclusively, this ambiguity therefore gives the concept the flexibility to apply to local circumstances and interests, while conveying an

almost universally understood sense of urgency as far as blight is concerned. In view of that, as alluded before, it is on this basis that urban blight in this study is assessed in relation to city attractiveness, a different approach from the normative view of urban blight, which only perceives blight as a by-product of urban sprawl.

1.2 Problem Statement

In its district, the town of Mthatha functions as what can be termed as a regional socio-economic hub as it is the most attractive in this regard. Understandably, considering the stagnant growth of the town vis-à-vis the intensive socio-economic (and largely informal) activities that take place in the town on a daily basis, this places a heavy burden on the town, particularly its facilities, services, infrastructure and other constituents *inter alia*.

In numbers, the town has a population of about 137,589 residents (Statistics South Africa, 2012), but existing experimental findings indicate that the town caters for the needs of over 1.5 million people on a daily basis, particularly those living within a 50km radius of the town (Harrison, 2008). Hypothetically, this largely accounts for the substantial levels of the perceived blight within the town. As a result, potholes, out-dated sewerage systems, electricity and water outages and dilapidated buildings among other symptoms of urban blight, have now coalesced into the character of the town, particularly its CBD.

This is therefore suggestive of the idea that there is a need to assess how city attractiveness is related to urban blight in this regard. This is to further explore and evaluate the possible remedies; particularly urban regeneration in a more pragmatic sense as an approach that can be considered in combating urban blight in such a context, expressly in the strife of achieving a more sustainable developmental trajectory in this town.

1.3 Rationale

In many cases (if not all), the issue of urban blight is often given attention within a confined paradigm of big and wealthy cities, and smaller towns with similar conditions as those blighted urban centres are often overlooked in the sphere of this subject as they are often accepted as customary epitomes of underdevelopment. Moreover, upon tracing its causes, urban blight is

traditionally portrayed as a spontaneous consequence of post-World War II urban designs, and is usually attributed primarily to the outset of urbanization[1] and population increase alongside counter-outmigration and other political and land use dynamics that have a direct impact on the physical, functional, social and sometimes economic depreciation in blighted areas. Furthermore, in the "normative view", the issue of urban blight is often looked at within the scope of repulsive/centrifugal factors, which lead to people moving away from the blighted area (population decline), that is, only as a by-product of sprawl.

Therefore, in line with the contention of Robinson (2006) that the theoretical insights on such issues cannot be based on the experiences of a few wealthy cities only, this study is nonetheless based in the context of Mthatha, which is a relatively small and arguably underdeveloped town with different dynamics from the settings within which urban blight is usually documented. In this town, given the 0.82% rate of population growth, there seems to be minimal indications of urbanization and excessive population growth. On the other hand, counter-outmigration, urban sprawl and population decline (in the inner city) are also minimal, with however blatant evidence of urban blight, and the town undeniably pumping with activity; which is on the other hand an indicator of city attractiveness.

With that said, there seems to be an overlooked and/or invisible element, which could account for the perceived urban blight in this town, which is what is termed "city attractiveness" in this study. To be precise, this is the phenomenon whereby a city/town is arguably at pole position in terms of its territorial assets (having more pull factors in the context of human geography) in relation to the towns within its region as far as the socio-economic factors are concerned.

Herein, despite the stagnant growth of the town, the most blatant evidence of this city attractiveness is the intense commuter activity between the town and its adjacent smaller towns. Justifiably, this directly or indirectly exerts unbearable pressure to the city's services on a daily basis, and therefore accelerates the rate of deterioration in the buildings and facilities among other constituents of the town. In this regard, as blighted as it is, Mthatha remains more attractive than the smaller towns within its region; thus making it an ideal town to assess the relationship between urban blight and the attractiveness of the town.

[1] A formal increase in the population of a particular urban area due to *(i)* natural urban population increase, *(ii)* urban net migration, and *(iii)* the incorporation of previously rural settlements into the urban environment due to urban sprawl (Kok & Collinson, 2006).

1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to establish and assess the relationship between urban blight in Mthatha and the attractiveness of the town.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

- To identify and explain the indicators of urban blight in Mthatha
- To outline how Mthatha is an attractive town and evaluate the extent to which it is attractive.
- To critically evaluate the synergies between urban blight and city attractiveness, particularly in the Mthatha CBD.
- To propose recommendations based on the findings of the study.

1.6 Research Questions

Main Research Question

- Can city attractiveness yield urban blight?

Sub-Questions

- What are the indicators of urban blight in Mthatha?
- To whom is Mthatha attractive?
- What makes Mthatha an attractive town and to what extent is the town attractive in relation to its surrounding towns?
- Is there any relationship between urban blight and this attractiveness in such a context?
- Given the results of this study, what are the proposed recommendations?

1.7 Hypothesis

This study primarily investigates the implications of the correlation between the phenomenon of urban blight and the notion of city attractiveness. Concisely, the study is anchored on the assumption that city attractiveness may cause or exacerbate urban blight hence it is believed here that these two diverse areas of research potentially share swaths of common ground under certain circumstances.

1.8 Research Methodology

1.8.1 Introduction

Assessing the relationship between urban blight and city attractiveness is not a linear process. This is because the process is inclusive of multiple diverse areas of research, which require a systematic way of consolidating them. Defensibly, this therefore serves as the framework within which the synergies between urban blight and city attractiveness are extrapolated. To achieve this, this study therefore adopted both quantitative and qualitative techniques in complementary ways to obtain the primary data that assisted in the realisation of the objectives of the study. To cement the hypothesis testing process, secondary data from publicly available sources (i.e. online resources, books, academic journals, newspapers, etc.) was also used in line with the conclusions from the literature review, which on its own somewhat laid a conceptual and theoretical foundation of the study.

1.8.2 The Research Process

As alluded before, the essence of this study is vested primarily in the correlation of the notions of urban blight and city attractiveness. To explore the indicators of urban blight, direct observations were undertaken; this was guided by a comprehensive checklist of blight indicators informed by the pre-existing literature on the indicators of urban blight.

To uncover city attractiveness component of the study, subjective opinions of the general public found within the geographical boarders of the town provided insight with regards to why there is, and how strong the conception of city attractiveness is in the town. This therefore means that a questionnaire (appendix 2) was used as a solitary tool for gaining insight on the main reasons and

in evaluating the extent to which the people from the smaller surrounding towns perceive and respond to the attractiveness of Mthatha.

More conclusively, to unpack this perceived relationship between these areas of research, the study undertook a thorough analysis of the findings on both the indicators of urban blight and evidence of city attractiveness to establish their existence. Having done as such, the study then assessed the implications of their coexistence in juxtaposition with the consequences of the city attracting a greater number of people into the town, which in essence revolve around the impact of the people's daily activities on the dilapidation of the town given their dependence on the town.

1.8.3 Data Sources

Given the nature of this study, it was therefore of utmost importance to employ different data sources using multiple data collection techniques so as to ensure that the objectives of this study were optimally fulfilled. Therefore, the study used both qualitative and quantitative data in complementary ways, as dictated by the objectives. This means that apart from the secondary data that was collected using online resources, library material and other secondary data obtained from municipal officials such as GIS data and information on the IDP; the study also used various techniques of primary data collection.

1.8.3.1 Primary Data Sources

As outlined by Hox & Boeije (2005), primary data refers to original, authentic, and first hand data that is usually collected for a precise research objective using techniques that best fit the research problem at hand. Therefore, considering the research problem of this study; direct observations, questionnaires and a key informant interview were the only primary data sources employed in this study.

i) Direct Observations

It is also worth mentioning that this study also employed a case study approach. This was in realization of the assertion by Yin (2009) that a case study should take place in the natural setting as it provides an opportunity for direct observation. By adopting this approach, the researcher was therefore provided the opportunity to capture the physical condition of a very contextual

planning related subject, which was urban blight in the urban fabric of the Mthatha CBD. According to Yin (2009), this works best when a study protocol is followed and when the researcher has some form of a checklist or a tabulation of the prime aspects of interest in the observation; and that is the reason the study made use of appendix 1.

ii) Questionnaires

The questionnaires were used as means of getting an idea of the people's activities of interest in the town of Mthatha. The structuring of the questions was aligned in a manner that unloaded the notion of city attractiveness from the perspective of the target population hence it was the main field of interest in these questionnaires. This was the purpose of appendix 2.

iii) Key Informant Interview(s)

The purpose of the interview that was conducted was to get a perspective of the local authority on the subject at hand. Understandably, this interview was structured in a manner that enabled the researcher to gain insight of the actual municipal plans in place, their strengths, and weaknesses; and to see if the same sentiments are shared in acknowledging and addressing the issue raised in the study; which is urban blight. For this reason, the nature of the interview was a semi-structured interview as can be seen in appendix 3.

1.8.3.2 Secondary Data Sources

According to Hox & Boeije (2005), secondary data refers to already existing data that had been originally collected with a different goal, but then reused to address another research problem. For the purpose of this study, such data was obtained from various sources which included books, journals, news papers, websites and GIS data.

1.8.4 Participants

For the purpose of this study, the participants were limited only to the people found within the geographical boarders of the town, together with a key informant, who is an official from the King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality representing the municipality's town planning department. Nonetheless, because this does not rule out that the interest of the study somewhat lies on those involved in informal economic activities within the town, it is also noteworthy that

the study was also purposely inclusive of people doing informal socio-economic activities in the CBD. Therefore, from the side of the informal sector, the participants of the study were 5 street car washers, 5 street salons, 5 street vendors, 5 motor mechanics and 5 owners of caravan restaurants. In addition, from the side of the residents, 5 people residing in each of the towns of Mthatha, Libode, Ngqeleni, Tsolo, Qumbu and Mqanduli were selected in addition to a solitary key informant.

1.8.5 Sampling

The sampling method that was employed in this study was that of a stratified purposive sampling. The primary stratum consisted of the people who do informal socio-economic activities in the CBD; with the secondary stratum primarily being those people living outside the geographical and administrative borders of the town but always using the town, and the residents of the town themselves. The tertiary stratum was solely the municipal official, who is a representative of the municipality's planning department. The main purpose behind this stratification of participants was firstly to ensure that the people involved in informal activities within the town are involved in the study. Secondly, the stratification method also sought to ensure that the study is also inclusive the general public, which is comprised of people who reside within and outside the geographical and administrative boarders of the town regardless of their occupation or what they do in town, hence the secondary stratum of the sampling frame. The tertiary stratum of the sampling frame existed to gain insight from the local authority's point of view on the current status quo of the town and the plans put in place in addressing the issues raised in the study.

Understandably, the justification of this sampling method lies on the fact that the study is primarily aimed at assessing attractiveness based on the activities of the people, particularly those living outside the boarders of the town of Mthatha but using the town on a daily basis. Considering the nature of the study, the people involved in informal socio-economic activities, particularly those from the surrounding smaller towns of Libode, Ngqeleni, Mqanduli, Tsolo and the residents of the town itself, were prioritized, but the study also ensured that it also includes the residents of these towns regardless of their occupation.

From these people, a sample of 5 people was selected for interviews as representatives of each type of informal activity selected for the study within the town. For the purpose of this study, the informal activities selected in the town were the street car washes, street motor mechanics, street vendors, informal hair salons and street food restaurants. This made up the first stratum of the sampling frame, which was limited to 5 types of informal activities (i.e. street vendors, hair dressers/street salons, motor mechanics, car washers, and caravan restaurants). The second stratum of the sampling was comprised of 5 people residing in the town and 5 in each of the other 5 selected surrounding smaller towns and their administrative areas. These other five towns were Libode, Ngqeleni, Tsolo, Mqanduli, and Qumbu. To get these people, taxi ranks in Mthatha were targeted as a way of avoiding having to go to the individual towns themselves; and because of the fact that it is where a large concentration of commuters would be found. In the case of the residents, these people were randomly selected within the specified taxi ranks, specifically to avoid bias, and to ensure that the study also reached out to the general public since the notion of city attractiveness concerns everyone within the geographical boarders of the town.

Another participant that is not aforementioned in this sampling frame was the key informant, who is an official from the planning department of the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality. This participant was also chosen purposefully as she would be vital in providing the local authority's perspective in terms of acknowledging the problem at hand (urban blight) and in providing insight on the existing planning policy and its sphere of influence as far as urban blight in the town is concerned. Thus, in total, the sample size was limited to 56 people.

1.8.6 Recruitment Strategy

As alluded before, the participants in the study were purposely targeted so as to ensure that data collection is in line with the objectives of the study. To ensure that the study reaches out to the desired participants, those falling within the designed sampling frame were approached and verbally beseeched to participate; and only with their consent the study made use of their insights. Those participants who agreed to participate in the study were then required to sign a consent form where they declared that they were well informed of what the study entails and thus agreed to participate in the study. The formal entity involved in the study, which is the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality planning department was already contacted by the time the study was undertaken and had provided a signed gatekeeper's letter agreeing to take part in the

interview that is part of the study. The supporting documents, which were the consent form that was signed by the participants, together with the gatekeeper's letter were attached to the research proposal document as proof.

1.8.7 Data Analysis

Having collected and captured the data, it was then analysed within the lens of a grounded theory hence the study sought to establish and assess the relationship between urban blight and city attractiveness with a hypothesis to be tested. This enabled the study to draw conclusions based on how it manifested itself in relation to the conceptual framework and the objectives of the study; this then paved the way for recommendations made based on the findings of the study.

1.8.8 Data Storage

To ensure that the data collected is safe; the questionnaires together with the scribbles from the interview were scanned and uploaded on an online storage drive. The login details to the storage drive were shared between the researcher and his supervisor. Once the data analysis part was done and the study was completed, the data remained on the online storage drive for a maximum of 5 years before it could be disposed. The hardcopies of the questionnaires and interview schedule remained in the researcher's school locker, and the keys to the locker were shared between with the researcher and his supervisor for a maximum of 5 years after the study was completed.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

It is also noteworthy that the study was not without limitations as it could not avoid external factors which somewhat hindered the full attainment of the study's intentions. To begin with, by the time the study was undertaken, the latest census data was not published yet so the study used 2011 data. Furthermore, because of the danger (due to crime) of some places that the study had to cover, upon undertaking direct observations, photos could not be captured, and images from google maps were therefore used as a risk mitigation measure. Furthermore, there were also limitations in terms of obtaining GIS data for other purposes such as making zoning maps due to the KSDLM itself not having that data, to mitigate this, the study therefore used the layout presented in figure 4.4. In addition to this limitation of adequate information, the study was also

unable to obtain data on the municipality's revenue base, property ownership and property rates, which meant that conclusions on such factors could only be drawn through making inferences from the data presented in the municipality's IDP.

1.10 Chapter Outline

Chapter 1: Background and Introduction to the Study

As an introductory chapter, this chapter starts off by broadly exhibiting the traditional fashion in which urban blight is usually encapsulated as means of providing a background of the research problem and exploring the missing gaps in the literature on the subject. Subsequent to that, the chapter then goes ahead to generally present the developmental state in former homeland towns, which generally gives a brief depiction of the existing blight in the study area. To supplement the crux of the study, this chapter also alludes to some factors which give light to the city attractiveness component of the study, thus enacting the cornerstone of the research, which is assessing the relationship between this urban blight and the town's attractiveness. This is unloaded in the Problem Statement and Rationale sub-sections of this chapter, which are broken down into the Research Aim and Objectives and extended through Research Questions that the study seeks to directly answer in achieving the objectives of the study. To make this possible, this chapter also presents the research methodology undertaken in conducting the research before going on to present the general structure of the dissertation as a method for conveying a brief layout of what every chapter entails.

Chapter 2: Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Considering that the study assesses the relationship between urban blight and city attractiveness, the study is however inclusive of other relevant terms and concepts, which are instrumental in augmenting the fundamentals of what is encompassed in the main subject and predicate of this study, which are Urban Blight and City Attractiveness respectively. With that said, the main concepts that underpin the study are therefore defined and explained in this chapter as means of unveiling their relevance within the scope of this study. Having done as such, this chapter goes on to present the main theoretical underpinnings of the main subjects and context of this study. In this regard, the main theoretical underpinnings used in this respect are the modernization

theory, the neo-liberalism theory and the theory of underdevelopment. Understandably, these are used as a method of explaining the social, political, economic and demographic determinants of the main subjects of the study in an abstracted manner. Understandably, because the latter theory speaks much to the context of the study, this theory is also used to outlay a definitive ground for the merits of the recommendations proposed in the study.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

This chapter basically reviews existing writings on the issue of urban blight, but since the study is additionally comprehensive of the part of city attractiveness, it also makes inferences on the subject to efficiently introduce the apparent attachment between these two diverse areas of research. By so doing, this section intends to thoroughly analyse the determinants of urban blight in various settings in order to outline what separates this study from the current research that has been undertaken on the subject, which is the where the concept of city attractiveness comes in. Having done in that capacity, this chapter additionally looks to reveal the lessons learnt from the literature on the primary subject of this study (which is urban blight) as method of making inferences skewed towards the realization of the objectives of the study. Among those lessons, this chapter also looks to uncover the approaches that were used in dealing with urban blight in various contexts so as to explore and evaluate possible approaches that could be pragmatically adopted in addressing urban blight in relation to city attractiveness in Mthatha.

Chapter 4: Case Study of Mthatha

This chapter is somewhat in conjunction with the latter part of the literature review and presents a background of the study area. By so doing, this chapter seeks to present a general understanding of not only the geographical, but also the socio-economic background of Mthatha, with focus on the history and developmental state of the town and its population as means of laying a general understanding of the determinants of the findings presented in chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Presenting the Findings of the Study – A Reflection on the Objectives

Correspondingly, this chapter presents a detailed presentation of the data obtained on urban blight and city attractiveness in the study area and is complemented by an exhaustive analysis of the data collected. Inferring from the objectives of the study, this chapter thus makes derivations

in light of the obtained data as a method of working towards accomplishing the main aim of the study. Understandably, these inferences are not only informed by the objectives of the study, but also the lessons learnt from the literature reviewed and the hypothetical merits provided in the theoretical framework.

Chapter 6: Recommendations for Urban Regeneration in Mthatha

In view of the data analysis presented in chapter 6, this chapter correspondingly unpacks urban regeneration as the proposed recommendation in addressing urban blight in relation to city attractiveness as it is the main issue presented in the study.

Chapter 7: Summary of Findings and Concluding Remarks

As the final stage of the dissertation, this chapter recapitulates on the whole paper through providing a condensed summary of findings and the concluding elucidations on the subjects of the study in view of the findings. This is done through guaranteeing that aim and objective of the study were achieved, and that the research questions were thoroughly attended to.

Chapter 2: Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to establish a conceptual and theoretical framework within which the concept of urban blight in relation to city attractiveness can be understood as presented in the study. To achieve this, the study firstly presents various complementary concepts, which help mould the essence of the study in addressing the issue of urban blight in the study area. With that said, the concepts discussed in this study include the concept of urban blight itself, alongside the concepts of city attractiveness, place utility, sustainable development and urban regeneration. Herein, these key concepts are defined as means of safeguarding a great unit of their conceptual consistency and cohesion without compromising their contextual relevance so as to avoid possible misinterpretations in the study, with the broader aim being to provide clarity where necessary. In this regard, the prime objective of this chapter is to therefore provide an indispensable understanding of the wider concepts of urban blight and city attractiveness in the study area by using complementary concepts and theories that directly relate to the study area.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

2.2.1 Urban Blight

The concept of urban blight in the context of urban planning is synonymous to that of urban decay and/or urban decline, and is subject to a number of definitions, connotations and interpretations that make it hard to distil. According to Lind & Schilling (2015), the term 'blight' originally comes from the field of plant pathology, but was adopted by urban reformers in the mid twentieth century to label the escalating urban malady associated with overrun, poor, working class neighborhoods.

In 1918, a Philadelphia planner, as cited in Gordon (2003:306), well described a blighted urban area as one that is not what it should be. Intrinsically, Gold & Sagalyn (2011) however argue that considering its half century of use, the concept itself has become a well-worn term of art. Nevertheless, because its application to different contexts is so subjective and pliable, it is nonetheless acceptable to generally contain it on a paradigm underpinned by the edict that its

judgement is in the eyes of the beholder. Justifiably, this is in parallel with the assertion by Robick (2011) that without a standard metric, every one judgment of blight would possibly redefine the concept. With that said, it therefore becomes of utmost importance to find common ground in that despite its universality, the crux of the concept remains rationally engrained on the contention that urban blight can be generally defined as a label for suggesting hostile urban conditions. These are conditions where a previously well-functioning city, or part of it; has dilapidated and fallen into disrepair (Robick, 2011).

In this sense, the most blatant form of urban blight often presents itself in the form of a physically deteriorated or decayed condition in an urban area, caused by any number of circumstances that worsen over time due to human neglect and disinvestment among other factors (Robinson & Cole, 2007). On the other hand, as encapsulated by Walker & Wright (1938), this also refers to an area that has deteriorated from an economic standpoint, thus becoming less profitable not only to the city and its government, but also the general public and the owners of its real estate at large.

According to Durden (2013), these are conditions that literally pose a threat to the health and safety of not only the residents of the blighted area, but also the general public exposed to such conditions. On the bigger picture, these conditions also depress an area's quality of life, and jeopardize the social and economic viability of an area. From a valuation point of view, Robinson & Cole (2007) thus describe urban blight as a result of unguided urban growth and arguably an indiscriminate mixture of not only homes but also factories, warehouses, junk yards, and stores that in turn result in depressed property values.

With that said, one can therefore reiterate that urban blight manifests itself in many dimensions, which can be orderly grouped in different traditional forms of either physical blight, frictional blight, functional blight or economic blight, or a combination of these depending on the context as they are further explained in this chapter (Chetty, 2014). Justifiably, this traditional classification nonetheless provides a starting point for the development of a framework for measuring blight and determining blight eradication strategies, as they are understood to relate to specific elements of the environment at hand.

2.2.1.1 Physical Blight

This form of urban blight particularly refers to the physical environment of an urban settlement, which is declining or in a dilapidated state. Buildings and infrastructure often show the most blatant indications of such conditions. Factors such as ageing cities, inadequate planning, abandonment and neglect of buildings alongside poor maintenance of an area and its services often account for this form of blight, more especially in areas that have an ineffective urban design (Chetty, 2014).

2.2.1.2 Frictional Blight

According to Chetty (2014); this is the form of blight that emerges from poor planning. It often transpires when incompatible and derogatory land uses are positioned in close proximity to one another; thus hindering the liveability and functionality in those land uses, which on the bigger picture compromises the viability of an urban environment. Defensibly, this justifies the abandonment of property in areas which are subject to incompatible land uses, which in turn gives room for urban blight to set in.

2.2.1.3 Functional Blight

This form of blight particularly refers to the deficiencies in the functionality of an urban environment. Understandably, it exhibits itself out of existing land uses that fail to serve an urban environment in a sustainable manner. Herein, when the land uses tend to fail to cater for the needs of the community, the area itself ends up being neglected and deserted by the community, thus in turn leading to disinvestment in the area, which subsequently leads to this form of blight (Chetty, 2014).

2.2.1.4 Economic Blight

According to Chetty (2014); this is the form of blight that is an outcome of an economically unproductive area. Herein, businesses that are at the core of the area's economy close down as investors tend to withdraw their investments in the area due to unprofitable returns, which are themselves a result of not having enough thresholds to sustain the businesses due to migration of people from the area. Other factors that also yield economic blight include the development of relatively larger shopping malls, which in a way dents the smaller businesses operating in the

same area as customers tend to prefer the malls over the smaller businesses offering similar products and services.

2.2.2 City Attractiveness

The concept of city attractiveness, otherwise known as territorial attractiveness, is a modern concept which has emerged with the aim of solving long-term regional development problems by new means (Ezmale, 2012). By definition, this can refer to the potential levels of one city's territorial assets and spatial qualities as factors of attraction for socio-economic activity. According to Ezmale & Litavniece (2011), in less abstract terms, this is a label used to refer to both the capacity to attract new residents, visitors, enterprises and investments as well as the ability to retain and develop communities, developing them as assets in rational economic grounds.

Understandably, there are different elements determining city attractiveness; these range from the quality and effectiveness of infrastructure to the quality of life itself, as well as the activity of the local economy and institutional capacity, which are themselves considerable factors for attraction to new residents, workforce, new enterprises and investments at large. Herein, it is however understood that cities undeniably compete with one another in terms of attracting new businesses or industries that in turn create job opportunities and provide material welfare. As such, cities that have technological, social, infrastructure and institutional assets among others tend to have a better competitive advantage over others and are thus deemed more attractive than others (Ezmale & Litavniece, 2011). In this regard, Russo *et al* (2013) thus apprehend city attractiveness as an attribute of regions that varies spatially according to its fundamental natural and environmental, social, cultural and economic factors.

However, according to Russo *et al* (2013), it is also worth mentioning that city attractiveness itself also has four overbearing characteristics, which determine to a large extent the different magnitudes that need to be analysed for the full comprehension of its effects:

- To begin with, it is worth acknowledging that with city attractiveness, history matters. That is; city attractiveness is in many cases bestowed in history of the city as it may accumulate

over time due to the different paths or set of processes that cities endure over time, which can in turn be credibly associated with the so called viscous character of human mobility (Russo, *et al*., 2013). Given the history of Mthatha (further explained in chapter 4), this particular characteristic has a significant contribution to the stance of town in terms of city attractiveness.

- Secondly, city attractiveness is likely to yield spatial overspill effects which could be both positive and negative, more especially where the attractiveness of any given territory is more likely to impact on those that surround it (Russo, *et al*., 2013). Considering the smaller towns within the same district as Mthatha, this perhaps justifies their stagnant growth as somewhat a result of Mthatha's attractiveness.
- Thirdly, city attractiveness remains a dynamic concept, although it is confined by path dependency and spatial inter-dependence. That is; in as much as the attractiveness of a place is influenced by history and by the (un)attractiveness of neighbouring areas, spatial regions that are attractive at a given moment and under a set of given exogenous or endogenous circumstances to a particular group (such as short term visitors), may not be such when these conditions change. As a result, attractiveness can change as a result of policy choices taken either within the territory or at a wider spatial scale – there is the possibility of institutional agency (Russo, *et al*., 2013). Given the apartheid legacy that South African urban areas had to endure, this could perhaps account for the discrepancies in city attractiveness during the apartheid period and post 1994 in South African cities.
- Finally, it is also worth mentioning that city attractiveness is not an 'absolute' quality of territories, but rather a relative factor of spatial differentiation. Thus a given territory can become more attractive not only because it has acquired more benefaction factors but because other territories have lost some of their endowment factors (Russo, *et al*., 2013).

Nevertheless, it is also noteworthy that the elements underpinning the concept of city attractiveness from a research point of view are both objective and subjective (Chang-Seok ,1985). To outline their objectivity and subjectivity, these elements are tabulated in table 2.1 below as summarized by Ezmale (2012) as he rationally categorized them into a criteria of twelve elements.

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Table 2.1:. The city attractiveness evaluation criteria and their characteristic indicators from a viewpoint of residents

Criterion	**Objective indicators**	**Subjective indicators**
Availability and mobility	Information on public (route, frequency) and private (the number) transportation	The evaluation of the public transportation quality and availability
Economic development, employment and material welfare of inhabitants	Statistic information about inhabitants (the number, demographic and educational indicators *et al*.), employment and unemployment indicators	Satisfaction with the living conditions in a city willing to change the place of residence, the assessment of the personal material position, satisfaction with job *et al*.
The quality and availability of health care services	Out-patient and stationary medical institutions (the number of institutions, medical staff and patients, beds, *et al*.)	Satisfaction with the quality of medical services their availability The physical condition assessment
The quality and availability of social care services	Information about the modes and the number of recipients of social care services, the social care budget	Satisfaction with the q uality and availability of social care services
The quality and availability of educational services	Information about the number of education institutions, teaching staff and children/ students, the number of interest education institutions, the offered services, *et al*.	Satisfaction with the quality and availability of education and interest education
The quality and availability of culture, sport and recreation services	Information about the number of cultural and recreation places, amateur groups, museums, libraries, sports institutions, visitors/participants ,the organized events, *et al*.	Satisfaction with the quality and availability of culture, recreation and sports, the opportunities of leisure time activities
Ecological quality	Information about the air quality, potential polluted areas, the quality of drinking water, *et al*.	Satisfaction with the ecological conditions in the city the quality of drinking water, *et al*.
Participation in diversificating the community's social life	Information about non-governmental organizations and interest clubs, the social activity of inhabitants	Inhabitants' participation and willing to get involved in social activities
The quality and availability of administrative services provided by the state and	Information on the types and costs of administrative services	Satisfaction with the quality and availability of administrative services

municipality		
The quality and availability of shopping services	Information about the number and types of shopping establishments	Satisfaction with the quality and availability of the services
The quality and availability of housing	Information about the dwelling space, accommodations, *et al*.	Satisfaction with the quality and availability of housing
The quality and availability of physical safety and security	Information about the number of crimes, fire and car accidents	Satisfaction with safety and security (on the street, at home, in the city)

Source: Ezmale (2012)

Nonetheless, it is however worth underlining that the tabulation above is not the most concrete evaluation criteria for city attractiveness as it is solely based on rational grounds. For argument sake, this tabulation is best accepted as an entirely general criteria for evaluating city attractiveness which is subject for alteration depending on the context. Considering the affirmation by Ezmale (2012) that there is no single definition of city attractiveness, it is hence worth stressing that even the assessment methodology in academic literature varies in terms of the criteria and factors affecting attractiveness for different types of territories

With that said, the common understanding herein however is that with city attractiveness, different target groups are translated differently, and the necessity to consider the regional differences and local contrasts is along these lines underscored. It is in this regard that this study assesses city attractiveness from a subjective perspective of the target group, which are the people using the town of Mthatha on a daily basis, particularly those living outside the borders of the town and those involved in informal socio-economic activities within the town. Justifiably, this is in respect to the view that these subjective indicators of the city attractiveness evaluation criteria are nonetheless conferred in attributes of wealth and income, job opportunities, housing situation, the quality of urban facilities, the presence of friends and relatives, and opportunity for social mobility, as it was stipulated by Chang-Seok (1985).

2.2.3 City Effect

Concisely, this is a relatively abstract umbrella term encompassing both the holistic results of city attractiveness and the concept of place utility. According to Cicerchia (1999), this refers to the atypical quality of relatively larger urban settlements relished by their populations and users. Herein, the prime indicator is the interminable access to not only distinctive and superior urban functions, but also special opportunities and amenities the town has to offer.

Understandably, this alone justifies why the town is a very much pursued purpose of not only individual but also collective aspirations. Justifiably, this term overall provides an answer as to why specific settlements have a higher degree of attractiveness in relation to others. Considering the state of development of Mthatha in comparison to the smaller towns within its region, it is therefore evident that the town of Mthatha has a city effect over the other smaller towns close by and this perhaps justifies why Mthatha is perceived as more attractive than the smaller towns within its district. This is also indicated by Harrison (2014:23), who states that in terms of population size, towns like Mthatha, Thoyohandou and Mmabatho are definitely comparable to secondary cities regardless of the fact that their economies are too small for them to claim city status. Therefore, it is for this reason that this study proclaims that in its district, Mthatha has a city effect, and not city status. Justifiably, this city effect can be construed from the following indicators as outlined by Archibugi (2001).

Indicators of City Effect

As cited in Archibugi (2001), the suggested components of city effect are not only inclusive of the demographic component, but also a superlative degree of :-

- the use of and access to superior urban services,
- transport;
- public spaces;
- a blend of spatial functions;
- urban structure and morphology;
- and a communication network.

2.2.4 Place Utility Approach

A behavioral geography concept; this concept in particular is very much complementary to the concept of city attractiveness. With that said, the indicators of city attractiveness are therefore best described within the scope of the 'place utility approach' concept, which perhaps justifies the methodology the study undertakes in unpacking this concept in the context of the study area.

Nevertheless, the place utility approach is a concept developed by Wolpert (1965;162), who encapsulated the term as a normative concept defining the net combination of utilities derived from individual's integration at some position in space. In simple terms, place utility is a measure of attractiveness or unattractiveness of an area, relative to alternative locations, as perceived by the individual decision maker (Simmons, 1968).

According to Wolpert (1965), the concept itself is consigned on the idea that people are always sub-consciously comparing the utility of their present residence with all the other places they are aware of. As such, place utility can be either positive or negative, depending upon how an individual perceives his or her place of residence. This perhaps stems from the view that individual perceptions concerning the utility of the current location relative to the perceived utility of alternative locations is extremely important in analysing migration and movement patterns of people.

In the context of this study, the concept provides an indispensable understanding of the reasons fuelling the intra-district movement of the people from their small towns (and their rural settlements) to Mthatha in response to the indicators of city attractiveness. Understandably, this concept is consigned on the idea of '*The Economic Man'*, which presumes that the economic man is a rational being with a solitary goal of optimizing profit, sagacious powers of perception, reasoning, and reckoning, and has perfect predictive abilities which enable him to never go wrong in anticipating economic opportunities (Wolpert, 1964). Thus, it is within this insight that the people who respond to the city attractiveness of Mthatha are perceived.

More conclusively, the place utility approach as a behavioural geography concept therefore aids in understanding the rationale behind the movement of people from their places of residence to the town of Mthatha on a daily basis hence it is also believed that this also has a contribution to the urban blight in the town.

2.2.5 Sustainable Development

It has arguably become a norm to speak of the concept of sustainable development as more of a process rather than an outcome such that the conception of sustainable development itself continues to be viewed as a niche area in the realm of development as a whole. Nevertheless, in as much as the concept is at many times considered synonymous with environmentalism, the crux of this concept remains bestowed in the integration of the environmental, social, economic and institutional apprehensions within an urban environment. Admissibly, due to its overarching nature, the concept of sustainable development itself conspicuously developed alongside the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a benchmark development agenda to be adhered to globally as it underpins each of the MDGs (Wilkins , 2008).

In the same breath, the most frequently cited definition of Sustainable Development was thus produced by the World Commission on Environment and Development, which defined it as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). As this concept developed, one of its prime objectives was to ensure the facilitation of the prospect to recognize and account for the full value of the broader ecosystem services in development planning. As such, it thus became of prominence herein that the vision behind sustainable development is engrained in environmental, economic and social pillars, a model which some have extended by introducing an institutional or governance pillar.

In this regard, it thus becomes inevitable that the trajectory of making of human settlements more sustainable should therefore descend from a framework principally based on these three pillars of sustainability, but advocated and administered through governmental intervention. This is in respect to the assertion that the apprehension of visions of a sustainable city is very much reliant on the city's ability to identify the issues and approaches best suited to their specific needs and circumstances (Weingaertner, 2010). As a result, it is within this scope that the relationship between urban blight and city attractiveness in this study should then serve as a diagnosis for suggesting possible means of achieving sustainable development in the study area considering the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and strengths the town manifests.

2.2.5.1 Environmental Sustainability

As a pillar of sustainable development, environmental responsibility herein primarily refers to ways of maintaining ecological balance. Explicably, this pillar of sustainable development principally necessitates the efficient use of natural resources and promotes the usage of alternative means such as renewable energy resources. As such, sustainability in this scope requires that human activity must only utilize natural resources at a rate which can give room for their natural replenishment hence it is understood in this regard that the carrying capacity of a settlement largely determines the scale of resource depletion (Goodland, 1995). In this sense, environmental responsibility thus seeks to improve human welfare while at the same time ensuring that humanity learns to live within the limitations of the biophysical environment.

2.2.5.2 Economic Sustainability

In the economic pillar of sustainability, an economically sustainable system is one that is able to produce goods and render services on an on-going basis, and yet still manages to avoid extreme sectoral imbalances that in turn compromise substantial production sectors such as the agricultural and industrial sectors (Harris, 2000). In this regard, the economic trajectory of sustainability should therefore seek to balance the natural production factors involved in meeting human needs while at the same time providing acceptable societal livelihood and a healthy economic environment. According to Chetty (2014), the attainment of economic sustainability, particularly in the context of urban regeneration, entails the provision of adequate services together without neglecting particular needs of households.

On the other hand, this pillar of sustainable development also advocates for supporting industrial and agricultural growth while at the same time ensuring an efficient use of labour and support for local business development. Understandably, this could also be stimulated through revision of zoning to encourage integrated land uses and relatively higher densities in order to create economically viable settlements (Doyle, 1998). Justifiably, this is of utmost importance as it minimizes the complexities associated with logistics and communication lines, which make it difficult for infrastructure maintenance and movement of goods.

2.2.5.3 Social Sustainability

Considering that sustainable development is inclusive of the society itself; it is therefore inevitable to speak of sustainable development without social sustainability alongside social equity. According to Chetty (2014), achieving social sustainability (especially be means of urban regeneration) requires a strong social cohesion hence it is crucial that in a community, the society must be in support of one another in order to overcome social ills such as unemployment, poverty and crime among others. To enable such an environment, a democratic system advocating for and nurturing equal treatment of people, community participation, community empowerment, participation and social mobility must be in place (Chetty, 2014). Understandably, the justification for this pillar of sustainability stems from the view that sustainable development is often represented as a balance between economy, environment and social equity.

2.2.6 Urban Regeneration

In its most literal sense, urban regeneration refers to the rebuilding of the city or parts of the city. Explicably, the priorities to advance urban regeneration have however transformed over time and space. For example, in the period of the 1950s, the focus of urban regeneration was solely on the betterment of the quality of the physical environment. From the 1960s onwards, focus however began to shift towards the social emphasis of regeneration goals, with economic concerns later emerging in the 1970s (Ahsan, et al., 2012).

Comprehensibly, there are many other concepts in line with urban regeneration that came with this transformation as it advanced with the goal of redeveloping degraded urban areas, with each varying according to context (i.e local goals, common practices and institutional/political agendas) (Neto, et al., 2014). Understandably, urban renewal was the earliest of these concepts; its focus was primarily on addressing issues related to the lack of new housing in Europe. These were issues of public health and well-being, which were based upon slum clearance agendas in conjunction with rebuilding interventions. Thereafter, the conception of urban redevelopment arose as a broader concept, with the aim being to incorporate socio-economic obligations such as poverty, unemployment and education; thus redirecting focus from only physical planning to other pressing issues in the realm of development. Subsequently, the concepts of urban

rehabilitation, revitalization and regeneration thus emerged as even broader and more holistic concepts encompassing the wider sphere of urban redevelopment (Balsas, 2007) cited in (Neto, et al., 2014).

More specifically, the concept of rehabilitation is usually employed solely for the physical restoration of buildings while revitalization is more related to action plans that attempt to improve other avenues such as abandoned industrial parks among others. According to Neto *et al* (2014), the concept of rehabilitation best fits the process of construction works on existing buildings while revitalization best describes the somewhat abstract process of giving life back to a certain area.

Nonetheless, urban regeneration on the other hand appears to be the concept that encompasses the territory as whole, addressing tangible and intangible issues in both the private and public realm (Roberts, 2000) cited in (Neto, et al., 2014). In this regard, Goodall (1988:490) cited in Steenkamp (2004) thus defines urban regeneration as an on-going process of remodelling the wider horizon of urban areas by means of rehabilitation and conservation as well as redevelopment. In this regard, it is therefore noteworthy that the most essential purpose of urban regeneration is to bring life back to a certain territory by all means and to restore a sense of belonging to that place. Understandably, this is inclusive of not only the improvement of the housing environment, but also supporting the establishment of new businesses, and subsequently the creation of greater employment, and recovering the normal stance of the neighbourhood in terms of security, aesthetics, economy, comfort and cleanliness among other factors that affect blighted areas (Neto, et al., 2014). With that said, it is therefore evident that an efficient regeneration process is expected to promote smart growth, generate sufficient revenue and returns from underutilized and neglected property, thus creating new jobs and business opportunities, empowering communities and addressing people's real needs while at the same time increasing environmental quality and removing blight through providing quality of life for all (Ahsan, et al., 2012).

2.3 Theoretical Underpinnings of Urban Blight and City Attractiveness

This section presents different fundamental theories in complementary ways as an effort to shape and enact a theoretical basis within which the proliferation of urban blight in relation to city attractiveness can be analysed. In so doing, the principal objective is to theorize the demographic, economic, political, and social determinants of the wider concepts of urban blight and city attractiveness in the context of this study. Understandably, this will serve as an extensive foundation within which these two diverse areas of research are centripetally put to common ground as a move towards the realization of the objectives of this study. In this regard, the main fundamental theoretical underpinnings discussed in relation to urban blight and city attractiveness are the modernization theory, the neo-liberal theory and the theory of underdevelopment. To achieve this, the study firstly unpacks the theory of modernization before introducing industrialization alongside urbanization as offshoots. Having done as such, the study then narrows down focus to industrialization and urbanization as means of providing a rather empirical perspective of the factors that yield urban blight.

In addition, the study further looks at the fundamental theory of neoliberalism, particularly to upswing the theoretical abundance of the factors that yield the conception of city attractiveness as understood to have a relationship with urban blight. To achieve this, this section unpacks the synergies between neoliberalism and globalization (as an offshoot) so as to introduce and endorse the perceived cohesion between neoliberalism and city attractiveness.

Moreover, to provide a theoretical consolidation of these concepts, the study then introduces the theory of underdevelopment. By so doing, the main aim is to deliver a firm degree of enlightenment in this respect, particularly in further elaborating the contextual relevance of the study area to the main subject and predicate of the study (urban blight and city attractiveness) in a theoretical perspective. In addition, it is also understood that this will also aid in providing the theoretical grounds for the merits for the possible intervention strategies proposed in dealing with the subject of this study. In a nutshell, the study uses the modernization theory as a theoretical underpinning of urban blight, the neoliberalism theory to explain city attractiveness, and the underdevelopment theory to consolidate the theoretical underpinnings of urban blight and city attractiveness in a contextual fashion, and to deliver the theoretical merits for the recommendations thereafter.

2.3.1 The Modernization Theory

According to Lewis (2010), the theory of modernization arose with the conception of economic internationalism, which was to a certain extent engrained in the motives of mercantile capitalism. As a theory of development, the Modernization theory emphasizes the process of social change; which is herein deemed as a precondition in generating economic advancement and in examining changes in social, psychological and political processes in a modernized manner. Admissibly, the rationale of modernization in development is entrenched on the idea that if one nation is to advance economically, it must ultimately strive to emulate the western countries (particularly America and the Great Britain) in terms of the means of production it adopts, which in essence implies the propagation of heavy industrialization, which in turn promotes capitalism (Peet & Hartwick, 2009).

In this respect, modernization however incorporates non-economic elements such as social practices, beliefs, values and customs. Herein, emphasis is on economic diffusion and speed of change as it is understood to be critical in the removal of various cultural and social barriers. According to Peet & Hartwick (2009), non-modernized societies are characterized by a low degree of specialization (particularly in means of production), high levels of self-sufficiency, cultural norms of tradition and functional diffuseness, relatively little emphasis on money circulation and market, family norms and nepotism, one-way flow of goods from rural to urban areas. Understandably, all these aspects are understood as detrimental in development as they are in one way or the other, the key determinants of economic vitality.

Nevertheless, from an economic perspective, modernization is based on neoclassical economics, which promotes capital accumulation alongside entrepreneurship and industrialization at the expense of agriculture and economic progress by adopting and adapting western technologies to the conditions of the third world (Petrescu, 2013). According to Rostow (1960), a country that is modernized is one that has gone through the five fundamental phases of economic growth, which are: (1) the traditional society, (2) the preconditions for the take-off of growth, (3) economic growth, (4) maturity and (5) sustaining growth through increasing mass consumption. Justifiably, this developmental economic theory has grown to be the blueprint for modernizing communities as it has evolved over time to become more pragmatic, balancing between handing the state an

advanced role as a market regulator to a deeper neoliberalism, focusing on the private property, individual liberties and entrepreneurship (Petrescu, 2013).

On the other hand, the social aspect of the modernization theory however has its focus vested on urbanization alongside the promotion of education and social mobilization for economic development and bureaucratization of the public administration. Understandably, this is largely in respect to the view that from the heydays of modernization, the supremacy of the western culture was affirmed as being a centre of modernity, innovation and industry where such values as performance, success and rationality were rewarded (Petrescu, 2013). As it seems, modernization from a development perspective thus perceives development as bridging the gap between developed and underdeveloped nations through an imitative process hence economic growth is deemed as the driving force behind development in the third world (Shandra, et al., 2003)

Nevertheless, modernist ideas encroached South Africa particularly during the post-World War 1 period as a response to industrialisation and urbanization among other factors which were pressing issues in planning for economic growth, just as was the case in the western countries (Mabin & Smit, 1997). In South Africa, the roots of the modern movement, according to Haarhoff (2011), are traced back to the year 1928, primarily as an end result of the study tours by architecture students from the University of Cape Town and the University of the Witwatersrand, which included visits to Europe in a quest to acquire the required expertise to replicate the modernist movement locally. Concerning physical development, the legacy of the modernist movement that resulted from these tours is evident throughout South Africa's spatial landscape. Justifiably, it resembles the work of Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius among other European elites in the fields of Architecture and urban planning; the spatial imprint of Apartheid planning itself is a resemblance of a modernist movement advocated through separate development catering for industrial processes.

2.3.1.1 Industrialization and Urbanization in the context of Modernization: a foundation for Urban Blight

If one is to look at urban blight from the lens of modernization, it is inevitable that in the theory of modernization, industrialization is undeniably a central facet (Rostow, 1960). The possible justification for this assertion perhaps stems from the fact that there is barely any modernized society where the improvement in material level of living is not considered as arguably the most desired goal by rulers and the ruled alike, and where industrialization is not perceived as the compulsory means of achieving it (Kemp, 2014).

Inferring from the view by Tipps (1973) that modernization is a representation of a transition from a primitive society of a subsistence economy to a technology-intensive and industrialized economy; it is however worth acknowledging that in the wake of modernization, industrialized economies have nonetheless come to represent a paradox of magnificence and foulness as cities have consequently come to dominate the character of man and to symbolize human attainment (Breger, 1967).

With specific focus on the foulness in cities, Kendall (2007) argues that from the onset, urbanization accompanied modernization and the rapid process of industrialization; and with that said, Breger (1967) in the same breath stresses that the tribulations in cities appear to have been born with urbanization. With urban blight – a predicament closely attached to urbanization, being one of those tribulations; it is therefore worth stressing that from the days of the Renaissance, it was through industrial revolution that urbanization began to exacerbate, when the disorder of urban activity and the complexities of urban adjustments began to multiply (Breger, 1967).

In this respect, according to Levin-Waldman (2004), in as much as industrialization brought about an urban explosion in terms of factories and diversity in populations, it also brought with it severe economic dislocation, and most notably, huge pools of labour that barely earned subsistence wages, which meant that workers were somewhat forced to live with their families in impoverished parts of the city, often in blighted areas characterized by tenement housing. Arguably, this however became the truest manifestation of urban blight as a direct result of industrialization in a modernized society.

Unmistakably, urban blight in this respect habitually denotes itself as a transitional phenomenon associated with modernization, which on its own is a natural by-product of the (assumed) complementary processes of industrialization and urbanization. As an example, Frankenhoff (1967), cited in Fox (2013), suggested that "slums necessarily belong to the process of economic growth in a developing country" by acting as 'the staging area for migrating poor' as they work to integrate themselves into the economic life of cities in expanding industrialized economies. Justifiably, this is due to the fact that people tend to migrate to cities with expectations of living better lives in urban areas as their decision to migrate is primarily based, among other reasons, on rational economic grounds (Malinga, 2000).

In this regard, it is arguably safe to conclude that the ills of an urban environment considerably emanate out of the practices of a modernized society as it somewhat entails a capitalist element which has a tendency of advancing the wealthier at the expense of the poor. The proliferation of urban blight alongside urban sprawl as a result of urbanization in industrialized societies is a revelation of such, though other subtleties also have their implications on the subject (Brenner & Theodore, 2003).

With that being said, other dynamics pertaining urban blight in industrialized societies are also closely related to the location of industry and industrial trends. Herein, it is however also evident that upon choosing an industrial site, the common practice is that an enterprise often pursues the one that will enable it to maximize profits regardless of how it affects human welfare. As such, socially, this often comes at a cost because these enterprises are profit oriented and therefore have a competitive advantage over other land uses such as housing when it comes to land markets. As a result, in industrialized societies, the dynamics that yield urban blight in relation to the location of industries (with respect to urbanization) are often related to factors such as depopulation and underutilisation of social capital on one hand, or excessive congestion and concentration of the population on the other (Reynolds, 1966).

Thus, it is in light of these dynamics that the emanation of urban blight, the subject of this study is primarily rooted on the theoretical underpinnings of the modernization theory, though other theories, such as neoliberalism and underdevelopment, have an equally significant role in framing the wider theoretical basis of this study.

2.3.2 The Theory of Neoliberalism

The theory of neoliberalism is shares a lot of commonalities with that of modernization. Nonetheless, the genesis of neoliberalism can be tracked back to the political-economic theories that emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, especially in scholarly debates between economists from various first world countries (Peet & Hartwick, 2009). By nature, neoliberalism is in many ways a facelift of the classical liberal economic thought that dominated the US and UK prior to the Great Depression of the 1930s. As it emerged, it manifested itself as a new "interventionist" approach that sought to replace classical liberalism hence it was believed that the viability of capitalism is heavily reliant on significant state regulation (Kotz, 2002).

By definition, a neoliberal society is one whose mode of governance, social structure and spatial development express the neoliberal vision of a free market utopia. Understandably, economic progress in the neoliberal society springs from individual initiative and unrestrained markets in land, labour and money. Herein, government is modelled on the enterprise, the citizen on the consumer and governance on business management. Justifiably, the cornerstone of the neoliberal ideology is the belief that open, competitive, and unregulated markets, liberated from all forms of state interference, represent the optimal mechanism for economic development. With that said, neoliberalism therefore claims that a capitalist system which is mainly unregulated, otherwise known as a free market economy, does not only exemplify the model of free individual choice, but also attains optimum economic performance with respect to efficiency, economic growth, technical progress, and distributional justice (Kotz, 2002).

Although the intellectual roots of this "utopia of unlimited exploitation" can be traced to the post-war writings of Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman, neoliberalism first gained widespread prominence during the late 1970s and early 1980s as a strategic political response to the sustained global recession of the preceding decade (Brenner & Theodore, 2003).

However, faced with the declining profitability of traditional mass-production industries and the crisis of Keynesian welfare policies; national and local states throughout the older industrialized world began, if hesitantly at first, to dismantle the basic institutional components of the post-war settlement and to mobilize a range of policies intended to extend market discipline, competition, and commodification throughout all sectors of society. In this context, the neoliberal doctrines

were deployed to justify (among other projects) the deregulation of state control over major industries, assaults on organized labour, the reduction of corporate taxes, the shrinking and/or privatization of public services, the dismantling of welfare programs, the enhancement of international capital mobility and the intensification of interlocality competition (Brenner & Theodore, 2003). In this regard, the objective was to assign a limited economic role to the state, suppressing it primarily to defining property rights, enforcing contracts, and regulating the money supply (Kotz, 2002).

As a result, by the end of the 1980s, a system of comprehensive recommendations based in neoliberal ideas was formulated, and subsequently became standard in conventional international economic policy circles. Explicably, this eventually became the blueprint for a 'neoliberal development policy package', as its policy instruments were deemed as pragmatic not only in the developed countries, but also in the third world countries. According to Peet & Hartwick (2009), these policy instruments, as disseminated by the World Bank and the IMF, include:

- ***Fiscal Discipline***

As a policy instrument, fiscal discipline emphasizes the need to curb the lack of political courage in matching public expenditures and resource availability as it the root of fiscal deficits. Herein, the understanding is that large and sustained fiscal deficits by central and provincial governments are the main reason behind macroeconomic disturbance in the form of inflation, balance of payments deficits, and capital flight.

- ***Reducing Public Expenditures***

This policy instrument promulgates the need to cut on government expenditures so as to allow a better functioning of the economy. Understandably, the rationale is that when there is a need to reduce on government expenditures, spending on sectors such as defence, public administration, and government subsidies, particularly for state enterprises should be cut, instead of primary education, primary health care, and public infrastructure investment inter alia.

- ***Tax Reform***

To allow a substantial flow of the economy, this policy instrument promotes the broadening of the tax base, the improvement of tax administration and the improvement of tax incentives through cutting marginal tax rates.

- ***Interest Rates***

Herein, it is standardized that in a neoliberal setup, interest rates should be market-determined rather than state-determined, and real interest rates should be positive to discourage capital flight and to increase the pool of savings in the economy.

- ***Competitive Exchange Rates***

As a policy instrument, this advocates for sufficiently competitive exchange rates as means of nurturing rapid growth in non-traditional exports. Justifiably, this is based on the view that economies should be outward-oriented; and to encourage this, it is argued that non-traditional exports should not be inflationary.

- ***Trade Liberalization***

To promote economic growth in a neoliberal setup, it is alleged that trade liberalization promotes the elimination of quantitative restrictions in terms of trade. Herein, the idea is that to harness this, tariffs must be reduced, but limited so as protect infant industries to a certain extent.

- ***Encouraging Foreign Direct Investment***

Considering the understood vitality of foreign investment, it is also encouraged that neoliberal policies should also advocate for the abolishment of barriers impeding the entry of foreign firms while at the same time allowing foreign and domestic companies to compete on equal terms. This is encouraged in the sense that foreign investment brings in the needed capital, skills and expertise. Understandably, with the right policy, these could be beneficial in terms of debt-equity swaps, where debt held by foreign creditors could be exchanged for equity in local firms, such as privatized state enterprises.

- ***Privatization***

In addition, using privatization as a policy instrument entails that state enterprises should be privatized as the private industry is perceived as more efficient.

- ***Deregulation***

Understandably, the crux of deregulation as a policy instrument is vested on the idea that all enterprises should be subject to the discipline of competition; thus deregulating economic activity in the sense of plummeting state controls over private enterprise.

- ***Securing Property Rights***

Lastly, it is also alleged that a neoliberal economic system functions better with secure property rights; as such, it is emphasized that secure and well-defined property rights should be made available to all at reasonable cost.

In light of this neoliberal development policy package, policy reform thus began to transcend throughout the world as the application of a model based on this package began to show in some Latin American countries during the early 1970s, from which it spread to Africa, Asia, and virtually all countries, even the newly liberated South Africa, particularly by the mid-1990s (Peet & Hartwick, 2009). Inferring from the policy instruments disseminated by the World Bank and the IMF, it is however noteworthy that three fundamental types of policies were involved in the neoliberal economic reform program. These were: (1) economic liberalization, where the broad rubric for legal and administrative changes needed to create institutions of private property and market competition; (2) macroeconomic stabilization, which includes measures to limit budgetary deficits, reduce growth of the money supply, and create a convertible currency with stable prices; and (3) privatization, meaning the transfer of ownership of state property to the private sector (Peet & Hartwick, 2009).

2.3.2.1 Globalization in the context of Neoliberalism: exploring the pedigrees of city attractiveness

Herein, it is noteworthy that in the wake of Neoliberalism, the western countries have largely been successful in dictating neoliberal policies through the IMF, WTO, World Bank and direct pressure, particularly in the Third World. Given that neoliberalism in the international sphere advocates for a free flow of goods, services, capital, and money across national boundaries; corporations, banks, and individual investors inter alia are thus able to move and acquire property across national borders, which to a large extent accounts for globalization (Kotz, 2002). As a result, globalization takes place in the urban centres, and urban centres embody and reflect globalization.

By definition, Globalization refers to the increase in the volume of trans-border economic relations and flow of resources, which in turn produces a qualitative change in the relations between national economies and between nation-states (Kotz, 2002). Justifiably, the concept also

has a spatial connotation to it as it also denotes what is termed a “world community” through intensified levels of interaction, interconnectedness and interdependence between nation-states (McGrew, 1992). Inferring from this, Kotz (2002) therefore states that in the process of globalization, there are three fundamental kinds of economic interactions, these are: (1) merchandise trade flows, (2) foreign direct investment, and (3) cross-border financial investments.

In a nutshell, merchandise trade flows refer to the exporting and importing of physical goods, while on the other hand foreign direct investments have much to do with cross-border economic interchange, which is basically associated with the movement of technology and organizational methods, not just goods. In addition, cross-border financial investments are devolved on financial capital flows and are numerated in terms of the net movement of capital into or out of a country and thus indicate the extent to which capital from one country finances development in other countries. As a result, cross-border flows of goods and capital are thus considered as the most substantial indicators of possible globalization of capitalism. As such, the most important features of globalization today are the greatly increased international trade, increased flows of capital across national boundaries, and a major role for large transnational corporations in manufacturing, extractive activities, and finance inter alia, operating worldwide while at the same time retaining in nearly all cases a clear base in a single nation-state (Kotz, 2002).

All the same, according to Narayana (2010), globalization also has its advantages and disadvantages. It is advantageous in the sense that it yields a wide spread of technology and management expertise, efficient use of factors of production, expansion of markets and greater opportunities for wealth creation. On the other hand, it is disadvantageous in that it is also risky considering the fact that in many cases, globalization has somewhat been associated with losses in local income and jobs as a result of external shocks and competition from imports and rising inequality with spatial and social divisions. Whatever the case may be, globalization remains a potential conveyor of many substantial social benefits.

Nevertheless, one can however deduce that as neoliberalism gains influence, it also gains more ground as a force promulgating the processes of globalization even further. Conclusively, it is the same processes of globalization that in turn appear to provide a healthy environment for transnational corporation investments in a city, thus increasing the potential for employment

(from the perspective of the greater population), thereby fuelling the attractiveness of one city and (sometimes) subsequently exacerbating urbanization. Neoliberalism in this respect thus creates an enabling environment for globalization; and globalization considerably fuels urbanization, which in essence stands to denote city attractiveness. Profoundly, this has been of dominance in many cities across the world and is largely responsible for emergence of national urban hierarchies, spatial polarization and the proliferation of mega-urban regions among other effects as the intensity of these investments tends to differ from city to city based on the favourability of the conditions these corporations seek.

2.3.2.2 Urbanization in the context of Globalization: the holistic indicator of city attractiveness

By definition, urbanization refers to the process by which rural communities become urbanized due to processes such as economic development and industrialization (Peng, et al., 2011). As a demographic term, urbanization denotes the redistribution of populations from rural to urban settlements over time. Understandably, increasing levels of urbanization are a result of the natural growth of the urban population and migration of the rural population towards cities. According to UNEP (2002), the driving forces behind urbanization include the opportunities and services offered in urban areas such as jobs and education. Logically, it is these factors (among others), that ultimately represent the empirical symbols of city attractiveness.

Inferring from, and emphasizing on has already been alluded; it is without doubt that urbanization is to a certain extent exacerbated by globalization, and that globalization flourishes well in a neoliberal society. As such, the most significant synergy between urbanization and globalization however lies on the fact that as the effects of globalization affect the spatial allocation of resources, thus influencing the spatial effects in cities across the world; urbanization on the other hand denotes the human response to those effects (Lim, 2006).

By so doing, these effects largely determine the magnitude of city attractiveness regardless of the fact that some subjective aspects that do not lend themselves to measurement also underpin it. Nevertheless, what is most notable is that the variance in city attractiveness in this respect is evidenced in that cities across the world habitually form a hierarchical system, which in turn unveils some monotony in terms of their size and the assortment of goods they supply (François

Thisse & Tabuchi, 2011). Understandably, the formation of the hierarchy of cities is in many ways influenced by the magnitude of the forces at play, where globalization is a central facet. Consequently, this to a large extent has an influence on the variance in urbanization trends in different cities in different parts of the world as it is holistically determines the opportunities a city has to provide for its residents and its prospective population at large (Vives Miro, 2011). As alluded before, it is the response to these opportunities that from the perspective of human behavioural geography determines the extent of city attractiveness.

2.3.3 The Theory of Underdevelopment

In the realm of development theories, the theory of underdevelopment itself essentially encompasses other critical but complementary theories developed by scholars such as Andre Gunder Frank, Samir Amin, Immanuel Wallerstein, H. Magdoff and Paul Baran *inter alia* (Reece, 1983). Nevertheless, considering the fact that all societies have developed in one way or another and to a greater or lesser extent; underdevelopment, particularly in this context, is certainly not the non-existence of development. Instead, underdevelopment according to Rodney (1973) makes sense only as a means of comparing the levels of development.

With that said, what is more portentous according to Leys (1975) in this respect is that the starting point of the underdevelopment theory is the period in which any given region of the so called Third World of today began to be progressively incorporated into a permanent relationship with the expanding capitalist economy. As such, the critical sub theories framing the fundamental theory of underdevelopment are therefore predominantly concerned with the liberal understanding of global politics and the economic system. In this respect, the stance of these sub theories is centred on the view that it is outstandingly the current economic system, together with past economic practices in the world system that are ordinarily or entirely to be held accountable for the so called lack of development in the underdeveloped regions of the world (Lorenzo, 2013).

Explicably, the crux of the theory of underdevelopment is therefore anchored on the fact that human social development has always been unbalanced, particularly from an economic point of view as some human groups have progressed further by producing more, thus becoming wealthier and wealthier in the process (Rodney, 1973). By virtue of this, the epitome of the

underdevelopment theory is therefore a comparative one, and has an indispensable element that expresses some form of an exploitative relationship (Rodney, 1973). With that being said, the critical and complementary sub theories framing the wider theory of underdevelopment discussed in this study are therefore the *World Systems Theory*, *Imperialism* and the *Dependency Theory*. As alluded before; comprehensibly, the underdevelopment theory herein provides a relatively abstract justification for the state of development in Mthatha, and unpacks the pedigrees of the developmental challenges the town faces, particularly in the context of this study.

i) The World Systems Theory

The World Systems theory of underdevelopment is a theory which is closely associated with Immanuel Wallerstein. According to Goldfrank (2000), the model of this theory is more macro sociological and stands to illuminate the dynamics of the so-called capitalist world economy within the scope of an aggregate social system.

Understandably, the theory itself denotes the world-system as a multicultural and territorial division of labour, where the manufacturing and exchange of raw materials and basic goods is deemed as a necessity for its entirety. Herein, division of labour incidentally refers to the macro forces and relations of production in the world economy as a whole, and is what in the end yields the existence of two major interdependent regions, which are the Core and Periphery regions/countries (Goldfrank, 2000).

According to Lorenzo (2013), the world systems theory in this respect explains why underdeveloped countries tend to lag behind the developed countries. In the same breath, the standpoint of this theory is bestowed on the view that the world economy is generally set up in a manner that allows the developed countries to exploit the developing countries in many ways. As expounded by Wallerstein (1974), this exploitation primarily revolves around the international division of labour that comes with this world economy as it enables some countries to engage in high value economic activities while others remain suppressed in low value activities. Evidently, the interaction that materializes between such countries in this regard always results in unbalanced wealth transfer from the less wealthy to more wealthy countries (Lorenzo, 2013).

Moreover, being a structural theory, this theory provides an explanation concerning what transpires in the world economy by drawing cognitive deductions on the relationships between national economies, which it classifies into ***Core***, ***Semi-Periphery*** and ***Periphery countries*** depending on their relationship with one another. Concisely, as alluded before, these are geographically and culturally distinct physical regions where one focuses on labour-intensive means of production while the other has its focus entrusted in capital-intensive means of production (Goldfrank, 2000).

Herein, the ***Core Countries*** refer to those countries that engage themselves in activities with high economic value. Such activities could be any sophisticated manufacturing methods or service activities which ultimately rest on the input of cheap raw materials and cheap labour productions, which at often times are gains of market monopolization. Understandably, these in turn result in high profit margins, which these countries take advantage of in further accumulating capital and in raising their living standards (Lorenzo, 2013).

On the other hand, the ***Semi-Peripheral Countries*** are those that possess some high value manufacturing with a considerable degree of capital concentration, but not as much as the *Core Countries*. According to Lorenzo (2013), these countries in a way serve as a buffer between the *Core* and *Periphery* countries. Arguably, this is because they are representatives of countries that have managed to ascent out of a state of untainted underdevelopment and are this way depictions of aspirational states, which in turn tempt the *Peripheral Countries* to continue working together in the world economy rather than trying to overturn it.

Lastly, the ***Periphery Countries*** in this theory are those that are primarily involved in labour-intensive means of production such as the extraction and exporting of raw materials and agricultural production. Understandably, in these relations, the *Core Countries* then import these raw materials, process them and export them back to these *Periphery Countries* in the form of manufactured goods, which are then sold at higher prices. This way, the *Core Countries* are able to extract surplus from peripheral countries, thus leading to the continued lack of development in the latter and the widening gap between the Core and Periphery in terms of their standards of living and capital accumulation (Lorenzo, 2013).

Thus, within this theory, it is noteworthy that nation-states are significant variables and elements within the system. As such, it is inevitable in this theory is that the states themselves are often used by class forces to pursue their interests. As a result, it is quite evident that from the lens of this theory, the differential strength of multiple states (where class forces are very detrimental) within the system is decisive in the maintenance of the system as a whole (Skocpol, 1977). Considering the position of the former Transkei region in South Africa, and that of South Africa in the whole world in terms of development, one is able to make deductions on why the region is so underdeveloped based on the logic of this theory and the other complementary theories, which are to be expanded further.

ii) Imperialism

According to Lorenzo (2013), Imperialist theories are more or less similar to world systems theories and other Neo-Marxist theories in that they also hold the position that the more Developed Countries account for the backwardness or underdevelopment in the less developed countries. However, the most significant difference between these theories is that the Imperialist theories trace the exploitative relationships back further in time and also complement the economic dimension with politics, culture and society. In this regard, the Imperialism theory explains the domination of underdeveloped areas by industrialized countries as a result of the variance in economic and technological levels, together with unequal power potential resulting from different strides of economic growth (Kuhnen, 1987).

As reiterated by Lorenzo (2013), the modern age of Imperialism appears to begin around the 15th century; the time of the European colonization of North America and its intensive contact with Asia, Africa and the Middle East. According to Peet & Hartwick (2009), in Marx's terms, mercantilist imperialism facilitated the so called "primitive accumulation" (primitive in terms of "early" or "first") of loads of global wealth, which was then reinvested as capital in the western European and North American industrial revolutions. Understandably, this was a consequence of their apparent pressure for expansion, which led to military and/or political colonization, which (among other reasons) sought to maintain economic dependence among their colonies (Kuhnen, 1987).

As such, the stature of the imperial period was marked by the worldwide domination of European powers in the form of their possessions of both formal and informal empires. In this regard, formal empires referred to those in which one country was a physical captive of another such that the captor was able to place its own citizens in power positions over the colonized, set the country's policies, control the economy and even attempt to reform the culture and society of the colonized country (Lorenzo, 2013). Informal empires on the other hand referred to various means by which a country could control another one without officially taking charge of it. Herein, the colonized country could have its own governance, but outside forces dictated the whole process. Such outside forces would be another country, which used its diplomat to govern political and economic affairs (Lorenzo, 2013).

Nevertheless, it is also noteworthy that the legacy of the imperialist system still managed to somewhat play out differently, particularly in formal colonies. The former colonies whose populations are now comprised of a majority of immigrants from the former colonial powers have somehow joined the ranks of the developed countries; these are countries like the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand and Canada to name a few. Arguably, the possible justification for this is that these countries gained early independence, and were thus successful in resisting exploitative economic relationships as their colonizers also showed some degree of lenience towards these countries (Lorenzo, 2013).

On the other hand, countries whose population remained considerably indigenous continued to be treated in a more exploitative way, with tightly controlled policies, and their ways of life largely influenced by colonial powers. Due to these reasons, the countries that were victimized by Imperialism in this fashion were subject to a number of negative consequences, which are pointed out below as cited from Lorenzo (2013).

- To begin with, constricted development was imposed on these countries, with focus bestowed only on the exploitation of cheap labour and raw material extraction.
- The local populations in these countries also had minimal (if any) political experience and training.
- Moreover, these populations were subject to systems of racial and cultural discrimination.

- In these countries, infrastructure was often built using native resources as means of "benefiting the country rather than the colony"; the motive was that the interests of colonies in this regard lied more on military needs rather than economic development.
- Policies also were set up in such a way that they discouraged any development of industries oriented in a way that would compete with those in the colonizing countries.
- There was also a considerable lack of expenditure on human capital, particularly education and healthcare. When education was provided, it often upheld the culture and language of the colonizing country.
- In addition, taxation and profit extraction from these countries also meant that their own capital accumulation was slowed, compromised or even eliminated.
- Even worse, the boundaries in these countries were also realigned for colonial convenience, as a result, ethnic groups were often cut apart or forced together by these boundaries, thus at often times leading to conflict among these groups.

Moving over, considering that many of the countries that are now underdeveloped are the former colonies that did not manage to gain independence until after WWII, and majority of those in Africa (where underdevelopment and poverty were the worst) did not gain independence until the 1960s. These countries still experience quite a number of considerable complications as a consequence of this late independence (Lorenzo, 2013).

To begin with, because these countries have a longer history of exploitation, they have irrefutably been subjected to underinvestment. Secondly, because of the lengthy periods under colonial rule, the indigenous natural resources in these countries have also been drained; this was perhaps aggravated by the lack of proficient leaders in the economic field, which led to dependence on external capital, expertise and leadership of multinational corporations (Lorenzo, 2013).

However, regardless of the fact that there were liberation movements within these countries, they too produced political leaders who were only noble when it comes to mobilizing people. According to Lorenzo (2013), these leaders were only alluring to confined individualities and were very vibrant in formulating the so-called "zealous" plans, which did not aid in good governance. Understandably, this somehow contributed to the problems in transitions these

countries experienced, hence their eventual resistance in joining global economy given past experience. As a result, these countries ended up being incessantly caught up in struggles shaped by a bipolar world and Cold War (Lorenzo, 2013).

More conclusively, the underdevelopment theory of Imperialism depicts a long history of strained relations. Considering the forms of economic activities pursued even to date, it seems easier and convenient for underdeveloped nations to continue with the colonial modes of production, as it is where permanent capital is positioned, regardless of the fact that to them it means settling for low-level manufacturing and extractive enterprises. Justifiably, this largely accounts for the continued lack of capital for reinvestment in these countries. As cited in Lorenzo (2013), this is undeniably aggravated by the resistance of developed countries in negotiating less exploitative trade agreements through the WTO. Instead, the developed countries tend to use these trade agreements to maintain the same patterns as those developed by colonial countries where developing countries are obliged to import manufactured goods because they cannot produce their own due to policy constraints which refuse to completely open markets. (Lorenzo, 2013). Looking at South Africa from the logic of this theory, and considering the colonial history of the country, this too provides answers as to why South Africa, a developing country, is so underdeveloped.

iii) The Dependency Theory

The Dependency Theory developed around the late 1950s as an explanation of post-colonial exploitation (Ferraro, 2008). However, with regards to this theory, it is worth stressing that there is no unified definition of the theory, instead, there are some core propositions which seem to underlie the analogy of most dependency theorists. According to Ferrarro (2008), there appears to be three most common features to these definitions which most dependency theorists share.

Firstly, the dependency theory, just like the World Systems Theory views the international system as consisting of two sets of states, which are the dominant and dependent states. Secondly, all definitions of the theory assume that external forces are of outstanding importance to the economic activities within the dependent states. Lastly, all definitions of the theory indicate that these sort of relations between the dominant and dependent states are somewhat dynamic as the interactions between these two sets of states tend to not only reinforce but also intensify the unequal patterns (Ferraro, 2008).

For instance, according to Ferraro (2008), the dependency theory can be well-defined as an elucidation of the economic development of a state in terms of the external political, economic, and cultural influences on national development policies.

On the other hand, as cited in Peet & Hartwick (2009), the dependency theory from the view of Dos Santos refers to a situation wherein the economy of a particular group of countries is acclimatized by the development and expansion of another economy, to which their own is subjected. This is usually attributed to some form of a historical condition, which ultimately shapes a certain structure of the world economy such that it favours some countries to the disadvantage of others, thus limiting the development potentials of the subsidiary economies in the process.

With that said, in as much as the dependency theory has some commonalities with the other theories of underdevelopment too, it remains different from them for various reasons. To begin with, what distinguishes the dependency theory from the theory of Imperialism is that it does not necessarily address conditions of either formal or informal colonization, but rather the dependency of indigenous economies on external capital and expertise (Lorenzo, 2013). Secondly, the dependency theory also diverges from the World Systems Theory in that it places much emphasis on the association of indigenous economies with the external world in terms of that economy's weakness, rather than the world structure (Lorenzo, 2013).

Types of Dependency

Regardless of the multifaceted definitions of the theory; empirically, dependency manifests itself in various forms. According to Lorenzo (2013), dependency can either manifest itself from the angle of ***Enclave Dependency***, ***Nationally Controlled Production***, or through ***Multi-National Corporations***.

With ***Enclave Dependency***, it happens through the use of foreign capital to develop a sector of one country's economy (usually raw materials extraction), which are then sold on the world market. Understandably, the profits of these activities stay with the holders of the foreign capital, with workers only receiving low wages, thus yielding minimal creation of permanent capital to benefit the host country (Lorenzo, 2013). A perfect example of such is the Anglo-American mines, which are run by foreign enterprises in South Africa. In this setup, others, such as

government officials, however do benefit through kickbacks and other similar arrangements, but these are not of the nation's benefit and generally do not add to the nation's capital accumulation (Lorenzo, 2013).

Another form of dependency as outlined by Lorenzo (2013) is the ***Nationally Controlled Production***. This often happens when production is at the control of a small indigenous group, where they sell the products on international markets and keep the profits to themselves. Understandably, this group generally establishes economically and sometimes culturally with foreign capitalists through educational and business contacts, and through interest in maintaining possession of international markets. In so doing, this group has a tendency of attempting to remain competitive by keeping wages low; as such, they only identify economically and sometimes culturally with foreign capitalists through educational and business contacts and through interest in keeping access to international markets. To safeguard their accumulated capital, they also tend to keep it (in the form of liquid assets or investments) outside the country or in offshore accounts (Lorenzo, 2013).

Concerning ***Multi-National Corporations***, dependency in this sense emanates out of these corporations providing capital and manufacturing expertise to develop consumer goods for the nation's market. In turn, this also leads to formulation of policies that yield the emanation of a middle class that can afford such goods, commonly at the expense of a lower, working class. Understandably, these Multi-National Corporations then make profit from this economic activity, which on its own fuels an increase in the standard of living of a small middle class, but no improvement for lower classes and no chance for the national accumulation of capital (Lorenzo, 2013).

2.3.3.1 The influence of Modernization and Neoliberalism on Underdevelopment

Having discussed underdevelopment, if one is to look at underdevelopment from the lens of modernization, it becomes blatantly evident that underdevelopment in this sense exhibits nothing more than backwardness in the Third World. As elucidated by Kuhnen (1987), underdeveloped countries are primarily attributed by internal issues such as such as illiteracy, traditional agrarian structure, the traditional attitude of the population, low division of labour and the lack of communication and infrastructure among other factors.

Inferring from the theories of underdevelopment discussed, it is however evident in this regard that the rationality of modernization, which assumed that the Third World countries would, naturally, follow the development trail of their colonial overlords without any way out from their socio-historical circumstances, is to blame for such. This is due to the fact that ironically, more than a century after the modernization experiment, the underdevelopment process has continued to intensify while the remedy for the malady of underdevelopment has not improved. Moreover, what is more appalling is that even when it is glaring that the majority of the so-called developing countries cannot withstand the competitive character of the capitalist world order exhumed by modernization and neoliberalism, the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO still continue to forcefully integrate them into the global economy (Olutayo & Omobowale, 2007).

2.3.3.2 Underdevelopment in Mthatha

Regardless of the fact that Mthatha now forms part of the democratic Republic of South Africa, the pedigrees of the town's underdevelopment remain engrained in its history. Therefore, if one is to understand the current state of the town's (under)development, it is of utmost importance to roll back in its timeline up to the times of Transkei's independence in 1976.

Concisely, during the times of Transkei's independence, South Africa however promoted Transkei to the world as an independent 'developing country'. Ironically, in as much as it was presented as a 'developing country', Transkei continued to exhibit signs of severe economic dislocation as a result of its relationship with the then South Africa. As such, a number of the homeland's African inhabitants would migrate to South Africa's labour market, as it was an uphill battle to sustain their economic independence through providing for their own self-subsistence by means of agricultural production. Understandably, the most immediate cause of this was the loss of land to which the indigenous people were subjected to as a result of colonialism, but this is not to preclude that other factors such as natural disasters too also had an impact on the decline of peasant self-sufficiency (Southall, 1982). Nevertheless, this consequently had a huge impact on the challenges the Bantustan faced in capital accumulation, and the legacy of such is still evident to date.

With Mthatha being the capital of the then Transkei Homeland/Bantustan, it is well understood herein as stated by Southall (1982) that from the heydays of colonialism, the African homelands

were classically backwards areas. The economies of these areas were attributed by low agricultural productivity alongside consequential outflows of migrant labour, inadequate industrial activity, monetary dependence upon the South African 'metropolitan power', and a predominant set of conformist and traditional attitudes among indigenous people, which was deemed as instituting a huge barrier to economic change, modernization and progress at large. As such, the homelands were understandably viewed as parallel to other underdeveloped territories in Africa, wherein independent entities such as Transkei were promoted as 'developing countries' whose quest for self-sustained growth required foreign aid, capital injection and modern technology (from South Africa of course) (Southall, 1982).

To make matters worse, so long as the migrant labourers who worked in South Africa had access to means of subsistence and remained with no political rights; wages could be fixed at the level of subsistence for the individual worker, since it could be presumed that, to some degree, his dependents were likewise bolstered by agricultural production in the reserves (the homelands). Consequently, this substantially deferred the Bantustan's capital accumulation while South Africa on the other hand continued to reap the benefits. As a result, South Africa's mining industry thrived partly because of this consequent economic benefit as it principally sustained by the cheap labour it reaped from the Bantustans it suppressed as labour reserves (Southall, 1982). In this respect, it was more blatant that Transkei's Independence was not really independence, but rather neo-colonialism.

Thus, in light of the theories of underdevelopment discussed; it is quite evident herein that with the relationship between Transkei and South Africa, if one is to look at it from the lens of the World Systems and Dependency theories of underdevelopment, it becomes clear that Transkei demonstrated a Periphery country while South Africa was a Core country, irrespective of the fact that the relationship also displayed some attributes of Imperialism. This is regardless of the fact that South Africa itself was a colony because in this kind of a relationship, South Africa had turned out to be the colonizer itself. With that said, the roots of underdevelopment in Mthatha primarily from the scope of the theories discussed herein emanate out of this relationship as South Africa exploited Transkei in many ways by granting it its independence.

2.3.3.3 Conclusions

i) In explaining Underdevelopment

Therefore, inferring from what has been outlined in this theory, it is worth stressing that underdevelopment should not be confused with a mere absence of development. Instead, underdevelopment must be encapsulated as a presence of development; but a presence of some system of capitalist development, the one which was labelled 'dependent development' in terms of Frank (1966), Dos Santos (1978) and Cardoso & Faletto (1981) as cited in Branco (2008). With that said, it is also noteworthy that underdevelopment, consequently, is not just attributed by low levels of income, industrialization, urbanization and education; it is additionally, and particularly, ascribed by substantial impoverishment and resilient inequalities which do no only relate to income distribution, but also access to the means of production, health and education. In addition; underdevelopment is also exacerbated further by the handicapping history of colonial and neo-colonial supremacy which progressed to incorporate the underdeveloped countries in some form of unequal attachment in the world economy, confined in an un-diversified economy which is transcendently coordinated to the export of primary goods, unequal distribution of the benefits of international trade, together with heavy external debt (Branco, 2008). In the case of Mthatha, underdevelopment in this region is undoubtedly a result of the relationship between the former Transkei and the then South Africa, where Transkei manifested as neo-colony of South Africa (Southall, 1982). More conclusively, the legacy of this relationship is still evident even in the democratic South Africa as the town is still in a severe state of underdevelopment despite the fall of the apartheid regime.

ii) On the way forward

Understandably, because underdevelopment principally denotes obstacles primarily concerning economic impediments standing before democratization, particularly in the context of today's underdeveloped countries of Africa, it is quite evident that this way, underdevelopment can, undeniably, play a significant role in confining democracy in many African countries (Branco, 2008). Thus, as a way forward, according to Branco (2008), policies formulated to promote democracy should not only be oriented towards hauling these countries out of a merely deferred

state of development by addressing an essential principle to their economic and social dynamics; instead, they must aim to diverge them from the dynamics of the underdevelopment models they have been historically trapped in (Branco, 2008).

Thus, instead of the actual trend in countering underdevelopment in a typical democratic setup, emphasis should be placed on the social over commercial objectives. That is, policies should primarily focus on the following objectives, which are outlined below as cited from Branco (2008).

- Firstly, policy reform directed towards countering underdevelopment in democratic countries should primarily seek to fight poverty and to reduce inequalities in the distribution of national income instead of striving to increase incomes irrespective of the distribution ratio.
- Secondly, the democratic states should also focus on reorienting public expenditure to the expansion of human proficiencies rather than on toning the state in search of "superb" market freedom.
- The revolution of institutional design must also be a priority instead of the normal institutional transplantation and standardization of cultural patterns that usually comes with the transition to democracy.
- Moreover, policies must also focus on seeking to diversify the sources of income rather than on overexploiting the traditional sources of this same income, which is at often times compelled by the need to reimburse external debt.
- In addition, policy reform must also prioritize probing for a more unbiased global distribution of the benefits from international trade, instead of imposing worldwide deregulation of trade.
- Lastly, democratization in terms of policy must also illuminate on erasing external debt instead of reproducing the same conditional schemes that only give room for remedial reduction of the debt burden and, therefore secure the prolongation of the status quo.

Thus, considering that Mthatha is now part and parcel of the democratic dispensation of South Africa and is subject to considerable underdevelopment. These objectives should somewhat serve as the blueprint for the proposed recommendations as they; to an extent, provide the

theoretical merits for possible interventions in terms of policy formulation in underdeveloped regions.

2.3.4 Summary

In this study, a comprehensive understanding of the correlation between the concepts of urban blight and city attractiveness is fundamental, as it is the cornerstone of this research. As such, it is equally vital to build a more affluent understanding of the common terminology and key concepts relating to the concepts of urban blight and city attractiveness.

Therefore, as a starting point, this chapter began by presenting a conceptual framework within which the concept of urban blight in relation to city attractiveness can be understood. In so doing, the chapter introduced and explained the various concepts which help encapsulate the conception of urban blight alongside city attractiveness in the context of this study. In this respect, the main concepts explained in this chapter were the concepts of urban blight, city attractiveness, place utility, sustainable development and urban regeneration. Defensibly, this chapter included the latter two concepts because it also seeks to propose recommendations along the lines of urban regeneration in the strife towards achieving sustainable development; therefore, it is regarded as a necessity to explain them in detail before they even appear in the closing chapter of the study.

Having done as such, the chapter then went on to construct a theoretical framework for explaining the demographic, economic, political, and social determinants of the wider concepts of urban blight and city attractiveness in the context of this study in a theoretical perspective. In this theoretical framework, the theories of modernization, neoliberalism and underdevelopment were explained. More specifically, the theory of modernization (in the context of this study) was used primarily to explain the pedigrees of urban blight as outlined in existing discourse on the concept. On the other hand, the theory of neoliberalism, particularly in this context, was used to elucidate the concept of city attractiveness in modern urban centres. Lastly, to provide a better understanding of the study area and the challenges it faces, particularly in relation to the subject of the study, the theory of underdeveloped was explained. Additionally, this theory was also used to rather consolidate modernization and neoliberalism contextually, and to give justification for the merits of the proposed recommendations thereafter.

Chapter 3: Exploring the Chronicle of Urban Blight in Different Contexts

3.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to explore, compare and contrast the different causes and manifestations of urban blight in different settings. By so doing, this chapter seeks to cement the cornerstone of this research by illuminating the perceived indistinctness in the existing discourse as means of explaining the outset and manifestation of urban blight from the contextual perspective of the study area. For this reason, the orientation of the literature review undertaken in this chapter is that of a systematic literature review. This is mainly justified by the fact that a systematic literature review is ideal for mapping out areas of uncertainty and identifying areas where (arguably) not enough relevant research has been undertaken; and where there is an alleged need for new studies; which is basically the essence of this study (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). With that said, it is therefore worth mentioning that this study is chiefly based on areas where one would argue that it is in human nature to literally think we (in general) know more than we actually do about them, but then, the reality is that there is limited convincing evidence to support our beliefs. In this regard, it is therefore safe not to disqualify that this is not to deny the pre-existence of studies with vivid and important results, but to acknowledge the fact that most research can only be understood in context (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). Into the bargain, this chapter also seeks to reap out substantial lessons from the literature reviewed, particularly those pertaining experimental methods of combating urban blight so as to adjudicate the most relevant and pragmatic of them to help stimulate the recommendations made in the closing chapter of this study.

3.2 Why is Urban Blight such a Marvel?

As alluded before in the conceptual and theoretical framework, the evils of the city appear to have been born with urbanization, but it is worth stressing that they have probably evolved since the olden days (Breger, 1967). Moving forward, it is however also worth revealing that since the distant past, the chaos of urban activity and the complexity of urban adjustments have also been multi-magnified. This perhaps justifies the assertion by Gordon (2003) that the concept of urban blight is woven through history and as a result, even defining urban blight has become an art form.

With that being said, Robick (2011) however proclaims and acknowledges that the flexibility of the application of concept is indeed useful to planners and politicians looking to apply their subjective sense of order, health, and efficiency to landscapes previously shaped by individuals and their interests. As such, despite the manifold fashion of apprehending the phenomenon of urban blight, the concept itself remains a marvel in that its essence remains intact and hypothetically serves all sides of debates over redevelopment as it is universally acknowledged as a perilous menace that needs to be quarantined (Robick, 2011). As a result, various state legislatures have found common ground in this and thus endorsed statutes, policies, municipal by-laws and zoning ordinances condemning blighted areas and permitting development entities to redevelop such areas, which perhaps justifies why urban blight is often discussed alongside urban regeneration, the former as a diagnosis and the latter as a cure (Robinson & Cole, 2007).

Irrespective of this, and regardless of the fact that the crux of the concept itself is so unanimous, it is however alleged in this study that the fundamental causes of urban blight nonetheless differ depending on the context. Comprehensibly, this is what underpins the core of this chapter – the exploration of the roots of urban blight in various settings, which are unveiled and explained through international and local precedents on the subject. Based on these precedents, it is however worth noting that urban blight can be a consequence of a multitude of socio-economic issues, which are bound to differ from one place to another. According to Gamesby (2013), these issues can be generally summarized into issues of the following:

1 ***Political choices*** – In this respect, urban blight understandably manifests itself when governments tend to support some cities over others, encouraging their development at the expense of others through a biased ploughing of resources.

2 ***Outmigration*** – Urban blight in this regard is often tied with suburbanisation or urban sprawl. Understandably, the prime cause of urban blight herein is the outmigration of wealthier and skilled individuals and corporations, which are economically advantageous to the area as they contribute to the tax base of the city. Their migration leaves the area to the relatively poor population, which essentially fails to uphold the area's economic, environmental and physical resilience.

3 ***Decreasing quality in housing stock*** – Urban blight in this respect arises as old buildings continually deteriorate due to poor maintenance. In such cases, either the owners or the tenants are unwilling or cannot afford to spend on maintenance. According to Gamesby (2013), this also happens when population densities are too high for the housing stock to withstand.

4 ***The absence of, or deficient urban planning –*** In this regard, urban blight is often a result of the absence of, or poor planning. Such neighbourhoods are habitually characterized by symptoms of scantiness such as narrow streets, which (as an example) are often responsible for traffic congestion and have a reputation of driving people and investment away from the setting in question.

5 ***Forfeiture of industry*** – The repercussions of the loss of industry also result to urban blight. Justifiably, the root of this cause revolves around changing economic situations or an absence of/withdrawal of government support. Subsequently, due to lack of employment, some neighbourhoods end up being abandoned as a result of the disappearance of industries, along with their workers.

6 ***A desperate convergence of low-income groups*** – It is also evident that blight in urban centres can also be a result of a high concentration of poverty-stricken populations. These are residents who often dwell in the inner city for easy access to work places. Understandably, such areas are often associated with high levels of drug abuse, crime and other incivilities that contribute to urban blight. In a way, this has a huge impact on the decrease in property values, which in the end yields higher levels of building falling into disrepair and greater chances of eventual abandonment.

7 ***Racism and an absence of ethnic integration*** – In this respect, urban blight usually emanates out of deliberate racial discrimination. Herein, the populations that are subject to racial discrimination are often deliberately declined employment and loans, thus denting their economic status and the sustenance of their neighbourhood. Accordingly, this promotes and promulgates poverty, which subsequently yields drug trafficking and robbery among other crimes common in such areas. However, this does not always occur in this overt manner; there are also cases where this racial discrimination is exhibited through unlegislated ethnic segregation and poor integration. This often happens in cases where poor migrants tend to be clustered in poorer districts. Understandably, this largely supresses development in these areas and can promote urban blight.

3.3 The International Experience on Urban Blight

Internationally, the history of urban blight can be traced back to the time of the Renaissance, the 14th-16th centuries. This was when cities had come to be dynamic centres of economic life and growth, and the time when they experienced perpetual turmoil and unending adjustments. This continued and notably exacerbated during the industrial revolution as urbanization continued at an accelerated pace (Breger, 1967).

As Durden (2013) states, historically, the concept of urban blight was initially associated with substandard housing conditions, which were deemed as posing a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of working-class families; particularly those in early industrial American cities. These conditions were most noticeable in what was known as tenement housing, otherwise known as "slums", where diseases and fire hazards were among the leading causes of death, and arguably, the perpetual decline and abandonment in central city neighbourhoods.

In line with this view, Hortas-Rico (2015) also states that rapid suburbanization created many of the challenges that most cities (particularly in the US) face today, ranging from traffic congestion, air pollution, and a loss of amenity benefits from open space to the weakening of agglomeration economies and economies of scale in the production of local public services. Considering the fact that interest in blight is not of recent origin, likewise, early writers on urban

blight and urban renewal solemnly stressed the adverse impact of the complex relationships between the inner city and suburban development (sprawl).

As such, a significant body of research has been framed incrementally based on this normative view. Understandably, the main concern herein has largely been the formulation of policies and programmes aimed at curbing such sprawl and nurturing a more compact urban development. As it seems, the policies and programmes enacted from the scope of this normative view are primarily underpinned by the theoretical conclusion that reduction in blight can be a byproduct of anti-sprawl programmes. Herein, the main rationale behind these anti-blight policies and programmes is that they do not only limit urban growth, but also provide incentives to redirect population growth and investment away from the suburbs towards the neglected inner core areas (Brueckner & Helsley, 2011).

Therefore, in light of what this international experience exhibits; what is most evident in this international experience of urban blight is that it perilous and it is a result of a multitude of factors which revolve around a number of issues chiefly pertaining suburbanization, outmigration and disinvestment among other socio-political factors, even though they differ from city to city. In addition, in as much as the remedial measures employed by these cities somewhat differ; they somehow remain intact in that they address the same issue, which is urban blight. Nevertheless, this does not mean that they are always pragmatic in all contexts as some areas that are challenged with urban blight are faced with different dynamics. Lastly, and more conclusively, what is more common (and of importance in this study) in all this international experience is that in all the documented cases, urban blight has never been associated with city attractiveness, but rather “city unattractiveness”, as illuminated in the following precedents. As it seems, the notion of city attractiveness herein only appears in the curative measures such as urban regeneration as authorities attempt to lure investment to the previously neglected inner cities that were deemed as “unattractive” as outmigration occurred.

3.3.1 The manifestation of urban blight in Detroit, Michigan

i) Background of Detroit

The city of Detroit is located in the State of Michigan in the United States of America. In terms of location, the city is located precisely at 42.33 in latitude, -83.05 in longitude and at 192 meters above sea level in terms of altitude. Additionally, the city is also the biggest city in Michigan, with an area of 357km^2 even though it has a current population of about 713,777 people in terms of demographics (World Atlas, 2016). Graphically, figure 3.1 below is a map showing the location of Detroit in reference to other American states and cities.

Figure 3.1: Map showing the location of Detroit in Michigan, USA

Source: World Atlas (2016)

ii) The heydays of Detroit

In terms of economy, the prosperity of the city of Detroit came at the beginning of the twentieth century. According to Counts *et al* (1999), this was when the city had come to be the center of automobile manufacturing industries and a hub of an expansive and developing workforce. For this reason (among others), the city of Detroit was accordingly nicknamed "The Motor City" or "Motown" as it was home to big household names and auto makers such as General Motors, Ford, Dodge and Chrysler to name a few.

Explicably, it was the period at the end of World War II that marked the Goldern Age of the American automitive industry as the country was at this time experiencing an automitive hegemony, which was principally bolstered by the industries based in Detroit. As outlined by Counts *et al* (1999), this hegemony was supplemented by the prosperity of the country's nuclear, scientific and economic sectors. As such, since the city's economy was booming at the time, it pulled masses of labour from many parts of the world and America itself to occupy the vacancies at the various assembly plants and manufacturing factories, which had been converted over after the war from military equipment production industries into automobile production factories. As a result, by the year 1950, the population of Detroit had risen to 1,849,568, a figure far greater than most American cities of the same magnitude (Counts, et al., 1999). According to Sugrue (1996), at this time, Detroit had proven to be one of America's fastest developing cities with the highest-paid blue-collar workers in the country as a whole, and it was for this reason that Zhou (2011) stated that at this time, the city was a booming metropolis that accurately personified the American Dream. Unfortunately, this prosperity was not eternal and the concequences of its expiration were presented on the cityscape as urban blight began to set in later on.

iii) The prime causes of urban blight in Detroit

As outlined by Padnani (2013), as the city's prosperity was at its peak, manufacturing industries began to restructure, and the danger of the city's dependence on a solitary industry became distinctly evident. Among the first propagators of this danger was the decentralization of the automobile industry. Understandably, this decentralization was fueled by many factors, whom among which was the escalation of strikes, which were enlivened by union negotiations and the unconcealed revolt between blacks and whites as they refused to coexist in the same work places

and residential areas. Because this was deemed as halting progress, other manufacturing plants were subsequently constructed in the suburbs and in neighboring states so that if there was a dissent in one production line, work could in any case proceed somewhere else. Nevertheless, this proved to be an unfortunate experience for the city in that as the industrial facilities spread out, so too did the employment opportunities (Padnani, 2013).

With that being said, it is however also worth highlighting that this was not the sole contributor to the growing unemployment in downtown Detroit. Evidently, as the industries began to experiment with automated systems in their lines of production, a vast number of laborers was also subjected to retrenchments, which in turn resulted to tens of thousands of laborers left without employment. Into the bargain, this was also exacerbated by the energy crisis in the 1970s and the economic recession in the 1980s, together with foreign competition, which essentially resulted to plummeting profits. Consequently, as employment opportunities from the automobile industries moved elsewhere, and with Detroit continually ageing, the city was further subjected to increased labor and health care costs. Overall, all these factors cumulatively led to the forfeiture of the automotive industry in Detroit, which is arguably the principal reason for the proliferation of urban blight in Detroit (Sugrue, 1996).

Nevertheless, the forfeiture of industry itself was a result of many factors which had a 'domino effect' on the eventual circumstance of the manifestation of urban blight in the city. According to Padnani (2013), the city also experienced extensive racial tensions (as alluded before) which led to the majority of the white population leaving the inner city, while the blacks on the other hand established themselves downtown. As mentioned before, this too had an impact on suburbanization as the whites opted to reside outside the inner city due to racial/segregational reasons. According to the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (2011:9), no other city in America has suffered from population decline in a way comparable to Detroit. Consequently, the city currently faces a 30% vacancy rate citywide, and this certainly accounts for the abundant scores of blighted and abandoned buildings in the city.

To make matters worse, there was also the influence of the city's lack of an efficient transit system. Evidently, since Detroit was generally renowned as "The Motor City", public policies in Detroit also stimulated a culture of car usage, with significant amounts of money invested in the construction of highways instead of public transportation. As Zhou (2011) states, unlike cities

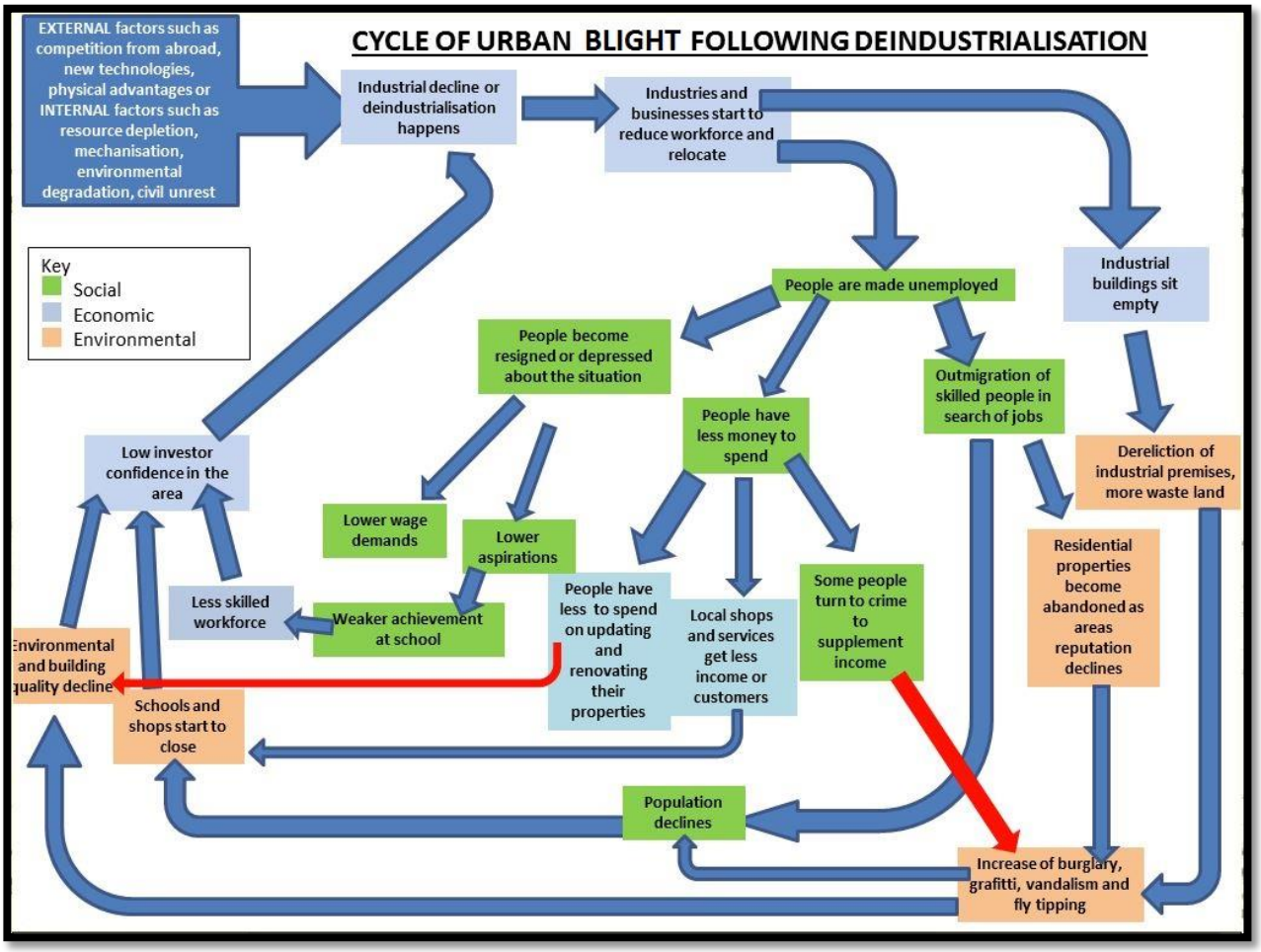
like Chicago and Toronto, Detroit did not build a subway or any other sophisticated bus rapid transit system, it only built a light rail, circling just 2.9-miles of the downtown region. Herein, what they failed to realize, as Zhou (2011) proclaims, is that the most serious issue with not having a sophisticated public transportation infrastructure is that that it encourages urban sprawl. As such, given the fact that most people (particularly the whites) in the Motor City owned cars, majority of them fled to the suburbs (a situation referred to as "white flight"), opting to commute to downtown for work. As mentioned prior, as individuals moved out, businesses in the long run took after, prompting to even lesser opportunities in this once extraordinary city.

Unsurprisingly, due to these occurrences, the city is now subjected to extreme levels of poverty. According to Padnani (2013), around 36 percent of the city's populace is living below the poverty line, and, by 2010, a 27.8 % of vacant residential spaces was reported, with very few people paying their taxes, thus leaving the city in financial starvation and struggling to maintain public services. In addition, the unemployment levels in the city currently sit at 19%, a situation worsened by the outmigration of the middle-class black families in pursuit of employment and better schools together with the absence of a sophisticated transportation system to accommodate downtown residents from commuting to work places in other areas outside (Zhou, 2011).

Furthermore, to some degree, the factors that have resulted to urban blight in Detroit are also associated with shortcomings of leadership. Concisely, as argued by Padnani (2013), the eventual financial crisis confronting Detroit had been accumulating for decades and was brought about to some extent by a trail of blunders, suspected corruption and considerable inaction by the city's leadership.

Thus, in light of the issues discussed herein, this multitude of factors eventually boiled down to the manifestation of urban blight in Detroit. This is evidenced by the city's physical and socio-economic conditions which are now characterized by decaying architecture and poor infrastructure alongside a continually shrinking population (over 60% decline by 2010), high levels of crime and poverty, together with a lack of high skilled human capital among other indicators of urban blight (Zhou, 2011). Figure 3.2 is a detailed diagrammatic representation of the factors that have led to urban blight in Detroit referring to the forfeiture of industry as the prime cause.

Figure 3.2: Cycle of Urban Blight in Detroit



Source: Gamesby (2013)

iv) Legislative measures dealing with urban blight in Detroit

According to White *et al.* (2014), since urban infrastructure is a remarkably visible and noticeable public good, the inability to provide or maintain such infrastructure (which is often made substantial by urban blight) has a tendency of jeopardizing social cooperation in many ways. Concisely, people confronted with urban blight tend to rationally lose enthusiasm in abiding by the law as they somewhat perceive the government, together with most others, to have discarded the rules of law. In this respect, urban blight serves as what White *et al.* (2014) term as a 'heuristic' exploited by people to conclude that the government is not satisfactorily playing its role in the provision and maintenance of public goods, as well as a 'heuristic' to determine that other civilians too have stopped to adhering to the rules of social contract. Consequently, this diminishes the legiticimacy of the government's rules and thus promotes a culture of rule defection, which subsequently yields normalized routines of extensive legal

transgressions, which, in turn further promulgate urban blight. Justifiably, it is for this reason that urban blight as a legal and policy term has its origins entrenched in the common law definitions of public nuisance (Lind & Schilling, 2015:804).

With that said, in the context of law, the Michigan state formally defines blight through different pieces of legislation. Among these legislations is the Blighted Area Rehabilitation Act 344 of 1945, which was enacted as a foundation for *Eminent Domain*[2] in the quest to curb urban blight in the state. According to Johnson (2005), this piece of legislation was endorsed to authorize the cities and towns of Michigan (including Detroit) to adopt plans for preventing urban blight and rehabilitating blighted areas, as well as acquiring real property for purposes of improvement or disposal in necessary cases. In addition, the act also prescribes the procedures for financing the practice of these powers while at the same time enunciating the effect of this act. Nevertheless, it was however later proclaimed that the Blighted Area Rehabilitation Act 344 of 1945 is apparently not specific enough considering today's challenges with respect to the use of *Eminent Domain* in eradicating urban blight, and is to some degree antique in its definition.

For this reason, this act is also supplemented by other pieces of legislations. The first of these is the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act 381 of 1996, which was permitted to primarily authorize municipalities in the creation of Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities (BRAs). The role of these BRAs is to facilitate the execution of brownfield plans and to make brownfield redevelopment zones. By so doing, the act also seeks to advance revitalization, redevelopment, and reuse of some properties, particularly those that are blighted, tax reverted or functionally obsolete. To achieve this, the act endorses the powers and obligations of these brownfield redevelopment authorities to certify the processes of issuing bonds and other confirmations of obligation by the authorities (Michigan Association of Planning, 2005).

Another complementary piece of legislation is the Senate Bill No. 132. According to the Michigan Association of Planning (2005), the bill was endorsed in 2003 to amend the Development of Blighting Property act 27 of 2002. Credibly, the prime objective of the act is to establish procedural measures for municipalities to consign blighting individual lots or buildings,

[2] An American policy whereby urban blight is addressed by means of expropriation of blighted property by local authorities for purposes of urban regeneration by capable development agencies (Pritchett, 2003).

purchase or condemn blighted properties and to handover blighting or blighted property for development.

Furthermore, to ensure a comprehensive implementation of these legislations and to prevent further blight, the Michigan Legislature also allowed for the creation of an administrative court to tackle blighted properties. The legislature gave these administrative courts significant powers to deal with property owners who fail to take care of their buildings and land parcels (Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, 2011).

Herein, the court has the authority (based on the aforementioned acts) to impose fines ranging from 25 to 10,000 US dollars, and to make the fines stick the courts are empowered to garnish wages and bank accounts. To address the problem of absentee property owners, the Michigan Legislature also allows for liens to be placed on properties outside the municipality in which the blighted property is located. Because they have the ability to levy fines upon property owners, they have a funding stream that does not require increased taxation (Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, 2011).

Nevertheless, in the case of Detroit, the revenue generated by fines however proved to have exceeded the costs of the operation of the court; these excess funds could then be used for other types of blight elimination and mitigation activities (ie: demolition and clearance efforts, establishment of land banks, creation of urban park space, etc.). Unlike the Housing Courts that are allowed to be created under Pennsylvania's Act 90, the Michigan administrative courts deal with all types of properties (Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, 2011). Be that as it may, in Detroit, while a significant amount of the fines owed had been collected, progress was made in dealing with blight, and the blight court was successful but only to a certain extent. However, while the previously mentioned blight courts are an effective tool, they alone however cannot solve Detroit's crisis regarding urban blight as the city is still faced with the challenge of overcoming the negative image of its city centre and the demographic patterns that promulgate counter-migration.

v) Summary

More conclusively, the precedent of Detroit illuminates that urban blight in this instance is a result of outmigration, which, on its own largely entrenched in the city's loss of the once

prosperous automobile industry. Even though this outmigration is also tied to a number of other issues such as racism, urban sprawl is still a key factor in the proliferation of urban blight herein in that it perpetuated further disinvestment downtown, thus paving the way for urban blight to set in. Given the high vacancy rate of properties, this therefore suggests that urban blight in this regard is closely tied to the inner city's "unattractiveness", which is testimony of what this study refers to as the "normative view".

3.4 The Experience of Urban Blight in South Africa

The landscape of the South African cities where urban blight has been encapsulated already is very much shaped by the apartheid regime. Understandably, the legislations (such as the *Group Areas Act of 1950* and *Land Acts of 1954 and 1955*) and policies introduced under the apartheid government advocated and encouraged separate development, which, on its own, was driven through land dispossession and the exclusion of non-whites from urban areas (Miraftab, 2007). At this time, spatial planning ensured that settlements for the black population were located in peripheral areas, which were divided by industrial and environmental buffers from the settlements of the white population (Murray, 2011). Consequently, the black population was subjected to economic exclusion, as economic opportunities were principally located in white settlements, which were inclusive of the CBD or the inner city.

Nevertheless, following the demise of apartheid, the same apartheid policies advocating racial segregation and separate development however remained in a way accountable for the outset of urban blight in these South African cities. Justifiably, due to long periods of economic exclusion to the non-white population (which these policies were responsible for), the demise of these laws meant that everyone was now allowed to move to areas of economic activity. Undeniably, that had an adverse impact on the manner in which things turned out hence the manifestation of urban blight in these areas (Hoorgendoorn, et al., 2008).

Understandably, due to the fall of these apartheid policies in 1994, the non-white population began flocking in the CBDs in search for economic opportunities. Concisely, because the CBD was never prepared for such populations, this resulted in many demographic, physical and social changes in the CBDs. In a nutshell, these urban centres saw counter-outmigration by the white population, with blacks on the other hand continually flocking in excessive numbers, thus

resulting to overcrowding, informal activities and physical deterioration of the buildings among other indicators of urban blight (Sibutu, 2010). Consequently, this led to further disinvestment in the CBDs, with the explosion of urban sprawl on the contrary, thus further propagating urban blight downtown. As documented, this trend was more common in the cities of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban, but this study exemplifies it using a precedent of the city of Johannesburg.

3.4.1 The manifestation of Urban Blight in Johannesburg, South Africa

i) Background of Johannesburg

The city of Johannesburg is located in the Gauteng Province of South Africa. Its borders start from the Orange Farm informal settlement (southerly) to Midrand in the north at a range of just about 80 kilometers. Westerly, the city stretches from Roodepoort to Edenvale in the east (a range of over 30 kilometers). In terms of population, Johannesburg is home to approximately 4.4 million people (City of Johannesburg, 2016); by the year 2010, about 5.88% of these inhabitants resided in the inner city (Sibutu, 2010). Generally, the city of Johannesburg is a city of high prestige and is renowned as the city that contributes the most to the county's GDP. According to the Centre for Development and Enterprise (2002), the city towers over not only the country, but also the continent as it is also the main transport hub and shopping centre in the region, with the busiest international airport in Africa. Figure 3.3 below shows the location of Johannesburg in South Africa in reference to other major cities in the country.

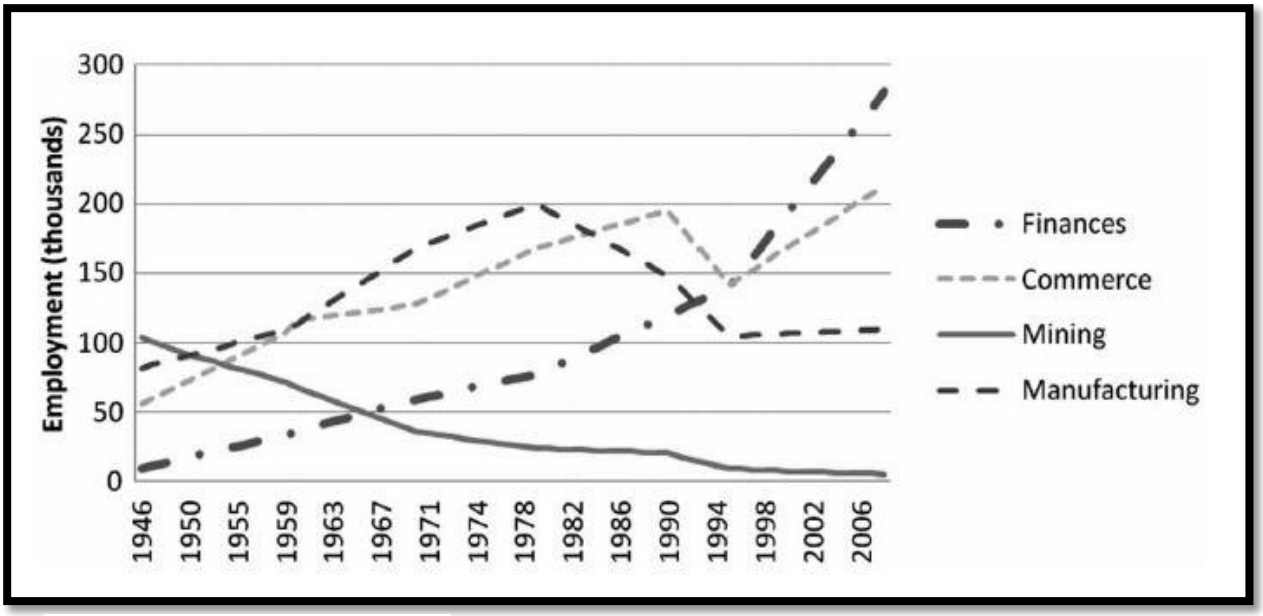
Figure 3.3: The Location of the City of Johannesburg in South Africa

Source: (Google, 2016)

ii) The Prosperity of Johannesburg

According to Stainer (1999), the city of Johannesburg principally owes its prosperity to the prospectors who discovered gold on the Langlaagte farm in the Witwatersrand reef. Understandably, it was this discovery that led to the foundation of the city in 1886 as the city gradually developed through the fortunes of the mining industry (Harrison & Zack, 2012). Over time, this geology, together with the existence of the world stock market, later yielded the creation of the industrial town of Johannesburg in the late 19th century. Understandably, around these times, gold mining in the city bolstered the growth of South Africa's economy as a whole, up until it reached a stage of self-sustained development, which, on its own yielded an assimilated labour market in the southern African region. However, around the year 2010, the gold mining industry unfortunately saw a sharp decline. As Harrison & Zack (2012) state, at this time, the Johannesburg gold mining sector was producing only 7% of the global output, as compared to the 44.5% average it produced between its peak and the early 1990s before facing a sharp decline in the following years. Nevertheless, by the time the gold mining the was facing a decline, the city had fortunately diversified its urban economy, and as a result, the city continued to grow without much dependence from the mining industry. Figure 3.4 below shows the composition and growth patterns of the different employment sectors which were key in upholding the growth of the city in this diversified urban economy of Johanneburg despite the decline of the mining sector.

Figure 3.4: Growth patterns of the main contributors of Johannesburg's economic growth



Source: Harrison & Zack (2012)

Inferring from these growth patterns, it is therefore not surprising that Johannesburg managed to steadily grew into the regional, national and continental centrepiece of economy it is today as it is now recognized as the main commercial and financial hub in the country despite the decline of mining. According to the Centre for Development and Enterprise (2002), by the year 2002, the city was home to 74% of South Africa's corporate head offices, including all the major banks in the country. For this reason (among others), the city is now deemed as the main driver of not only the economic performance of Gauteng, but also that of South Africa as a whole as it accounts for more than 35% of the country's GDP. Moreover, to illuminate the city's significance on the international economy; as outlined by the Centre for Development and Enterprise (2002), the JSE is 11 times larger than the second biggest stock exchange in Africa, and is the 12th most powerful in the world (Crankshaw & Parnell, 2002).

Unsurprisingly, Johannesburg is hitherto reckoned as the most rapidly developing city in the country as a whole, as it has over 100 years of contribution to growth and development in South Africa and internationally (City of Johannesburg, 2016). Being the area of high economic activity it is, Johannesburg has also materialized as the most dominant metropolis in the continent, ahead of Cape Town, Lagos and Nairobi among other major cities in the continent (Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2002). Be that as it may, the city is not without its flaws as the city has also been subject to dramatic changes, which triggered a sequence of both desired and undesired consequences, including urban blight.

iii) The outset of Urban Blight in Johannesburg

As outlined by Bethlehem (2013), the city of Johannesburg is one of the cities of the developing world that exhibit similar characteristics to many of the big cities of the developed world, particularly when it comes to inner city decline. Despite Johannesburg being the largest city in South Africa, according to Sibutu (2010), its inner city is considered the most decayed in the country. However, like some cities of the developing world, the case of Johannesburg is a little more complex in comparison to the cases of the developed world, and is less tied to the rise of suburbs. According to Bethlehem (2013), the main justification for this perhaps stems from the fact that many of the factors that primarily led to the outset of urban blight in Johannesburg were to some degree specific to the demise of apartheid. As such, the outset of urban blight in the inner city of Johannesburg can be traced back to the 1980's and early 1990's, the periods

whereby the nation whirled through the interregnum between the apartheid regime and the new democratic dispensation (Bethlehem, 2013).

As aforementioned, the apartheid regime had extensive effects on the spatial configuration of Johannesburg, and this is perhaps why it is not surprising that the advent of the democratic era too had its own implications in terms of the socio-economic setup and spatial transformation of the city. Understandably, following the demise of apartheid policies, the non-white population began flocking in the inner city in extensive numbers; an occurrence which led to the once favoured (by legislation) minority (white population) departing the inner city in an apparent effort to avoid inclusion of all races in the same living spaces. According to Fraser (2008) cited in Sibutu (2010), many white landlords deserted their buildings in the inner city, and most formal businesses migrated to the expanding nodes northerly for the same reason as they accepted the whole 'freedom of movement by all races' idea with great pessimism. As outlined by Harrison & Zack (2012), this therefore yielded serious and vivid land use and demographic changes in the inner city.

To begin with, following the introduction of democracy, informal trading and informal employment in the inner city began taking centre stage, with new immigrant populations from across the continent on the other hand establishing a large presence into the bargain. Consequently, in addition to the rising urbanization in Johannesburg, the city also saw a huge inflow of people occupying and exploiting the deserted buildings and infrastructure in the inner city, thus causing overcrowded and derelict living spaces, particularly in Hillbrow and the CBD. As a result, these social and physical changes dramatically transformed the Johannesburg CBD as its built environment was under-capacitated to accommodate such changes. For these reasons, the Johannesburg inner city is now characterized by dilapidated buildings, environmental degradation, high crime rates and devalued properties among other symptoms of urban blight (Bethlehem, 2013).

Arguably, such situations were also aggravated by the fact that the migration of businesses from the inner city also had a negative effect on the revenue base of the municipality due to landlords blatantly abandoning their buildings and refusing to pay rates and taxes. Consequently, banks ended up redlining considerable portions of properties in the inner city as landlords defaulted on their mortgage settlements. According to Sibutu (2010), it is therefore believed that this

migration marked the beginning of the inner city decline as offices of most businesses gradually departed from the inner city to satellite locations like Sandton, where relevant authorities were much active in the provision, maintenance and management of urban services (Sibutu, 2010). As such, given the reduced income, municipalities became increasingly incapable of providing the much-needed services and embarking on capital infrastructure projects, thus paving the way for urban blight began to set in.

To make matters worse, as all this happened, the city was also undergoing a period of transition in terms of governance. As Bethlehem (2013) states, immidiately after the advent of democracy, the new authorities which had just come into governance in the city had a lot of other problems to address, including the exasperating process of institutional restructuring, which went on for a period of about six years. Understandably, this led to the city not having a stable basis from which it could operate; an unfortunate incidence which eventually led to the city's bankruptcy in 1998. Unsurprisingly, this situation precipitated a bail-out from the South African Treasury; which, in turn, subsequently called for restructuring in the quest for a more effective governance - thus resulting to the formation of a metropolitan municipality in 2000. According to Bethlehem (2013), it was until then that action against the issue of urban blight in the city began taking centre stage as the city saw the inception of the long process of urban regenaration.

iv) Attempts at redressing Urban Blight in Johannesburg

According to the Housing Development Agency (2013), in the context of South Africa, the notion of urban regeneration materialized later in the 1990s to the early 2000s, obviously following the realization of the proliferation of urban blight in the inner cities. Justifiably, this was also associated with the entrepreneurial turn of the 1990s, when apprehensions over efficiency, monetary discipline, growth and competitiveness became central and impacted on the urban fabric. Underestandably, this was catalyzed by the decentralization of municipal administration in urban governance, particularly during the creation of metropolitan municipalities, as was the case in Johannesburg.

Nevertheless, in the case of Johannesburg, Bethlehem (2013) cites four key factors that were instrumental in not only the activation of inner city regeneration initiatives, but also the wave of investments they have drawn. As enumerated by her, these are: ***(i)*** Public investment in

urban renewal and infrastructure, ***(ii)*** City Improvement Districts (CIDs), ***(iii)*** Institutional and corporate investment, and ***(iv)*** Private, entrepreneurial investments, particularly in the residential sector.

With regards to **public investments**, the city established the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) as the main entity dealing with urban regeneration in the inner city. According to Bethlehem (2013), the JDA essentially operates as the main platform for public investments associated with inner city regeneration. By nature, the JDA has two broad phases of investments within which it operates. The first of these phases (which has apparently been completed) focused on prestigious, one-off investments, which were aimed at kick-starting the process of urban regeneration in the inner city of Johannesburg, projects such as the Nelson Mandela Bridge and the development of the Constitutional Court in the inner city are examples of such investments. The second phase of these investments (which is on-going) on the other hand is more focused on relatively less prestigious investments that are more sustained. Understandably, these are primarily aimed at supporting, catalysing and sustaining investments by the private sector. Evidently, such projects primarily come in the nature of precinct upgrades targeting the creation, replacement or improvement of public spaces and infrastructure among other investment incentives; the *Rea Vaya* Bus Rapid Transit system project is one prime example of such investments (Bethlehem, 2013).

Another key factor underpinning urban regeneration in Johannesburg according to Bethlehem (2013) is the platform of **City Improvement Districts (CIDs)**. Comprehensibly, this initiative operates in the manner of collecting levies in addition to existing rates and taxes within certain demarcations. Explicably, these levies are then used for services like the provision of security, greening and public space management *inter alia*. Reasonably, the main rationale behind this initiative is the creation of an income base for running projects aimed at independently uplifting and protecting various areas within the Johannesburg inner city under the broader objective of achieving urban regeneration in the inner city (Bethlehem, 2013). Examples of CIDs in Johannesburg include the Braamfontein Improvement District, Retail Improvement District, South-Western Improvement District and the Main Street Mall (Sibutu, 2010).

In addition to these key factors, the urban regeneration initiative of the Johannesburg inner city is also very much indebted to various investments from different entities ranging from

Institutional and **Corporate** entities to **Private**, **Entrepreneurial** investments. According to Bethlehem (2013), as the inner city was a victim of major capital flight, the office sector suffered the most. However, despite the departure of many prominent offices from the inner city, other institutional and corporate entities such as some of the major banks in the country persisted and brought a glimmer of hope to the inner city by maintaining their investment in the area. Banks such as Standard Bank, Absa and FNB alongside other companies such as Anglo Gold Ashanti are prime examples of the major entities that contributed to the regeneration of the inner city by staying put and upgrading the premises within which their head offices are located.

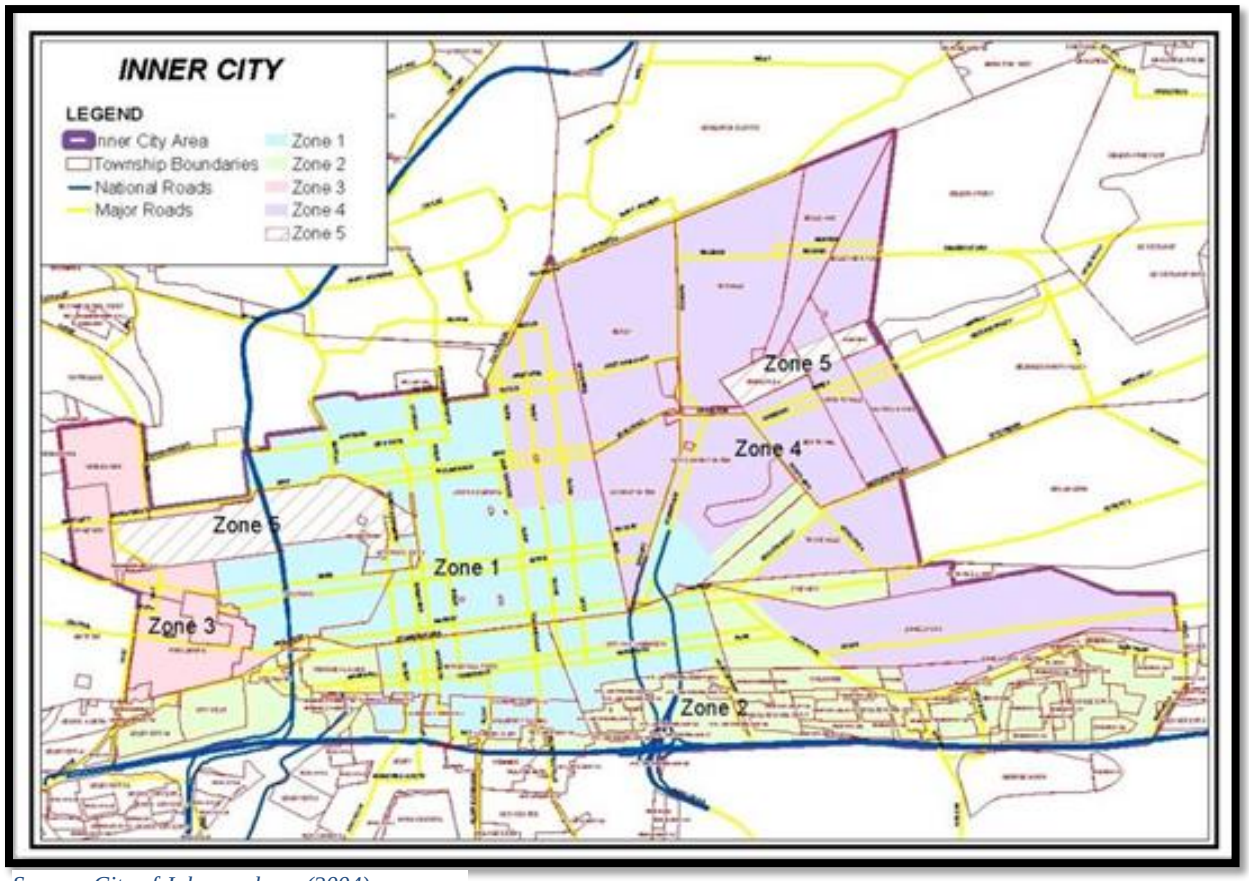
Justifiably, this paid off over time as new investors such as the Johannesburg Land Company eventually came forward, bringing forth new office stock among other developments in the inner city. Concisely, other regeneration outcomes to result from such investments include other retail, residential and mixed-use projects. The newly built mall in Newtown, the new housing projects by private developers, and the *Maboneng* precinct towards the east of the CBD among other prominent projects are prime examples of investments that have enlivened the long lost vibrant business market with the support of a committed public sector (Bethlehem, 2013).

Admissibly, to prolong the sustainability of these investment driven regeneration initiatives, the South African government also introduced the **Urban Development Zone (UDZ)** tax incentive. Introduced in 2003 by the then minister of finance, this tax incentive was mainly aimed at encouraging and promoting more investment within defined zones. Understandably, Johannesburg was one of the first cities within which this tax incentive was put to action as the city demarcated its whole inner city as a UDZ.

As outlined by Sibutu (2010), this tax incentive operates through stimulating private sector investment in the building and/or upgrading of commercial and residential properties, including low-cost housing units. Herein, if the project entails an improvement of an existing building or part of it, the tax incentive provides deductible amounts for either a duration of 5 years straight-line depreciation, or for 20% of the improvement costs, and a further 20% of the expense in each of the four subsequent years of assessment. Justifiably, this is on condition that the developer is to utilize the building, or part of it solely for the purposes of trade. On the other hand, if the recipient project for the tax incentive is a construction or extension of, or an addition to a property, a 20% deduction of the total cost is obtained in the year within which the building is

assessed after it has been put to use. Another option that comes with this package is a 5% deduction of the total cost, obtainable for each of the 16 subsequent years of assessment on condition that the developer continues to use the property for only purposes of trade. Nevertheless, for all of this to apply, the property must strictly be located within a UDZ (Sibutu, 2010). Figure 3.5 below shows the delineation of the different Urban Development Zones within the Johannesburg inner city.

Figure 3.5: Urban Development Zones in the Johannesburg Inner City



Source: City of Johannesburg (2004)

Additionally, another component of the arsenal against urban blight in Johannesburg is the Better Buildings Programme (BBP). Initially started as the Bad Buildings Programme, this programme aims at preventing further blight and achieving urban regeneration through targeting individual buildings. Justifiably, this programme is underpinned by pieces of legislation such as the By-laws on Problem Properties, which condemn derelict properties for the purpose of regeneration. As it seems, the BBP is structured around the same principles as America's *Eminent Domain* as

it operates through identifying and acquiring dilapidated buildings/properties whose municipal services and rates payment bills are in arrears that extremely surpass their market value. Operationally, the BBP starts by identifying a building and evaluating its status before implementing a legal acquiring process, which accordingly leads to either expropriation or purchasing of the building for purposes of regeneration (Housing Development Agency, 2013).

v) Summary

Much like every other typical case of urban blight in a big city, this precedent portrays a city where urban blight is largely in the inner city. Unsurprisingly, this blighted inner city is a result of a multitude of factors revolving, *inter alia,* around disinvestment, capital flight to suburbia and poor urban management. However, unlike Detroit and other cities in the developed countries, the case of Johannesburg is however a bit different and complex in that all these factors are to a large extent associated with apartheid and the implications it had both demographically and spatially. Understandably, these implications on their own are largely tied to the fact that in the South African context, the idea of racial inclusion in urban settlements was viewed by many businesses (which were predominantly owned by the white population) with great pessimism, thus fuelling capital flight to suburbia.

Intrinsically, subsequent to these implications, the Johannesburg inner city is facing challenges of poor public transport management alongside poor conditions of some buildings and infrastructure, together with inadequate credit control and revenue collection among other problems that come with urban blight (Sibutu, 2010). Thus, inferring from these observations, it is quite evident that this precedent too relates the cause of urban blight in the inner city to capital flight, which, on its own, was very much inspired by apartheid. With that said; even though this precedent is an epitome of a South African context, it still associates urban blight with "unattractiveness" hence the pessimism by the white population and major corporations. Moreover, in as much as one would argue that the "flocking in" of the non-white population, which occurred after the demise of apartheid, is also a sign of "attractiveness", it is only considered as an after effect of capital flight, and not as a prime contributor to the blight of the Johannesburg inner city. Therefore, by virtue of this, the case of Johannesburg too is no different from what this study refers to as the normative view.

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the chronicle of urban blight paints a menace that is deemed as perilous wherever it establishes itself. However, as it seems, based on existing literature, the notion of urban blight has only been encapsulated from a paradigm of big and wealthy cities both in the developed and developing countries. Unsurprisingly, in such settings, the notion of urban blight is hitherto closely tied to urbanization, outmigration and suburbanization among other social and land use dynamics. Internationally, this is traced back to the times of the industrial revolution while in the context of South Africa it dates back to the period immediately after the demise of apartheid. Nevertheless, what is most common and of importance herein is that the outset of urban blight is largely engrained in a pessimist or "unattractive" perception of the inner city by certain populations or corporations, which is testimony to what this study refers to as the normative view. Understandably, as stated by Gamesby (2013), this is habitually motivated by racism and/or forfeiture of industry, which are more often than not more likely to prompt subsequent incidences such as outmigration, capital flight, decreasing quality in housing stock and a desperate convergence of low-income groups among other leading causes of urban blight. With that said, what the literature fails to exhibit is the outset of urban blight not in cities, but in towns, and towns that are not subject to suburbanization and outmigration, or even urbanization as such.

Be that as it may, on the other hand, it is also noteworthy that the documented curative measures employed by different cities under the umbrella goal of urban regeneration are equally important in stimulating the recommendations made in the final chapter of this study. This is largely because in as much as they are drawn from experiences of big and wealthy cities, they still deliver a useful array of initiatives from which the study area could adopt in combating urban blight, depending on which is more pragmatic than the other, and despite the fact that most of them are mostly centred around curbing urban sprawl.

Chapter 4: Case Study of Mthatha

4.1 Background of Mthatha in the Context of the Study

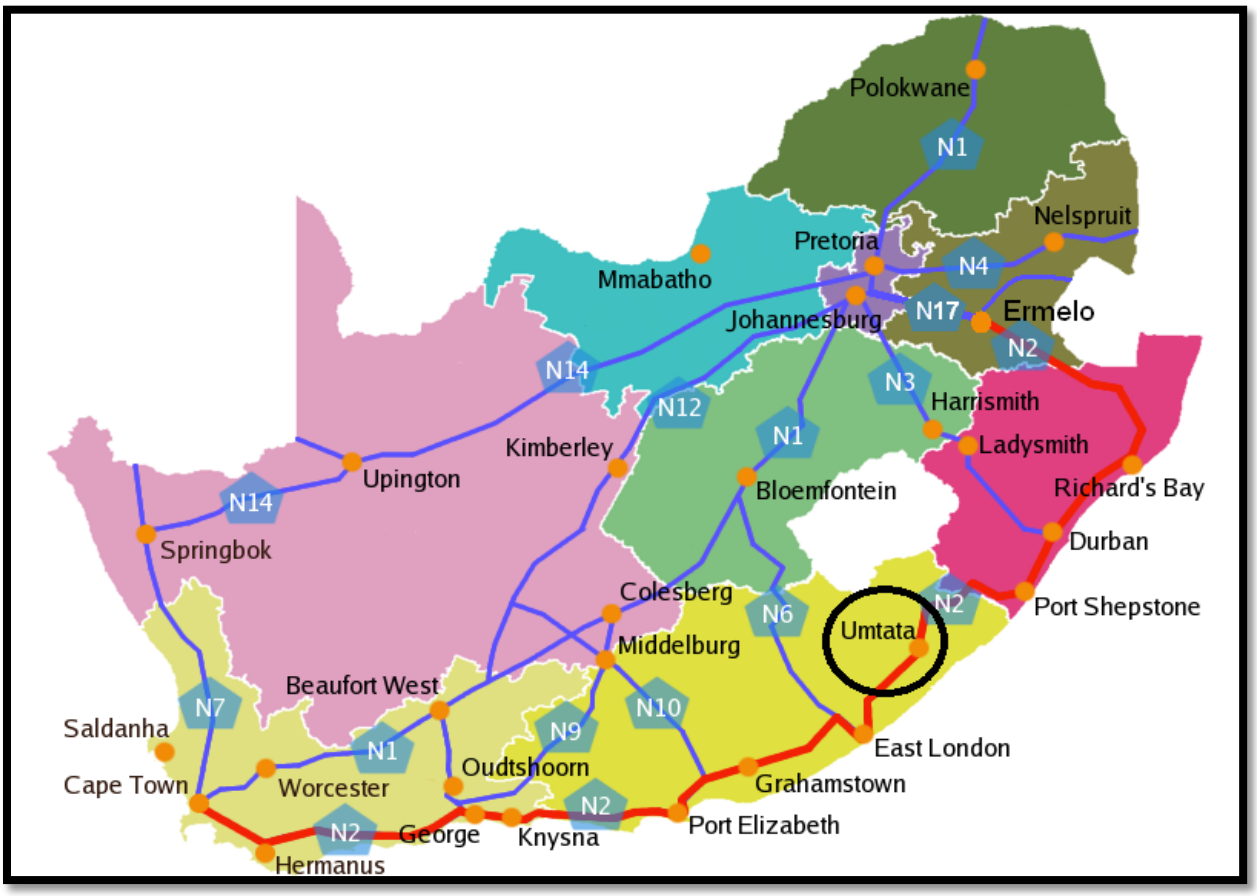
The town of Mthatha (formerly known as Umtata) was established back in 1879 on the banks of the Mthatha River and right at the intersection of the N2 national road and the R61 provincial road. The genesis of the town came in the form of a rural settlement and service centre in the British colonial era, initially established as a military base for colonial forces (Dzinotyiweyi, 2009). Over time, the town gradually transformed incrementally into the leading administrative centre in the area, and subsequently into the capital of the Transkei Bantustan, and that of the Independent Republic of Transkei, which was the first of ten regions within South Africa to be granted full independence throughout the period of institutionalised apartheid which reigned between 1948 and 1994.

Understandably, as pointed out by Southall (1982), this was nothing more than the apartheid government's agenda to repudiate South African citizenship to all black people within the territory, disguising it as a "plan" of awarding the Bantustan definitive sovereignty so it could serve as a labour reserve for the South African industries of the time. Unsurprisingly, Mthatha thus holds a strong historical association with prominent political figures such as Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo as it was a conspicuous compel in the strife against apartheid. During these times, the town was undeniably at the core of political activism - principally exhibited through the prominent events of "deliberate" maladministration, and active boycotts of the practices and policies that were imposed by the then South Africa on Transkei, particularly in the 1980s. This overall defiance continued until it reached a peak with the military coup d'état that took place around 1990 (Sikrweqe, 2013).

Nevertheless, the system however demised in 1994 with the advent of the democratic regime as the African National Congress (ANC) came into power. Today, with the new spatial demarcation that came with the new democratic dispensation, Mthatha has since then become part of the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Subsequent to that, the province is currently home to 13% of the total population of the country, making it the third largest after Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal (Dzinotyiweyi, 2009). Figure 4.1 below shows the location of Mthatha (circled

in black) within the province and in the country, together with how it is linked with the national road network.

Figure 4.1 Map of South Africa showing the location of Mthatha relative to the national road network



Source: Google (2016)

In terms of municipal administration, in the post-apartheid South Africa, the town is the administrative centre of the OR Tambo District Municipality (ORTDM) and is home to the King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality (KSDLM). However, in as much as the town falls among the smallest district municipalities in the Eastern Cape Province, its parent district municipality, the OR Tambo District Municipality has the second largest population after the Amathole District Municipality with an estimate of 1,5 million people (Lombaard, 2010). In addition, in its district, Mthatha is arguably the most developed, with perhaps "the best" infrastructure as compared to other municipal areas (Lombard, 2010).

Moreover, given the geography of the town, it is however also evident that its urban fabric is surrounded by rural areas, which are themselves dependent on the infrastructure and economy of the town. As alluded before, in this regard, Mthatha thus becomes more of a regional powerhouse; serving as both an economic and social hub to the functionally lower order towns of Tsolo, Libode, Ngqeleni, Mqanduli, Qumbu, Flagstaff and Lusikisiki (among others) in addition to their surrounding rural settlements (Dzinotyiweyi, 2009).

However, regardless of the stature of the town in its district, the town is however also subject to blatant physical discourtesies as it has today relapsed into a town of potholes, out-dated sewerage systems, electricity outages and dilapidated buildings. Additionally, the Mthatha River also filled with alien vegetation and raw effluent; its riverbanks have congested brambles, which have gotten to be hotspots for pickpocketing and a paradise for thieves since Mthatha is essentially a pedestrian town. Into the bargain, the people of Mthatha often have to go for lengthy periods without water, with sewerage spills being a constant sight (Dzinotyiweyi, 2009).

Furthermore, the streets of the town are constantly congested with cars, pedestrians and informal traders. The main roads are themselves constantly overcrowded with trucks supplying numerous stores around the city, most notably those in Sutherland and Madeira Street, which are the main streets connecting directly to the R61 and N2 provincial and national roads respectively. As it seems; spatially, the situation is arguably aggravated by the fact that the land is locked by the surrounding rural areas, whose land claims constrain the expansion of the town (Dzinotyiweyi, 2009).

Thus, in light of what has been outlined herein; looking at Mthatha, at first glance, the town unveils a paradox of splendour and squalor as one is able to simultaneously pick both elements of a blighted area and those of city attractiveness, which is quite confusing because as far as the existing urban planning discourse is concerned, never the twain shall meet. In light of this irony, it is however highlighted that the main purpose of this chapter to therefore establish and assess the relationship between this perceived urban blight in Mthatha and the attractiveness of the town, with focus given particularly to its CBD.

4.2 Understanding the Place of Mthatha in its Region

Figure 4.2: Mthatha within the OR Tambo District Municipal Region

Source: O.R Tambo District Municipality (2016)

As alluded before, and depicted in figure 4.2 above; regionally, Mthatha (marked by the red circle) falls within the King Sabata Dalindyebo (KSD) municipal region, which is under the O.R. Tambo District Municipality (ORTDM) (marked by the brownish region) occupying the eastern coastal portion of the Province. Other local municipalities within the ORTDM include the Nyandeni Local Municipality, Mhlontlo Local Municipality, Port St Johns Local Municipality and the Ingquza Hill (Qaukeni) Local Municipality. Nonetheless, to avoid confusion, it is also noteworthy that previously, the ORTDM was also inclusive of the Mbizana and Ntabankulu Local Municipalities, which were subsequently reassigned to the Alfred Nzo District Municipality after the 2011 municipal elections.

Coming back to Mthatha, the most substantial aspect linking the town to its wider region is its strategic location at the intersection of the N2 national route, which links it to major cities such as Cape Town, Durban and East London; and the R61 regional route, linking it to Engcobo and Port St John's at the coast (Dzinotyiweyi, 2009). Its local municipality, the KSD municipality

(which is also an amalgamation with Mqanduli) is categorized as a B2[3] municipality, and its area of jurisdiction covers an extent of 3,027.37 km^2 out of the district's 12,095.51 km^2 in terms of area, which is about 25% of the total coverage (eWISA, 2005).

Regarding population, the wider ORTDM has a total population of 13,649.43, which is distributed across five local municipalities. Table 4.1 below shows the population distribution of the various local municipalities within the ORTDM as informed by the 2011 census.

Table 4.1 Population distribution in ORTDM

Local Municipality	**Population**	**Percentage (%)**
King Sabata Dalindyebo	451,710	33%
Nyandeni	290,390	21%
Ngquza Hill	278,481	20.5%
Mhlontlo	188,226	14%
Port St Johns	156,136	11.5%

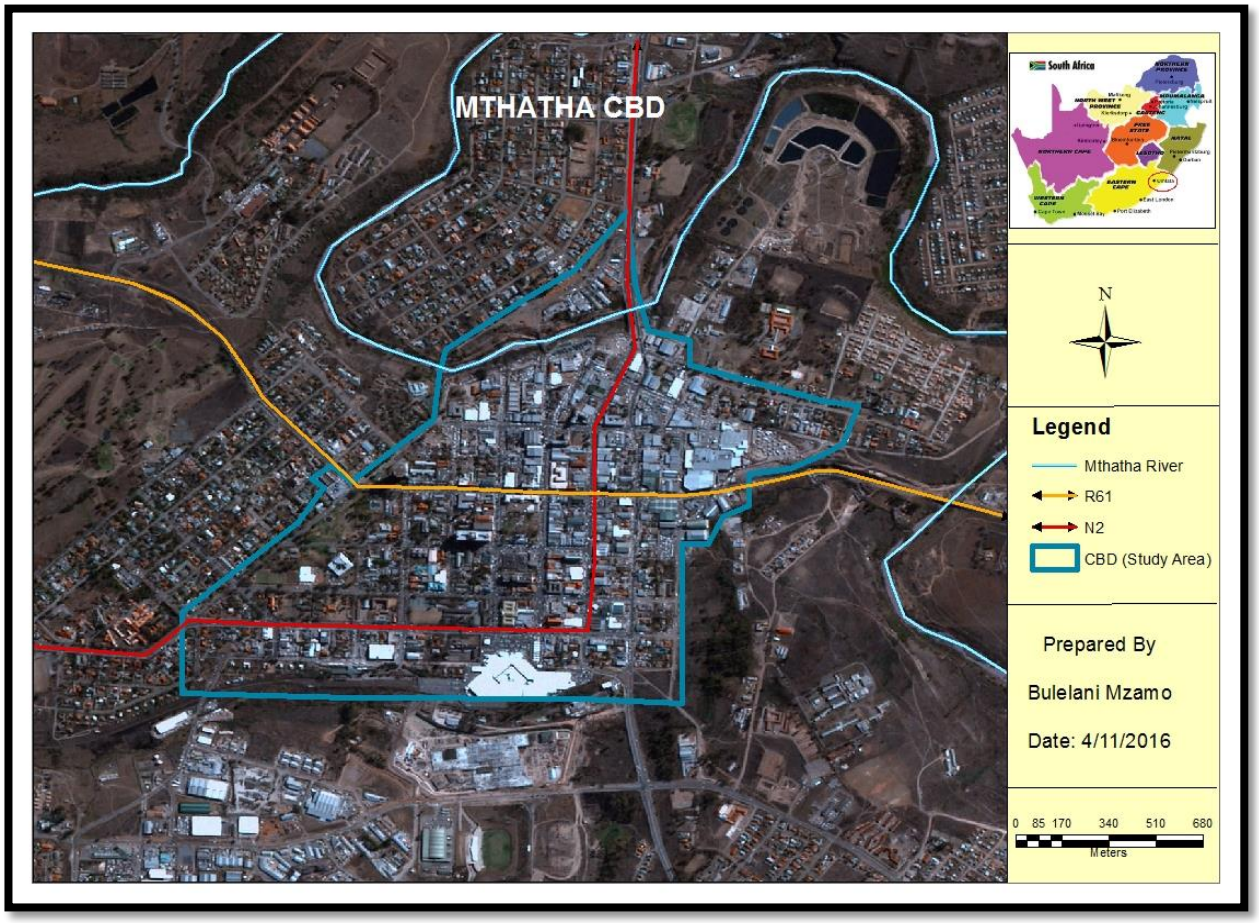
Source: Census (2011)

As presented in table 4.1 above, it is evident that the KSD municipality remains with the largest share of population within the district at 33%. Justifiably, many factors account for this, but most notably, this in a way also gives an indication of the perceived attractiveness of the area hence it retains the larger share of the observed concentration of population in the area in comparison with other municipal regions within the same district.

[3] A municipality of a large town, with an urban core, and that is characterized by large urban dwelling populations (Tullock, 2017)

4.2.1 Extent of Study Area

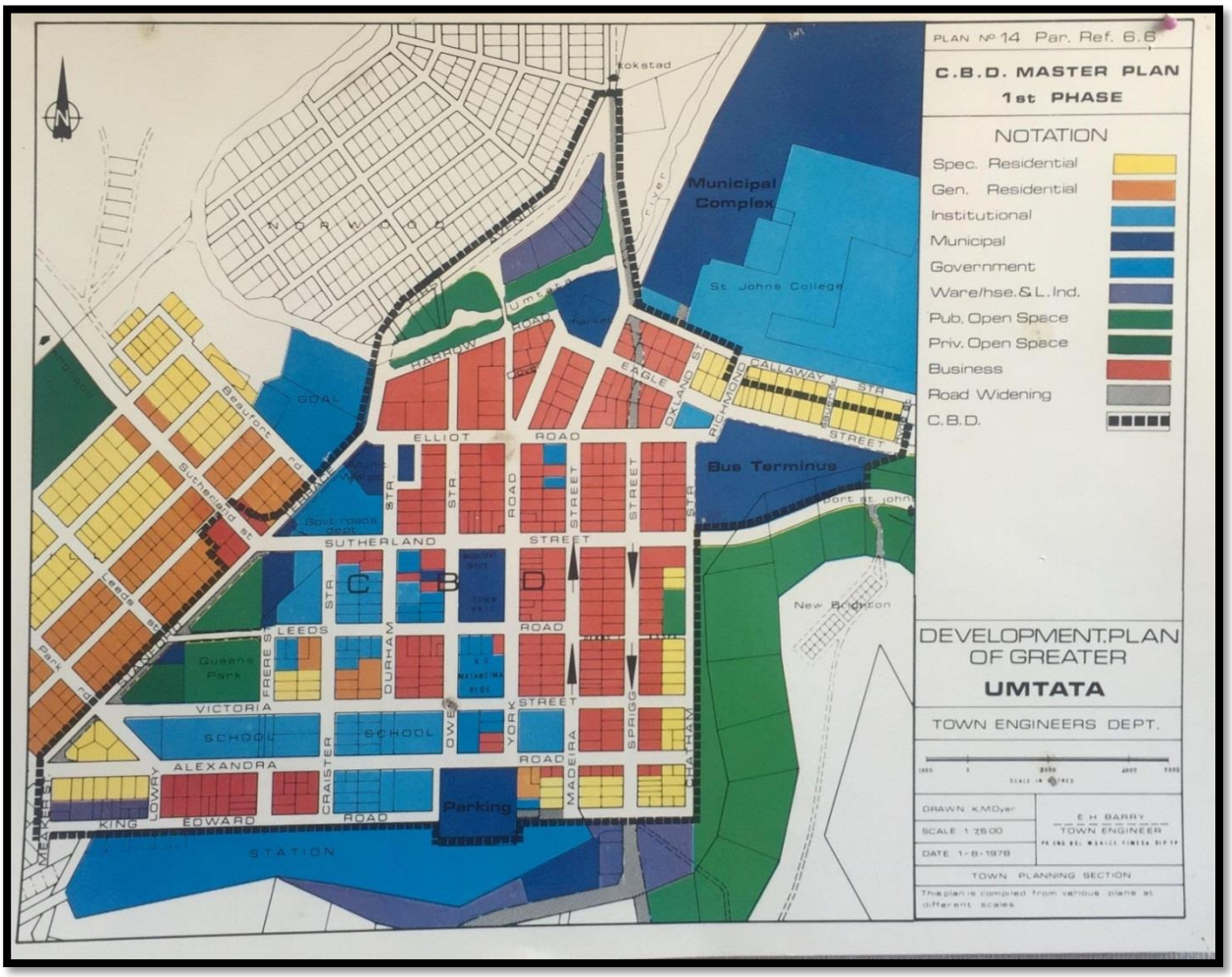
Figure 4.3:.Satellite Image Showing Mthatha CBD/ Extent of Study Area



Source: Author (2016)

Located precisely at 31°34′00″ S 28°46′00″E on the Global Positioning System (GPS); the Central Business District (CBD) of the town, which is the extent of the study area, covers an area of 54.97 km^2. Figure 4.3 above is a delineation of the Mthatha CBD and principally shows its proximity to the N2 and R61 major roads, together with the Mthatha River. On the other hand, figure 4.4 below is the actual layout plan of the town, showing the street names and the spatial demarcation, distribution and the zoning of erven (erf) within the study area. Justifiably, knowledge of these will aid in grasping the findings of the study even to people who are not familiar with the study area as it gives one an idea of where and what land uses to expect in the target areas, thus abetting in upholding the relative bearing of the subject in the central thesis of the study.

Figure 4.4: Mthatha CBD Layout Design



Source: Umtata Municipality (1978)

4.3 Socio-Economic Profile

According to Statistics South Africa (2012), the town of Mthatha itself has a total population of about 137,589 people with a growth rate of 0.82%. On the other hand, the wider KSD municipal region has a population of about 451 710, which is scattered across 32 wards within the municipal region in 105 240 households averaged four people per household. In terms of population density, the town itself has a density of 1,863 persons/km², while the wider municipal region has a density of 149 persons/km^2. Moreover, the racial makeup of the population of the town is predominantly Black African (with 92.8% of which being Xhosa speakers), but also has minimal compositions of Coloureds, Indians/Asians, Whites, and others. Table 4.2 below shows

the racial makeup of the town in percentages as informed by the 2011 census released in Statistics South Africa (2012).

Table 4.2 Population Composition of Mthatha

Race	**Percentage**
Black African	98,5%
Coloured	0,8%
Indian/Asian	0,3%
White	0,3%
Other	0,2%

Source: Census (2011)

In terms of gender make up, Mthatha has a composition of 54% females and 46% males, which perhaps accounts for the 57,3% of the female headed households in the town. Moreover, with regards to age profile, Mthatha has a very youthful population as the most dominant age on its population pyramid is the age between 15 and 19 years, which is 6.7% and 6.9% for males and females respectively. Nevertheless, most notably, the economically active age accounts for 59.9% of the total population, leaving a dependency ratio of 66,8, which places the KSD Municipality at number 69 out of 171 municipalities when ranked by the dependency ratio; which is not as severe when looked at within the broader scope of South African local municipalities (Statistics South Africa, 2012).

4.3.1 Employment Profile

As unveiled by the 2011 census, the town however has a quite alarming rate of 38.3% formal unemployment, and out of a total of 170 local municipalities in the country, it is ranked number 57 in this respect. Appallingly, 48.3% of the unemployed population in the town is the youth (Statistics South Africa, 2012). As it seems, the main economic sectors herein are the community services sector, which constitutes about 48%; the finance sector (21%); and the trading sector, which constitutes about 18% of the total economy of the town, with the remainder hypothetically being covered by the informal sector (The Local Government Handbook, 2012). Accordingly, there is also a prevalence of inequality in terms of racial income distribution among the residents

of the town. According to Harrison (2008), the average annual income for black people is R15 762 compared to R41 875 for coloureds and R131 583 for whites.

Considering the racial distribution in table 4.2, it therefore remains blatantly evident that a majority of the residents of the town have livelihoods that somewhat remain in dreadful straits. Understandably, this is basically due to the fact that the industrial sector is negligible herein; as such, the state remains the prime employer and the principal contributor to the Gross Geographic Product (GGP), followed by the trade and financial sectors of the economy (Dzinotyiweyi, 2009). As a result, a vast number of households (approximately 35%) survive through government grants and transmittals from mineworkers and relatives employed in other major South African towns (Harrison, 2008).

Intrinsically, these circumstances continue to fuel a lively informal economy, which is visible across all corners of the town as it encompasses large numbers of vendors selling fruit, vegetables and clothing *inter alia*; alongside street hair salons, street car washes, caravan restaurants, tailors and motor mechanics to name a few. However, despite its significant and inevitable dominance, this informal sector of economy remains a poverty trap (Dzinotyiweyi, 2009). Explicably, as explained by Harrison (2008), this is basically due to the fact that wages in the informal sector remain suppressed. As it seems, this is largely a consequence of the development of outsized shopping malls and retail shops in close proximity to the main transport interchanges that contest with almost 70% of the vendors in Mthatha, especially those established at these dominant vitality points. According to Harrison (2008), in as much as most of the vendors in Mthatha have been in operation for a significant number of years, almost 61% of them continue to make earnings that do not exceed R500 per month. Even worse, these big retailers have headquarters that are outside Mthatha, as a result, the profits made do not stay in Mthatha and this continually reduces money circulation and capital accumulation in the town. Consequently, this inhibits the potential prosperity of the town; as it should, ideally, take fruition of the existence of these giant retailers. However, this fails to happen mainly because Mthatha is principally a city of consumers rather than of producers (Dzinotyiweyi, 2009).

4.3.2 Poverty

As cited in Msi (2009), the World Bank (2000:19) formulated a universal poverty line, which is consumption based, and basically incorporates elements such as the expenditure required to afford a minimum standard of nutrition, together with other basic necessities, and a further amount that differs from the next country. As elucidated by Sikrweqe (2013), the poverty line is an arithmetic demonstration of the value of all the goods and services that are deemed necessary for either an individual or a household. With that said, it is however also noteworthy that such a measure can only depict the distribution of resources within a country, as it does not, on its own, describe the depth of poverty, nor provide a peculiar analysis of the prevalence of different manifestations of poverty and needs. Nevertheless, using this poverty line as a benchmark, the Eastern Cape Province remains one of the poorest provinces in South Africa with extreme rates of poverty, particularly due to the historical neglect of these areas linked with its historical stature as a homeland. In this respect, it is evident that the percentage of people living below the poverty line is estimated to be around 59% in the KSD municipality (KSDLM, 2015).

4.3.3 Other Human Development Indicators

i) GINI Coefficient

By nature, the GINI Coefficient is a measure of relative inequality, wherein the higher the GINI Coefficient, the higher the inequality. This is usually illustrated graphically via the Lorenz Curve, where the cumulative percentage of the population, arranged from poorest to the richest, is placed on the horizontal axis, with the cumulative percentage of income received by cumulative percentage of population on the vertical axis. Understandably, when there is a high prevalence of inequality among the population, the Lorenz Curve moves vertically from the point of origin. Conversely, a reduction in inequality within the population results to the curve moving vertically to the point where hundred percent of the population receives hundred percent of income. Ideally, the perfect balance on the Lorenz Curve is achieved when the curve forms a straight line from the point of origin, depicting what is termed a line of Perfect Equality (Sikrweqe, 2013). In the KSD municipality, the GINI Coefficient as informed by the 2011 census is 0.62.

ii) Human Development Index (HDI)

The Human Development Index (HDI) according to Pycroft (1998) cited in Sikrweqe (2013) is a composite, relative index, which attempts to qualify the extent of human development within a community. Understandably, the focus of the Human Development Index extends far beyond the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), to a more comprehensive delineation of wellbeing. By nature, it is a combined measure of three dimensions: life expectancy, education and living standard (Sikrweqe, 2013). As informed by the 2011 census, the HDI in KSD sits at 0.47 (KSDLM, 2015).

iii) Literacy Rate

Concisely, the literacy rate as an indicator of human development has much to do with the highest levels of education obtained by the population in question. This is stratified into divisions of those who ended below matric, those with matric, BA/HON graduates, and MA/PhD graduates. In this regard, as informed by the 2011 census, overall, the KSD municipality has a literacy rate of 61.9%. This is a composite of 43.5% of people with matric, 8.9% people with BA/HON, and 0, 3% MA/PHD graduates. In summary, Table 4.3 below shows a comparison of the different development indicators across the various municipalities in ORTDM and in the municipality as a whole.

Table 4.3 Key Indicators of Human Development in ORTDM

Local Municipality	**GINI Coefficient**	**HDI**	**Literacy Rate**	**Poverty Levels**
King Sabata Dalindyebo	**0.62**	**0.47**	**61.9%**	**54.5%**
Nyandeni	0.56	0.39	48.3%	65.5%
Mhlontlo	0.56	0.42	51.0%	54.0%
Ingquza Hill	0.56	0.37	43.6%	68%
Port St John's	0.57	0.36	37.9%	63.2%
ORTDM – Total	**0.59**	**0.51**	**51.6%**	**72.2%**

Source: KSD (2015)

Thus, inferring from this table, it is therefore evident according to the KSD (2015:70) that the development trajectory for the municipality is quite a challenging one. Understandably, this is due to digressions in the different development indicators employed in measuring the trajectory of development in this perspective. Herein, despite the Human Development Index (HDI) indicating a minor improvement in the quality of life for people in the KSD Municipality over the last 10 years; simultaneously, other poverty indicators such as the GINI Coefficient and Literacy Rate exhibit an increase in poverty. Even so, judging by these indicators, the KSD municipality however remains with the lowest levels of poverty in the district.

4.4 Sector Development

4.4.1 Infrastructure and Services

According to Statistics South Africa (2012), the KSD municipality recognizes 60.% of formal dwellings, to which it aggregates the status of infrastructure in conjunction with that in the city centre. Based on the 2011 census, it is evident that in the KSD municipal area:

- Mthatha boasts by having a railway station and an airport, which when utilized fully, can help bolster local economy
- Electricity provision is quite substantial as it is aggrigated to be 73.3%.
- However, there is only a total of 26.1% in terms of flush toilets connected to sewerage.
- Weekly refuse removal only sits at 24.6%.
- Piped water inside dwelling on the other hand remains relatively low at 19.1%.

Moreover, with focus on the CBD, the 2015/16 IDP also stipulates with regards to infrastructure that:

- 90% of Mthatha tarred road network has dilapidated beyond pothole repair requirements.
- Road markings have faded and the road signs are limited.
- Conditions of pavement vary from from fair to very poor in the CBD.
- It is also evident that the roads do not cater for the large number of pedestrians.
- There is also heavy congestion in the CBD.

- Robots need to be synchronized to avoid congestion.
- Trucks passing through the CBD aggravate traffic congestion, particularly during peak hours.
- Pavements are also damaged and dangerous.
- Storm water pipes are inadequate, larger pipes are needed.
- Poor waste management and storm water systems lead to blockages in storm water drains and thus result in flooded streets.
- Additionally, old and un-maintained ruptured pipes and blocked drains sometimes result to street flooding.
- There are also high levels of enchroachment by both shops and hawkers.

With that being said, it is therefore apparent that there is also an ubiquitous institutional failure in Mthatha. Justifiably, this is evidenced (among other symptoms) by the persistent manifestations of a collapsing sanitation system, the contamination of the river as a result of direct sewer run-off and accumulated solid waste, the pot-holed roads, the illegal bakkie taxis carrying off passengers to the surrounding rural settlements, and the competition on the pavements between delivery vehicles, taxis, hawkers and pedestrians (Harrison, 2008).

Thus, in this regard, it becomes evident that the town is largely faced with challenges of infrastructural backlogs and underdevelopment. According to Msi (2009), to some extent, these are often associated with the town's poor industrial base and infrastructure provision which fails to bolster business and industrial developments, together with the lack of coordination and integration of development initiatives, which in turn prompts an ineffective use of resources.

4.4.2 Housing

With regards to housing, the KSD municipality has an average household size of 5.15 people. In this municipality, housing is predominantly located in dispersed rural settlements and in the urban settlement. Table 4.4 below shows the distribution of the housing in terms of formal dwellings, informal dwellings and traditional dwellings in all municipalities within the ORTDM as informed by the 2011 census.

Table 4.4 Housing distribution across the ORTDM

Municipality	Formal Dwellings	Informal Dwellings	Traditional Dwellings
King Sabata Dalindyebo	30 633	3 945	44 467
Ingquza Hill (Qaukeni)	11 672	282	32 894
Mhlontlo	11 371	1 290	26 088
Nyandeni	8 432	309	41 251
Port St John's	48 710	170	21 387
ORTDM (Total)	110 818	5 996	403 617

Source: KSD (2015)

4.4.3 Health Facilities

As outlined in the 2015/16 IDP of the KSD Municipality, the town of Mthatha has 4 major hospitals. These are the Nelson Mandela Academic Hospital, which is linked to WSU hospital academic institution (formerly known as UNITRA), the Mthatha General Hospital, Bedford Hospital, and St. Mary's private hospital. Additionally, the town also has 3 medical health facilities, which are the Norwood Civic Centre, Stanford Terrace and the Ngangelizwe Community Health Centre (KSDLM, 2015).

4.4.4 Educational Facilities

In this respect, the town of Mthatha is quite privileged as it is home to a number of primary and secondary institutions, with one University and FET College, which are the Walter Sisulu University and the KSD FET College (also known as Cicira). Table 4.5 below depicts a comparison of the KSD municipality with the other local municipalities within the ORTDM.

Table 4.5 Number of schools per Local Municipality in the ORTDM

Municipality	No Schooling (%)	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)
King Sabata Dalindyebo	35.5	32.1	29.5	2.9
Ingquza Hill (Qaukeni)	43.4	35.6	19.9	1.1
Mhlontlo	31.2	42.0	25.4	1.4
Nyandeni	41.6	35.1	22.5	0.8
Port St John's	48.2	35.4	15.6	0.8

Source: KSD (2015)

4.5 Summary

More conclusively, in light of what has been outlined herein, it is therefore evident that to begin with, Mthatha is the most developed town in its region, and for this region, the town possesses some level of superiority almost in all aspects. However, the town also has its flaws, particularly in addressing development as it is characterized by unconcealed physical incivilities among other factors which are suggestive of urban blight,. As it seems, the current structure of its local economy, however, constrains the overall betterment of the majority of its people who have also been failed by poor public management that originated from political tensions which have overwhelmed the town since the days of apartheid. Consequently, Mthatha is plagued by institutional and management failure as, illustrated by the inefficient water supply and constant electricity outages, surface flow of raw effluent, failure in handling solid waste management among other indicators. With that said, this study however presents a strong case that what is being overlooked herein, though, is that this could also be due to the failure of its bulk infrastructural network to cope under the burden of a rising population as the town is subjected to intense commuter activity on a daily basis (Dzinotyiweyi, 2009). In line with the objectives of the study, this is further illuminated further in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Presenting the Findings of the Study – A Reflection on the Objectives

With the previous chapter outlining the background of the study area; presenting its history, extent and its socio-economic profile; this chapter correspondingly provides the empirical findings of the study aligned with the research questions as means of ensuring that the objectives of the study are realistically comprehended, and the research questions are attended to. Understandably, this chapter is principally based on primary data, but secondary data is also used to enhance the empirical opulence of the various subjects ordained herein as a move towards accomplishing the main aim of the study. To support the central thesis of the study, the presentation and analysis of the data collected is therefore undertaken in a thematic manner that directly reflects the objectives of the study. With that said, this chapter is therefore centred on firstly illuminating the indicators of urban blight in Mthatha before outlining how the town is attractive, and evaluating the extent to which it is attractive. Having done as such, this section then reflects on the central thesis of the study by critically assessing the synergies between the perceived urban blight and city attractiveness in the Mthatha CBD.

5.1 What are the Indicators of Urban Blight in Mthatha?

As outlined in chapter 2 of the study, urban blight is quite complex and manifests itself in various forms, which can either be physical blight, frictional blight, functional blight, economic blight, or even a combination of these. However, regardless of the fact that based on the interview with the key informant (2016), the KSDLM planning department does not consider the town as blighted; the study however argues that the town is blighted. In so doing, it maintains that urban blight has various indicators, which can be encapsulated in many ways. This can be through a visual scrutiny of the physical conditions in the setting in question, or through a collection of non-physically observable data from reliable sources, more especially in the case of economic blight and other indicators that are based on statistics. Nevertheless, because not all collected data in this respect may qualify as urban blight, it is therefore necessary to do a qualification test by double-checking the attributes of the data collected with that outlined in blight statutes or by-laws. With that said, for the purpose of this study, the following checklist is used as the criteria for the qualification assessment of the perceived blight in Mthatha. However,

because of the nonexistence of municipal by-laws dedicated in identifying and addressing urban blight in the study area, this comprehensive list was adopted from the Arapahoe Square Blight Study (2009).

Urban Blight Qualification Check List

1. ***Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures***
2. ***Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout***
3. ***Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness/ Plot irregularity***
4. ***Unsanitary or unsafe conditions***
5. ***Deterioration of site or other improvements***
6. ***Inadequate public improvements or utilities***
7. ***Defective or unusual conditions of title rendering the title non-marketable/ Diverse Ownership***
8. ***The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes***
9. ***Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidation, deterioration, defective design, physical construction, or faulty or inadequate facilities***
10. ***Environmental contamination of buildings or property***
11. ***Existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements***
12. ***Overcrowding/Excessive Land Coverage***
13. ***Tax Delinquency***
14. ***Traffic Congestion***
15. ***Incompatibility of Land Uses***
16. ***Crime***

In the same breath, it is also worth stressing that some of the conditions enlisted in the qualification checklist tend to overlap depending on how they manifest themselves. For this reason, the study therefore primarily presents and explains them in the category of physical blight, mainly depicting them by means of images as a majority of them are principally recognizable through direct observations on the physical urban fabric of the study area. Nevertheless, because the study largely presents these indicators of urban blight through physical blight, one must not disqualify that it also touches on other forms of urban blight through inferring from the observable attributes suggested by the physical blight. Others such as crime, tax delinquency and issues pertaining title rendering and diverse property ownerships are

explained through the use of both primary and secondary data sources as they are not tangible aspects.

5.1.1 The Physical Manifestations of Urban Blight in Mthatha

Focussing on the most tangible manifestations of urban blight, as observed, the Mthatha CBD evidently has quite a number of slums, dilapidating and deteriorated structures and infrastructure (among other factors), which are blatant indications of urban blight.

i) Buildings/Structures

Frankly, regarding buildings, direct observations on the study area undeniably reveal a substantial number of buildings, which, when juxtaposed with the urban blight qualification checklist enlisted above, attest various manifestations of urban blight. These range from civic buildings to residential, commercial and light industrial properties scattered across the CBD. Because these buildings are scattered across the town, the study identifies and presents them according to their zoning, with figures 5.1 to 5.5 being civic buildings; 5.6 to 5.9 being residential, and figures 5.10 to 5.13 depicting commercial and a single light industrial property.

Herein, figure 5.1 below shows the one of the old civic buildings, the Jubilee Hall at the corner of the then Harrow Road (now Stanford Terrace) and Bridge Street; a dilapidated monumental structure which was constructed in 1932 in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of Mthatha in 1882. According to Bam (2012), this has become one of the well known crime hotspots where criminals are known to rob truck drivers and motorists exiting the CBD.

Figure 5.1: Jubilee Hall, Mthatha

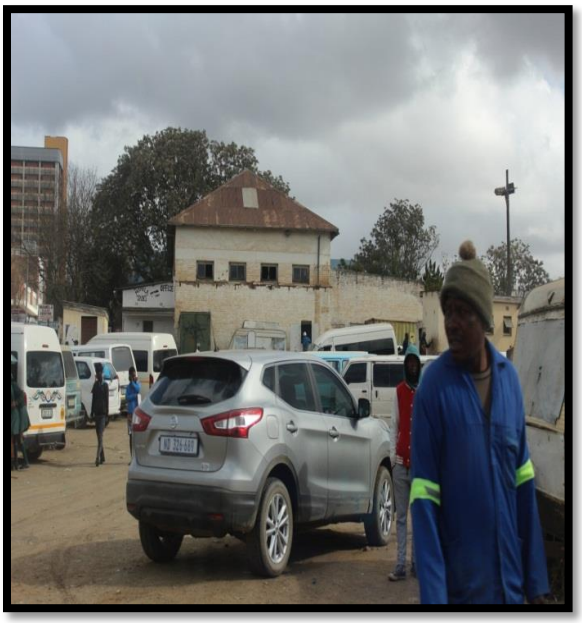
Source: Author (2016)

Another example of a dilapidated civic building is the one in Durham Street. Based on the layout presented in figure 4.4, the building appears to be an old Municipal Workshop Centre. However, today, it too has turned into a deteriorated slum, with broken windows, cracked walls and a rusted roof among other blight indications. Furthermore, its open space has tuned into an informal, unpaved parking reserve for the nearby *Mamela* Taxi Rank. Figures 5.2 and 5.3 below show the building together with its space used as a parking reserve.

Figure 5.2: Deteriorated Old Municipal Workshop Building in Durham Street

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.3: Informal Parking Outside the building in Durham Street



Source: Author (2016)

Evidently, the buildings from figure 5.1 to 5.3 are not the only derelict civic buildings in the Mthatha CBD. In Elliot Road, there is also an old and deteriorated civic building, which forms part of the KSD Traffic Department and Motor Vehicle Registration Centre. As it seems, this building has aged to such an extent that it patently does not comply with building codes as it has deteriorated external walls and broken windows. In addition, due to its poor conditions, the building has also turned into a famous spot for urination among the male users of the nearby taxi rank, thus aggravating the already derelict conditions exhibited in this building and its surroundings. Figures 5.4 and 5.5 below show this building's front and back view together with its "secondary" (illegal) usage.

Figure 5.4: KSD Traffic Department

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.5: Dilapidated Traffic Department Building

Source: Author (2016)

Nonetheless, as aforementioned, the observed physical indicators of urban blight are not only limited to the civic buildings exhibited above, they also span out to residential and commercial properties in and across the CBD. Credibly, these properties are in a dilapidated state and display barefaced indications of not only unsanitary and unsafe conditions, but also of circumstances that jeopardize life and the resilience of the properties themselves through factors such environmental contamination and deteriorating building materials. Admissibly, these conditions are palpable in the properties in Richmond Street (figure 5.6), Eagle Street (figure 5.7), Essex Lane (figure 5.8) and King Edward Road (figure 5.9).

Figure 5.6: Slum in Richmond Street

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.7: Dilapidated House in Eagle Street

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.8: Slum in Essex Lane

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.9: Impoverished Residential Property in King Edward Road

Source: Author (2016)

Regarding these properties, judging from the layout plan of the town presented in figure 4.4, the deteriorated buildings in Richmond Street, Eagle Street, Essex Lane and King Edward Road were previously residential units as they fall within areas zoned for residential purposes. However, today they have turned into impoverished and dilapidated structures, which are now predominantly encroached by informal and illegal land uses including drug dealing. Other properties displaying physical blight indications include the market in Madeira Street (figure 5.10) and other commercial and industrial properties in Stanford Terrace Street (figure 5.11), Bridge Street (figure 5.12) and King Edward Road (figure 5.13) among others.

Figure 5.10: Ntozonke Market in Madeira Street

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.11: Unfinished Structure with Environmental Contamination

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.12: Slums in Bridge Street

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.13: Dilapidated Light Industrial Property

Source: Author (2016)

ii) Infrastructure and Services

- ***Conditions of Roads and Street Space***

In terms of roads, the Mthatha CBD is also characterized by a substantial level of road dilapidation, which is visible in a majority of the streets across the CBD. According to the KSDLM IDP (2015), almost 90% of the town's surfaced road network has deteriorated to such an extent that the roads are not only filled with potholes, but are also unmarked, with no signage and some of the paving in them has dilapidated into an unacceptable state whose improvement would have to go beyond pothole repair. Even worse, the pavements/sidewalks alongside these roads have also dilapidated to such an extent that they even show signs of environmental contamination due to the deterioration of their hard surface. Typical examples of these roads are the roads in Stanford Terrace Road (figure 5.14), Richmond Street (figure 5.15), Oxland Street (figure 5.16), Victoria Street (figure 5.17), Owen Street (figure 5.18), King Edward Street (5.19), Chatham Street (figure 5.20) and Eagle Street (figure 5.21).

Figure 5.14: Stanford Terrace Road

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.15: Poor Road in Richmond Street

Source: Google (2016)

Figure 5.16: Oxland Street Dilpidated Road

Source: Google (2016)

Figure 5.17: Victoria Street Poor Road

Source: Google (2016)

Figure 5.18: Massive Pothole in Leeds Road

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.19: King Edward Poor Road

Source: Google (2016)

Figure 5.20: Dilapidated Road with bushes on the sides

Source: Google (2016)

Figure 5.21: Potholes in Eagle Street

Source: Google (2016)

Inferring from the images presented in the above figures, it is evident that the conditions of the roads in the CBD are also significantly inadequate as both roads and pavements generally fail to cater for the huge traffic and large number of pedestrians respectively, thus resulting to their unconcealed dilapidation and subsequent heavy congestion in the town. According to the Sustainable Mthatha Consortium (2008), road traffic through the CBD is estimated between 20 000 and 22 500 cars per day along the N2, and between 15 000 and 17 500 vehicles along the R61. This is quite extensive in comparison with towns of comparable size such as Beaufort West, whose traffic volumes are estimated to be around 4000 along its main roads, particularly the N1. In the same breath, figures 5.22 and 5.23 below show the congested York Road, together with Sprigg Street, which is the main route feeding incoming traffic into the town via the N2.

Figure 5.22: Traffic Congestion in York Road

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.23: Traffic Congestion in the N2 arterial road

Source: Author (2016)

Figures 5.24 and 5.25 on the other hand are typical examples of dilapidated and congested sidewalk pavements, which also form part of the inadequate roads, which indicate physical urban blight in the Mthatha CBD.

Figure 5.24: Heavily Congested Pavement in Elliot Road

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.25: A dilapidated sidewalk pavement in Bridge Street

Source: Author (2016)

- ***Storm Water Drainage, Sewerage, and Water System***

Understandably, the poor state of the roads also has a significant impact on the storm water drainage and sewerage systems. As such, the deterioration of the road in the Mthatha CBD occurs concurrently with that of the storm water drainage and sewerage system, thus negatively affecting the overall reticulation patterns of these services in the town as a whole, including that of the water reticulation system. According to Dzinotyiweyi (2009), by the end of 2008, out of 20 water pump stations, 19 were reported as inoperable.

Unsurprisingly, the deterioration of these systems is not only characterized by the unkempt sewage spills (raw effluent) which are a result of the overloaded and old, bursting pipes throughout the town. It is also epitomized by the water outages and flooding experienced in the town on a continuous basis as a result of the poor water reticulation and storm water drainage systems of the town. In this respect, these poor conditions of the town's storm water drainage, sewerage, and water reticulation systems therefore qualify as indicators of urban blight as they

yield unsanitary and unsafe conditions, which in turn pose serious environmental hazards to the inhabitants of the area. Understandably, these conditions also have negative repercussions on the Mthatha River as it is where they consequently deposit the affluent they convey. Some examples of these are evidenced in figure 5.26, figure 5.27, figure 5.28, figure 5.29, figure 5.30 and figure 5.31 below.

Figure 5.26: Burst Water Pipe in Owen Street

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.27: Raw effluent in Bridge Street

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.28: Dilapidated Storm Water Drain

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.29: Puddles of Raw Effluent from the Dilapidated Building in figure 4.6

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.30: Water leakage from the building in Durtham Street

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.31: Sewage from a burst pipe in Stanford Terrace Road

Source: Ntshobane (2016)

- ***Mthatha River***

As aforementioned, the Mthatha River is also directly affected by the unsanitary conditions yielded by the derelict state of bulk infrastructure within the town. According to the River Health Programme (2008), due to the old sewer systems, which are inefficient as a result of overloading and poor maintenance; the systems experience extensive blockages and stuctural failures which in turn result in sewage pollution either from raw or partially treated effluent entering the river. As such, downstream, the water is of poor quality ,and this is also aggravated by factors such as littering and the use of the river as a faciltity for abblution and other incivilities such as urinating. This perhaps accounts for the increased nitrates and ammonia levels, together with high faecal coliform bacteria counts and the presence of pathogenic bacteria which are responsible for the water-borne diseases evidenced by the outbreaks of cholera in the area. Consequently, the river is also encroached by macro-invertebrate assemblages which are associated with poor water quality and the existence of fine silty sediments, which are a result of the sewer system channelling both sanitary waste water and storm water in the same pipes. In turn, these conditions stimulate the escessive growth of algae and congested bushes which in turn become hotspots for criminals which victimize people walking close to the river as the town is essentially pedestrianized (River Health Programme, 2008). Figure 5.32 below shows the Mthatha River while figure 5.33 shows an example of these incivilities with a man who has just releived himself on the river bank.

Figure 5.32: The Mthatha River and its bushes

Source: Google (2016)

Figure 5.33: Incivilities along the Mthatha River

Source: Google (2016)

- ***Litter, Refuse Disposal and Cleanliness***

In this respect, Mthatha is arguably one of the most dirtiest towns, not only in the Eastern cape Province, but in the whole of South Africa. As it seems, this is not only due to high rates of negligent littering, but also because of the poor refuse disposal service in the town (Graham, 2011). Other factors which also aggravate this issue are activities such as informal advertising by means of posters (shown in figure 5.34) which are pasted literally in almost every building in the CBD, together with other informal activities such as the fixing of cars and burning of tyres by motor mechanics on the streets which leaves grime on the road and on the walls as shown in figure 5.35. Justifiably, all these factors contribute to the deterioration of property values in the town, thus contributing to the perceived notion of urban blight in the town.

Figure 5.34: Illegal advertising by means of posters on walls in Madeira Street

Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.35: Grime on the concrete fences in Richmond Street

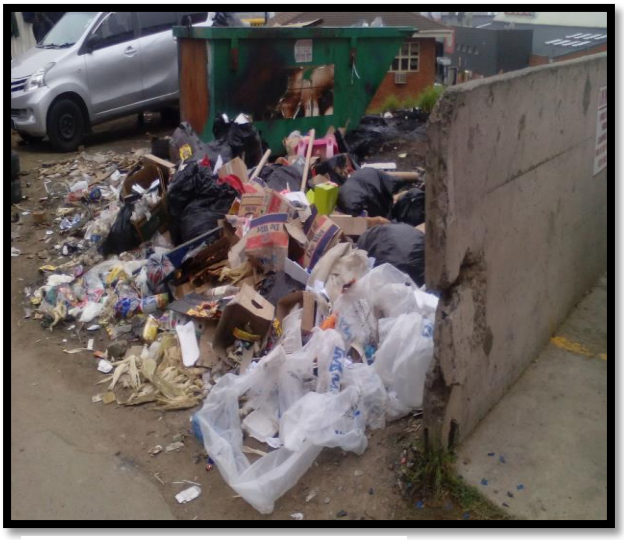
Source: Author (2016)

Into the bargain, some places in town also have an unpleasant smell largely because of the undisposed solid waste that piles up in and around trash bins. Due to this, these places are filthy and undeniably present environmental and health hazards to the people exposed to such places. Figures 5.36 and 5.37 are prime examples of such places.

Figure 5.36: Unkempt solid waste in Elliot Street

Source: Author (2016)

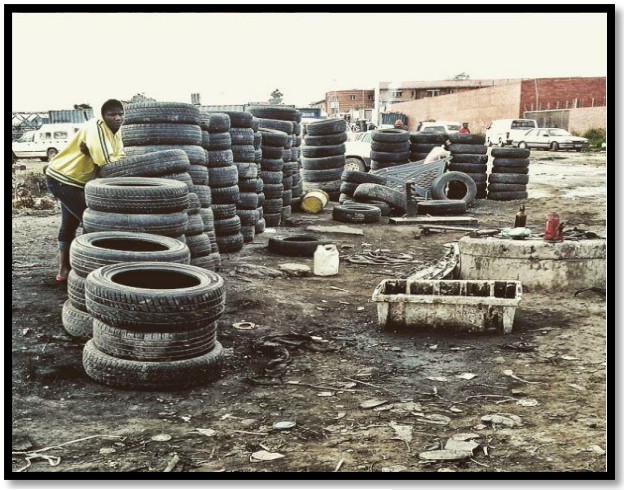
Figure 5.37: Unkempt solid waste in Chatham Street



Source: Author (2016)

Understandably, these are not the only places with high concentration of dirt or lack of cleanliness in the town; evidently, the same places that have a high concentration of informal motor mechanics are also contributors to this perceived blight in the town because of their hawking of used tires everywhere they establish themselves. This is evidenced by figures 5.38 and 5.39 below.

Figure 5.38: Tyre Hawking in Stanford Terrace Road



Source: Author (2016)

Figure 5.39: Tyre Hawking by the taxi rank in Stanford Terrace Road

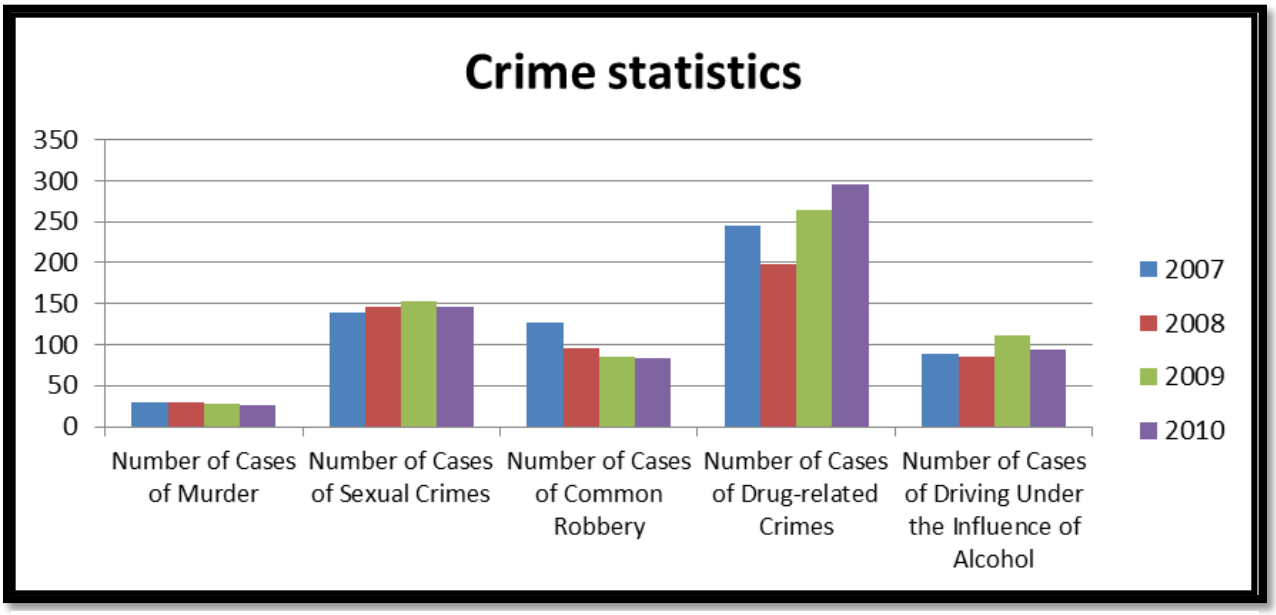
Source: Author (2016)

5.1.2 Non Physical Indicators of Urban Blight in Mthatha

i) Crime

Unsurprisingly, the town of Mthatha also has an extremely bad reputation when it comes to crime. Nevertheless, according to the KSDLM IDP (2015), the most common criminal activities reported in the police stations in KSD, particularly the ones in town are primarily commercial crimes such as shoplifting and larceny out of or from motor vehicles alongside other crimes such as drug dealing, robbery, assault and burglary among other criminal activities. Figure 5.40 below shows the number of reported cases in KSD between the year 2007 and 2010 as illustrated in the IDP.

Figure 5.40: Crime Statistics reported in the KSD municipal region between 2007 and 2010



Source: KSD IDP (2015)

Moreover, in addition to these statistics, the table below also reveals that in the Mthatha CBD, the number of reported cases between April 2012 and March 2013 is much higher than in all the other police stations within the KSD municipal region. Deducing from this, with respect to crime, these statistics are undeniably weighty indicators of urban blight in the Mthatha CBD. Correspondingly, table 5.1 below depicts the various categories and numbers of criminal cases reported in the police stations within the KSD municipal region in the aforementioned period.

Table 5.1: Criminal cases reported between April 2012 and March 2013 in the KSD municipal region

Crime category	BITYI	COFFEE BAY	KWAAIMANI	NGANGELIZWE	MQANDULI	MTHATHA (Central and the Madeira)	Total number of cases
Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm	160	62	89	131	210	679	1331
Attempted murder	21	1	14	6	12	77	131
Burglary at non-residential premises	26	22	20	19	54	272	413
Burglary at residential premises	57	33	29	157	152	605	1033
Common assault	37	39	27	95	54	639	891
Common robbery	4	2	0	12	32	182	232
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	1	1	0	15	6	52	75
Drug-related crime	99	25	16	86	53	162	441
Murder	50	5	21	35	30	145	286
Robbery at non-residential premises	13	3	3	10	17	65	111
Robbery at residential premises	15	9	16	12	23	69	144
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	52	15	26	79	88	685	945
Sexual Crimes	77	14	37	85	73	319	605
Stock-theft	223	10	81	5	102	237	658
Theft out of or from motor vehicle and motorcycle	24	27	5	88	34	1146	1324
Commercial crime	6	1	0	3	46	1282	1338

Source: KSD IDP (2015)

ii) Other Indicators of Urban Blight

Moreover, in addition to crime, the town is also subject to other indicators of urban blight that are not physical. To begin with, based on the KSDLM IDP (2015), it is evident that the municipality does not have a clear method of controlling and increasing its revenue base as some of the properties in town are tax delinquent. In this respect, the IDP outlines a poor revenue collection on debtors and direct income, alongside non-collection on rentals, among other causes such as the non-demarcation of vending stalls as key contributors. Additionally, the municipality is also faced with the overarching challenge of noncompliance with National Building Regulations. As it seems, this is exacerbated by the fact that the municipality has no measures or by-laws put in place for enforcing, recording and tracking building improvements to aid in the billing section dedicated in identifying changes in property values, together with the lack of proper monitoring of land use. Into the bargain, it is also evident that servitudes are also not charged, and the stealing of energy is also prevalent (KSDLM, 2015).

5.2 To whom is Mthatha attractive?

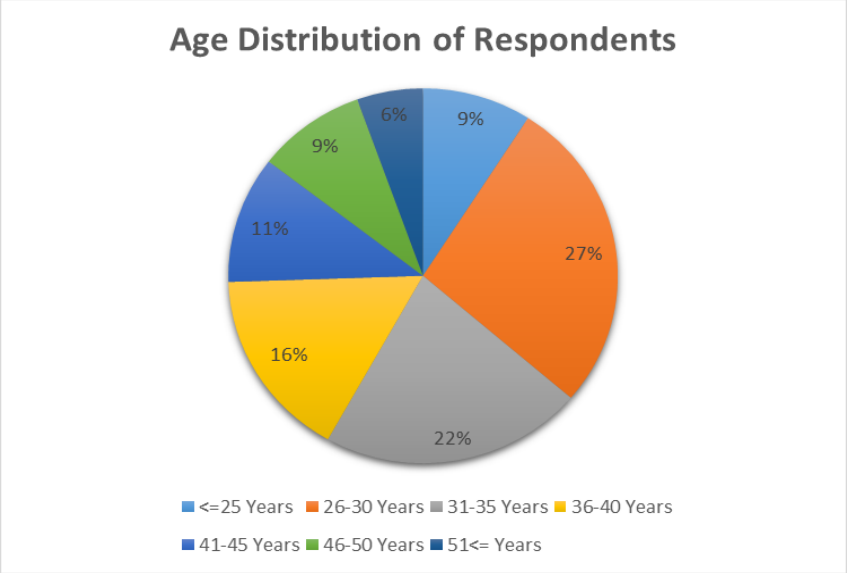
Plausibly, as alleged in this study, the town of Mthatha has many pull factors, which draw people into the town on a daily basis, some opt to reside while others commute for different reasons. However, as alluded before in the methodology, because the study adopted a stratified purposive sampling; accordingly, this section firstly illuminates the attractiveness of Mthatha from the perspective of the informal sector within the town before presenting it from the perspective of the general residents of the smaller surrounding towns and Mthatha itself. Nevertheless, before doing as such, this section starts off by presenting the socio-economic background of the respondents so as to somewhat give an indication of whom the town is attractive to as far as respondents are concerned.

5.2.1 Socio-Economic Background of the Respondents

The socio-economic background presented herein is of the 55 respondents that participated in this study with the omission of the official representing the KSDLM planning department. These respondents are comprised of 25-targeted people from the informal sector, 25 people from 5 of the smaller towns adjacent to Mthatha, and 5 people from Mthatha itself. Explicably, due to the nature of the study, this socio-economic background has been limited only to age distribution, gender distribution, marital status, employment status and income distribution.

i. Age Distribution of Respondents

Figure 5.41: Graph Showing Age Distribution of Respondents



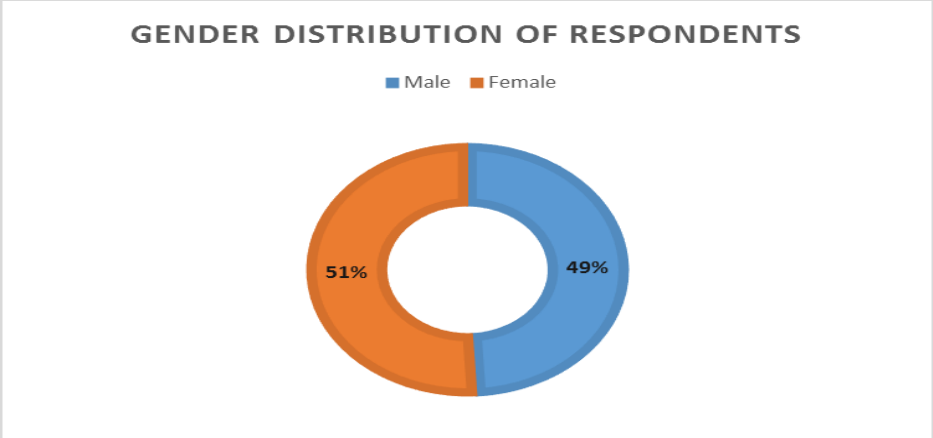
Source: Author (2016)

Deducing from figure 5.41, the respondents are somewhat youthful, and there is an inverse proportionality between age and the number of respondents as the most dominant age group is the age 26 - 30 years, with the least dominant age group being the age from 51 years upwards.

ii. Gender Distribution of Respondents

However, with regards to gender distribution, the male and female ratio is almost equal at 51% and 49% respectively. This is illustrated by figure 5.42 below.

Figure 5.42: Gender Distribution of Respondents

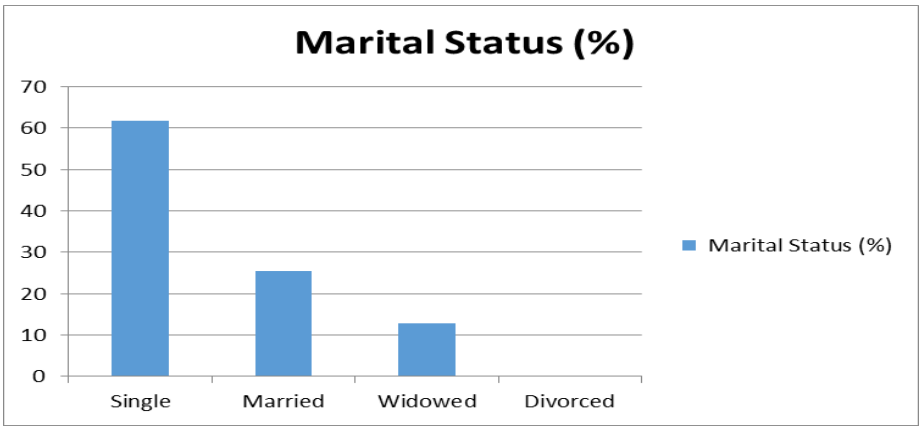


Source: Author (2016)

iii. Marital Status of Respondents

On the other hand, concerning marital status, experimental findings on the respondents indicate that the majority (62%) of the respondents are single, while only 25% are married. The 13% difference is comprised of the widowed, with 0% divorced. Figure 5.43 below is a graphical representation of this distribution in percentages.

Figure 5.43: Marital Status of Respondents

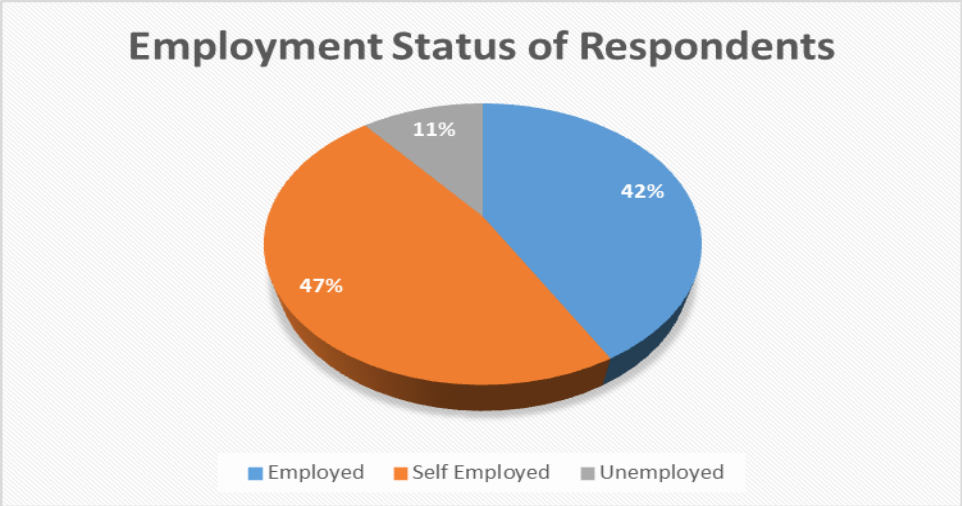


Source: Author (2016)

iv. Employment Status of Respondents

Regarding employment status, the respondents were either unemployed, employed or self-employed; with the latter taking the largest share probably due to the high unemployment aforementioned in 4.3.1. Figure 5.44 is a graphical illustration of their employment status.

Figure 5.44: Employment Status of Respondents

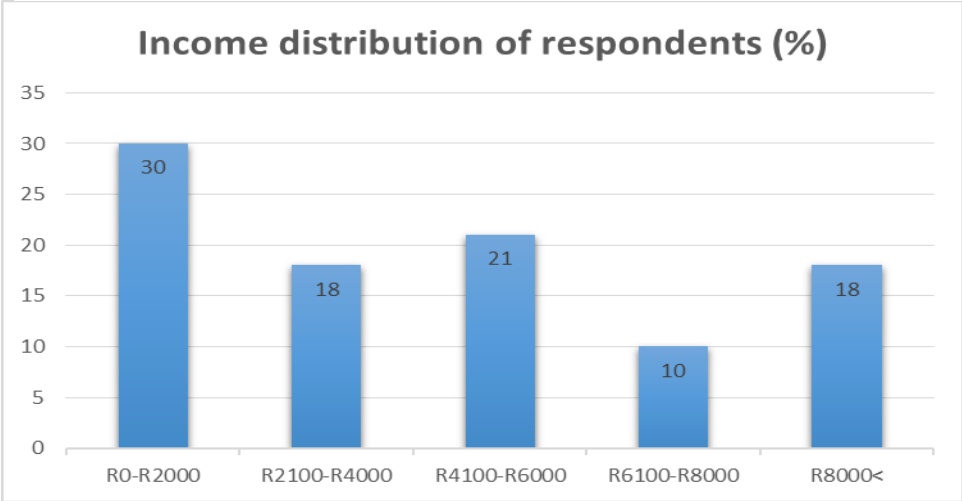


Source: Author (2016)

v. Income Distribution of Respondents

Figure 5.45 below illustrates the income distribution of the respondents as informed by question 1.6 of appendix 2. Inferring from this graph, the majority of the respondents are relatively poor and the implications of that undeniably have an impact on the subsequent findings.

Figure 5.45: Income Distribution of Respondents



Source: Author (2016)

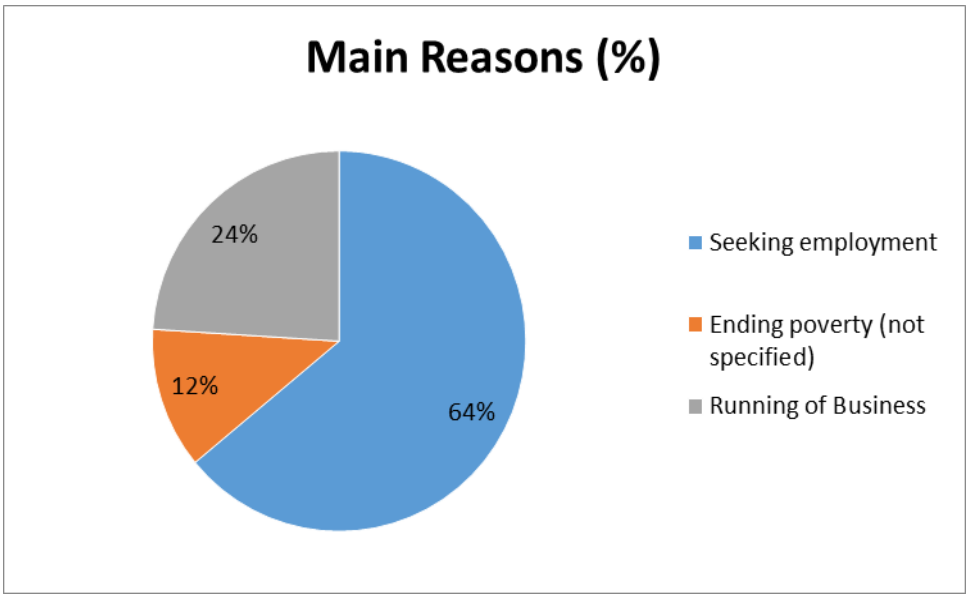
5.3 What makes Mthatha an attractive town and to what extent is the town attractive in relation to its surrounding towns?

5.3.1 What makes Mthatha an attractive town?

i. **<u>To the people who do informal activities (informal sector)</u>**

To begin with, from the perspective of the 25-targeted people who do informal activities in the Mthatha CBD (the first stratum of the sampling frame) - seeking employment, ending poverty (not specified how) and running of businesses are the main reasons for coming to Mthatha that came in response to question 2.3 of appendix 2. This is therefore suggestive of the fact that these people mainly perceive Mthatha as a place of hope and opportunity, and that is how the town is primarily attractive to them. Empirically, figure 5.46 below is a graphical illustration of their main reasons for coming to Mthatha as informed by the questionnaires.

Figure 5.46: Main reasons for coming to Mthatha (Informal Sector)



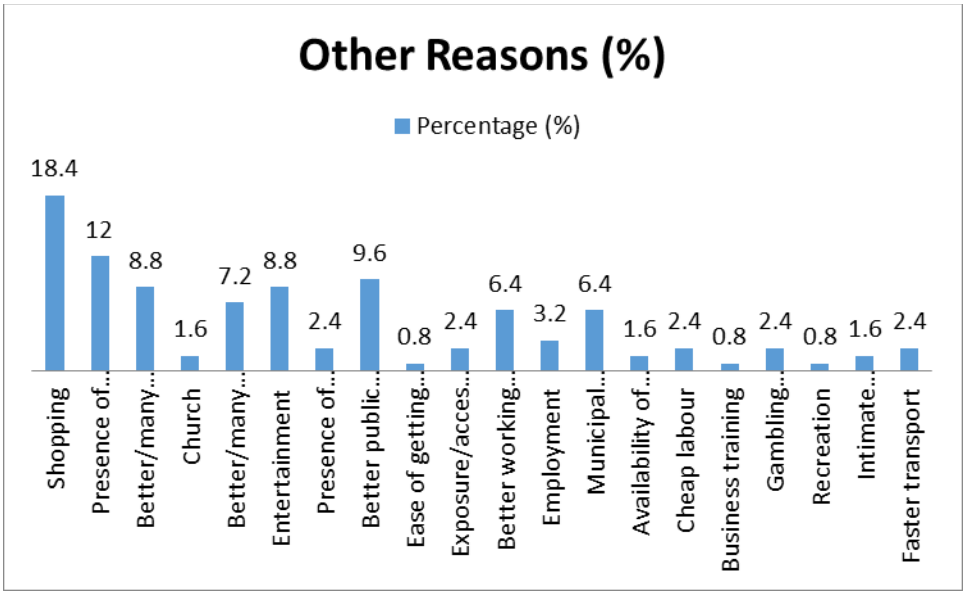
Source: Author (2016)

However, apart from these reasons - with each person outlining 5 other things that lure them into the town (refer to question 2.4 of appendix 2), these people in their entirety provided 20 other motivations for coming to Mthatha on a daily or permanent basis. Table 5.2 and figure 5.47 below show these 20 different things that lure these people into the town daily based on their subjective opinions.

Table 5.2: Other motives for coming to Mthatha (Informal Traders)

Motivation	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Shopping	23	18.4
Presence of customers	15	12
Better/many options of schools	11	8.8
Church	2	1.6
Better/many options of health facilities	9	7.2
Entertainment	11	8.8
Presence of relatives	3	2.4
Better public facilities	12	9.6
Ease of getting materials	1	0.8
Exposure/accessibility	3	2.4
Better working space	8	6.4
Employment	4	3.2
Municipal services	8	6.4
Availability of stock	2	1.6
Cheap labour	3	2.4
Business training	1	0.8
Gambling options	3	2.4
Recreation	1	0.8
Intimate relationship	2	1.6
Faster transport	3	2.4

Figure 5.47: Graphical Illustration of the above table



Source: Author (2016)

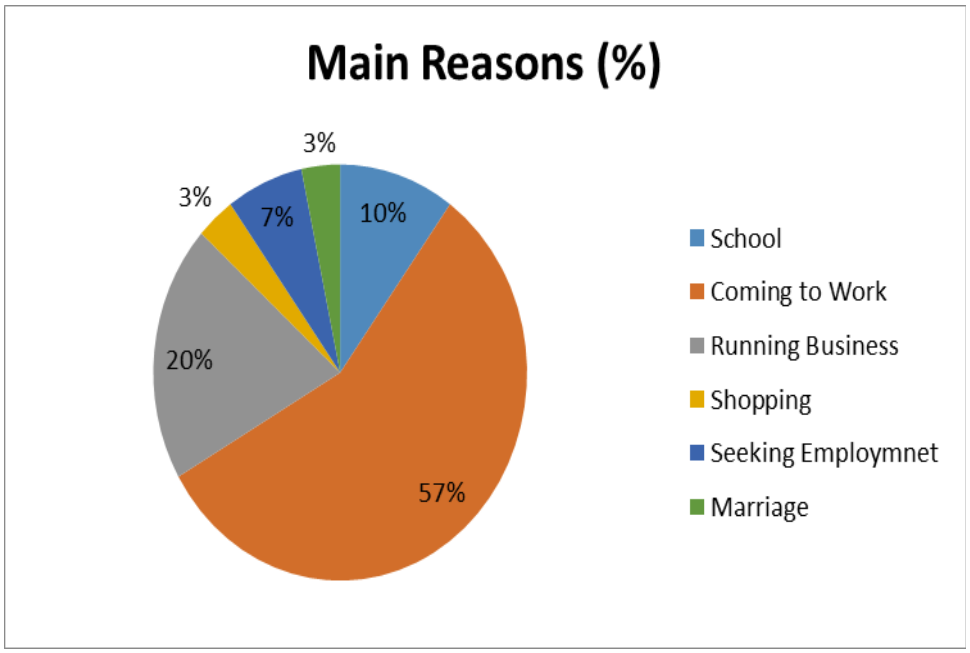
Deducing from the table and graph above, it is evident that apart from seeking employment, the people who do informal activities in the CBD are also predominantly lured into the town by the many shopping options it has to offer. As stated by respondent 27, “many of us mainly go to town to do shopping since Mthatha has better shops that cater our needs as parents”. This attests the assertion by Harrison (2008) that Mthatha is more of a place of consumers rather than of producers. What is more, these people are likewise motivated to come to Mthatha by the presence of their (potential) customers. This was also confirmed, among others, by respondent 4, who stated that “there are more chances of getting a car to wash in Mthatha than in Libode”. In that order, these motivations are also complemented by the presence of better schools and public facilities, followed by entertainment and the many options of health facilities the town has to offer. Others, such as better working space and municipal services are also considerable motivations to these people as their responses were on par at 6.4%. Furthermore, based on this table, the least frequent motivations were the ease of getting materials, business training and recreation, and this in a way echoes the priorities of the people who do informal activities. However, despite how they prioritise their motives, by merely having the qualities presented in table 5.2 and figure 5.47, to the people who do informal activities in the CBD, the town of Mthatha is undeniably attractive.

The opulence of this attractiveness is further enhanced by the responses to question 2.20 of appendix 2 as 36% of these people conclude that the town is more attractive than their original place of residence in the sense that it is largely conducive for self-employment, while 24% on the other hand also admit that the town has more business opportunities. In the same breath, only 8% make mention of better services, while 12% on the other hand allude to the fact that Mthatha actually has better chances of employment, with only 4% making reference to better facilities. Nevertheless, the remaining 8% is comprised of responses that claim Mthatha is attractive, but not more attractive than their original places of residence. The main reasons behind this claim allude to the impression that Mthatha is no different from where they come from in the sense that there is also a huge lack of employment.

ii. To the General Residents

Moving over to the second stratum of the sampling frame employed herein, which is comprised of 30 people residing in Mthatha and in five other smaller towns surrounding Mthatha. From the perspective of these residents - school, coming to work, running businesses, shopping, marriage and seeking employment were the main reasons for coming to Mthatha that came up as they responded to question 2.3 of appendix 2. Inexcusably, these reasons are indicative of the attractiveness of the town from the standpoint of these people. Correspondingly, figure 5.48 below is a graphical illustration of these reasons as enumerated from the questionnaires.

Figure 5.48: Main reasons for coming to Mthatha (general residents)



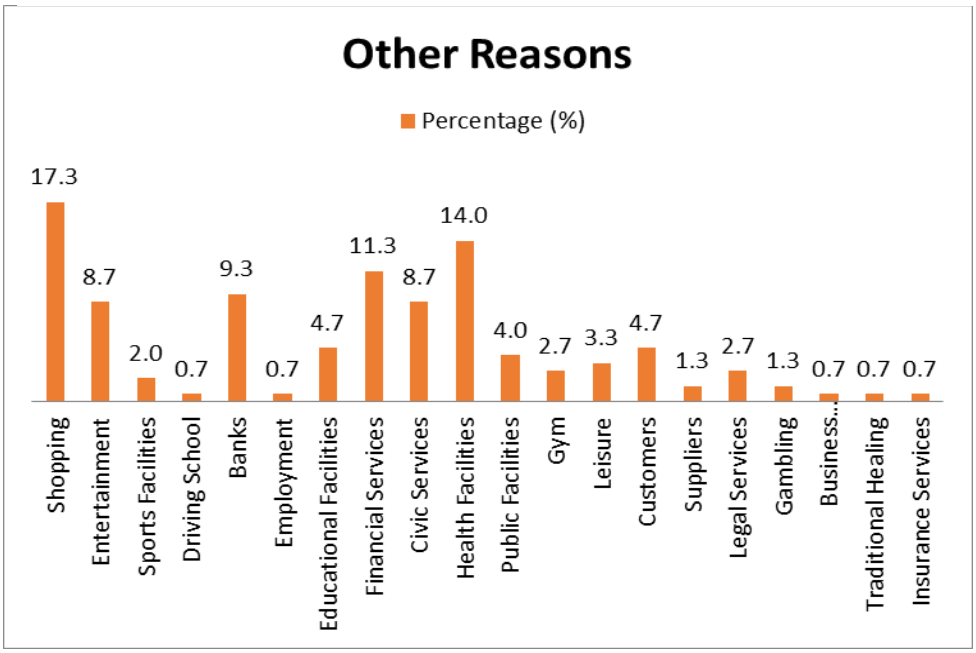
Source: Author (2016)

In addition to these reasons, responses to question 2.4 of appendix 2 further enhance the opulence of the attractiveness of Mthatha from the perspective of these residents. Likewise, with each person outlining 5 other things that lure them into the town, these residents also provided 20 other motivations for coming to Mthatha. Table 5.3 below is a tabulation of these other secondary motives for coming to Mthatha, while figure 5.49 is a graphical illustration of the same data.

Table 5.3: Other motives for coming to Mthatha (General Residents)

Motivation	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Shopping	26	17.3
Entertainment	13	8.7
Sports Facilities	3	2.0
Driving School	1	0.7
Banks	14	9.3
Seeking Employment	1	0.7
Educational Facilities	7	4.7
Financial Services	17	11.3
Civic Services	13	8.7
Health Facilities	21	14.0
Public Facilities	6	4.0
Gym	4	2.7
Leisure	5	3.3
Customers	7	4.7
Suppliers	2	1.3
Legal Services	4	2.7
Gambling	2	1.3
Business Opportunities	1	0.7
Traditional Healing	1	0.7
Insurance Services	1	0.7

Figure 5.49: Graphical Illustration of the above table



Source: Author (2016)

Construing from table 5.3 and figure 5.49 above, it is evident that even from the perspective of the general residents of these targeted towns, though not a main, shopping remains a leading motive for coming to Mthatha, another confirmation of the assertion by Harrison (2008). This is followed by the presence of many/better health facilities alongside the various financial service entities (such as loan sharks) and banks that attract people to the town on a daily basis. As stated respondent 31, "as poor people, we rely heavily on money lenders and most of them are based in Mthatha".

On the other hand, given the highly youthful profile of the respondents, it is also not surprising that entertainment also falls among the top five secondary reasons for coming to Mthatha. On par with entertainment at 8.5%, civic services such as those offered at the Department of Home Affairs are also another thing that lures people to come to Mthatha on a daily basis. Correspondingly, these are followed by the presence of educational facilities, whose level as a factor of attraction is on par with customers at 4.7% (which go hand-in-hand with suppliers and business opportunities) as some of the general residents of these towns are also informal traders, irrespective of the fact that they are not part of the first stratum of this sampling frame. As can be seen in figure 5.49, public facilities, leisure, gym, sports facilities, gambling, seeking employment (by those who are self-employed), driving schools, traditional healing and insurance services are also other things available in Mthatha that attract people from other towns and other residential areas within Mthatha itself.

In addition, upon responding to question 2.20 of appendix 2, 37% of the residents concluded that Mthatha is generally attractive mainly because of the better employment options it has. Understandably, such responses came from the people who were fortunate enough to get employment. Nevertheless, on the other hand, 10% of the responses to the same question referred to the existence of tertiary institutions as their ultimate reason for the town's attractiveness, these responses possibly came from students. Moreover, a further 23% mentioned the presence of customers as their subjective ultimate reason to perceive the town as attractive; understandably, such responses came from informal traders. Be that as it may, 13% of these responses were not as suggestive of occupation as they only perceived the town as attractive because of its size and vibrancy, which are obviously superior to wherever they come from. In addition to this, 3% of the responses to question 2.20 of appendix 2 made mention of better

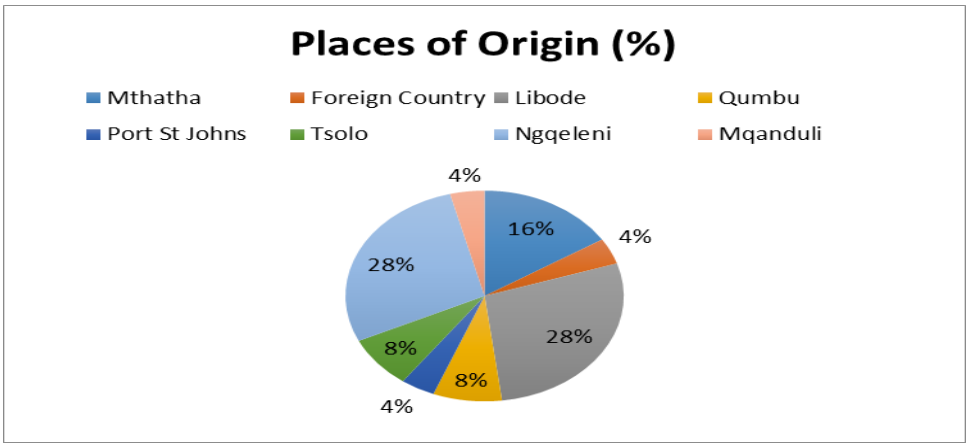
public facilities, while another 10% referred to better shopping options. With that said, it is very much possible that these reasons somewhat have a ratchet effect on the eventual status quo of the town's attractiveness as they even draw families to settle in the cities/towns in question. As a result, 3% of these responses mentioned the presence of their families as their ultimate reason to see Mthatha as attractive.

5.3.2 To What Extent is the Town Attractive?

i. <u>To the people who do informal activities (informal sector)</u>

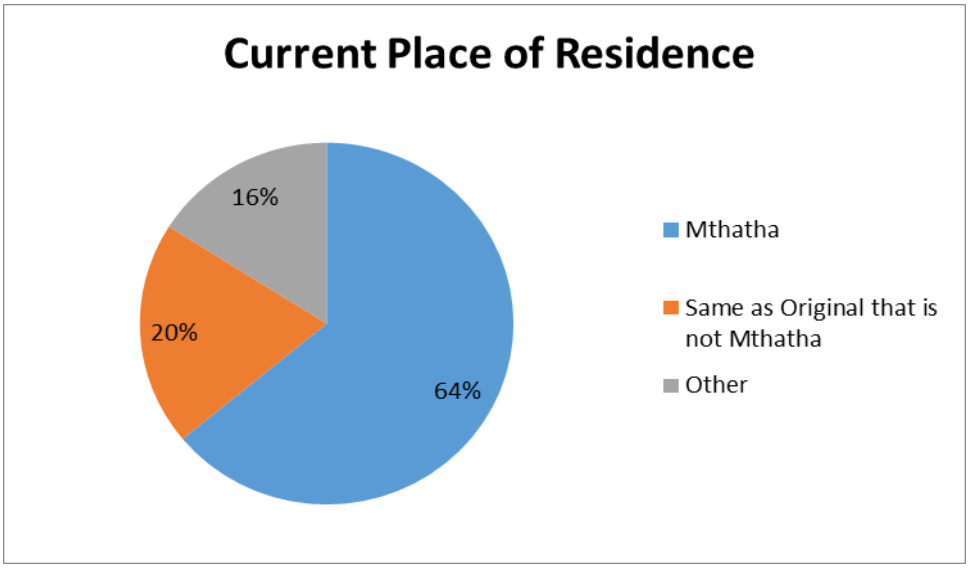
To begin with, in response to question 2.6 of appendix 2, 76% of the people who do informal activities affirm that the town certainly meets their expectations, while the remaining 24% maintains an opposing view. Moreover, in response to question 2.19 of appendix 2, 92% of these people however reckon Mthatha as more attractive than the towns where they originally come from, while 8% of them are of the opposing view. Additionally, in highlighting the extent to which the town is attractive; it is also evident that Mthatha does not only lure people from the smaller surrounding towns (including those that are, and those that are not part of the second stratum of the sampling frame), but also people from foreign countries such as Malawi. As informed by the questionnaires, the respondents that fall under the first stratum of the sampling frame originally come from many places including Mthatha itself alongside, Libode, Qumbu, Port St Johns, Tsolo, Ngqeleni, Mqanduli and a foreign country. Figure 5.50 below shows the distribution of the places of origin of the people who do informal activities in the CBD based on the responses to question 2.1 of appendix 2, while figure 5.51 on the other hand shows the distribution of their current places of residence.

Figure 5.50: Places of Origin



Source: Author (2016)

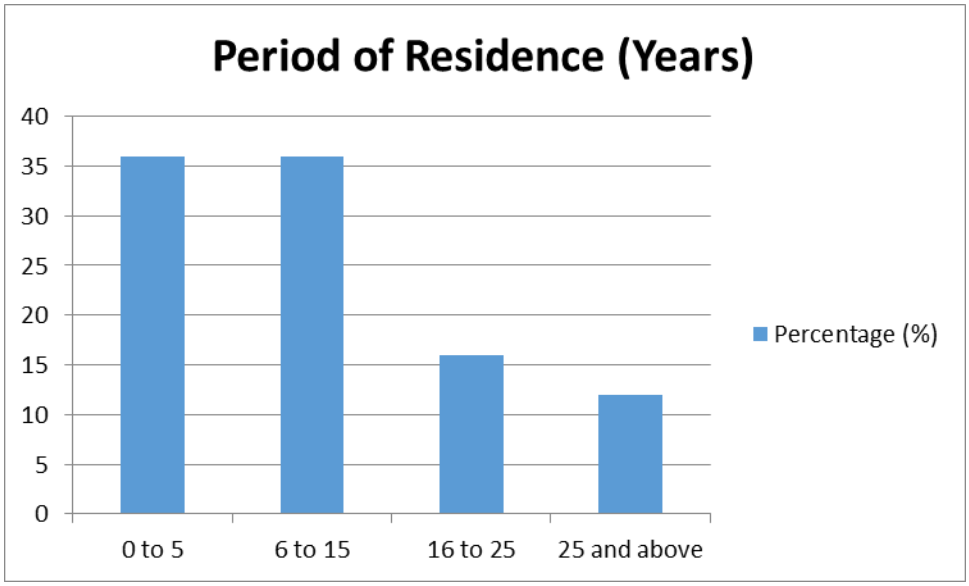
Figure 5.51: Current Places of Residence



Source: Author (2016)

Inferring from both figures 5.50 and 5.51, it is therefore evident that in as much as only 16% of these people are originally from Mthatha, 64% of them actually reside in the town while 20% still reside in their other original places of residence that are not Mthatha. The remaining 16% however is comprised of people reside neither in their original places of residence or in Mthatha. These are people who reside in places that are closer to Mthatha but not under the dominion of the town. Figure 5.52 below shows the number of years these people have lived in these areas.

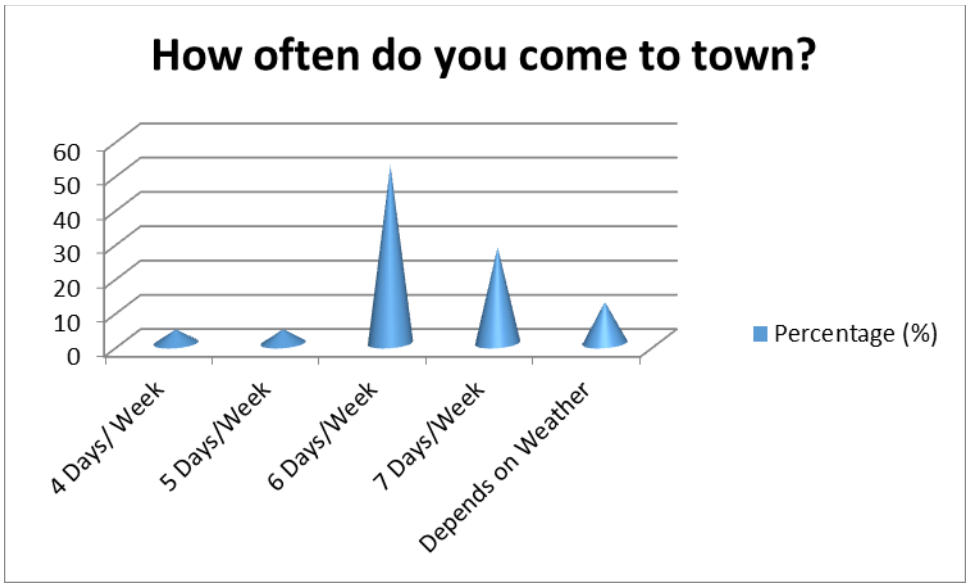
Figure 5.52: Period of Residence in Current Places of residence



Source: Author (2016)

Nevertheless, irrespective of the number of years these people have lived in their current places of residence, these people still come to town frequently depending on the activities they do in town and the circumstances that make it favourable to conduct them. Figure 5.53 below illustrates the number of days these people come to town per week.

Figure 5.53: Number of days of coming to town per week



Source: Author (2016)

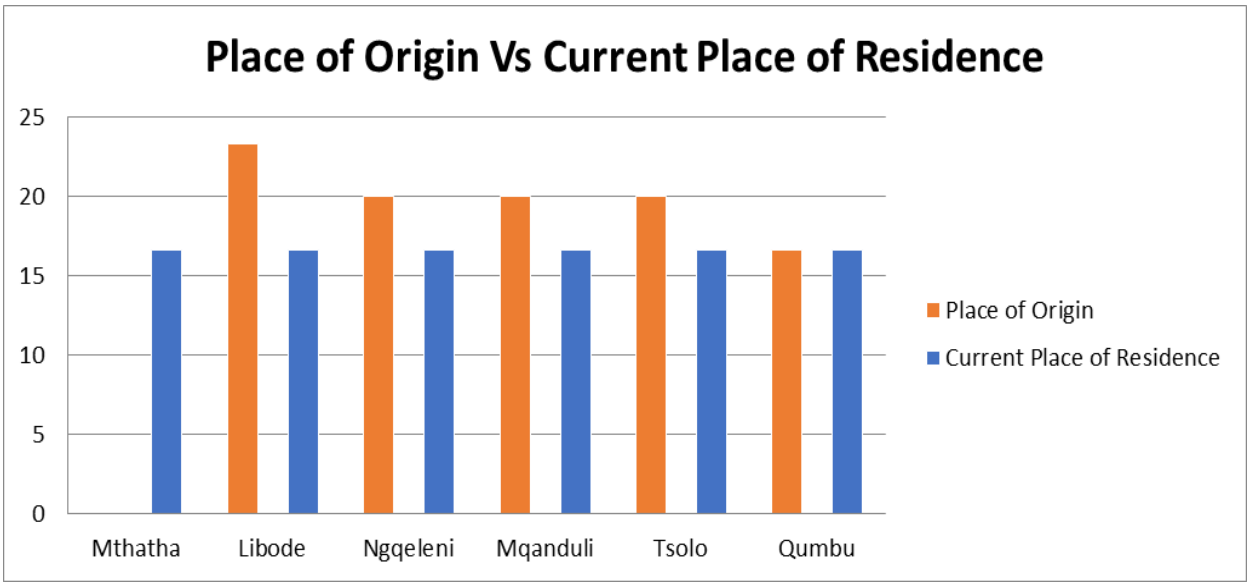
Inferring from figure 5.53 above, it is therefore evident that irrespective of where these people reside, majority of them come to town almost every day as 52% of them come to town 6 days per week while 28% come to town every day. This is therefore suggests that the town is so attractive such that up to 80% of the people who do informal activities have a reason to come to the town almost every day, or a minimum of 6 days a week.

ii. <u>To the General Residents</u>

Moving over to the second stratum of the sampling frame, which is comprised of the general residents of Mthatha and other smaller surrounding towns; in response to question 2.6 of appendix 2, 96% of these people agree to the town meeting their expectations while only 4% is of a different view. Unsurprisingly, 100% of these people therefore avow that the town is in this respect more attractive than their original places of residence. However, regardless of the fact that the study categorized these people according to their places of residence, responses to question 2.1 of appendix 2 nonetheless reveal that the five people that fall under the residents of

Mthatha are also originally from other towns. This therefore implies that the distribution of their original places of residence differs from that of their current places of residence irrespective of the fact that these people were deliberately targeted as representatives of the towns in the sampling frame. Figure 5.54 below illustrate this contrast further.

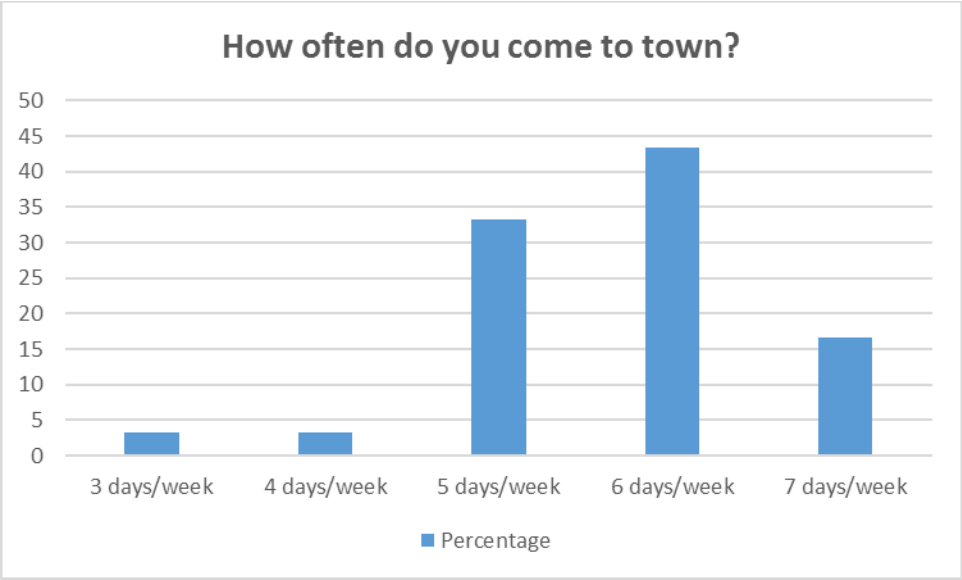
Figure 5.54: Graph showing the contrast between places of origin and current places of residence



Source: Author (2016)

As can be seen in figure 5.54 above, the responses to question 2.1 of appendix 2 reveal that among the respondents under this stratum, no one is originally from Mthatha, but due to the attractiveness of the town, 17% of these respondents are now residents of the town and have been staying there for an average of 15 years. Nevertheless, regardless of where the respondents under this stratum reside, it is also noteworthy that a majority (43%) of the entirety of these people come to town about 6 times a week. Justifiably, this is due to the socio-economic activities that go on in Mthatha as these people outline that these 6 days are Monday to Saturday, with midweek being for things like going to work or running businesses, and Saturday being for things like shopping, entertainment and leisure *inter alia*. As illustrated below, the next group after the majority comes to town only on business days, that is, Monday to Friday. Defensibly, this group is comprised of the older respondents who primarily come to town strictly for employment or business purposes. This group makes up about 33% of these people. Figure 5.55 below is a graphical illustration of how many times these respondents come to town per week as unveiled by the responses to question 2.5 of appendix 2.

Figure 5.55: Graph showing how many times these respondents come to town



Source: Author (2017)

Additionally, inferring from figure 5.55 and section 1 of appendix 2, it is also evident that the people who come to town about 7 days a week are those that do informal socio-economic activities in the CBD (even though they fall under this stratum). Others, who come to town about 3 and 4 days a week are mainly comprised of those that are neither employed or doing informal activities, but come to town regularly in search of employment.

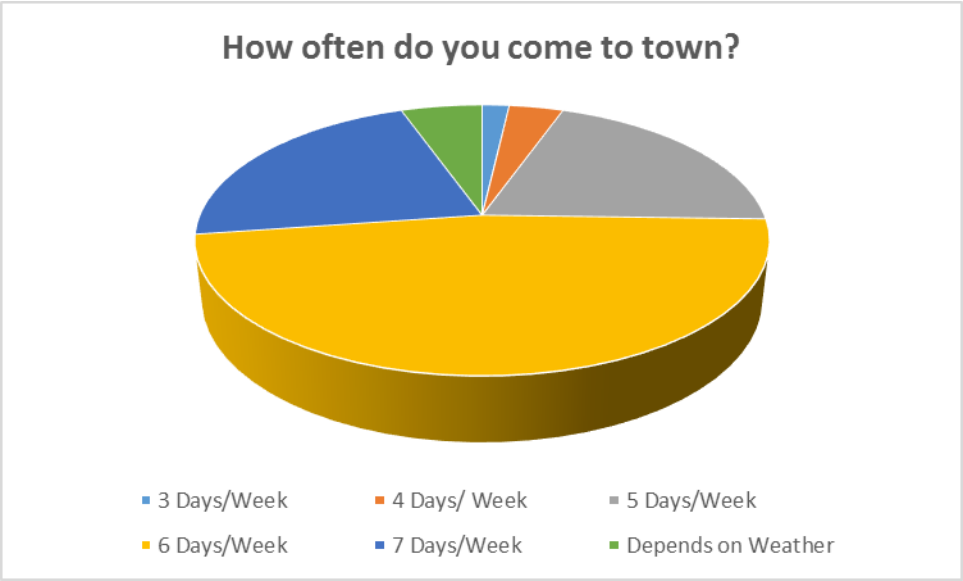
iii. Summary

Thus, looking at it from the perspective of the entirety of the respondents (with of course the exception of the official from the local municipality), one can therefore recapitulate that Mthatha is generally reckoned as attractive by 96% of the respondents while only 4% is for the opposing view. As such, the town lures people from many parts of the province and even outside the country to such an extent that in as much as the study targeted only five people from Mthatha, which is only 9% of the respondents, the study reveals that 38% of these respondents are actually residents of Mthatha.

On top of that, it is also evident that Mthatha is also attractive to such an extent that it meets the expectations of 87% of the entirety of respondents while only 13% of them affirm that the town fails to do so. As a result, the majority (89%) of the respondents come to town a minimum of days per week while the minority comes only 3 days a week. Figure 5.56 below illustrates the

number of days the respondents in their entirety come to town per week based on the responses to question 2.5 of appendix 2. With that said, considering the large extent to which the town is attractive, this study then goes on to make inferences on the implications of this attractiveness on urban blight.

Figure 5.56: Graph showing days within which respondents come to town per week



Source: Author (2017)

5.4 Is there any relationship between urban blight and this attractiveness in such a context?

Having explained the indicators of urban blight in Mthatha, and having outlined how Mthatha is an attractive town, together with the extent to which it is attractive; this section correspondingly recapitulates on the central thesis of the study by exhuming the perceived relationship between these two diverse areas of research. By so doing, the study seeks to ensure that the aim of the study is achieved, and the hypothesis is somewhat tested. However, before doing as such, it is worth reiterating that this relationship is not only engrained on the impacts of the activities of the people that use the Mthatha CBD on a daily basis, including the residents, but also on the implications of the town attracting a large number of people on the CBD. With that said, this relationship is firstly exhumed through inferring on the impacts of the informal sector as a direct outcome of the attractiveness of the town before going on to focus on the subtleties yielded by the general residents of the other towns surrounding Mthatha.

5.4.1 The repercussions of city attractiveness on urban blight with focus on the informal sector

To begin with, before going on to outline this relationship from the contextual perspective of this study, one must also note in passing that even in existing literature, the relationship between urban blight and city attractiveness is portrayed as a positive one, and is somewhat closely tied mushrooming of the informal sector. Justifiably, this is due to the fact that to a large extent, the informal sector (which is also symptomatic of urban blight) is significantly fuelled by city attractiveness. This is confirmed by the affirmation by Vam Heerden (2011:15) that the relationship between the proliferation of urban blight and the establishment of the informal sector is a positive one. What remains unanswered, though, is whether urban blight proliferates the informal sector, or the informal sector promulgates urban blight.

Nevertheless, with focus on the informal sector included in this study, which is a direct outcome of the town's attractiveness, it is evident that the activities these people carry out in the Mthatha CBD have a significant contribution to the perceived urban blight in the town. Beginning with the street car washers, inferring from the responses to questions 2.7 to 2.10 of appendix 2, 100% of them use water yet none of them is paying for it. Understandably, the main reasons behind them not paying is that 60% of them take advantage of leaking water pipes within the CBD, which is somewhat a deliberate occurrence. As claimed respondent 4, "sometimes we are forced to burst the pipes to keep the business running". The remaining 40% however relies on the nearby river stream. Irrefutably, this has a direct contribution to the subsequent dilapidation of the town's water reticulation system, which on its own is an indicator of urban blight as they overuse and damage a water reticulation system they do not pay for. Figure 5.57 below shows one of these informal street car washes.

Figure 5.57: Street Car Wash

Source: Google (2016)

Moving over to street salons, as these salons establish themselves on the sidewalks within the CBD, they take up huge spaces on the sidewalks and thus contribute to the congestion and excessive land coverage that is prevalent in a majority of the streets of Mthatha. Moreover, in terms of municipal services, the services these salons use the most are electricity and water. According to the respondents that participate in this informal activity (refer to questions 2.7 to 2.10 of appendix 2), 100% of these people however do pay for these services, but not to the local authority; the only thing they pay for to the local authority is the space they occupy on the sidewalks, whose payment is only R10 per month. In terms of electricity, informal street salons predominantly get their connection from nearby properties that are serviced, and usually pay about R50 per month; others who are unable to do so often rely on petrol generators and battery power. With regards to water, they purchase it from vendors who move around these salons selling water at a price of R10 for 5 litres. Justifiably, the mere fact that these salons contribute to congestion and use electric power that is not assigned to them by the municipality implies that these salons are also contributory to this perceived blight as they put unwarranted pressure on the town's services. Moreover, because the municipality does not make provision for them in terms of amenities and refuse collection, areas around these salons are usually unsanitary, filthy and become hotspots for urinating and other incivilities that qualify under public nuisance in terms of law. Figure 5.58 below is shows one of these salons.

Figure 5.58: Informal Hair Salon

Source: Author (2016)

Likewise, concerning street vendors, these people establish themselves on the sidewalks and are scattered across the town. The municipal services they use the most depend on the products they sell, based on the responses to question 2.7 of appendix 2, 65% of these vendors use water the most while only 20% uses electricity, the remaining 15% uses none of these services. Evidently, the ones that use water the most are those that sell fruits, veg and pot plants, while those that use electricity are those that sell CDs and DVDs, those that sell other items such as live chicken and clothes on the other hand use neither of these services. Nevertheless, irrespective of the services they use, none of these people pay for them because they source them from nearby shops and garages as they claim that they are offered them free of charge. Justifiably, because these vendors contribute to uncleanliness and the overloading of services, which cripples the revenue base of the municipality, they too have a direct impact on the deterioration of the amenities of the town, which, on its own is indicative of urban blight. Figure 5.59 below depicts one of these vendors and the obnoxious environment within which they create through their establishment.

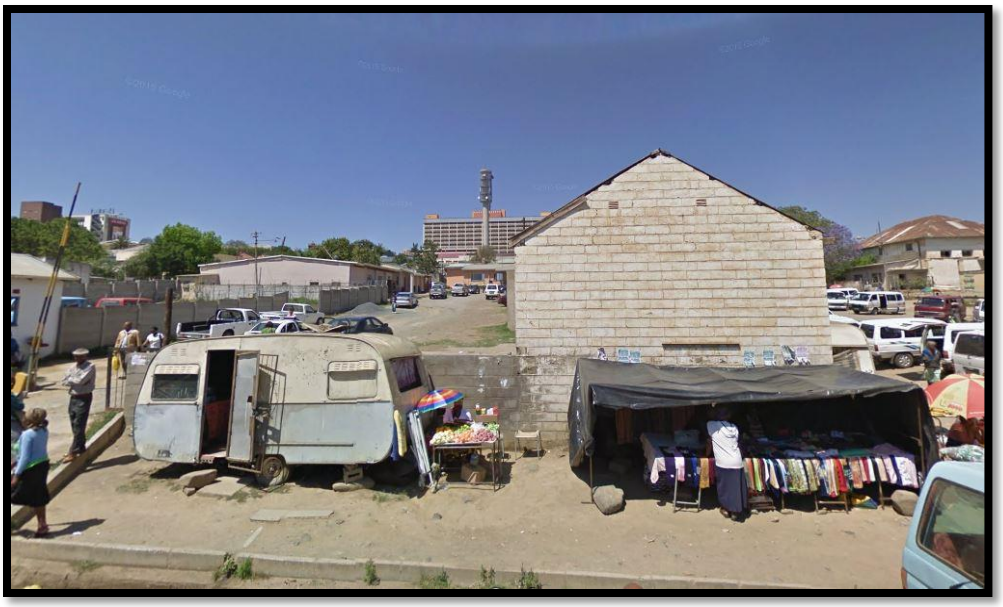
Figure 5.59: Street Vending in Madeira Street

Source: Google (2016)

Furthermore, with regards to caravan restaurants, just like the informal street salons, these restaurants also establish themselves on the sidewalks in the CBD. In terms of municipal services, the service these restaurants use the most is water, which they use it for cooking and cleaning. Another service that is used by these restaurants, though not all, is electricity. Evidently, those that do not use electricity rely on methane gas stoves for cooking. Nevertheless,

deducing from the responses to question 2.9 of appendix 2, 80% of the restaurants that use municipal services pay for them, but not to the municipality. Just like the street salons, these restaurants informally rent these services from nearby properties that are fully serviced. The remaining 20% that doesn't pay for water brings it from home. Nevertheless, by renting these services from nearby properties, these restaurants also overload the services of the town and thus directly contribute to their dilapidation, subsequently resulting to the perceived blight within the town. Moreover, these restaurants also have negative repercussions on the aesthetic environment of the town as they are at many times associated with the lack of cleanliness which usually surrounds them, subsequently resulting to deterioration of property values. Figure 5.60 below depicts one of these caravan restaurants, which is situated close to a vending stall next to the KSD Traffic department and the *Mamela* Taxi Rank.

Figure 5.60: Caravan Restaurant



Source: Google (2016)

Lastly, moving over to the informal motor mechanics in the Mthatha CBD, these people establish themselves on the roadsides in many parts of the CBD, particularly those that are seemingly efficient in terms of accessibility. As claimed respondent 23, who is also a mechanic, "we mainly choose Mthatha because it has more customers than other smaller towns in the region, and the town has no by-law dedicated to preventing our establishment". Nevertheless, based on the responses to question 2.7 of appendix 2, in terms of municipal services, these people are only reliant on wider roads, which enable them to make parking space provision for the cars they fix.

Unsurprisingly, due to the work they do, the areas they occupy are usually dirty, noisy and more often than not result to Locally Unwanted Land Uses (LULUs), which are symptomatic of frictional urban blight as residents and formal businesses often evade such areas, thus resulting to depreciation of property values. Figure 5.61 below shows one of the areas in the Mthatha CBD with a high concentration of motor mechanics.

Figure 5.61: Motor Mechanics in Richmond Road

Source: Google (2016)

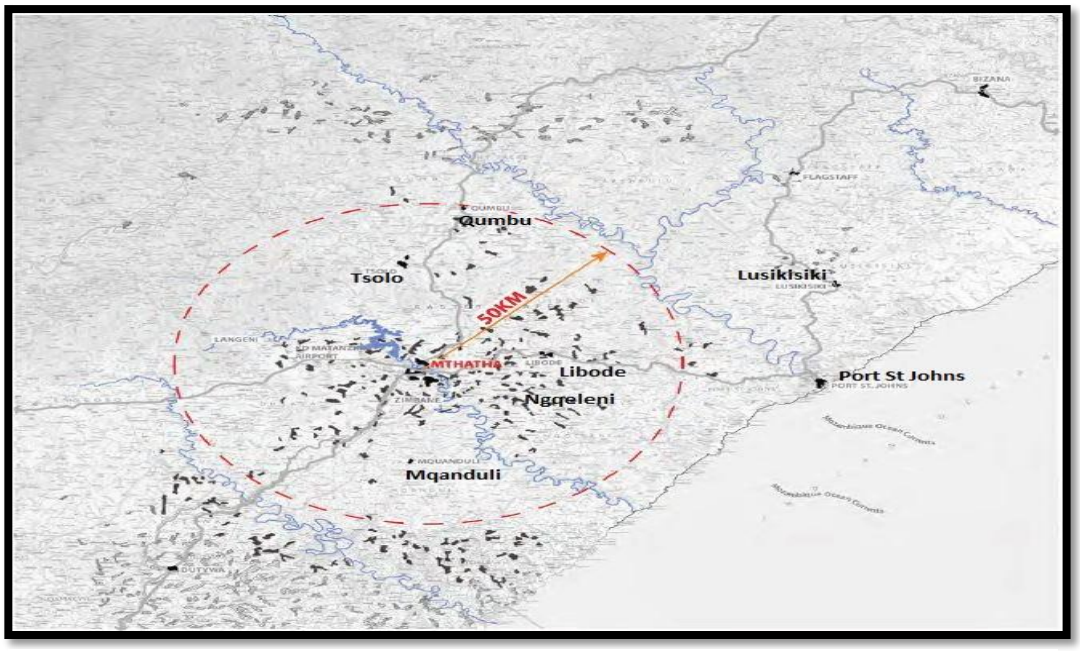
5.4.2 The repercussions of city attractiveness on urban blight based on the subtleties concerning a substantial influx of the residents of the smaller towns surrounding Mthatha

Justifiably, the relationship between the town's attractiveness and urban blight is not only vested on the impacts of the informal sector, but also on the implications of the town attracting a large number of people on a daily basis, particularly those residing outside the dominion of the town. However, before explaining this further, it is also of utmost importance to firstly underline how city attractiveness diverts from urbanization so as to somehow build an understanding of the intricacies ordained herein.

With that said, considering the scale of Mthatha, in juxtaposition with the scale of cities such as Durban, it is evident that the people who reside in these smaller towns surrounding Mthatha reside in places that are of equal distance to the places that are located in what would be the

Commuter Zone if one was to look at it from Earnest Burgess' *Concentric Zone Model*[4], as can be seen from figures 5.62 and 5.63 below.

Figure 5.62: Places within a 50km Radius from Mthatha



Source: Dzinotyiweyi (2009)

Figure 5.63: Places within a 50km Radius from Durban

Source: Google (2017)

[4] A concentric ring model depicting urban land usage in 5 zones wherein zone 1 is the CBD, zone 2 being a transitional zone with mixed commercial and residential uses, zone 3 being homes of the working class while zone 5 is middle class homes and zone 5 being the commuter zone with upper class suburbs (Park & Burgess, 1925).

Therefore, construing from figures 5.62 and 5.63 above, one can then deduce that in as much as these places are in relatively equal distances from the CBDs of Mthatha and Durban, in the case of Durban, these people are actually residents of Durban, whereas in the case of Mthatha these people are residents of their respective smaller surrounding towns. It is in this respect that city attractiveness diverts from urbanization because in as much as these people commute to Mthatha daily, they are still not categorized as residents of the town. As such, an increase in their population does not necessarily mean an increase in the population of Mthatha, regardless of the fact that these people make their living in the town, and it is for this reason that the distinction between city attractiveness and urbanization is underscored in this study.

However, in recapitulating on the central thesis of this study, one can therefore construe that this same distinction embodies the synergies between urban blight and city attractiveness in many ways. To begin with, the KSDLM planning department acknowledges that in as much as Mthatha attracting people from these smaller towns is an advantage, it is also a liability to the town in the sense that it puts unprecedented pressure on the infrastructure and amenities of the town. This way, regardless of the fact that the people from the smaller surrounding towns travel to Mthatha almost every day, because they are not residents of the town, they do not pay rates to the KSDLM.

Therefore, considering the fact that the town only has a population of only about 137,589 while catering for the needs of about 1.5 million people, one can therefore deduce that only about 9% of the people who use the services of the town actually constitute the threshold within which the town was designed for. This therefore implies that the town is overloaded because about 91% of the people you find in town on a random day excessively use amenities and infrastructure they do not account for. This cripples the revenue base of the town in the sense that due to this overload, the rate within which these services need to be repaired does not correspond with the actual population that accounts for these services, thus resulting to an increased dilapidation of infrastructure, which is in essence indicative of urban blight.

In addition, given the high rate of unemployment in Mthatha, the attractiveness of the town this way also provides a healthy threshold for the informal sector, whose presence, on its own brings about urban blight in many ways as outlined already. Because this attractiveness takes place in a town that lacks a clear land use management system, as claims Mabusela (2008), the town is

accordingly subject to derogatory land uses which bring about depreciation in property values, abandonment of properties and enchroachment by the informal sector. Plausibly, these result to tax delinquent properties and excessive land coverages which breed various criminal activities including drug dealing *inter alia*. Prime examples of such include the establishment of the taxi rank depicted in figure 5.3 and the concentration of motor mechanics in Richmond Road depicted in figure 5.61. Into the bargain, this attractiveness also has a direct contribution to traffic congestion (which is also another indicator of urban blight), expressly considering the fact that about 89% of the respondents come to town a minimum of 5 days a week. To simplify this relationship, figure 5.64 below presents an illustration of these synergies by means of a matrix, wherein the horizontal axis presents the intricacies that come with city attractiveness while the vertical axis presents subsequent variables under urban blight, with the nature of the synergies being either a primary cause, a contributor or having an indirect adverse impact to the variables under urban blight.

Figure 5.64: Relationship Matrix between Urban Blight and City Attractiveness

Relationship Matrix: Urban Blight VS City Attractiveness									
Urban Blight Variables	**City Attractiveness Variables**								
	High rates of commuting	Excessive day time population	Excessive land coverage	Exploitation of the Non-existent/ Weak by-laws	Exploitation of weak land use management	Illegal Encroachment of available properties	Establishment of informal sector	Overuse of municipal services	Extensive legal transgressions
Traffic Congestion	❖	❖	❖						
Tax Delinquency				❖	•	•	o	o	
Poor Revenue Base	•	•	o	❖	❖	❖	•	•	o
LULUs			❖	•	❖	❖	❖		•
Unsanitary Conditions			o	•	❖	•	❖		o
Building Code Violations			•	o	o	❖	•		•
Crime	o	o			o	•	o		•
Slums			•	❖	o	❖		•	
Dilapidated Infrastructure	❖	❖	❖	•	❖	❖	❖	❖	•
Deterioration of sites or property	o		❖	❖	❖	❖	❖	•	❖
Inadequate Street Layout	o	o		o	o	o	o		

LEGEND	❖ Primary Cause	• Contributor	o Indirect Adverse Impact

Source: Author (2016)

5.5 Summary

In light of what has been outlined, it is evident that based on the indicators of urban blight presented in this study in juxtaposition with the list of blight indicators that was adopted as a guidance in undertaking direct observations, one can then conclude that the town of Mthatha is indeed blighted and the situation is gradually worsening. Theoretically, this can be linked to the fact that Mthatha has transformed from being a traditional society into a society that sustains growth through increased mass consumption, a society that is an epitome of modernization. Nevertheless, in as much as Mthatha has adopted a culture of a modernized society, its level of industrialization, however, remains not enough to cater for the people it attracts in terms of employment, and for this reason, urban blight in Mthatha is evident in the key determinants of economic vitality, which are buildings and infrastructure.

What is more, deducing from the responses of the research participants, it is also evident that in as much as the town is blighted, to the people of the smaller towns surrounding Mthatha, the town remains much more attractive to than their original places of residence in many ways. The theoretical justification for this perhaps lies in the neo-liberal ideology, which, through globalization, allowed for transnational corporations to establish themselves in the town, thus increasing the hopes of employment to the people, and providing more options in terms of shopping and banking among other services these transnational corporations provide. In essence, this therefore implies that through neo-liberalism, Mthatha was fortunate to gain superior territorial assets in comparison to the smaller towns within its region.

Nevertheless, construing from the coexistence of these marvels (urban blight and city attractiveness), what is also evident, however, is the fact that in this case, they somewhat complement each other as city attractiveness in this context yields this urban blight. Justifiably, this is based on the findings that suggest that apart from the town having superior territorial assets, which bolster its attractiveness, it also makes it conducive for the informal sector (which is a direct outcome of a modernized society failing to accommodate the poor economically) to establish itself and thrive. Because this happens in an underdeveloped town, this then kick-starts a downward spiral, which boils down to urban blight as the impacts of the informal sector have a direct impact on the proliferation of urban blight. This is also aggravated by the fact that the town also caters for the needs of people that far exceed the maximum threshold of the town, thus

on the bigger picture bringing about what could be termed as an urban overload. Into the bargain, all this in the end under capacitates the municipality in that it cripples the revenue base of the municipality, thus making it hard to plan and execute curative measures to deal with the indicators of urban blight exhumed in this study.

Chapter 6: Recommendations for Urban Regeneration in Mthatha

6.1 Introduction

Having concluded on the prevalence of urban blight in Mthatha, and having illuminated how the town remains attractive, together with the relationship between these two diverse areas of research, this chapter correspondingly intends to address the problem of urban blight in Mthatha by recommending urban regeneration as a move towards a more sustainable developmental trajectory for the town. Plausibly, in striving to optimize the pragmatism of this recommendation, the merits for this recommendation are not only stimulated by lessons from the precedents presented in this study, but are also guided by the researcher's gained personal acquaintance of the study area, together with the opinions of the research participants and the KSDLM planning department. Furthermore, it is also noteworthy that for this recommendation to serve its purpose, the study is also for the view that this urban regeneration should be geared towards achieving *Sustainable Goal Development Goal 11*,[5] as it is aimed at making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

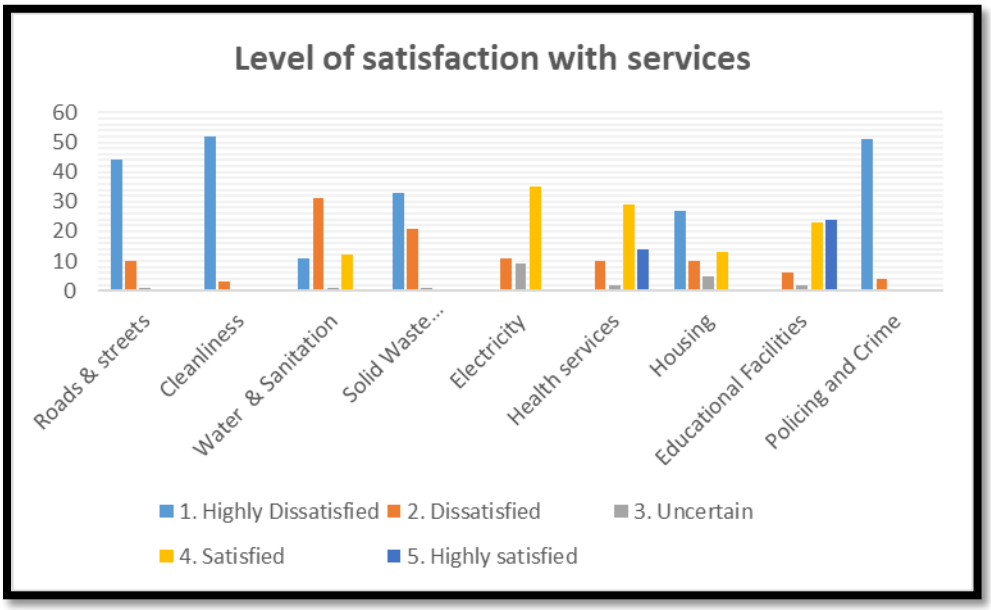
6.2 The merits for Urban Regeneration in Mthatha

As alluded before, construing from chapter 5 of the study, the prevalence of urban blight in Mthatha is evident, and that alone unquestionably suggests the need for urban regeneration in the town. However, this is also cemented by the decree of the president of the Republic of South Africa, who in 2009 declared Mthatha as a Rapid High Impact Presidential Intervention Node. According to the South African News Agency (2012), the intention herein was to radically address the backlogs experienced by the town in terms of infrastructure and service delivery, expressly in the sectors of Energy and Waste Management; Water and Sanitation; Human Settlements; Transport and Mobility and Local Economic and Social Development.

[5] A sustainable development goal aimed at the creation of not only cities and human settlements that are inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, but also human habitats that enshrine the people's right to an adequate living standard through provision of adequate housing, and making provisions for the disabled populace in terms of mobility. This sustainable development goal also seeks to create safe cities and human settlements that also provide equitable access to the environment and public transport in both urban and rural areas, where participatory planning and management is respected (United Nations development Programme, 2016).

Be that as it may, it is however also worth stressing that regardless of this declaration, the progress made under the Presidential Intervention programme remains very negligible. As such, 8 years after this declaration, deducing from the responses to section 3 of appendix 2, which present the opinions of the respondents, it is also evident that the respondents remain far from being satisfied with service delivery, particularly when it comes to roads and streets, cleanliness, water and sanitation, solid waste management, housing, policing and reducing crime. The only sectors the beneficiaries have a considerable level of satisfaction on, though not enough; are services concerning electricity, health services and educational facilities, as illustrated by Figure 6.1 below. In figure 6.1, the vertical axis represents the number of respondents expressing each level of satisfaction for the different services presented in the horizontal axis.

Figure 6.1: Beneficiaries' levels of satisfaction with service delivery in Mthatha



Source: Author (2017)

In the same breath, having expressed their levels of satisfaction as far as these services are concerned, the responses to question 2.17 of appendix 2 likewise indicate the various areas the respondents would like to see improved. Based on these responses, it is evident that in a choice of 4 services for each respondent, the entirety of the respondents would like to see improvements in roads, water and sanitation, street lights, public facilities, solid waste management, electricity, storm water management, housing, social facilities, safety and the public transport system. Thus, construing from these findings, it is of utmost importance that this urban regeneration addresses these issues as they somewhat serve as an examination of the needs of the town concerning the

subject at hand. This therefore means that in as much as the proposed projects under this urban regeneration are somewhat stimulated by those in the precedents presented in this study, they must strive by all means to take into consideration the entirety of issues raised in this study while at the same time taking advantage of the town's attractiveness.

6.3 Key Intervention Areas for the Urban Regeneration to tackle

Understandably, considering the fact that unlike urban renewal, urban regeneration goes far beyond the revitalization of just the physical part of the city, for this urban regeneration to be deemed as successful, it will have to amicably bring about positive changes to both the physical and socio-economic variables of Mthatha. With that said, the key intervention areas this urban regeneration will have to tackle are (1) legislation and policy, (2) infrastructure, (3) housing, (4) local economic development and (5) increasing the municipality's revenue base.

6.3.1 Legislation and Policy

To ease the process of implementing urban regeneration in Mthatha and preventing further blight, in terms of legislation and policy, the KSDLM needs to adopt a piece of legislation that is similar to Detroit's Blighted Area Rehabilitation Act 344 of 1945 and Johannesburg's By-law on Problem Properties. This is very much feasible because in terms of section 156(2) and (5) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, municipalities are mandated to make and administer by-laws for the effective administration of the issues which they have privilege to administer, and to practice any power concerning an issue sensibly essential for, or coincidental to, the successful execution of its capacities (City of Johannesburg, 2014).

This means that through this by-law, the municipality will not only have the capacity to define an urban blight criteria, but also to make provisions for arbitrating in any building that shows qualities that qualify under the urban blight criteria. Rationally, the criteria will incorporate various defects, whom among which will be abandoned and hijacked properties alongside overcrowded, unlawfully connected (to services), illegally occupied, dumping sites, structurally erroneous properties and other properties that pose a danger to the wellbeing of the general society for health or security reasons. Additionally, the criteria will also include properties where rates/tax/service charges have not been paid for months, together with structures that are not

legally compliant, or have no formal supply of municipal services. Just like *Eminent Domain* and the Better Buildings Programme (BBP), when translated into policy, this legislation will enable the KSDLM to seize blighted properties for purposes of regeneration without disputation, a movement that will subsequently bring about positive changes even to the infrastructure of the town. In line with the principles of SPLUMA, through urban regeneration, this by-law will aid in achieving spatial justice, spatial sustainability, efficiency, spatial resilience and good administration in many ways.

Concisely, in terms of spatial justice, this urban regeneration will aid in addressing the widespread poverty and deprivation experienced by former homeland areas. Concerning spatial sustainability, this urban regeneration will take place in the CBD, thus minimizing the chances for urban sprawl to occur (even though it is minimal already), while at the same time optimizing the viability of the CBD as a community. Consequently, this will also achieve the element of efficiency, as it will entail an optimal usage of existing resources and infrastructure. Furthermore, this urban regeneration will also contribute towards spatial resilience in that it will exercise flexible measures to ensure a sustainable livelihood for the community of Mthatha. Lastly, this legislation will also harness good administration in that it will incorporate this urban regeneration in the preparation and amendment of spatial plans, policies, land use schemes, which on their own take into account public participation that through the IDP planning process (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, 2013).

6.3.2 Infrastructure

As alluded before, to a large extent, the town of Mthatha is characterized by a poor state of infrastructure. For this reason, this urban regeneration needs to invest heavily on infrastructure improvement, as it is vital to public health, safety, and general welfare. Arguably, this will also be beneficial to the economy of the town as it will somewhat boost investor confidence on the town. As illustrated in chapter 5, the major areas that need revitalization are roads, water & sanitation, solid waste management, electricity and public transportation. With regards to roads, the roads in the CBD need to be revitalized and some widened in order to minimize traffic congestion, this is inclusive of pavements/sidewalks. Concerning water & sanitation, the current water reticulation system is old, dilapidated and overloaded. This therefore suggests that the system needs to be upgraded if it is to cope with the current demand of water. This also applies

to the supply of electricity, which also needs upgrading and proper monitoring. Moreover, the town also needs to upgrade its solid waste management system as many parts of the CBD are characterized by unkempt solid waste, which is left uncollected for days. Lastly, to somehow deal with traffic congestion in the CBD, the KSDLM needs to improve the public transport system of the town, either by trying to regulate the informal minibus taxi industry, dedicating special lanes for public transport, encouraging use of public transport, or through intensifying use of an alternative mode of transport such as the existing rail.

6.3.3 Housing

With regards to housing delivery in urban regeneration, it is noteworthy that the country has no concrete policy framework for directing how urban regeneration should go. According to the Housing Development Agency (2013), in the South African context, urban regeneration is only enrooted in specific programmes linked to legislation, and the most prominent of these programmes is the CID programme. Essentially, this implies that the manner in which urban regeneration is structured is subjective to those municipalities who implement its projects, and it is not necessarily always geared towards housing delivery.

However, in the context of this study, considering the fact that about 49% of the respondents are highly dissatisfied while 18% are dissatisfied with access to housing in Mthatha (refer to figure 5.65), it is evident that the need for better housing delivery herein is very apparent. This means that because of the attractiveness of the town, a majority of the respondents would love to reside in Mthatha, but due to unavailability of housing, they are forced to commute from their smaller towns almost daily. Therefore, if the KSDLM is to roll out urban regeneration projects in the Mthatha CBD, it would be a mistake if those projects are not inclusive of the development of residential property. With that being said, taking into account the context within which the urban regeneration is to be applied, which is a CBD with a population dominated by low to middle income earners, the most sensible form of housing delivery herein would be Social Housing[6]. Concisely, this is due to the fact that Social Housing is inclined towards the provision of not just good quality, but also affordable rental housing opportunities in well located parts of South African urban areas. This is also supplemented by the main objective of this housing programme,

[6] A rental housing option targeted for low income groups with a monthly income of R1500 to R7500 per month (Housing Development Agency, 2013).

which is to provide households with direct and reasonable access to the developmental opportunities associated with the available socio-economic infrastructure in these urban areas (Housing Development Agency, 2013).

However, for this urban regeneration to incorporate Social Housing, various policy measures need to be considered. To begin with, in terms of policy, Social Housing projects are often rolled out in specific geographical areas referred to as Restructuring Zones (RZs). This therefore means that if the KSDLM is to roll out Social Housing projects in the Mthatha CBD, it needs to delineate the whole Mthatha CBD as an RZ. In addition, according to the Housing Development Agency (2013), in terms of the Social Housing Act 16 of 2008, Social Housing projects are administered by Social Housing Institutions (SHIs), meaning that the KSDLM needs to appoint a SHI or assume the role of a SHI to administer the roll out of these projects. Because this will be in line with the government's agenda to reduce the existing housing backlog, the KSDLM should look into securing the Restructuring Capital Grant (RCG) to finance these projects. Nevertheless, this is not to say that the entirety of this urban regeneration should be centred on Social Housing; it should also address other factors such as local economic development.

6.3.4 Local Economic Development

Moving over to local economic development, in the context of urban regeneration, one cannot escape the fact that the provision of infrastructure plays a crucial role in economic development (City of Johannesburg, 2016). Therefore, for the urban regeneration to be deemed as successful in this regard, through addressing the infrastructural backlogs, this urban regeneration needs to also bring a positive impact to the town's local economic development; and this could be achieved in many ways.

To begin with, the KSDLM needs to introduce and implement the CID programme in the Mthatha CBD. Through the levies collected via this programme, the KSDLM will arguably gain substantial funding to help sustain the infrastructural upgrading programmes under the umbrella of urban regeneration in the town. Even more, such funding could also be supplemented with the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG), which municipalities access through developing a three year Capital Plan (KSDLM, 2015). Justifiably, such improvements could hold the capacity to attract more businesses (apart from retailers) into the town as it has been proven in the

precedents that they yield investor confidence. Understandably, with increased investments, the town will arguably see an increase in productivity and employment, thus resulting in an increase in the GVA of Mthatha, which is indicative of economic development.

Secondly, the KSDLM needs to also introduce the Urban Development Zone (UDZ) tax incentive in Mthatha. Admissibly, this will also encourage private investments dedicated in the construction of residential, commercial and mixed-use property, thus increasing not only the number of formal affordable residential property, but also that of formal businesses. Intrinsically, this will stimulate the development of property that is not solely dedicated to retail, thus diverting from the development trend that is emerging with the recent development of outsized malls such as the *BT Ngebs City* mall.

However, considering the fact that the town is also characterized by high unemployment, which fuels intensive informal socio-economic activities; it is also of utmost importance to address this issue in a manner that will avoid gentrification, as it has a tendency of marginalizing the people from the informal sector. To achieve this, the KSDLM needs to plan and develop specialized precincts that will accommodate the informal socio-economic activities (including taxi ranks) that take place in the town depending on their compatibility. Arguably, these precincts will somehow formalize and manage these activities through providing, regulating and charging for the municipal services and infrastructure these activities require. To ensure that the informal sector cooperates in the parameters that come with the development of these recommended precincts, the KSDLM needs to also formulate a by-law condemning all informal socio-economic activities taking place outside these precincts. To some degree, this will contribute towards a more rigid land use management framework for the KSDLM as it will entail an enforcement of the directives endorsed in the IDP and SDF in all land parcels in the town; this is of course assuming the that this urban regeneration is incorporated in these plans. Essentially, this will address the issue of urban blight while at the same time capitalizing on the attractiveness of the town.

6.3.5 Increasing the Municipality's Revenue Base

According to the KSDLM (2015), the low rate of revenue collection excessively weakens the capacity of municipalities to deliver services to communities. As such, because local government revenue plays a crucial role in the improvement of living standards, if the urban regeneration is to improve living standards of the people of Mthatha, it will have to inexcusably ensure that the revenue base of the KSDLM is also increased.

Understandably, because the KSDLM is categorized as a B2 municipality, the majority of its revenue primarily comes from property rates, followed by intergovernmental transfers and interests earned gained from outstanding debts among other contributors. However, what is noteworthy herein is that despite the municipality having various avenues for collecting revenue, service charges remain a very minimal contributor to the KSDLM revenue base regardless of the fact that their upgrades require excessive funds. This is exacerbated by the fact that even with property rates; many properties within the CBD do not pay rates. Therefore, to increase the revenue base of the municipality, this urban regeneration needs to ensure that the upgraded infrastructure and the revitalized properties are financially accounted for by those who use them through employing strict regulatory measures. According to Mabusela (2008) such measures could be achieved through the development and employment of a comprehensive land use management system and strict zoning laws, where the municipality will ensure that what is on the ground corresponds with what appears on the SDF.

In this regard, however, one must also acknowledge the fact that to some degree, all the aforementioned recommendations (including the specialized precincts) have the capacity to contribute to the increase of the municipality's revenue base. This is largely because they entail formalized developments of not only municipal infrastructure, but also private and civic properties. Understandably, because these developments will be up to standard and will employ formal tenure systems, property owners will be unpardonably enforced to pay rates and service charges as these properties will be now enlisted in the municipal database.

6.4 Summary

In light of what has been discussed in this chapter, urban regeneration is recommended as a holistic programme that the KSDLM should look into planning and implementing. Considering the context within which this urban regeneration is recommended for, this chapter correspondingly breaks down the program this into an arsenal of various legislations, policy and projects addressing various avenues under the umbrella of urban regeneration. The pragmatism of the tools this chapter recommends for implementation however is informed by findings from the precedents together with the responses of the participants of the study, including the KSDLM planning department. Concisely, the main intervention areas that this urban regeneration seeks to tackle include legislation, infrastructure, housing, local economic development and increasing the revenue base of the municipality. In essence, the study is for the view that if the KSDLM is to tackle the urban blight that is gradually creeping in the Mthatha CBD, it must capitalize on its attractiveness without turning a blind eye on the informal sector that is dominant in the town as findings of the study reveal that it is a direct outcome of the town's attractiveness.

Chapter 7: Summary of Findings and Concluding Remarks

7.1 Introduction

As the final stage of the dissertation, this chapter recapitulates on the whole study through providing a summary of the findings and concluding elucidations on the subjects of the study in view of the findings. To uphold a clear understanding of these findings, this chapter presents this summary in a manner that is directly reflective of the objectives of the study as means of building up to the aim of the study.

7.2 Summary of Findings

This study was aimed at assessing the relationship between urban blight and city attractiveness. Understandably, this was instigated and motivated by various realizations, which comprehended that:-

- The causes of urban blight are rarely interrogated regardless of the fact that urban blight regularly remains the stage whereupon the contention of urban regeneration, renewal, and resilience develops;
- Even in those rare cases where the causes of urban blight are interrogated, it is often done within a confined paradigm of big and wealthy cities, which overlooks small towns with attributes of urban blight, as a result;
- When it is interrogated, it is often attributed to challenges faced by big cities, which are essentially urbanization, counter-outmigration motivated by racism, classism, deindustrialization and the subsequent urban sprawl whose impacts on the inner city revolve around disinvestment;

With that said, upon realizing these factors, the study thus looked at Mthatha, which is a relatively small town as compared to these big cities. In so doing, the study however comprehended that the town actually has significant indicators of urban blight regardless of the fact that the town is faced with different dynamics from these cities. As such, unlike the normal cases of urban blight where the blighted areas are often characterized by centrifugal factors that lead to people and investment evading such areas, the study found that the case of Mthatha

unveils the opposite, as it remains with considerable centripetal factors that are indicative of its attractiveness. This therefore implied that the town of Mthatha is essentially blighted and attractive at the same time.

Understandably, this was proven by direct observations on the Mthatha CBD, which when juxtaposed with the list of urban blight indicators adopted from existing discourse, attested considerable symptoms of urban blight. On the other hand, regardless of this blight, the opinions of the respondents also unveiled that the town remains more attractive than the smaller surrounding towns as almost 80% of the respondents admitted to coming to Mthatha almost every day. In view of this, the study thus assessed the implications of the correlation of these phenomena and found that there actually is a relationship between urban blight and city attractiveness. Justifiably, this relationship is founded on the realization that the attractiveness of the town is actually accountable for the urban blight in the town as its implications have a domino effect on the eventual outset of urban blight; this is based on various findings, which unveiled that:

- More than three quarters of the people one finds in the town on a random day are not residents of the town, but residents of the smaller towns within a 50 kilometre radius of the town, regardless of the fact that they use services of the town (which they do not pay for) almost daily, moreover;
- The majority of these people is unemployed;
- This fuels a lively and intensive informal sector as even the formally employed minority becomes customers of this informal sector;
- This informal sector thrives through exploiting the municipal services of the town, which it does not pay for;
- This cripples the revenue base of the municipality and thus makes it hard to repair and upgrade these services;
- Even worse, this results in an overuse these services and thus accelerates their rate of depreciation;
- This spreads out to buildings as this informal sector gradually encroaches them;
- This makes way for criminal activities to take place
- This then yields LULUs, which deteriorate property values in many ways;

- This prompts building code violations and unsanitary conditions which pose a threat to the public for health and security reason
- Essentially, this is indicative of a town which caters for people far exceeding its maximum threshold, a factor that is symptomatic of an urban overload;
- Consequently, this builds up to a blighted urban landscape, which undeniably needs radical intervention.

Correspondingly, to address the issue of urban blight, the study therefore recommended urban regeneration as a curative measure for the urban blight in the Mthatha CBD. In response to the issues that are subjective to the Mthatha CBD, this urban blight seeks to take advantage of the town's attractiveness by recommending legislative and policy measures that will aid in the provision of infrastructure and housing delivery for the development of the local economy. Eventually this will arguably enhance the revenue base of the KSDLM, thus playing a crucial role in the improvement of lives of the people of Mthatha and its catchment area. More conclusively, this urban regeneration is centred on increasing the capacity of Mthatha to cater for the people from these towns through adopting them and economically capitalizing on their existence for the benefit of the town.

7.3 Recommendations for Improving the Study

Considering the fact that the study alludes to an element of urban overload in Mthatha as an outcome of its attractiveness that leads to urban blight, the study needs to further develop the concept of urban overload scientifically. This means that the study needs to cement this argument with numerical values that will enhance the tangibility of this urban overload as a concept or a research area. Such values could be values pertaining infrastructural thresholds vis-à-vis infrastructural usages and the economic value the municipality loses through deterioration of this infrastructure.

7.4 Concluding Remarks

In this study, the relationship between urban blight and city attractiveness was assessed and found to be a positive one. This was attested by various factors, which illuminated how city attractiveness causes urban blight under certain circumstances. Nevertheless, this was not to deny the causes of urban blight that are already documented in existing discourse, but to illuminate that the conception of urban blight as a whole is very subjective and can apply even in the context of a town. This is very crucial because if one misdiagnoses a problem, the solution will be wrong, meaning that if the town is to undergo regeneration without interrogating the socio-economic forces at play, the solution may not be as desired. It is in this respect that this study derailed from what it refers to as the "normative view" in an attempt to further develop the discussion on urban blight, its causes and the context within which it applies. Be that as it may, the study is open for critique as it may have missed some key issues due to the limitations encountered in the research process, but then again, from the context of this study, there is a relationship between urban blight and city attractiveness.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Checklist For Urban Blight Indicators

Blight Indicating Condition	**Presence**	
	YES	**NO**
Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures		
Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout		
Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness/ Plot irregularity		
Unsanitary or unsafe conditions		
Deterioration of site or other improvements		
Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities		
Defective or unusual conditions of title rendering the title non-marketable/ Diverse Ownership		
The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes		
Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidation, deterioration, defective design, physical construction, or faulty or inadequate facilities		
Environmental contamination of buildings or property		
Existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements		
Overcrowding/Excessive Land Coverage		
Tax Delinquency		
Traffic Congestion		
Incompatibility of Uses		
Crime		

Appendix 2: Voluntary Questionnaire

Researcher: Bulelani Mzamo (0785204493)

Supervisor: Dr Hangwelani Magidimisha (0312601353) **NO:…….**

ASSESSING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN URBAN BLIGHT AND CITY ATTRACTIVENESS: THE CASE OF MTHATHA CBD

Instructions:

1. Please answer the questionnaire as honestly as you can
2. Where necessary, you can mark each response by filling in, or marking with an X , or by marking with a TICK ✓
3. Answer the questions you are comfortable with answering. If you do not feel comfortable to respond, you have the choice not to answer, and all responses will be kept confidential.

SECTION 1: GENERAL PERSONAL PARTICULARS

1.1 Gender	Male	
	Female	

1.2 Age Group	< -25 yrs		41-45 yrs	
	26-30 yrs		46-50 yrs	
	31-35 yrs		51- <	
	36-40 yrs			

1.3 Race	Black	
	White	
	Indian	
	Coloured	
	Other	

1.4 Occupancy	Employed	
	Self Employed	
	Unemployed	
	Other	

1.5 Marital Status	Single	
	Married	
	Widowed	

1.6 Salary	R0-R2000	
	R2100-R4000	
	R4100-R6000	
	R6100-R8000	
	>R8000	

SECTION 2: ASSESSMENT OF CITY ATTRACTIVENESS AND ITS IMPACT

2.1 Where is your ORIGINAL and CURRENT place of residence?

……..

……..

2.2 How long have you lived where you are currently residing?

……..

……..

2.3 What is your main reason for coming to Mthatha?

……..

……..

……..

2.4 What other 5 things lure you the most in Mthatha?

……..

……..

……..

2.5 How often do you come to Mthatha?

……..

……..

……..

2.6 Does the town meet your expectations upon coming here?

Yes
No

2.7 Which of the city services do you use the most when you are in town (i.e water, electricity)?

……..

……..

……..

2.8 How do you use these services, or what do you use them for?

……..

……..

……..

2.9 Are you paying for these services in any way? If so, how much do you pay and for which service?

……..

……..

……..

……..

……..

2.10 If you do not pay for services, what is the reason?

……..

……..

……..

2.11 What social facilities do you use the most in Mthatha? For what?

……..

……..

……..

2.12 Are these facilities adequate?

Yes
No

2.13 If not, how are these facilities inadequate?

……..

……..

……..

2.14 Are you formally owning or renting any property in Mthatha?

Yes
No

2.15 If so, is the property adequately serviced (i.e infrastructure)?

……..

……..

……..

2.16 If not, what services are inadequate?

……..

……..

……..

2.17 Which 4 services would you improve?

……..

……..

……..

2.18 In your opinion, how critical is the issue of crime in Mthatha?

……..

……..

……..

……..

2.19 With that said, would you say Mthatha is generally more attractive than your place of residence?

Yes
No

2.20 What is your ONE ultimate reason for the answer in question 2.18?

……..

……..

……..

……..

SECTION 3: ASSESSING THE NEED FOR INTERVENTION

3.1 In your opinion, would you say that the town of Mthatha is blighted or decayed?

Yes
No

3.2 What 3 reasons would you give for your answer in question 3.1?

……..

……..

……..

3.3 Do you think the people from the surrounding towns who utilize the services of Mthatha on a daily basis contribute to this urban blight or decay ?

Yes
No

3.4 If yes, in what way do they contribute?

……..

……..

……..

3.5 How do you feel about the condition of the following, are you …?

1. Highly Dissatisfied
2. Dissatisfied
3. Uncertain
4. Satisfied
5. Highly satisfied

Roads & streets	1	2	3	4	5
Electricity	1	2	3	4	5
Cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5
Water & Sanitation	1	2	3	4	5
Solid Waste Management	1	2	3	4	5
Health services	1	2	3	4	5
Housing	1	2	3	4	5
Education	1	2	3	4	5
Policing and Crime	1	2	3	4	5

3.6 Which ONE of these areas, if any, would you like developed/ improved upon in Mthatha?

Infrastructure (i.e Roads, electricity, water)
Residential units
Public Facilities
Other
None

3.7 If other, specify

……..

……..

……..

3.8 Do you have any final comments would you like to add?

……..

……..

……..

Appendix 3: Interview Schedule

Researcher: Bulelani Mzamo (0785204493)

Supervisor: Dr Hangwelani Magidimisha (0312601353)

DATE OF INTERVIEW……..

NAME OF ORGANIZATION…….

JOB TITLE OF RESPONDENT……..

1. **According to KSDM, what does the proximity of the Mthatha to the smaller towns of Libode, Ngqeleni, Mqanduli, Tsolo and Qumbu etc mean to you as the administrative center of the O.R Tambo District Municipality? Is it an advantage or liability, or both?**

……..

……..

……..

2. **Please explain your answer in question 1?**

……..

……..

……..

3. **In terms of livability, would you say Mthatha has a comparative advantage over these towns in any way?**

……..

……..

……..

4. **Does the KSDLM consider the town of Mthatha as blighted/decayed? Please explain**

……..

……..

……..

5. **In your opinion, is there any relationship between the proximity of Mthatha to these smaller and the decay in the town? Please explain**

……..

……..

……..

6. **What implications does this proximity have on the infrastructure and service delivery at large?**

……..

……..

……..

7. **Considering the people that commute from the administrative areas of these smaller towns to Mthatha every day on top of the residents of the town themselves; would you regard Mthatha as overloaded?**

……..

……..

……..

8. **If yes, what measures (in terms of policy and programmes) has the town put in place to curb this?**

……..

……..

……..

9. **What is the impact of the informal sector on the blight/decay of the town?**

……..

……..

……..

10. **Are there any cases of abandoned properties around the CBD or properties that have turned into slums? If yes, what is the municipality doing about it?**

……..

……..

……..

11. **Does the municipality have any plans for urban regeneration/ urban renewal?**

……..

……..

……..

12. **If yes, how is the government funding or intending to fund these projects/programmes?**

……..

……..

……..

13. **What are other challenges facing the municipality in terms of development for sustainable human settlements?**

……..

……..

……..

14. **Is the municipality benefitting enough from tax revenue to fund its development programmes?**

……..

……..

……..

15. **Given the status quo of the town, how can the municipality capitalize on this situation in devising a turnaround strategy?**

……..

……..

……..

16. **Any final comments?**

……..

……..

……..