

**EMPOWERING THE HOMELESS IN DURBAN, CBD:**  
**Towards a Socio-Economic Transition House.**

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## DECLARATION

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture, in the Graduate Programme in Architecture, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa

I, Leeshanthi Govender declare that,

- 1. The research in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.*
- 2. This thesis has not been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.*
- 3. This thesis is my own unaided work and all citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged.*

This thesis is being submitted for the degree of Master in Architecture in the faculty of Humanities, within the school of Built Environment & Development Studies, KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.

.....

Leeshanthi Govender

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## DEDICATION

*This is dedicated to two special people in my life my parents, whom made this possible.*

*Behind my success lays tremendous sacrifices.*

*Thank you for the financial and emotional support throughout this journey. Thank you for believing in me and encouraging me to become a strong independent woman. I am, who I am, because of you.*

*This success is not alone mine but yours as well.*



## **ABSTRACT**

Within the growing urban context of Durban City, this dissertation investigates spaces which aid the socio-economic empowerment of homeless people. This research explores carefully designed spaces that Architects can implement in a Socio-Economic Transition House, which will aid the homeless in transitional process towards becoming socio-economically empowered.

This research dissertation explores the various spaces which conceptualizes a Shelter to aid the transition process of the Homeless becoming socially and economically empowered within the city of Durban. The psychological and physical street culture experiences are considered and translated into carefully designed spaces that encourage transition towards becoming independent model in society. Relevant literature was reviewed in order to gain an understanding of the social and economic empowerment of the homeless and how architecture can provide empowering spatial conditions.

The dissertation aims to conceptualize a building typology which is a symbol of social and economic growth and creates a new social culture among the homeless. The building typology should also represent the communities concern and sympathy towards the Homeless phenomenon within the city of Durban.

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# Background Research On Issues

The Homeless Community Within Durban's City Centre

## CHAPTER

*Figure 1: Sorrowful face of a Homeless Man*

Source: (<http://spixabay.com> - accessed June 2017, edited by Author)



### **1.1.1 Background**

As a result of rural urban migration most cities around the world are experiencing overcrowding. People migrate to the cities in hope of better opportunities in order to improve their quality of life. Globalization and financial pressures play a central role in contributing to the influence of rural urban migration. Homelessness is a result of economic pressures and limited resources to meet the needs of people migrating into the cities. Durban, Central Business District (CBD) accommodates 4 000 homeless people (Gabo 2016). The increasing number of people migrating into the city affects the in-adaptive built environment and society negatively as it was planned only to handle a limited number of people. The South African support systems are not equipped to provide the care required for the Homeless people. The existing homeless shelters are not specifically designed to aid the homeless in the rehabilitation and transitional process of gaining control of their lives.

Eiselen (2010:2) states that in order for the homeless to improve their lives, they need to gain control over it first. Proposal of a built environment that provides spaces for Life skills training, provision of meals, shelter and resources which aid their development in becoming active members in society. In concurrence with a built form, support systems such as guidance counseling, job and career guidance, legal aid, counseling assistance and motivational talks needs to be set in place to prevent the homelessness cycle.

The dissertation will focus on empowering the homeless through a proposed built form that is sustainable, economical and environmentally respondent and socially acceptable.

### **1.1.2. Motivation of Study**

The motivation of the study, there is an insufficient and unsuitable response to the homeless and their living conditions in Durban, CBD. Homeless shelters are not able to provide spaces which empower and impact positively on the lives of the homeless. Homeless shelters in current form provides a space to sleep for the night stay without spaces to empower, revitalize or socially uplift the homeless. Apart from the conditions and standards of the shelters not following "human rights ethos" in their "operation of shelters" the homeless are expected to pay a fee to stay per a night. Homeless shelters are more "commercialized" (Rondganger,2015) by being a profit making facility rather than a facility which meet the needs of the homeless to empower them. Through the building typology of a Socio-Economic Transition House, will provide the users with an opportunity to empower, revitalize and socially uplift themselves in order to become active members in society again. This building typology will provide a suitable living environment for rehabilitating and transforming the homeless back into society. The environment retains the poor of influence over inhabitants actions, behavior, cultural systems and social order.

## **1.2. DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1.2.1 Definition of the problem**

There is a lack of response towards helping the homeless through transitioning and rehabilitating themselves into becoming active members of society. The influence of global urbanization in the City, creates architecture which meet the needs of the wealth-class society which results in the homeless feeling alienated and isolated from society. Architecture found in the City, lacks the required spaces to nurture the needs for the homeless to transform and rehabilitate into independent models of society.



### **1.2.2 Aims**

The aim of this research is to understand the transitional requirements of a Socio-Economic Transition House in order to investigate and design spaces that empower the homeless to become active members in society.

### **1.2.3 Objectives**

The objectives of this research are:

- To investigate nurturing spaces that have the ability to promote integrated skills and empowerment development within the confines of a homeless shelter.
- To analyze the architectural design of existing shelters as a means to understanding the current concept of “home” within the homeless shelters of Durban, CBD.
- To analyze Socio-Economic Transition House, both psychologically and physically.

## **1.3 SETTING OUT THE SCOPE**

### **1.3.1 Delimitation of Research Problem**

Primary focus of this research is to empower the homeless and investigate how architectural spaces can influence or contribute positively to the process of uplifting the homeless in Durban, CBD. The proposed research will investigate existing spaces and new spaces which can be integrated into the built form in order to influence skills development for economic sustainability and community development for social sustainability.

The study location is limited to the Durban, CBD. The proposal will serve as a guideline to assist Architects and people whom deal with the homeless to assist them, to gain control over their lives, within the built environment.

### 1.3.2 Definition of Terms

**City:** "A city is an area in which a large number of people live fairly close together. Cities usually have their own separate governments and systems for maintaining and providing utilities and transportation." (Vocabulary.com, 1998)

**Community:** "A group of people living in a particular local area or common ownership" (Vocabulary.com, 1998)

**Empowerment:** The process of gaining control over one's life and uplifting one's self from a crisis situation. This is an act of becoming physically and mentally stronger and gaining confidence.

**Home:** Home speaks about the "relationship between people and their environment." (Dovey 1985). It is emotionally based and the attachment people have with their place of dwelling.

**Homeless:** The lack of control over economic situation resulting in living on the streets.

**Identity:** A reflection of one's character and set of values and morals one believes in.

**Interaction:** A user's relationship with their built environment. Everyone has a different view of their built environment depending on their identity within it. For example: homeless persons have a significant relationship with a homeless shelter compared to a Shopping Centre.

**Nurturing Built Environment:** The consideration of users' perceptions in the design process to create a built environment which supports and encourages its users to develop and transform into independent models. The built environment is created from design elements which form a human settlement.

**Placeless:** "Indistinguishable from other such places in appearance or character" (Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary, 1828)

**Shelter:** A built form providing temporary housing and meals to the homeless.

### **1.3.3 Stating the Assumptions**

This dissertation is based on the following assumptions:

Consideration of the homeless needs and aspirations are vital in the conceptualization of a Socio-Economic Transition House.

If there is a lack of consideration, the city would foster more homeless people and ultimately the homeless will enforce their right to the city.

A Socio-Economic Transition House provides the homeless with a platform to uplift themselves from their crisis and prevent the cycle of homelessness repeating itself.

Architecture is more than protection against bad weather, it influences its users emotional and mental states.

In order for the homeless to thrive they require a secure structure to house their social and economic activities.

### **1.3.4 Primary and Secondary Questions**

#### ***Primary questions:***

How can a Socio-Economic Transition House empower, revitalize and socially uplift the homeless to become integrated members of society?

#### ***Secondary questions:***

- What are the current accommodation challenges facing the homeless?
- What are the conditions of current facilities and spaces in the Homeless Shelters in the CBD?
- How do the existing spaces in Socio-Economic Transition Houses impact on the lives of its users?

## **1.4 CONCEPT AND THEORIES**

The dissertation will analyze social theories and architectural theories to understand the dissertation topic and questions. The concepts and theories will be discussed more in-

depth in the Literature Review Chapter of the dissertation. The social theories to be analyzed are *Identity and Culture* with specific reference to the homeless within the urban environmental context. The architectural theories to be analyzed are *Phenomenology, Place-Theory and Empowerment*.

**Theory of Identity:** Identity is defined by the way others perceive one, one's own self-definition and one's material ownership. It is based on more than just ethnicity but also constructed from "language, religion, occupation, caste, occupation, ideology and social status" (Low and Chambers 1989:XV).

Identity is closely connected to culture. The manner in which we do things define our culture which aid our identity. This is due to individuals in societies having the same common values and perceiving the world in a similar way. Hence identity is a "product of a set of constructs" (Mthethwa 2001:53) which individuals view themselves and by which others view them according to. Rapoport's method of creating meaningful connections with people and their environment requires "identity constructing factors".

Globalization, a process of events which effect one society therefore have a ripple effect on other societies around the world as they are all linked in some way or another. Thus, influences an individual sense of identity. This is due to an individual's identity being constructed from a global range of resources. The impact of modernism and tradition creates a new set of constructed identity for individuals. The environment plays a role in constructing an individual's identity. Identity in current times accommodates a degree of fluidity due to global influences (Mthethwa 2001:59).

**Theory of Culture:** The definition of culture varies, however in this dissertation interpretation of culture is based on lifestyle and daily practices. Culture forms the basis for our daily lives (Mangena 2010:9), basically it is the way people conduct their lives and behave. Their beliefs and values also play a part in forming their culture.

Diller(2013:5) states that culture is "the lens through which life is perceived". Culture plays a part in defining people within their society, this provides a platform for them to express themselves. Culture is used to help define an individual's identity through their lifestyle. This identity is how people are perceived by others and within society. This

social theory will be analyzed in order to generate a better understanding of the homeless culture and their role in creating spaces to empower them.

Culture is broken down into two components and used to define and understand an individual's identity and life. The first component should define expressions of social groups with regard to which religious institutions an individual belongs to, their family structure and their gender roles with regard to their status hierarchies. The second component is made up of a series of components which is used to define the manner in which people perceive and model their lives, their values, their lifestyle and their activities. These series of components play a role in determining the concept of "lifestyles and system of activities"(Methethwa 2001:11).

The concept of "culture-core" is used to provide supportive environments which retain their core components irrespective of cultures change or time periods change. The supportive environments remain resistant to change however value new ones, where this allows a range of new identity groups which relate to their environment to be created.

***Theory of Phenomenology:*** Phenomenology is multi-sensory architecture which is important as "it is through our senses that we perceive the world, it is through them that a relationship with the world is made possible"(Franks 2007:55). Senses enhance the users experience of a building thus one can conclude that architecture serves more than just shelter or visual art. The initial stage into the phenomenological approach is to differentiate between natural and man-made objects. Basically "influential school of thought not only recognizes and celebrates the basic elements of architecture" (Nesbitt 1996:26) such as wall, floor and ceiling which act as horizontal planes and vertical planes but also places emphasis on the "sensuous qualities of materials, light and colour and the symbolic, tactile significance of the joint" (Nesbitt 1996:29). The conceptual approach which works with the theoretical approach: phenomenology, is the concept of home.

**Theory of Place-Theory:** Place theory states that spaces are required to respond contextually. Contextually with regard to "the people, the surroundings, the political and social aspects as well as activities of the people within the space" (Stubbs 2016:10).

Cresswell (2004:12). describes place as *"space invested with meaning in the context of power"*.

Genius Loci, creates meaningful architecture which accommodates sensory elements that enhance the users experience of the building and encourages users to interact with the building. Hence users are influenced by the design of the building either positively or negatively. Aim of the theory is to create a place which stimulates memory and meaning. Every environment depicts its own unique "spirit of place", this is the culture and tradition of that particular place, which can be seen in the architecture of that place. Genius Loci is used to reflect a "spirit of place" within architecture this allows the users of the region to relate and connect with the building. The theory also directs the aesthetic design of the building to have a similar architectural style to the rest of the surrounding buildings. This ensures that the building fits into its context and meets the needs of its users.

**Theory of Empowerment:** Empowerment is a process of assisting individuals or supporting them towards becoming independent models. Empowerment is where an individual's abilities and skills towards creating economic and social sustainability for independent living.

Theory of empowerment is a social concept which tries to "connect the personal and the social, the individual and society as well as the micro and macro" (Stubbs 2016:9). The theory is a human rights approach which requires regular community based ideology and respect for the individuals within the system.

Churchil (et al. 2012) states that the physical environment influences its users meaning and perception on life and initiate their sense of empowerment to occur. Therefore when designing a space for the Homeless , one needs to consider a combination of elements which encouraging empowerment, community development and ownership among the Homeless.

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODS AND MATERIALS**

### **1.5.1 Research Methods**

This section will outline the methods used in this research and explain the intended scope of study and techniques that are used for gathering data for the research topic.

The research methods which will be implemented in this study will be of mixed method which combines quantitative and qualitative approaches by the means of primary and secondary data gathering. The purpose of the research is to illustrate that homeless shelters which incorporate skills development spaces could improve the lives of homeless through acquiring a skill in order to generate an income. The main research is around instrumental homeless shelters within the Durban, CBD. The reason for this choice of shelters is for the research's purpose to inform and conceptualize a new architectural design through understanding and interpreting the existing conditions and the impact of the shelters on their users.

### **1.5.2 Research Materials**

#### ***Primary Data***

Primary source of data collection for this research was collected by reviewing case studies, semi-structured interviews with staff members and homeless people within the participating shelters. The interviews provided an experience of the spaces in the shelters. Help defined the concepts of homelessness as a phenomenon and informed the researcher how these concepts are seen and understood within the shelters. Interviews were carried out with the Shelter staff, organizations and NGO's through personal interviews, observations and questionnaires. Opportunity to absorb shared experiences however maintained a direction of information which will be able to inform this research actively. Case studies were conducted by observations and conversations with key personnel at three Homeless Shelters in Durban, CBD. The main Case Studies analyzed and discussed in this study is The Strollers Overnight Facility located on Mansel Road, Durban and Denis Hurley Shelter located on Cathedral Road, Durban. Visiting each site, data was collected in a qualitative method by observing the shelter

staff and the homeless. Reviewed existing case studies that allowed for a better and more in depth insight on true operations and occurrence within the shelters that the researcher would have been blinded by.

### ***Secondary Data***

Secondary source of data collection for this research involved passive observations of the homeless whom are based in the area of study and how they earned their fee for the shelter at night. The purpose of the observation was to gain first-hand experience of homelessness as a phenomenon and living strategies within Durban, CBD. Reviewed existing literature on the subject, relevant case studies and precedent studies complied in books, thesis and journals. This data was reviewed and selected in order to support my research topic and form the bases of my research.

### **1.6 Conclusion**

Chapter One laid out the theoretical framework that will be used in this dissertation to resolve the research problem. The combination of theoretical framework and data collection will provide a practical framework for the architectural spaces that stimulate and enhance empowerment. The theories will be analyzed further in Chapter Two to absorb key ideas and principals that would help design a Socio-Economic Transition House. The theories culture and identity.

These two theories are used to understand the Homeless daily practices and what gives them their identity of a Homeless person. Understanding their daily practices provides an explanation to why they are on the streets, what their needs are and how architecture can help empower them towards becoming socially and economically independent. It also provides reasons and solutions towards creating a new identity for the Homeless within society.



# 2 Literature Review

***Defining & Conceptualizing Identity of the Homeless in the City***

***Culture***  
***Identity***

CHAPTER



***Figure 2: Scared face of a Homeless Man***

***Source: (<http://nonprophetnews.com> - accessed June 2017, edited by Author)***

## 2.1 Introduction



*Figure 3: Expanded Diagram depicting focus and link to the Key Social Theories towards understanding dwelling in the city.*

*Source: Figure by Author, 2017*

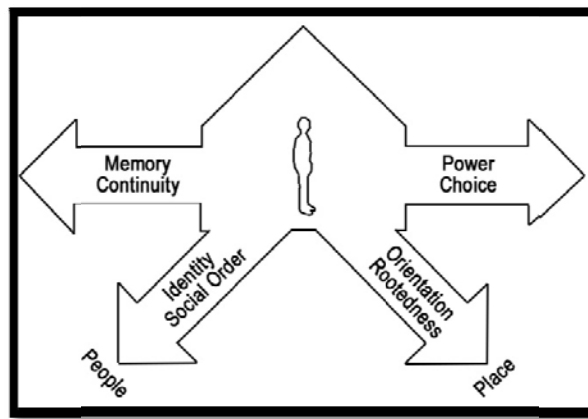
Chapter Two focuses on key literature which understands the importance of dwelling to an individual's identity and culture. Figure 3, Illustrates that Identity and culture are directly linked to an individual's place of dwelling especially when living in the City. First section focuses on identity and its links to dwelling. There are psychological connections that individuals have with their place of dwelling. This section will help understand the strong link between identity and place of dwelling.

The second section will help understand the importance of considering the concept of culture (Homeless culture) when designing spaces for them, within the city. The concept of culture analyses the lifestyle and behavioral patterns of the homeless in order to design spaces which would aid their empowerment. The Homeless have a street culture and their own homeless identity, this is what provides structural meaning to their lives daily. When the homeless culture and identity is understood then one can design a building which the homeless can relate to and use to become socially and economically empowered. However the Homeless culture and identity in the city is difficult to understand due to the lack of a "home". A "home" or "place of dwelling" for people is a main factor which contributes to their identity.

## 2.2 Relationship between the City and Conceptualizing identity.

As discussed in Chapter One: An individual's identity is created from their place of dwelling and their role in society. Identity is constructed from not only language, religion, occupation, ideology and social status but most importantly from your place of dwelling.

Hauge and Kolstad (2007:274) states that both terms "house" and "home" are associated with place of dwelling. House is a reference to a physical structure where as "home" is a reference to "personal, social or cultural terms"(Hauge and Kolstad 2007:274). Hauge and Kolstad (2007:274) reinforces that an individual's identity is associated with a "person or groups of person."



**Figure 4: Home as a connectedness**

**Source: Dovey, K. 1985, *Home and Homelessness: Introduction*". *Home Environments. Human Behavior and Environment: Advances in Theory and Research*. University unknown.**

Figure 4, Illustrates the themes of home which represent an individual's identity and connectedness. "Home is a schema integrity and meaning to experience in a place"(Dovey 1985:92).

The concept of dwelling is more than a "physical place"(Shidfar 2013:239). The main purpose of a building is to dwell. Users have an emotional and psychological attachment to their place of dwelling. However it is not associated with the concept of home or a fixed place. Heidegger (1971:350) established a rule to form what "it means to dwell is language". Through language, Heidegger establishes meaning and

understanding of building and dwelling. "Building as dwelling" Heidegger (1971:350). Building has two original states: cultivation or meaningful building. The definition of cultivation and construction activities focused on Bauen (Building) rather than to the original meaning of Bauen (to dwell). People are known to nurse and nurture the things that grow and the things that do not grow are constructed. Hence cultivation and construction is the act of building.

Heidegger (1971:351) states that through this process he describes dwelling as a basic characteristic of humans on earth.

**Baun:** to dwell.

**Bauen:** to build, dwell, also care for, cherish, protect, preserve and nurture.

Language reveals three facts that Bauen signifies.

- 1. Building is really dwelling.*
- 2. Dwelling is the manner in which materials are on the earth.*
- 3. Building as dwelling unfolds into the building that cultivates growing things and the building that erects buildings.*

Heidegger (1971:351) states that humans strive to be in a state of peace, thus to "dwell is a natural state of preservation of nature and natural states". Building therefore is a form in which preservation and growth occurs within. However building as a physical form does not encapsulate such notions. According to Heidegger, establishing dwelling requires unity into simple oneness. Include fourfold: earth, sky, divinity and mortals and preservation of the fourfold. Therefore to live and dwell is part of our natural act on earth. Being aware and acknowledgeable of the fourfold establishes the relationship between humans and dwelling allows a more enhanced experience of the place of dwelling.

As discussed in Chapter One: Identity is connected to culture as individuals in society have the same common values and perceive the world in a similar way, therefore culture is depicted strongly in architecture to demonstrate the unique cultural identity of a particular society in a particular time period.

Heidegger (1971:150) reinforces this belief in his statement,

*" the manner in which we dwell is the manner in which we are, we exist, on the face of the earth- an extension of our identity of who we are."*

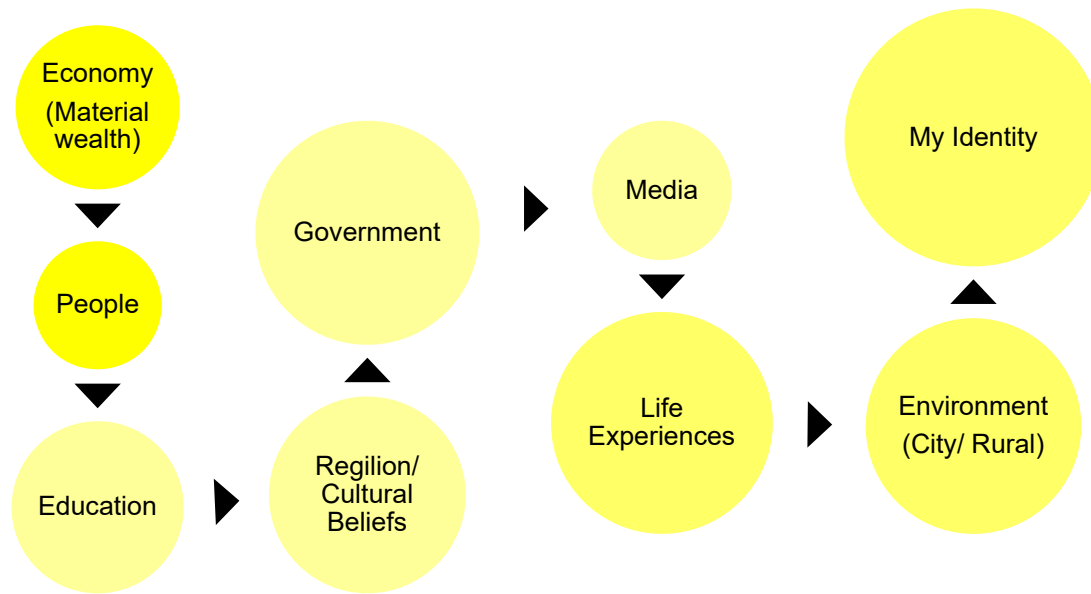
and

Rapoport (1984) agrees with Heidegger when he highlights the importance of cultural influence in architecture in his statement,

*"understanding the cultures of different groups- their structures of values and symbols, their patterns of behavior in different settings, their propensity to establish domains and clusters and the influence of these on the physical nature of their environment."*

Dauids (2007:24) states that the relationship between built form, space and identity is dynamic. This is due to the built form changing to reflect its current nature of society. Post modern era, urban environment is influenced by globalization thus creates a dynamic multicultural built environment. The urban context is not only influenced by global influences but by people whom relocate and carry their cultural identity with, thus creating "cultural systems which intersect and interpenetrate each other"(Rorich 1996:3). An advantage to this is that societies are created which are tolerant and accepting to foreign cultural identities.

In urban context, Identity of societies and individuals are based on economic status, material ownership, education status and social status (see Figure 5). The adoption of westernized cultural ideologies and principles influence individuals to lose their own unique cultural identity.



**Figure 5: Expanded Diagram depicting aspects that define identity in post modern era within the city.**

**Source: Figure by Author, 2017**

Due to globalization morals and values are lost thus "global cultures"(Govender 2014:34) are created. These "cultures" are constructed on economical and political platforms. Davids (2007:3) highlights in this statement the importance of identity in built form. "Palaces, dwellings, places of worship and places of burial are marked with an identity, which gives them a firm location in both time and place".

Traditionally societies constructed dwellings with respect to their identity and culture therefore architecture holds the power to reflect a particular culture using specific imagery and symbolic representation. This provides an insight into the societies cultural beliefs. With the large number of cultures and sub-cultures existing in the world there is a continuous need for different settlement patterns and homesteads.

Traditional societies used specific materials to construct their built environment. The materials can be used in different ways to achieve different aesthetic designs for each society within their context. Yagua society in the Amazon is an example of traditional societies structural approach. Locally sourced timber for structural supports and thatch for the roof. The structure was raised due to the heavy rain and walls were open for cross ventilation. Thatch was used due to the rain and to create a connection to the



earth. The materials chosen was a reflection of their location and cultural beliefs. Their "home" represented their unique cultural identity and climatic experience within their environment, (see Figure 6).



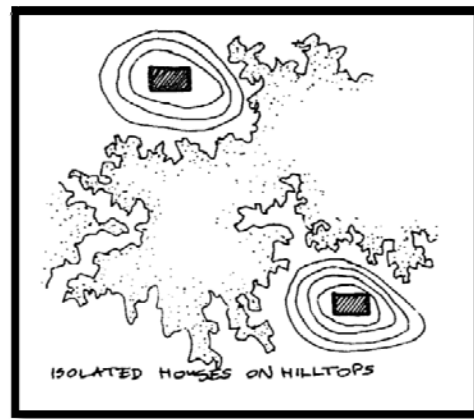
*Figure 6 and 7: The left is Yagua Dwelling (Amazon) and the right is house in Durban (South Africa)*

*Source : (Rapoport 1969:27) / (<http://www.brokiesway.co.za/youth.htm>- accessed January 2018)*

Post modern era in an urban context, built forms irrespective if residential, commercial or industrial materials are chosen based on economic value, (see Figure 6 and 7). The materials are mass produced in factories disregarding identity or cultural value.

Depending on the aesthetic appeal of the built form, materials are sourced either locally or internationally. Most built forms represent a modern and global culture. Therefore people whom hold high economic status in society would value this built environment, for others, it would appear cold and not relatable.

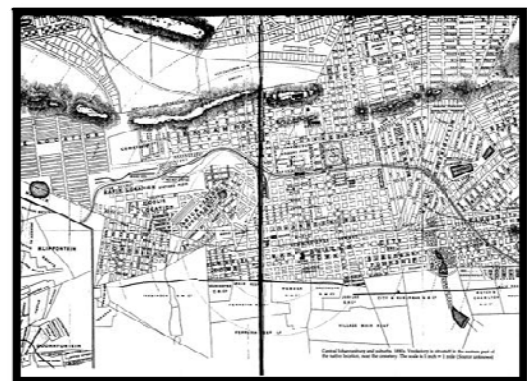
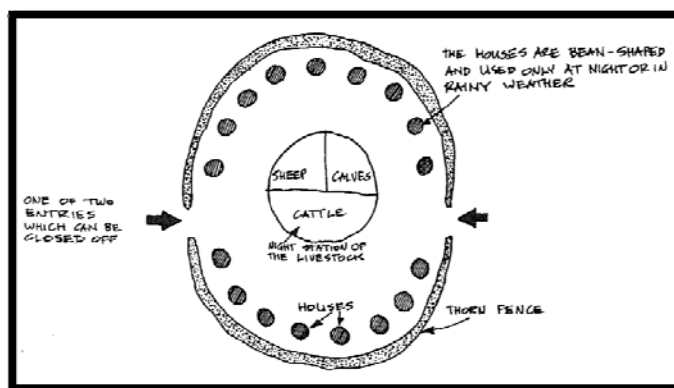
Rapoport (1969:29) highlights traditional site selection relied on two aspects: physical nature of the site which is the gradient, soil type, climate experienced in the area and vegetation, and the other aspect: symbolism, religious and socio-cultural values of the site. The Meo society in South East Asia selected steep gradient sites rather than a gentle one due to their cultural beliefs, (see Figure 8). Arguably in current times site selection would rely on easy access to roads (transport routes), job opportunities, access to water and electricity and gentle gradient site (cost effective to build).



**Figure 8: The picture depicts the Meo Tribe Settlement, South East, Asia.**

**Source: (Rapoport 1969:37)**

Traditional settlement patterns were based on the societies culture and identities. The Masai Tribe in Africa, settlement is centralized around their cattle which represents their attitude towards their cattle. The huts are built around the centre point creating a protective barrier for the cattle. Cattle plays an important part in their beliefs and culture of the Masai Tribe. Cattle signifies the tribes wealth, religion and ceremonial importance which forms the foundation of the Masai's culture, (see Figure 9). Johannesburg in South Africa, settlement pattern was based on economic and political platforms,(see Figure 10). The pattern placed importance on the movement of vehicles for transporting goods (gold). The gaining of wealth forms the basis of Johannesburg society's culture. Today Johannesburg is still known for its opportunities to gain economic value for individuals therefore many people relocate to the City of Gold.



**Figure 9 and 10: The left is the Masai Tribe Settlement, Africa and right is Johannesburg, South Africa settlement.**

**Source : (Rapoport 1969:57)/ ([http://www.wikiwand.com/en/History\\_of\\_Johannesburg](http://www.wikiwand.com/en/History_of_Johannesburg) - accessed January 2018)**



From the above discussion one can conclude that traditional dwelling systems are designed based on the users cultural identities. It plays an influence on the architectural design and the site selected for settlement. The architecture captures the society's identity and culture within its built form, site selection and settlement pattern. Post modern era, the built environment represents global culture which not everyone is able to relate to, especially the homeless. The Homeless already lack a "home" and when in a City, identity is constructed based on economic and political platforms which the homeless cannot relate to. As a result their identity is a "homeless individual" and their culture is "street culture". There is a need for a strong relationship between dwelling and identity as it gives us a place and society of belonging. Architecture captures a particular society's identity and culture therefore allows the user to "relate and find meaning to it"(Govender 2014:41). Architects are challenged in current times, to express the multi-dynamic identities and cater for a multi-cultural society within an urban environment.

### 2.3 Views of the Homeless within the City.

As discussed previously, globalization caused the creation of "global cultures" which are based on economic and political factors.



**Figure 11: Successful Business person.**

**Source:** (<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com> -accessed April 2017)

*Global culture*  
*Part of society.*  
*Permanent home.*  
*Upper class.*



**Figure 12: Homeless person.**

**Source:** (<http://robbieallenart.com> - accessed April 2017)

*Street culture*  
*Excluded from society.*  
*Temporary home.*  
*Lower class.*

Globalization is also a result of mixture of social groups, social and economic status classes, non-migrates and migrates which are found in the city (see, Figure 11 and 12). The land that has adequate services and facilities are exclusive to upper class society while the lower class experience the contrast. The economic barriers create a segregation between the two classes creating problems. Stolls (2013:57) states that low income groups become insurgent citizens as a desperate act for basic services and facilities. They claim their "right to the city" (Stolls 2013:56).

Holston (1998:49) states that the homeless are seen to be insurgent citizens as they construct their homes on legally owned land. This conflicts with the City planning and results in tension among the citizens. He also states that this leads to prejudice over distribution, inclusivity and the "rights to the city".

Society classifies the homeless as "outsiders"(Govender 2014:34). When the Homeless choose to sleep on public benches or trade informally they are defying society views and policies. This is also viewed as defining the "proper place" within an urban space and these acts are called insurgency. However the only way for the homeless to voice their displacement is through acts of insurgency. Govender (2014:59) states that the homeless are seen as "invaders to the social structure of society".

The homeless find it difficult to find suitable accommodation in the City, because it is designed for people whom have money to pay for the expensive accommodation. The only accommodation available for the Homeless are shelters and segregation which is an act by Government to control the Homeless and prevent settlement on urban spaces. It is not only the Government whom force this separation but the homeless themselves. Fischer (1976:105) states that part of a basic human characteristic is to belong to a community. The Homeless are failing to find a community to belong to therefore create their own Homeless community and street culture. A community which fails at linking themselves with the global culture, result in excluded and isolated communities.

The absence of material ownership and a permanent home prevents the Homeless from constructing their own culture and identity. The Homeless construct a home from available materials found on the streets. The concept of a home for the Homeless is more a mental state rather than a permanent place of dwelling. This is similar to the concept of a truck driver's home being on the road, as there is association of memories, comfort, security and being at peace. Thus leads to the Homeless not having "connectedness".

Muller (1978:9) states that the Homeless identities are created from their stereotypical street roles, called the tramp and the bum. Muller (1978:9) states that the tramp and the

bum is a result of modern lifestyle pressures. The unmanageable physical and mental stresses leading to an individual opting out. Hence the decision and acceptance by an individual to live on the streets and be Homeless. However the tramp and the bum is not considered as a lifestyle but a situation where an individual does not have control over their life. Lack of control over their financial, health, safety and status in society.

Society created a stereotype and stigma which the Homeless conform to making it difficult for them to uplift themselves. If more individuals are unable to gain employment or Government or other private individuals aid, the Homeless community will expand. The Homeless would be forced to adapt to survive and take over their "right to the city"(Stols 2013:56). Resulting in the homeless constructing their homes on legally owned land, taking over dilapidated or abandoned buildings in the city (Act of insurgency). Situations similar to Rio de Janerio in Brazil, which is currently one of the biggest slum's in the world. The slum's accommodate 25 0000 people whom are unemployed and are homeless, (see Figure 13). This Homeless phenomenon can be prevented through a transitional process that links them back into society. Examples of insurgent living around the world, (see Figure 14 and 15).



**Figure 13: Rio de Janerio insurgent citizenship.**

**Source:** (<https://media-cdn.tripadvisor.com> - accessed May 2017)



**Figure 14: Shanty Town, Mumbai India**

**Source:** (<http://www.power-technology.com> - accessed May 2017)



**Figure 15: 131 Margaret Mncadi Avenue, Durban.**

**Source:** (<https://www.google.co.za/maps/place/131=margaret=mncadi=ave,=durban=central> - accessed January 2018)

In Durban, CBD. The Point and the Beachfront are popular venues for the homeless. The Point Precinct is detached from the City however remain linked through block plan design. Thus creates an opportunity for the homeless to find accommodation in street corners and dilapidated buildings, (see Figure 16).



**Figure 16: Map Depicting the detachment between the Point Precinct and Durban, City.**

**Source:** (<http://gis.durban.gov.za/ethekwinimunicipality/viewer/cgisPublicViewer.html> - accessed January 2018)

The Point Precinct is one of the oldest developed and neglected areas. Land is privately owned which is used as storage facilities or warehouses therefore presence of people in the area is slim. Resulting in a quiet space for the homeless to settle without being disturbed. The act of taking shelter in the dilapidated buildings is a form of insurgency. The development of Ushaka Marine World and Ushaka Beach was a strategy to attract investors to activate the area. The development attracted the homeless as they saw it as an opportunity to earn a living by begging or selling their crafts. The homeless hang around the beachfront and the point as they find it easy to gain access to free health care (Addington Hospital), free water and utilising public bathroom facilities for personal hygiene and food or money from locals and tourists. The Warwick Junction is another

Homeless hotspot, along the Highway areas, where the Homeless find accommodation under bridges and beg for money at the robots. Close proximately to the Warwick Junction, is Denis Hurley Centre which provides meals daily and personal hygiene facilities, the public transport hub and informal markets provide many opportunities for social and economic growth for the Homeless. However the homeless feel they are limited in finding resources and hassling for material necessities to aid their survival in this area.

## **2.4 The Culture of the Homeless in the City**

In current times, an individual's identity is constructed from material ownership such as money, physical structures, cars, and social status. Fischer (1976:28) states that urbanism influences people to adopt personality-manipulation in order to suit their situation. Fischer (1976:28) uses the example of a husband whom is aggressive at work however loving at home. Urbanism influences multiple identities to be constructed.

Social identity is defined by different groups in urban environments which shape an individual's identity greatly. Social groups are made up of your family, friends, ethnical values and the community you belong to. The family and friend's groups are the primary group as an individual's values and beliefs from tradition are rooted. Fischer (1976:125) states that the primary groups are the most important to an individual and society. This is due to an individual's quality of life depending on the close relationship with the group for emotional and ethical support. Belonging to a group is essential in the urban environment as it gives an individual a sense of belonging and identity within a large dynamic built environment. The Homeless lack identity in the City as a result of having no "home" and not belonging to a primary group. This forces the Homeless to forget their former cultural identity and adopt a new street culture. The Homeless identities are then constructed based on three factors: "political, regional and economical identities" (Ndlovu, 2005:19).

Snow (1987:1355) states that the Homeless are withdrawn from society in order to maintain their self-worth. This becomes a difficult task daily as they require interacting with society to survive on the streets. Philipps (2012:21) adds that the Homeless create a street culture due to being isolated from society. They only associate with each other which is where they develop their own social group, this is where the Homeless create their own identity. This also results in over-imaginative and unrealistic identities created by the Homeless. Snow (1987:1359) uses an example of a Homeless person whom fabricates stories of how he ended up in this situation and their attempts to become wealthy or part of society in the near future. These stories are their attempts to construct an identity and culture for themselves within society. Their social group includes hierarchy which is determined by whom experienced the worst traumatic experiences

during street living. Philipps (2012:22) states that this hierarchy poses a challenge in the transitional process for the Homeless to be integrated back into society.

The Homeless set of values which construct street culture is the ability to survive on the streets by means of earning an income through begging, stealing or any other way of earning income. Substance abuse and undesirable activities are a common daily practice among the homeless. Philipps (2012:21) states that violence forms the platform for street culture which is due to their sense of bitterness and aggravation towards the rest of society. The Homeless have no control over their lives however when they do have control over a situation it is approached with aggression. Philipps (2012:21) further states that the homeless are in a failure cycle to resettle therefore they depend on their street culture for survival.

## **2.5 Transitional Spaces**

Psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott states

*"Transitional space is the space of play and creativity- where our culture is created, where love can grow, where teaching and learning take place, where art is ,made and where culture is created."*

"Pathways to the community" is a program done by physiologists and doctors in rural areas where patients have limited access to resources let alone resources to help them empower themselves. This program used transitional space to aid their patients empowerment. Patients and their families presented impressive psychological changes. Participants were able to destroy "the psychological barrier" (Debra A. & Abraham B. Shani. ed. 2016:126) which kept them a prisoners to their home. The changes were based on personalized treatment plans and transitional spaces. The transitional spaces explained the dramatic changes of the participates and created interest on the topic to create similar spaces that influence the change of its users. Transitional spaces are ideal for people whom lack access to resources or services that enable themselves to become independent models. Participates who are powerless (no control over their lives), experience shame and embarrassment, self-esteem broken due to their inabilities and interaction with others results in withdrawal from society.



*"Pathway to the community participants"*



**Figure 17: Disabled person.**

**Source:** (<https://thumbs.dreamstime.com>  
-accessed April 2017)

*Dependent on family and friends.  
No control over abilities.  
Psychological barriers prevent empowerment.  
Lack of confidence.  
Low self-esteem.  
Isolated from society.  
No identity in society.  
Unemployed.*

*"Homeless as participants"*



**Figure 18: Homeless person.**

**Source:** (<http://www.walesartsreview> - accessed  
April 2017)

*Dependent on the charity of others.  
No control over life.  
Psychological barriers prevent empowerment.  
Lack of confidence.  
Low self-esteem.  
Isolated from society.  
No identity in society.  
Unemployed.*

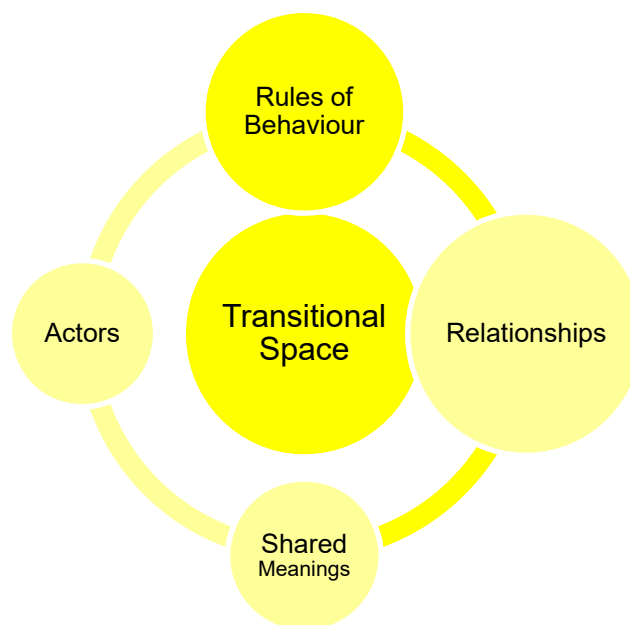
Transitional spaces are important for participants whom experience "dominate field" Debra A. & Abraham B. Shani. (ed. 2016:128) as a preventive measures to fore fill their potential.

One can conclude that the homeless require transitional spaces see, (Figure 17 and 18) to aid their empowerment. Transitional spaces provide opportunities to "previously repressed dialectics" (Debra A. & Abraham B. Shani. ed. 2016:121) to experience and explore their existing environment, after being brought to awareness in a transitional space.

Altering their mindset towards "previously unthinkable realities" to gain independence towards own freedom. "Pathways to the community" is a program which assists people that have created psychological barriers for themselves, this lead to them isolating

themselves from their family and community due to their disabilities and inabilities. After participating in the program, participants were able to recognize their roles within their families and communities. Thus their families identified their respective roles and implement measures to help integrate them within their social spaces which they formerly were excluded from. The process helped participants to disengage with the stigma attached to them and engage with a limitless possibilities. Transitional spaces helped the participants to initiate a new phase of dependent living.

Transitional spaces based on the "Pathway to the community" program were used in conjunction with personalized treatment plans. Transitional spaces are aimed at providing an environment to "change disadvantaged mindsets" Debra A. & Abraham B. Shani. (ed. 2016:128). Thus returning to their previous environment with a new mindset. A mindset which allows them to alter their identity and challenge themselves to achieve the previously unthinkable. Spaces required for transition provide opportunities from stage of dependence to advanced stage of independence.



**Figure 19: Four Components of Transitional Space.**

**Source: Figure by Author, 2017**

Transitional spaces are made up of four components which was derived from the "Pathway to the community" program which included transitional spaces that used these

four components, (see, Figure 19) which require the assistance of personalized treatment plans to aid empowerment. Effects of transitional living, positive mental and physical effects, became physically and emotionally independent, gained confidence to go out into public spaces and engage with other people. This allows participants to be integrated back into society and find their identity within society. Examples of Transitional Spaces in the Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre below, (see Figure 20 - 22) used as Precedent Study for more information in chapter five).



**Figure 20: Green Courtyard in the Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre, for social interaction, reflection and mediation.**

**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com> - accessed May 2017)



**Figure 21: Cubical Living in the Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre, for sleeping, writing and reading.**

**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com> - accessed May 2017)



**Figure 22: Meeting space for Homeless and Counselors to determine their needs, Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre.**

**Source:** (<https://www10.aeccafe.com> - accessed May 2017)

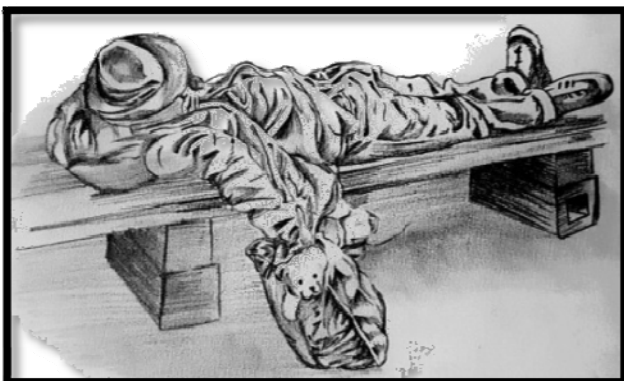
The most important effect of transitional living is that the process helps to mentally destroy the psychological barrier created and engage with people in society, and break free from isolating themselves due to their disabilities and inabilities. Transitional spaces would be essential for the homeless to experience due to their psychological barriers, that prevent them from engaging with the public yet alone seek help.

Peter Senge (2012) states that "*Architecture is the housing of the human spirit.*" Architecture can aid the freedom of the human or keep it prison.

## 2.6 Conclusion

The Homeless culture does not conform to the way society operates. The Homeless lack a "home" which plays a vital role in constructing their identity. As a result their culture becomes a way of life to survive on the streets. Ndlovu (2005:29) states that the Homeless identity is constructed by the others within society which makes it difficult for the Homeless to strive for a better life. There's always a stigma attached to their being. When trying to assist the Homeless there is more required than just a rand at the stop street. The Homeless are not able to "change disadvantage mindsets" Abraham B. Shani. (ed. 2016:128) while remaining in their current environment, therefore they are required to step out. This is not only to assist with breaking the stigma (psychological barrier) attached to them but also linking them back to society. The transitional space serve as a linkage back into society but not as previously Homeless but as individuals with an identity whom are able to challenge themselves and achieve the previously unthinkable.

Creating a "home" which serves as a transitional house for the Homeless in the City is difficult, this is due to the Homeless not being able to relate to any of the buildings. Only people whom have material wealth would be able to relate to the buildings in the City, as they would serve as a place of employment or where they buy goods. This becomes a challenge to conceptualize a "home" which serves as a transition house for the Homeless within the City. In attempt to design a Socio-Economic Transition House, three architectural theories were chosen to be analysed, in order to understand what elements and factors are required to meet the needs of the Homeless. These theories would also highlight the type of spaces required while enhancing the understanding of the experience of these spaces.



*Figure 23: Homeless Man sleeping on a bench.*

*Source: Drawn by Author, 2017*



# B

# Conceptualizing a Home in The City

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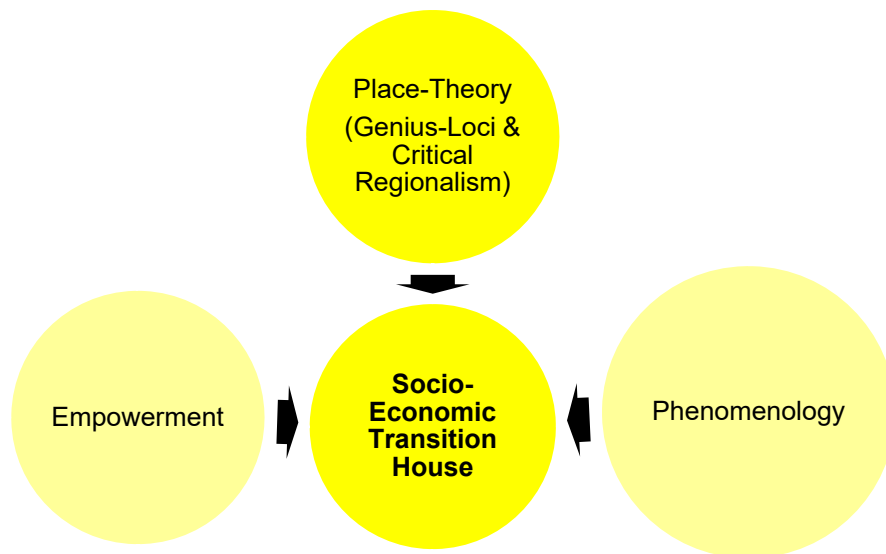
CHAPTER

*Figure 24: Fear seen in the face of a Homeless Woman*

Source: (<http://ss-media-cache-ako.pining.com> - accessed June 2017, edited by Author)



### 3.1 Introduction



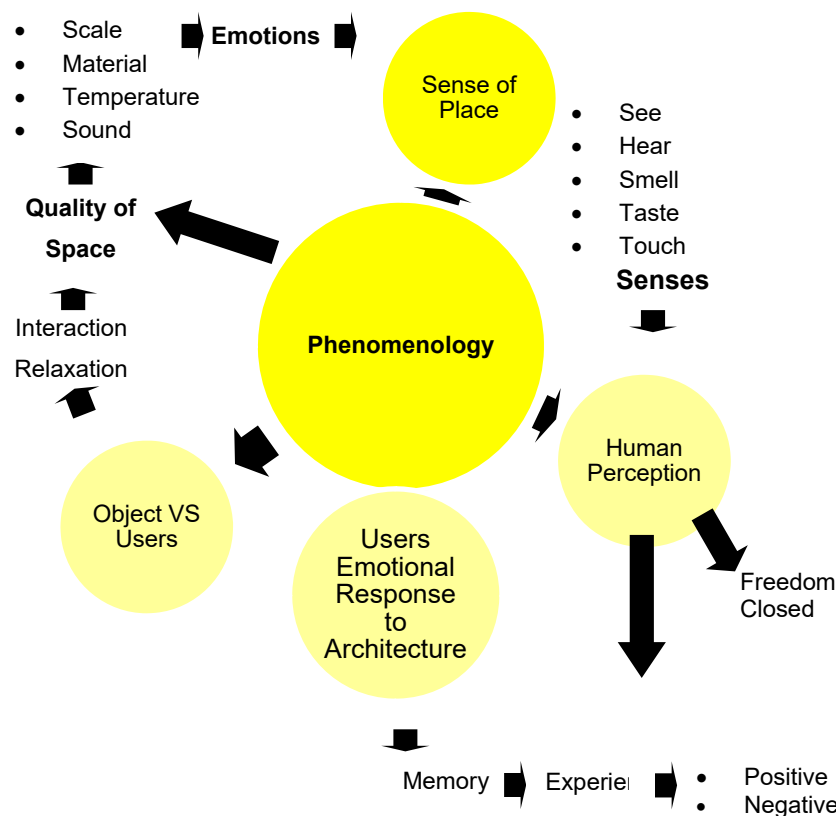
**Figure 25: Expanded Diagram depicting focus and link to the Key Architectural Theories and Sub-Theories towards conceptualizing a Socio-Economic Transition House.**

**Source: Figure by Author, 2017**

Chapter Three focuses on designing a Socio-Economic Transition House within the City and which would aid the Homeless empowerment. The section will draw on the ideas of phenomenology to form the platform of empowering the homeless through the built environment. The research will explore the specific conditions of the built environment that the Homeless respond to. Within this chapter the relationship between the Homeless and the transitional spaces are highlighted. Place-Theory would highlight the surrounding context and help link the surrounding nodes to aid the design of the Transition House. Empowerment would help identify the spaces required and which type of skills actually encourage social, economic and environmental development not just for the design of the building itself but for the users.

### 3.2 Phenomenology used to conceptualize a "Transitional" Space.

Seamon (2016) states that "Architectural phenomenology", can be defined as the phenomenological study of architectural experiences and meanings as constituted by qualities and features of both the built environment and human life. Phenomenology architecture celebrates the basic elements of architecture: walls, floors and ceiling (horizontal planes) and vertical planes but also emphasizes on the "sensuous qualities of materials, light and colour and the symbolic, tactile significance of the joint" (Nesbitt 1996:29). In the Figure below, able to see phenomenology and its aspects.



**Figure 26: Phenomenology and its aspects.**

**Source: Figure by Author, 2017**

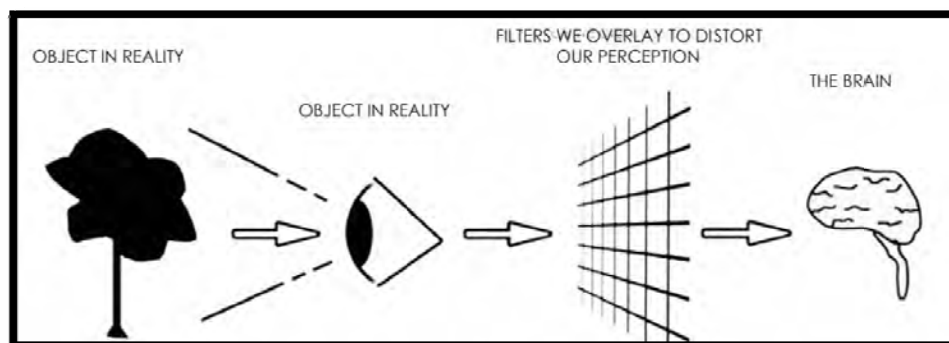
The phenomenology theory in this study is used to stimulate the healing process within a transitional environment. Breetzke (2010:76) states that phenomenology can assist with creating a positive mind, body and soul of an individual. Breetzke (2010:62)

concludes that phenomenology has the ability to assist the healing of the Homeless as it encourages better health conditions, life and re-energise the body and soul.

Transitional spaces in this research study is an environment which is an escape from their previous street culture lives. Schaller (2012:9) states that for the healing process to occur quicker and more effectively, an individual needs to be removed from their former environment and placed in transitional spaces. Transitional spaces would allow the homeless to escape their traumatic street life and heal within a safe, secure and comfortable environment.

Understanding the causes of Homeless mental health is essential when attempting to heal the homeless mental health. Gory and Ritchery (1990:89) states that the homeless experience daily hardships, long term struggles with continuous failures, lack of social supports and weak coping abilities aid their depression. Depression results in their detachment and social isolation. The homeless embody a stigma stimulated by other social groups which prevent them from seeking help in health care nor social support.

Senses and an individual's perception contribute to the well-being of an individual. They control the physical and psychological aspects of an individual. An environment can contribute to an individual's mood and also control it. Architecture has the ability to impact on an individual's senses and perception. The environment an individual is placed in can either improve their health or deteriorate it. Architecture should not be mistaken to have the ability of healing but rather stimulate an environment for healing.



**Figure 27: Perception Process.**

**Source:** (<http://wecoloringpage.com> - accessed April 2017)



Perception (see Figure 27), encourages an individual to understand their environment and makes them aware of their surroundings. Our perception of the world is a result of nerve chemicals which control our mood balance. Our senses create the image of a place through our perception. Our mood and health is therefore an "unconscious result"(Basson 2014:18) of our perception . As our environment changes our emotions responses to those changes.

Sensory properties (see Figure 28), should be considered in architecture as it allows an individual to interact and relate to the building. Through touching the textures and surfaces of a building it can impact on an individual physically and psychologically. This is due to the building textures and surfaces evoking one's senses. The stimulation of sense enables an individual to feel part of their environment. For mental health healing to occur a sense of independence needs to be obtained, which is done through having control over one's environment.

The use of sensory properties in an environment "allow for healing to emerge"(Schaller 2012: 53).

- **Sight:** Natural, organic soft edges evoke emotions of freedom and expression compared to right angles seen in the urban built environment which evokes emotions of restriction and constraint, (see Figure 28). The light entering into the building creates a relaxing atmosphere.



*Figure 28: Therme Vals, Switzerland by Peter Zumthor.*

**Source:**

(<https://www.archdaily.com/tag/phenomenology> - accessed January 2018)

- **Sound:** Sound of running water evoke emotions of relaxation and peacefulness compared to the sound of traffic in the city which evoke emotions of stress and anxiety, (see Figure 29). The water fall runs through the main axis of the building, which creates a continuous sound of flowing water. This creates a calming and relaxing atmosphere.

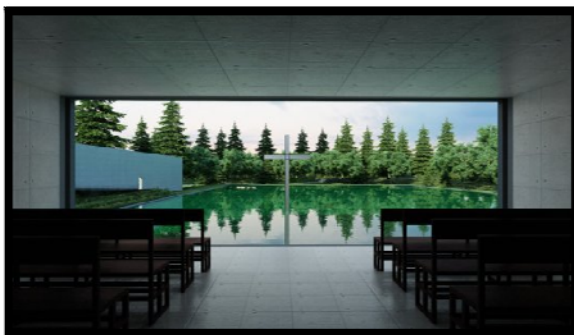


*Figure 29: Salk Institute by Louis Kahn*

**Source:**

(<https://www.archiobjects.org/louis-kahn-salk-institute> - accessed January 2018)

- **Smell:** Natural elements (rain, grass or soil) create a connection to nature. Evokes emotions of freshness and cleanness compared to urban environment pollution (vehicle fumes, wastage and chemicals), (see Figure 30). The Church is designed around nature, the smell of the lake and trees creates a fresh and clean atmosphere.



*Figure 30: Church on water by Tadao Ando*

**Source:**

(<https://lifelifeelectric.wordpress.com/tag/tadao-ando> - accessed January 2018)

- **Taste:** Taste of fresh fruit and vegetables would create a clean taste pallet which is associated with healthy eating. You imagine feeling better when you eat fresh produce compared to eating oily deep fried foods. Where you feel lazy and drained of energy.

- **Touch:** Feeling the building's surfaces and textures allow the user to experience and engage with it. Allowing the user to feel part of the building which makes the user comfortable and secure within the building. When a user is comfortable in a space they are able to heal mentally, (see Figure 31). The use of different materials encourages the user to touch and relate to the building.



**Figure 31: Bruder Klaus Field Chapel by Peter Zumthor**

**Source:**

(<https://www.archdaily.com/798340/peter-zumthors-bruder-klaus-field-chapel-through-the-lens-of-aldo-amoretti> - accessed January 2018)

Pallasmaa (2005:12) explains, how the physical environment affects our emotions and reactions that aid the healing process within a space.

*"All the senses, including vision, are extensions of the tactile sense, the senses are specializations of skin tissue and all sensory experiences are modes of touching and thus related to tactility. Our contact with the world takes place at the boundary line of the self, through specialized parts of our enveloping membrane".* Pallasmaa (2005:12)

An environment influences the mental and physical health of individuals. It has the ability to heal people through phenomenological architecture which is a multisensory architecture. For the Homeless psychologically to be rehabilitated there needs to be a connection to their daily lifestyle (culture) and meaningful spaces. The current environments that the Homeless are exposed are sterile therefore they feel depressed and isolated. There is a lack of connections to a home environment which aids their psychological issues.

Fallingwater House: "Fallingwater is the physical and spiritual occurrence of man and architecture in harmony with nature, (see Figure 32 and 33). All you have to do is listen." (Perez 2010). The house was designed to sit on top of the waterfall to make it part of the users life. Hearing the sound of running water evokes relaxation and

peaceful emotions. The primary design goal was to create a building that is harmonious in nature. The use of natural stone in the house allows the users senses to be evoked through touching the surface of the stone thus allows the user to feel part of the house.



**Figure 32 and 33: Fallingwater House, Frank Lloyd Wright. An example of phenomenology architecture which sites in harmony with its environment.**

**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com/>)/ (<https://img0.etsystatic.com> - accessed April 2017)

The users senses allows them to create their own perception of the house. The design of the house encourages the user to move towards nature. Enforced through low ceilings and dark narrow passageways. This design strategy makes the users feel compressed and restricted thus inspiring them to move towards nature. The horizontal form of the building sits low and compliments the site.

Light, Colour and Shadow Psychology: Experience of natural lighting in the healing process is vital. Individuals exposed to "amplified concentration of natural sunlight"(Basson 2014:20), Light complimented with the play of forms, colour and natural elements can balance a space and create a space which individuals can experience an alternative state of consciousness which could recollect their memory from lived experiences. Colour psychology has the ability to impact on human behavior, moods and emotions"(Basson 2014:21). Emotions irrespective negative or positive can be evoked through visual stimulation from architecture and colour. Colour stimulates our

emotions depending on our mental perception of it. Colour perception is based on our cultural beliefs or shared psychological perceptions of specific emotions to specific colours. Through manipulating or controlling colour, the experience of a space can be controlled thus the control of an individual's emotional response and behaviour can be controlled, (see Figure 34).

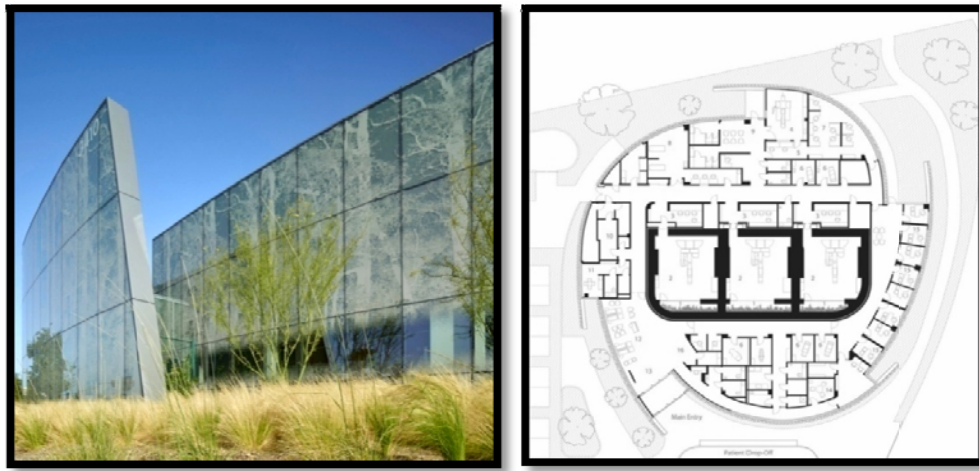


**Figure 34: Colour psychology wheel.**

**Source:** (<http://www.smashingmagazine.com> - accessed April 2017)

Kraemer Radiation Oncology Center, Canada, (see Figure 35 and 36). This centre is an example of using light, colour, shadow psychology and nature in the healing process. The Centre is designed in contrast to traditional radiation treatment centre's which are placed below ground level. The Centre was designed on ground level to embrace natural lighting. Natural lighting used to harness the stress and anxiety levels from radiation treatment. Views of nature and the play of interior colours create a calm, tranquil and relaxing atmosphere similar to a spa experience. The organic form of the Centre allows for a Zen garden. The connection to nature is a process of silencing the mind and building the spirit. The customized glass facade walls mirror the landscape thus enhances the buildings connection to nature. The glazing pattern density varies

throughout the building to provide privacy where required and transparency where appreciated.



**Figure 35 and 36: Kraemer Radiation Oncology Center, Canada .**

**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com> - accessed April 2017)

The organic form of the Centre presents soft edges which evoke emotions of freedom and relaxation. At night the building emits a yellow glow light which transforms the building into a beacon of hope for cancer patients.

### **3.3 Place-Theory as a tool for Community Development.**

Place-making is a underlying principle which marries the built work and its location. Menin (2013:144) states that the underlying principle creates the phenomenological linkages which embodies the site, location and human interaction within a space to form an evolving organic body. The fundamental issues in architecture is creating a built form which address multicultural identities and creates a sense of belonging for its users. The theory of Place-making provides a structural framework to embrace and prioritises these ideas within the built environment.

The main focus of Place-Theory is the reflection of the characteristics of place, its people and their culture. Nesbitt (1996:26) states that the tectonic aspect of architecture plays a specific role especially the concrete detail which "explains the environment and makes its character manifest". Therefore Nesbitt (1996:28) further emphasises



that place is defined by the "visual, tactile, alfactory and aruol sensations" which the built environment forming together the local character or atmosphere. For meaningful architecture to exist, culture and identity of the users need to form the bases of the spaces within the built environment. Thus in this research study, it is key to understand the Homeless and their street culture as well as the spaces which directly affect them in their current environment.

Norberg-Schulz (1983:66) states that architectural solutions for a place should be derived from observations of the practical patterns of use of space. Human activity patterns and interactions are dynamic which evolve consistently. Thus adaptive spaces are required for spaces to remain relevant. Day (2002:164) reinforces this idea, if spaces do not evolve as human patterns evolve then the space is "neither alive nor responsive to human life".

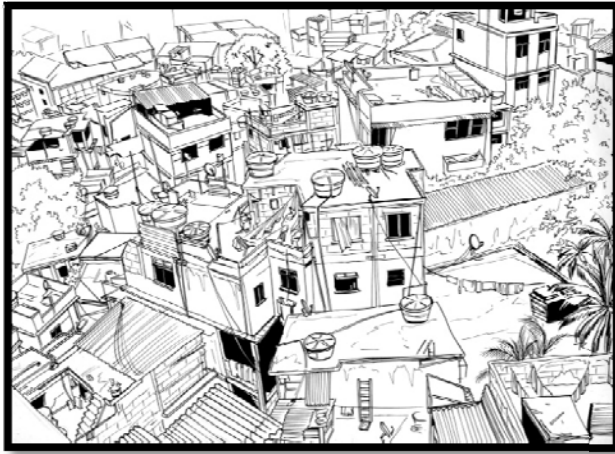
Auge (2009:7) states that place is defined as the relational, historical and reactionary to identity and culture. It is a space which is embodied by human activity pattern thus making a space a 'place'. Place is therefore constructed through its users experience and the meaning they draw from it. The physical parts of place are responding to the "social processes and therefore become products of these systems" (Stubbs 2016:23).

### ***Genius Loci***

"The spirit of a place feeds, and is fed by the attitudes and actions of these who administer, build, maintain and use it."(Day 2002:7).

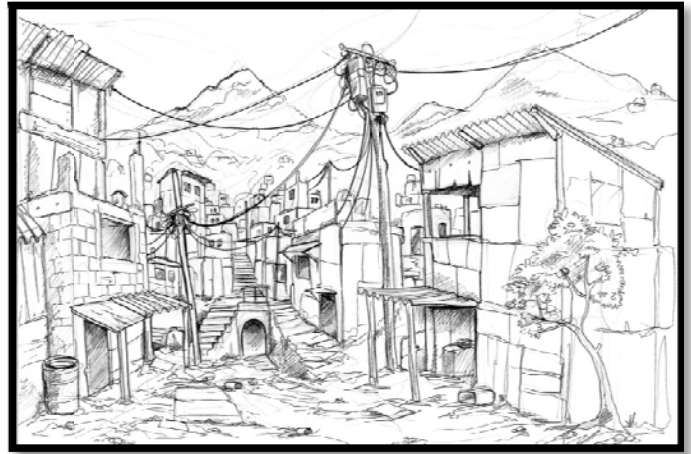
Genius loci is derived from the Romans who believed places embodied "spirits that determined their essence"(Stubbs 2016:25). Thus genius loci means 'spirit of place'. The 'spirit of place' is dynamic and evolving constantly as it reflects the human character, the culture and the place. The experience of a place is based on the people inhabiting the space, their human activity patterns and the physical infrastructure(roads, buildings, parks etc). Thus tells a story of the people and creates the character of the place. Genius loci theory linked with phenomenology theory, helps create meaningful architecture as it reflects "the values and needs, both in use of materials and the understanding of self-organization of the space"(Stubbs 2016:25). Norberg-Schulz

(1982) in contemporary usage, introduced a new angle to the concept genius loci, the unique atmosphere of a place defines, a 'spirit of place'. This states that in current times genius loci is found in the way humans construct their settlements, which is influenced by their human culture, nature and financial status. This type of settlement is more spontaneous that embodies the settlers own unique character and 'spirit of place'. This is also known as an act of insurgency, when the homeless have no place to go therefore construct their homes on urban spaces.



*Figure 37: Rio de Janeiro informal settlements Architecture.*

*Source:(<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com> - accessed April 2017)*



*Figure 38: Rio de Janeiro informal settlement character.*

*Source:([http://www.gcourtioi.fr/portfolio/img/2d/work\\_1/img\\_1.jpg](http://www.gcourtioi.fr/portfolio/img/2d/work_1/img_1.jpg) - accessed April 2017)*

As discussed previously Rio de Janeiro, Brazil is one of the world's largest slums. The construction method used in these informal settlements depict a certain character, which is in contrast to formal built environment. The inhabitants use materials that are available to them to construct these buildings. The roads are unpaved and uneven. The character of the place is created by the inhabitants not just by their human activity patterns but by the physical infrastructure constructed themselves.

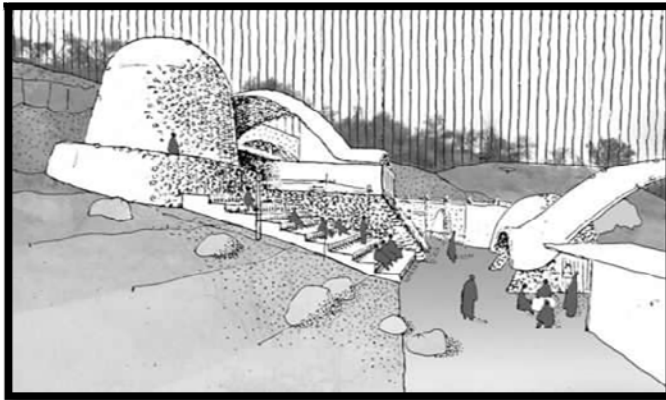


## ***Critical Regionalism***

Critical Regionalism, is used to "define an architecture that is grounded in 'place'"(Stubbs 2016:24). Through the built environment, culture can be sustained by harvesting and nurturing culture and community ideas. Critical regionalism theory was aimed to design architecture which displayed identity and culture which was rooted in place, while employing universal design methods. In order to design relevant architecture which is rooted in 'place', there needs to be an understanding and consideration of culture and tradition while marring modern techniques and tectonic.

Adopting critical regionalism in the design approach provides a platform for modern design to be site responsive. Critical regionalism is based on two main aspects, the understanding of modern techniques and technologies and place of proposed architecture. The driving ideologies of critical regionalism is its response to the site, climatic nature, local skills and craftsmanship and materials found in the area. The theory emphasizes the design of "experiential and spatial architecture"(Stubbs 2016:24) which is evident in phenomenology of place. It also embraces the design of a specific place through the culture and identity that inhabits a place. Architecture has the ability to capture a specific time, region and place through materials of that time and architectural style specific to that region of place.

Mapungubwe Interpretation Centre, designed by Peter Rich is an example of a regions culture and identity embodied in the landscape. This centre is an example of critical regionalism as it emphasizes the regions culture, identity and vernacular materials. Rich drew inspiration from the architecture of the local Ndele Tribe and African Vernacular. The centre was not designed to any local tribe but take inspiration from African vernacular. The design is a combination of modern technologies and vernacular materials found in the region. The landscape played an inspiring role in the organic forms of the centre. The use of local materials (stone, brick and thatch) from the region combined with modern technologies helped to achieve the design of large vaulted roofs. The domed roof represent the forces that are found in nature. The construction as well was built by local builders and the community, local woman handmade the soil tiles.

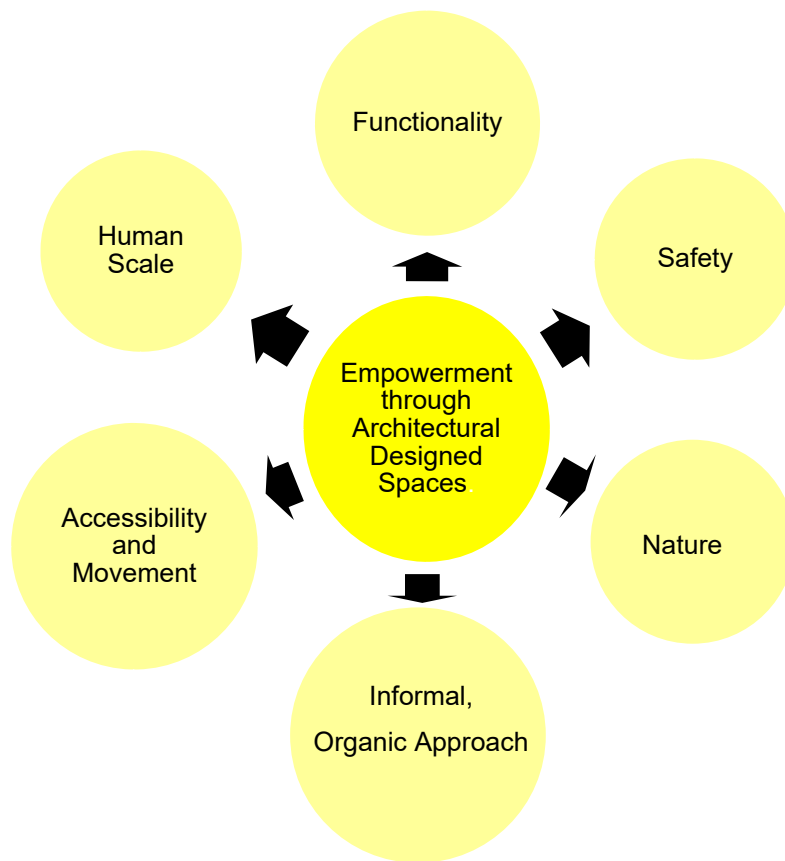


**Figure 39 and 40: Mapungubwe Interpretation Centre, designed by Peter Rich. An example of Critical Regionalism.**

**Source:** (<http://www.archidatum.com> - accessed April 2017)

In order to create a sense of identity and empowerment through architecture, there needs to be an understanding of the place in which it is to be designed. Thus allows for connections to the inhibitors of the place towards a design which is responsive to the identity, culture and vernacular materials to the specific place. Designing for the homeless would influence the materiality of a place as it would require sensitive and stimulate healing interior and exterior spaces. It is vital to incorporate critical regionalism in the design to ensure understanding of the homeless, their street culture and their current environment. Designing a socio-economic shelter which is responsive to its context (Durban), people (Homeless), climate and typography (City).

### 3.4 Empowerment through Architectural Spaces



*Figure 41: Aspects need to consider when designing spaces that empower people.*

*Source: Drawn by Author, 2017*

In the attempt to empower the Homeless through architecture, there needs to be a consideration of aspects with regard to the spaces which help the empowerment process. The above Figure illustrates the aspects that are required to be considered. These aspects should be considered in order to impact on the homeless transition process and lifestyle positively. There also needs to be consideration placed on Sustainable architecture to ensure sustained empowered individuals.

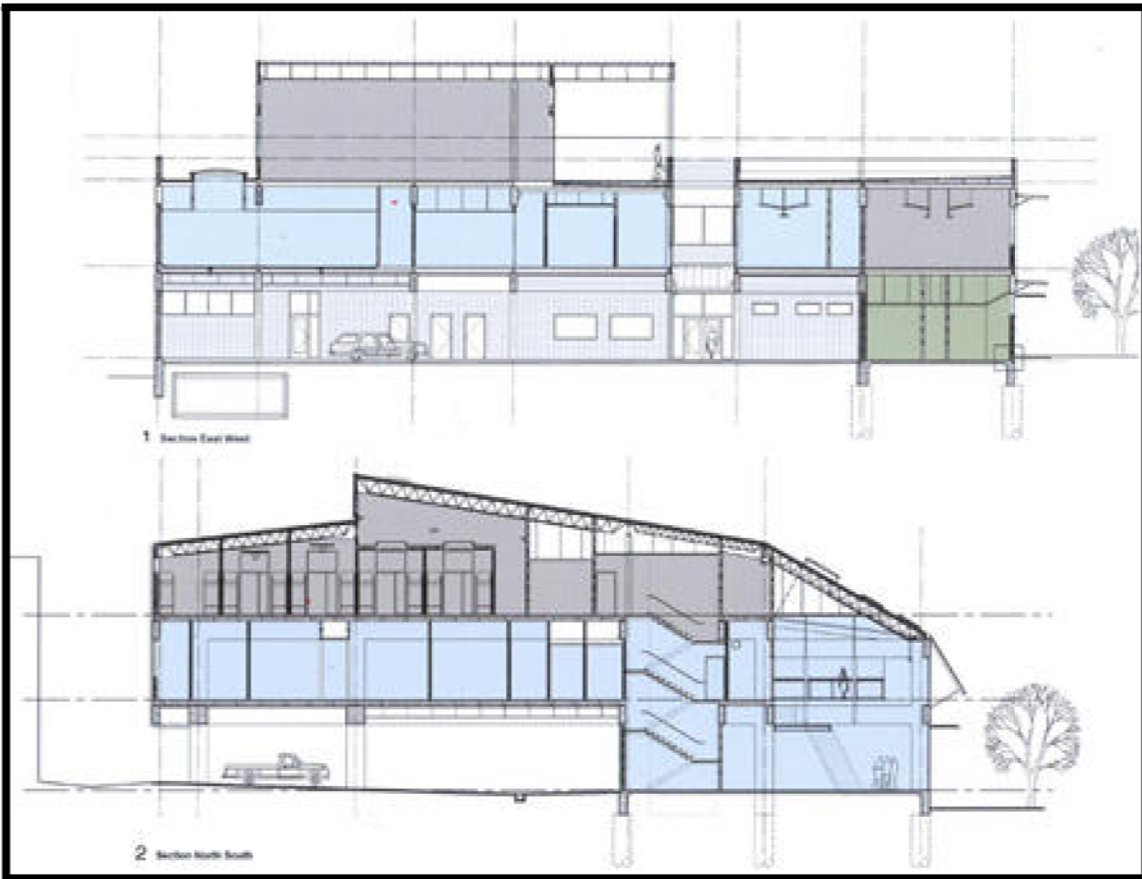
## ***Functionality***

The principals of meaningful architecture is based on the spatial design of a building. Spatial design which addresses the needs of its users within the urban environment. Austin Resource Centre is a Homeless shelter, meeting place, support center and a transition space which helps the Homeless through their programs. The Homeless enter the building on the ground floor which accommodates services and facilities for public use. Services and facilities such as computer room, laundry service, locker room and a health care clinic. The first floor accommodates shower facilities, offices, conference rooms, cafeteria, meeting rooms and multi-purpose room. This level is for the homeless to gain help through the programs provided by councilors. The second floor accommodates 100 beds for the homeless people with a City view.



**Figure 42: Austin Resource Center for the homeless.**

**Source:** (<http://www.tilt-up.org> - accessed May 2017)



**Figure 43: Section of the Austin Resource Center.**

Source:(<http://www.aiatopten.org> - accessed May 2017)

The building is structured from a public level to a semi-private to a private level, for access control. Large glass windows on the ground level create transparency for public view, (see Figure 42 and 43). The design of the Centre allows interaction on the street level yet still provides privacy on the other levels. The corner entrance draws the public into the building with the aid of the large entrance and double volume space. The Centre connects to the city through its open and accessible spaces. The Centre reflects a welcoming and approachable space for the Homeless to come and get help. The Centre has a multi-functional program which is open and accessible to not just the Homeless but others whom want to improve their situation. The Centre provides spaces which directly impact on the transitional process towards an independent lifestyle.

## ***Safety***

The environment is composed of physical aspects and social aspects which interact and create safe places. Current spaces in the urban environment have spaces which are blinded to passive surveillance.

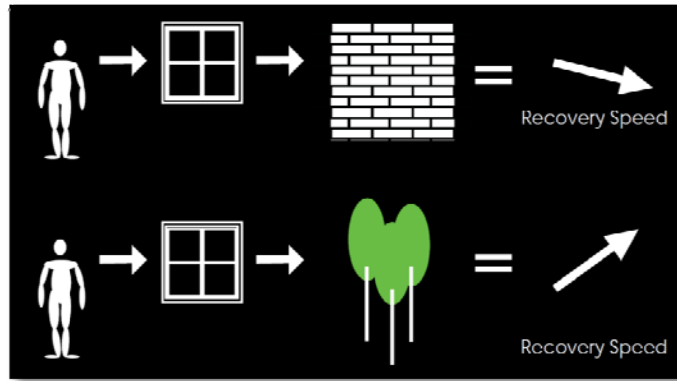
- Unsafe feeling spaces: isolated, dark and quiet spaces attract the Homeless and undesirable activities (drugs and crime). These spaces lack passive surveillance.
- Safe feeling spaces: passive surveillance spaces, presence of people, activities to stimulate the presence of people, open and light.

The Homeless require safe feeling spaces to heal mentally. It is an essential principle to consider in a transition space and rehabilitation process.

## ***Nature***

Spaces with a connection to nature stimulate natural healing. Sound, smell and touch of nature evokes emotions of relaxation and silencing of the mind (peacefulness). Nature provides an atmosphere of calming and serenity which is necessary in the healing environment. A simple redirection of a patients view towards nature has proven to be a useful mental distraction tool allowing recovery to occur quicker.

Roger Ulrich (1986:420), (see Figure 44), changed the view of healing in hospitals by introducing views of nature and natural environment compared to brick walls. Patients whom experienced natural views required less pain medication and experienced shorter hospital stays. "Elements of nature"(Schaller 2012:41) evoke qualities of calmness and serenity which is essential in the healing environment and the process of healing.



**Figure 44: Roger Ulrich, effects of garden on healing outcomes.**

**Source: (Schaller 2012:40)**

### ***Informal, Organic Approach***

Spaces which empower the Homeless require informal organic environments. The current rigid spaces created within the urban environment evokes feelings of intimidation, restriction and insecurity. Day (2002) states that spaces need to be adaptive in order to respond to the organic nature of human activity patterns. Thus allowing the spaces to remain relevant as human activity patterns change.

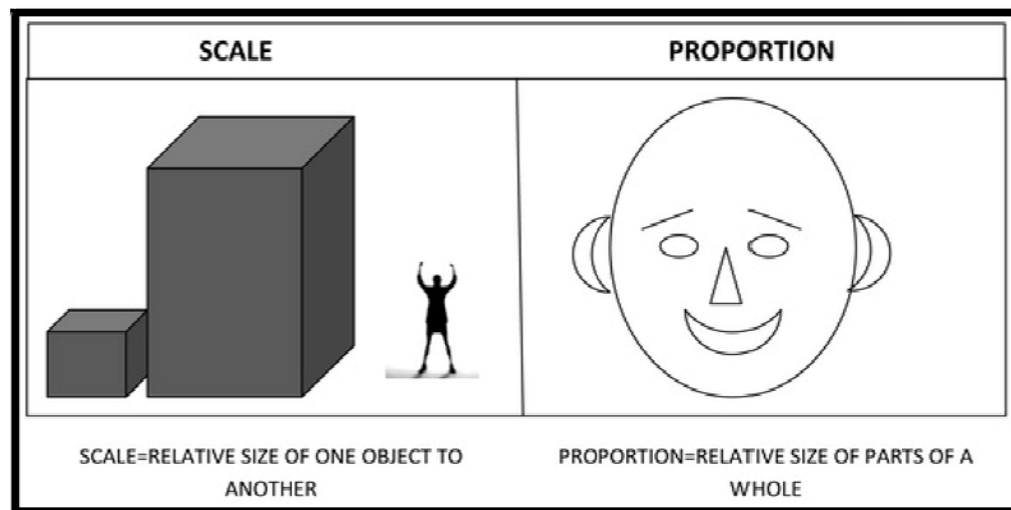
### ***Accessibility and Movement***

Many Homeless move around the city with their belongings or selling goods (pushed in trolleys or carried in bags) on a daily basis. Thus accessibility and movement is crucial for the Homeless. The traditional approach to deal with making a building easily accessible is to add staircases, ramps or lifts. However this approach places the circulation services in isolation, separates the building from its users and breaks the building and street connection. The alternative approach is placing the building on the street level to allow easy access and provide lockers for the Homeless belongings like in the Austin Resource Centre (see Figure 42)

### ***Scale and Proportion***

Scale and proportion plays a vital role in the perception created and experience of a space. It relays on the balance of scale and proportion. The scale of a space influences the users emotions, if the space is too large, the user feels lost and disorientated. These

spaces are perceived to be unsafe. However if the spaces are passive and intimate, it evokes feelings of safety. Scale (see Figure 45), is a reference to size of an object in relationship to another object. In architecture scale is used for different building typology to evoke different emotions. For example, a residential building would be designed in consideration of human scale, the floor to ceiling height is three meters or less to create a comfortable space. A monumental building would not consider human scale as it is to pronounce the importance of the building to society. Large scale spaces in monumental buildings evoke emotions of intimidation, placing emphasis on the importance of the building rather than humans. Proportion (see, Figure 45), is a reference to relative size of parts of a whole, for example the size relationships with a human body. Proportional system provides guidelines to the design which is responsive to the human figure. Proportion also helps with the aesthetic of a building.



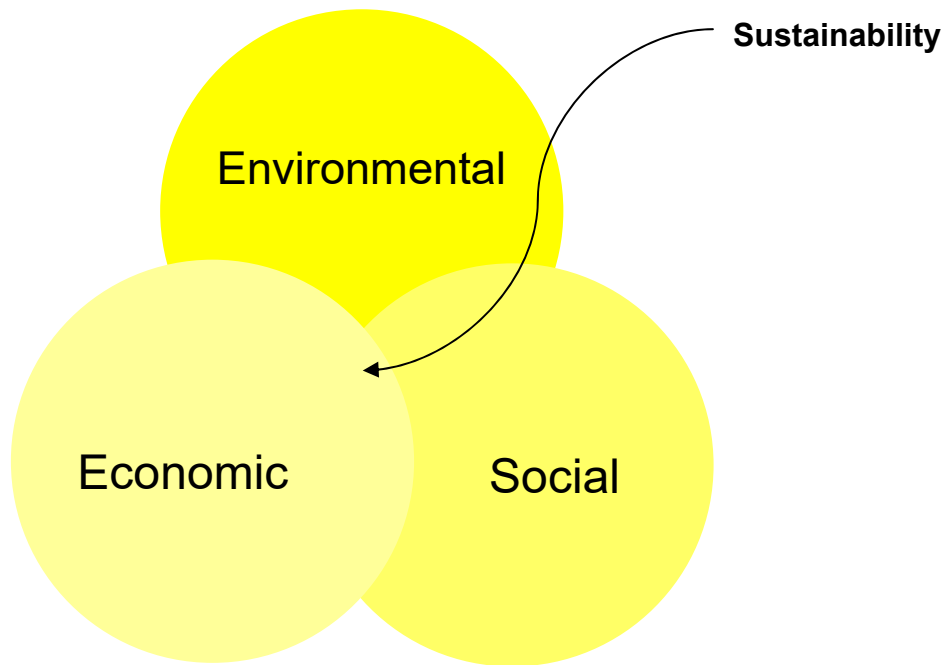
**Figure 45: Scale and Proportion.**

**Source:**(<https://www.sophia.org> - accessed April 2017)

The influence of scale and proportion in creating a comfortable transitional space for the Homeless is vital. As it influences the behavior and reaction of the homeless to the spaces. Similar to phenomenology architecture. This aspect links with the informal organic approach as it avoids spaces which make a user feel restricted or intimidated.



## Sustainable Architecture



**Figure 46: Three pillars of Sustainability: Environmental, Social and Economic.**

**Source: (Drawn by Author - accessed August 2017)**

Sustainable architecture is a combination of environmental, economic and social benefits. Sustainable architecture requires a balance between the three pillars, "it's one that has minimal environmental impact while simultaneously meeting its occupants' various needs." (Design Build 2011).

Below listed from Design Build (2011), the benefits of the three pillars:

### *Environmental Benefits*

To preserve our environment and prevent our natural resources from being depleted.

Sustainable substitutions are introduced in developments which allows us to:

- Protect the Ecosystem
- Reduce Carbon Emissions
- Improve Air and Water Quality
- Conserve Water
- Conserve Natural Resources

- Waste Reduction
- Temperature Control

### *Economic Benefits*

Utilizing sustainable materials, reducing energy consumption and improving water efficiency it allows us to:

- Aid in the Expansion of the “Green Market”
- Reduce Operating Costs
- Optimizes the Life Cycle of the Building
- Increases Property Value
- Improve Occupants Attendance and Productivity

### *Social Benefits*

Improving interior environmental quality its allows for:

- Improved Occupants Comfort and Health
- Create an Aesthetically Pleasing Environment
- Minimizes Strain on Local Infrastructure
- Increases Occupants Overall Morale
- Improves Worker Productivity

## **3.5 Conclusion**

Conceptualizing a home in the city is difficult for all social groups especially the Homeless as it does not address a specific identity or culture. The urban environment struggles to consider the multicultural identity of current times. Therefore the users are not always able to relate or engage with the buildings. However through the theories of phenomenology, empowerment and place-theory, provides an understanding and direction towards designing a Socio-Economic Transition House which the users can relate to and empower themselves through. The Socio-Economic Transition House would serve as a Homeless Shelter and a public psychological escape from the stresses of modern urban living. This transition space should eliminate the feeling of isolation and enhance community interaction and social development, complimented by

reintegrating the Homeless back into society through multiple program. Resulting in empowered Homeless people through architectural spaces. Empowering the Homeless ensures socio-economical development and active members in society. Empowering the Homeless is a long process with sustained results. This would have a micro and macro impact on the City of Durban and on social services aided to help the Homeless survive. The design of a Socio-Economic Transition House will not however eliminate or radically influence the Homeless statistic. This architecture would however serve as an opportunity for those Homeless people of Durban, CBD who want a better quality of life and want a new culture and identity in society.

In an attempt to further understand how to design for the Homeless two precedent studies are analysed. Looking at the two well known precedent studies provides examples of how different countries deal with the homeless and how effective their methods are. It also provides and directs the design decisions for the Transition House to meet the needs of the Homeless.

# Precedent Studies

Towards Creating Rehabilitation & Transitional Spaces for the Homeless

*Pacific Garden Mission*

*The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre*

CHAPTER

*Figure 47: Homeless Man*

*Source: (<http://www.barnorama.com> - accessed June 2017, edited by Author)*



## **4.1 Introduction**

Chapter Four focuses on reviewing precedent studies which are designed to deal with the Homeless. These would be used as guides in generating an appropriate intervention. The precedent studies chosen provides key understanding of the Homeless phenomenon within an urban context. The following architecture illustrates the carefully designed spaces which aid the development and growth of the Homeless while understanding the Homelessness phenomenon within an urban context.

The Pacific Garden Mission and the Bridge Homeless Centre, assists and empowers the Homeless through different approaches. The precedent studies will be analysed against the theories and concepts which were discussed in previous chapters. Through analysis, conclusions can be drawn which would aid in the design of the Socio-Economic Transition House.

## **4.2 Rehabilitating the Homeless back into Society: Pacific Garden Mission**

### **4.2.1 Project Description**

**Architect:** Tigerman Mccurry Architects

**Location:** Chicago

**Project Area:** 14492.87 sqm

**Project Year:** 2007

Pacific Garden Mission is a Gospel worship ministry which was founded by Colonel George and Sarah Dunn Clerk in 1877. The organization grew from a tiny ministry storefront at 386 Clark Street to one of the largest continuum rescue shelters in America. It is also one of the oldest rescue missions in the country working towards changing lives through Gospel. Provides meals three times a day, temporary and permanent shelter, clothing, health care and spiritual guidance. Stanley Tigerman was the Lead Architect on the project. He was attracted to the project due to their respected

approach towards the Homeless, treating the Homeless as guests ensuring their dignity and pride is maintained.



*Figure 48: Exterior view of the Pacific Garden Mission.*

*Source: (<http://ftempo.com> - accessed June 2017)*

The main challenge for the project was site selection. The site selected was near the previous site and surrounded by parking lots and railway trucks. The lack of urban fabric challenged the Architect to create a building that responds to pedestrians as the surrounded urban environment did not. The Architect aimed to create a retreat like atmosphere where the Homeless could feel safe while enjoying the amenities provided in the building. The Mission accommodates a thousand people on bunk beds and four hundred more during winter. The dining room seats six hundred people and serves two thousand meals daily. The Mission is based strictly on the worship of Gospel therefore prior to each meal a Gospel service attendance is mandatory.

#### **4.2.2 Justification of Precedent Study**

Chicago urban environment is similar to Durban. Both experience high levels of unemployment, crime and Homelessness. The Homeless find shelter under bridges or in public parks as an act of insurgency. This act of insurgency is a response to their situation and the city's urban fabric. The Mission is a representation of the Homeless



phenomenon that Chicago faces. The Mission aims to change the perception of the homelessness and create a link for the Homeless to become part of society.

The "Theory of Genius Loci" can be seen in the Mission to define a sense of place in Chicago. It became a symbolic structure that the Homeless could relate to and aided their identity and culture within society. The meditation and reflective courtyards in the Mission help the occupants to reflect on their situation towards a positive one.

#### 4.2.3 Location



**Figure 49: Location and connections to Pacific Garden Mission.**

**Source:** (Google Maps - accessed May 2017, edited by Author)

The Mission is located, (see Figure 49), in a Warehouse District on the outskirts of Chicago City. The area is characterized by railway tracks, highway roads, parking lots, retail facilities and a few low income residential units; similar characteristics to Durban,

Warwick Junction. Due to decentralization and suburbanization, businesses relocated, unemployment increased, buildings became neglected and vacant thus became a breathing ground for Homelessness. Due to the surrounding urban environment focusing on commercial nodes the Mission was unable to create connections, the public transport hub and public green spaces is a distance from the Mission. The area is also detached from Chicago City thus limiting the economic and social growth. The area as a result does not cater for the homeless nor embody social development of the community. There is also a lack of public social interactive spaces. This influenced the Architect to design the building focusing on the interior spaces.

#### **4.2.4 Project Objectives**

- Main objective was to be a Homeless institute which creates a link for the Homeless to be integrated back into society and strive for a better quality of life.
- Attracting the public's and states attention towards the homeless phenomenon in Chicago City using the building and their own radio station called "Unshacked" to broadcasts reflective stories of homelessness.
- Produce active members in society through the provision of shelter, supportive services and spiritual guidance for the homeless.
- Spreading the worship of Gospel to inspirer and create a belief system for the homeless towards a positive change in their lives.

#### **4.2.5 Program and Planning**

The design is based on connecting the building to the central courtyard. The courtyard stretches the length of the building to maximize natural lighting into the spaces. The building is formed using four wings to create the perimeter of the courtyard which is also used during the summer as an outdoor chapel. The building accommodates five classrooms for training and skills development, computer facilities, gym rooms, library, laundry facilities, barber shop (personal grooming), lounges to interact and socialize, six counseling rooms and separate gender sleeping rooms, (see Figure 50 and 51).





**Figure 50 and 51: Sleeping arrangements at the Pacific Garden Mission.**

**Source: (<http://www.tigerman-mccurry.com>- accessed June 2017)**

The homeless arrive through the main entrance, where they are interviewed by a counseling staff to determine their individual needs. They are then directed to their gender inclusive wing of the building, this separation ensures safety and security for the homeless, especially for woman with children. The homeless are then asked to remove their clothing and place it in a heated room (kills any germs, lice or vermin), and to use the bathroom facilities, where they are given clean sleep wear for the night. They are also allocated a sleeping bunk. The sleeping dorms are further separated into temporary and permanent residents. Hygiene is a firm practice in the Mission as it prevents diseases and illnesses. Prior to supper, the residents have to attend a Gospel Worship service and if the residents spend the night there is an additional Bible studies session in the morning. There is also a mandatory Gospel Worship service prior to receiving lunch at the homeless shelter. The Mission strongly believes that the homeless faith in God can alter their lives and provide them with hope for the future.



*Figure 52 and 53: Left: Faith expressed in the Pacific Garden Mission aesthetic appeal and Right: Prayer space.*

*Source: (<http://www.tigerman-mccurry.com>- accessed June 2017)*

There are many programs provided to assist the homeless towards gaining control over their lives:

- ***New Day Program***, assists the Homeless whom experience substance abuse due to their situation. The program provides a safe and healthy way of eliminating the dependence on substances such as drugs or alcohol.
- ***New Life Program***, assists the Homeless with spiritual guidance towards gaining control over their lives and assist the Homeless with training and skills development to gain future employment.
- ***Mothers and children Ministry Program***, focuses on mothers and children, with their daily needs and their spiritual guidance. This program helps approximately three hundred woman and children daily, by providing meals, shelter and supportive services.
- ***Bible Program***, a small group of Homeless people taken in for sixty days, where they learn about the Bible and Worship of Gospel. Once the program is completed, they are shifted to career development to gain employment and becoming active members in society again.

- **The Skills Program**, assists the homeless to achieve their high school diploma and provide an opportunity for further training in Computer Literacy and English Language.



*Figure 54 and 55: Green House at the Pacific Garden Mission.*

*Source: (<http://www.jetsongreen.com> - accessed June 2017)*

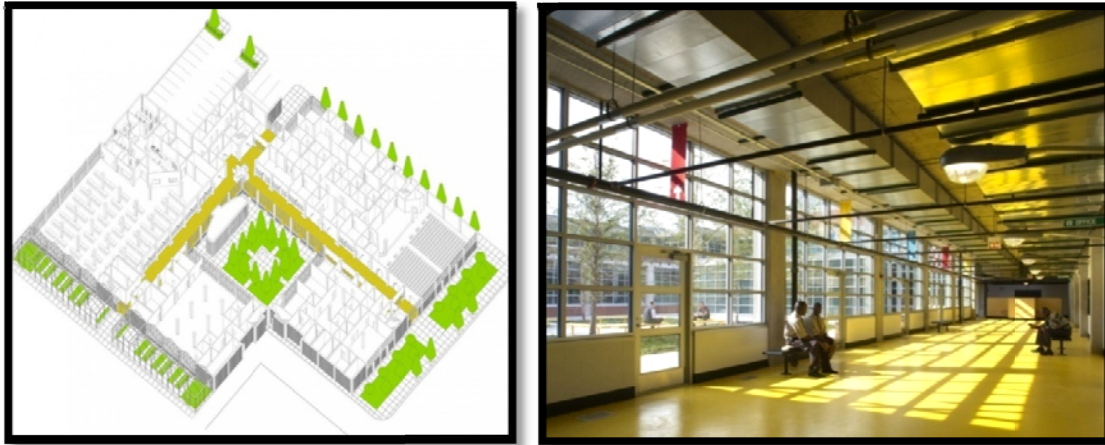
- **Green House** which stretches the length of the Mission building, (see Figure 54 and 55). This plays a vital role in implementing the "Theory of Empowerment" into the building. Employ the long term residents, gain skills for future employment opportunities and serves as a green space for the residents to socialize and interact. Thus encouraging community development.

#### 4.2.6 Analysis of Design

The Architect created a lively street atmosphere to encourage interaction through the main circulation spaces. This was done on the ground floor L-shaped corridor known as the yellow brick road. Street benches, street lights, street bins, street signs and the floor was painted in yellow epoxy paint to create this street like atmosphere. This was done to create a "sense of place" and familiarity for the Homeless, most Homeless consider the streets as their home rather than a Homeless Shelter. "Theory of Phenomenology", multisensory architecture assisted with enhancing the Street like atmosphere in the building through the play of light, colour and shadow. The yellow circulation space forms the main circulation space to all the areas in the building including, sleeping



dorms and dining hall, (see Figure 56 and 57). The focus of the project was directed towards the interior of the building. The central courtyard creates a safe and peaceful space which allows the Homeless to escape their circumstances. The courtyard spaces made the design feel open yet protected by the building layout.



**Figure 56 and 57: Yellow circulation in the Pacific Garden Mission.**

**Source:** (<http://www.tigerman-mccurry.com> - accessed June 2017)

The "Theory of Empowerment" is implemented by the Architect through the services and facilities to assist the homeless in gaining control over their lives, empowering them through skills training and facilities that would aid their learning. Empowering the homeless through architecture is a method to create meaningful architecture.



**Figure 58 and 59: Solar Panels on the roof of the Pacific Garden Mission.**

**Source:** (<http://www.jetsongreen.com> - accessed June 2017)

The Mission grows their own fruit and vegetables which is aimed at allowing the homeless to gain skills that would allow them to become economically sustainable. The produce grown also is used to aid the Soup Kitchen and sold to generate income. The soil used in the Green House is organic and made by the occupants from the Soup Kitchen scraps. The green roof garden is used to manage storm water and reduce the heat island in the City. The roof also has one hundred solar panels which is used to heat up the water used in the building, (see Figure 58 and 59). This allows the building to be economically sustainable.

The neighboring buildings influenced the materials used in the Mission. The red brick and raw concrete used expresses a strong exterior and the colourful palette on the interior creates a friendly and comfortable interior. Funding was a challenge resulting in the Architect reducing design costs by exposing building services, durable and sustainable materials, sustainable strategies to ensure low operational costs and building facades changed to resemble a warehouse. However the social spaces and sustainability feature of the building was still achieved. The Architect approached the project carefully not to showcase the Homeless but create meaningful architecture which symbolizes hope and opportunity towards a better future.

#### **4.2.7 Conclusion**

Pacific Garden Mission integrates the street atmosphere concept which the Homeless are familiar with. The building allows the homeless to express themselves in a familiar setting and not feel uncomfortable. The building includes spaces which allow the residents to interact and socialize which encourages community development. The radio station "Unshackled" helped the occupants to spread the word of the Mission and their experiences while encouraging others in need to gain help. The Architect used "sense of place" and creating "place" as concepts to create a building which the Homeless could relate to thus creating a comfortable environment for the Homeless. Connection to nature is used in the rehabilitation process through greenhouse activities and duties and courtyard, (see Figure 60 and 61).

The Mission is limited in economical and social growth as they are detached from the City core and a distant from public transport hub, thus making it difficult to connect to different nodes in the city. The surrounding nodes are commercial which does not serve many opportunities for the Homeless. The Mission resembles the two historical themes in urban architecture: social transition through housing and garden city which was used to guide urban development in areas. The Garden City was aimed at decentralizing business activities from the City core to outlying areas in order to reduce the City life stress and pressures, These themes are features in the courtyard as the Garden City and the solid red brick form is the Housing.



**Figure 60 and 61: Courtyard of the Pacific Garden Mission.**

**Source:** (<http://www.jetsongreen.com> - accessed June 2017)/ (<http://www.greenbeanchicago.com> - accessed June 2017)

The theories and concepts used created successful spaces to aid the rehabilitation process for the Homeless. This precedent study is relevant for the proposed building to inform the various spaces that are acquired to aid the Homeless transition. Spaces which the Homeless can relate and familiar themselves creates a comfortable space for the Homeless to feel at ease and allow the healing process to occur. This project illustrates that the architectural spaces can aid the transitional process towards becoming active members in society. The design and spatial layout of the Bridge creates a new sense of life for the Homeless community.

## 4.3 Rehabilitating the Homeless back into Society: The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre

### 4.3.1 Project Description

**Architects:** Overland Partners Architects and Dallas-based Camargo Copeland Architects, San Antonio

**Location:** Dallas, Texas. United States of America

**Project Area:** 13759.3 sqm

**Project Year:** 2008



**Figure 62:** *The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre.*

**Source:** (<https://dallasnews.imgix.net/1475261242-Neighborhoods> - accessed May 2017)

Dallas accommodated approximately six thousand Homeless people (one thousand of which were disabled). The Homeless phenomenon impacted on Dallas downtown City, increased petty crime rate and placed pressure on the social services that deal with the Homelessness. The lack of Shelters resulted in the Homeless taking accommodation in public spaces in the City. The local businesses were also affected by the Homeless

presence as many customers were discouraged from purchasing which placed the City's economic and social growth at risk.

In 2003, the Dallas City proposed a ten year strategy to eliminate the Homeless phenomenon. The aim of the proposal was to increase funds for the Homeless program, expand the Assistance Centre capacity and increase the supply of permanent housing for the Homeless. The primary aim was to create a 24-hour Homeless Assistance centre, which would assist the Homeless with shelter and access to care and services. This was done so that the Homeless could achieve permanent housing. A Homeless Task Force was created to design a building which ensured the needs of the Homeless was met. The task force included political and business leaders, social workers (experienced in homelessness), health care specialist and volunteers from existing Homeless shelters. The finalised spatial, aesthetic and location of the centre was critically analysed and debated upon to ensure the successful outcome of the building.

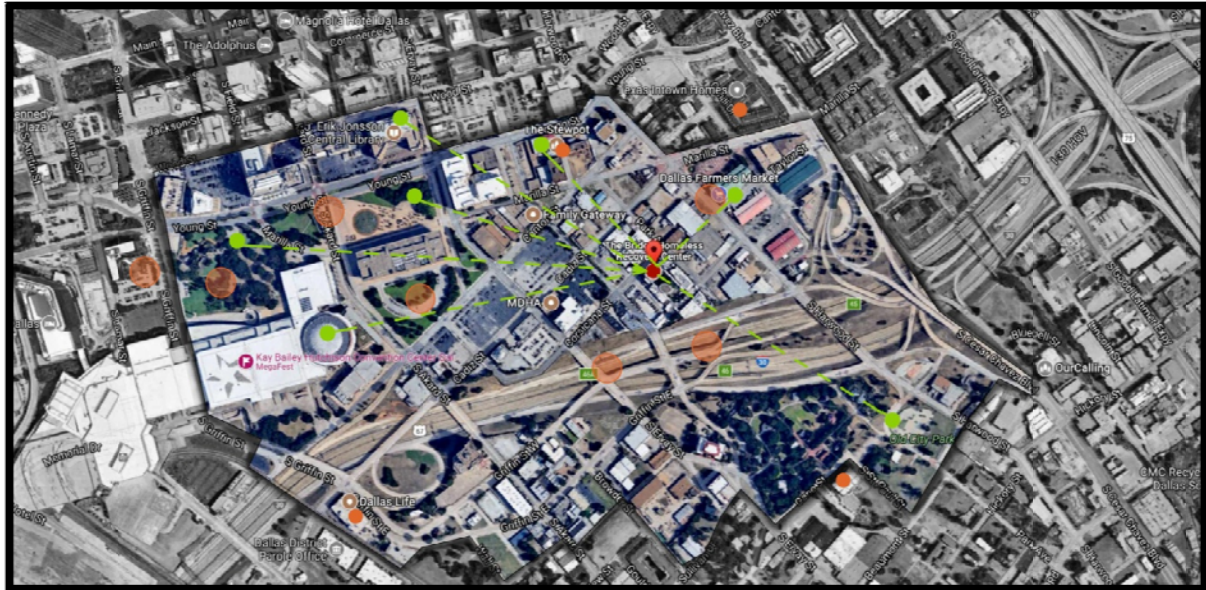
#### **4.3.2 Justification of Precedent Study**

Dallas, similar to Durban experienced a similar Homeless phenomenon within their City. Using the "Theory of Perception", The Bridge is an example of society's innovative approach to assist the Homeless, through temporary shelter with an opportunity to learn and acquire skills and training through various skills development and training programs offered at the Centre. After the Homeless engage with the services and facilities provided, the petty crime rate decreased thus created a better perception of the City center. The "Theory of Empowerment" was used to improve the Homeless living conditions and help them become socio-economically sustainable. This was achieved by the Homeless taking advantage of the various facilities and services provided in the Bridge. This leads to the "Theory of Representation", the Centre becomes a representation of its users. A chance to re-identify themselves and their roles within their society after being Homeless. The building design displays how architecture can be used encourage dignity and empowerment among the Homeless people and encouraging a change in perception of the Homeless among the community.



### 4.3.3 Location

The Bridge is located in the Warehouse District of Dallas, (see Figure 63), it is in blind site of public view yet near to the City Hall, Transportation Hub, Farmers Market, public green spaces, homeless hot spots and near existing Homeless Shelters. The block adjacent to the Bridge is reserved for future expansion however used for public thoroughfare. The building layout optimises the North and East sunlight.



- The Bridge Homeless Assistance Center
- Homeless Shelters
- Homeless Hotspots
- Connections to Public Services and Facilities

**Figure 63: Location and connections to The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre.**

**Source: (Google Maps - accessed May 2017, edited by Author)**

The design of the building mimics the surrounding context building designs where the facades are built right up to the sidewalks. The Warehouse District was previously an economic and commercial hub prior to suburbanisation and industrialisation. This resulted in relocation of businesses, vacant buildings, demolished buildings for parking

ports and increased levels of unemployment. The district is characterized by the Interstate Highway which connects the City to the outlying areas.

Many homeless find accommodation under bridges and in vacant buildings (see Figure 64). The site was selected which was three blocks away from Dallas City Hall yet still connected to a network of public spaces, public services and public facilities. The location was vital in the approach taken to change the perception of Homelessness by creating an architectural landmark. This was aimed at representing a new symbol for Dallas and the occupants of the Bridge. The site captured the City's compassion for the Homeless while still protecting and preserving the investments of the City.

#### **4.3.4 Project Objectives**

- Eliminating the Homeless phenomenon through the provision of housing and support services which aimed to assist the homeless to achieve permanent housing.
- Reduce the financial strain placed on the social services and facilities (jail, hospitals, emergency shelters and police).
- Reduce the Homeless experience such as petty crime to gain material necessities, misuse of public facilities and gathering in public spaces.
- Location selected was to prevent the Homeless from being isolated or stigmatised but instead connect them to transportation facilities, green spaces and public services and facilities.
- Provide shelter and security while maintaining their dignity and respect.
- Create a positive perspective and representation of the building for the Homeless and the public while expressing the communities compassion towards the homeless and their situation.
- The concept was to meet the needs of the Homeless community within one location. A central location which would accommodate a network of services and provide shelter for the Homeless whom suffer from unemployment, abusive relationships or mental illness.

- Support services to help the homeless gain employment which would give them a sense of dignity.

These objectives of the Bridge would fall under the similar objectives of the proposed Socio-Economic Transition House.

#### 4.3.5 Program and Planning

The main spatial planning principle was to have a central landscaped courtyard, where all six buildings have a visual and physical connection to it while still respecting their street connection (see Figure 64). The Bridge focuses on providing immediate and continuum support to the homeless.



**Figure 64: Site Plan and Context images of The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre.**

**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com> - accessed May 2017)

The *Service Building* on the First floor: Medical Clinics, Health screening, Counseling and Training. Second floor: Support Services such as Legal Aid, Travelers Aid, Job Placement, Housing assistance, Work-live Housing and Administration. Third floor: Accommodation space for long term residents: separate female and male dorm rooms, rooms for people with special needs (elderly, transgender and convalescing).



**Figure 65: First Floor Plan of The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre.**

**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com> - accessed May 2017)

The *Dining Pavilion and Kitchen* is centrally located on site which creates a social hub. Three meals are provided by a Stew Pot (Presbyterian Church Charity in Dallas). Outdoor Restrooms and Showers provides facilities for all guests to maintain their basic hygienic care.



**Figure 66: Third Floor Plan of The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre.**

**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com> - accessed May 2017)

The *Sleeping Pavilion*, (see Figure 66) was a formerly adaptive reused Warehouse building on the Southwest side of the site which provides shelter for three hundred homeless people. There is also garage style doors which create an outdoor sleeping experience which the long term homeless are familiar with.

The *Storage Building*, (see Figure 66) provides spaces for guests to safely keep their possessions while at the Centre.

#### **4.3.6 Analysis of Design**

The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre is a multi-purpose facility catering for more than six thousand homeless people whom experience long-term Homelessness. The building serves over five hundred meals daily. The design of the Bridge was to be a simple layout for easy movement through the buildings. The concept was to create a campus of ensemble buildings which centered around a central landscaped courtyard



(see Figure 67). The courtyards formed an integrated part of the design. The first experience when entering the building is through an Entry courtyard. The second courtyard is for social interaction and outdoor eating space of the Dining Pavilion. The third courtyard is reserved for the residents. The fourth courtyard is reserved for residents with minors. The courtyard spaces were designed to encourage community to grow and develop. The courtyard spaces made the design feel open yet protected by the building layout. The design of the building considered the users circulation and access to the various functions and their spatial requirements. The design of the building was influenced by the complex service delivery to meet the needs of the diverse users. The sleeping spaces in the Bridge, are a contrast to the jail like spaces found in the Shelters within the area. The Architects introduced natural lighting and ventilation as well as made the building aesthetically pleasing to illustrate respect and dignity of its users.



***Figure 67: Second courtyard in the Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre, for social interaction.***

***Source: (<http://www.archdaily.com> - accessed May 2017)***

The building achieved LEED Silver certification for including many sustainability strategies such as adaptive reuse building, low albedo roofing and paving, indigenous plants, grey water harvesting, energy and water conservation methods, recyclable and

low VOC materials, maximize natural lighting and ventilation. The Bridge is one of five U.S Homeless Shelters that is environmentally friendly.

The "Theory of Perception" is displayed in how the project recognised the Homeless community and through a proposed facility allow them to redefine and re-identify themselves and their role within society. The Homeless are ignored and neglected by public due to the negative perspective of homelessness. The Bridge thus aims at changing the Homeless perception through landmark architecture.

The "Theory of Empowerment" is displayed through the services and facilities provided to assist the homeless in gaining control over their lives, empowering them through skills training and facilities that would aid their learning. Empowering the homeless through architecture is a method of creating meaningful architecture.

The "Theory of Representation" is displayed through the Bridge becoming a symbol of new outlook for Dallas Homeless community. Thus empowers, aid their recovery and provide them with an opportunity to be part of Dallas greater community. The design of the building is bold and located close to the City Hall which expresses the importance of the Homeless.

The "Theory of Critical Regionalism", is displayed through the architectural style of the building which is similar to surrounding buildings. The architectural style of the building is bold and robust, featuring hard edges and large forms similar to the characteristics of its place. The surrounding buildings influenced the materials and aesthetics of the building. Red brick, steel and polycarbonate sheeting panels reflect the industrial architectural style in the district. The building lights up at night and illuminates a yellow glow which represents a beacon of positive change for the occupants and the area. The buildings solid form expresses its strength, permanence and sustainability.

#### **4.3.7 Conclusion**

The theories used: "Theory of Perception" used to change the Homeless perception through landmark architecture. The "Theory of Empowerment" empower the homeless

through architectural spaces and create meaningful architecture. The "Theory of Representation" used to create a symbol of new outlook for Dallas Homeless community. Link the Homeless back into society. The "Theory of Critical Regionalism", helps the building to connect to its surroundings. In the proposed intervention would include these theories to create a building which represents and empowers the Homeless yet sensitive to the Homeless phenomenon.

The theories and concepts helped achieve the projects objectives. This precedent study is relevant as it embodies similar objectives of the proposed intervention such as a platform for empowering the Homeless, adaptive reuse building, use of durable and sustainable materials and sense of ownership created among the occupants. The design and spatial layout of the Bridge creates a new sense of life for the Homeless community. This project illustrates how architectural spaces can impact on individuals lives and alter the negative perception of the Homeless phenomenon towards a positive one therefore creating meaningful architecture with great significance.

Analysing precedents studies helped understand how the Homeless phenomenon is being dealt with in different countries and how effective their approaches are. Looking at case studies will help understand how the homeless are assisted in Durban and where there is a lack and how the approaches to assisting the Homeless can be improved.



# 5

## Case Studies

Durban's Response to Empowering the Homeless

*Denis Hurley Centre*

*Strollers Overnight Facility*

CHAPTER



*Figure 68: Homeless Woman*

*Source: (<http://www.thesun.co> - accessed June 2017, edited by Author)*

## 5.1 Introduction

Chapter Five focuses on case studies within Durban city, Denis Hurley Centre and Strollers Overnight Facility. The two examples are current operating facilities in Durban, which provide basic services in hope to meet the needs of the Homeless. The case studies analyses the architecture and the conditions of these facilities and their contribution towards the social and economic growth of the Homeless. The Facilities are viewed in perspective of architecture responding to the needs of the Homeless. The location of both facilities play a vital role in how the structures function. The balance between the complex relationship between multiple social needs and the responses to architecture requires attention to be maintained as architecture can impact positively or negatively on spaces used to empower people. The two case studies would assist with designing a Socio-Economic Transition House that responds to the needs of the Homeless within Durban context.

## 5.2 Case Study: Denis Hurley Centre

### 5.2.1 Project Description

**Architects:** Ruben Reddy Architects

**Location:** 2 Cathedral Road, Durban, CBD

**Project Year:** 2014

Denis Hurley Centre is a new development in Durban, City. It was conceptualized as a contemporary facility to uplift and provide support services to the surrounding community. The dynamic and multicultural context is reflected in the building's dynamic character. The building is named after the late Archbishop Denis Hurley.



**Figure 69 and 70: Exterior views of the Denis Hurley Centre.**

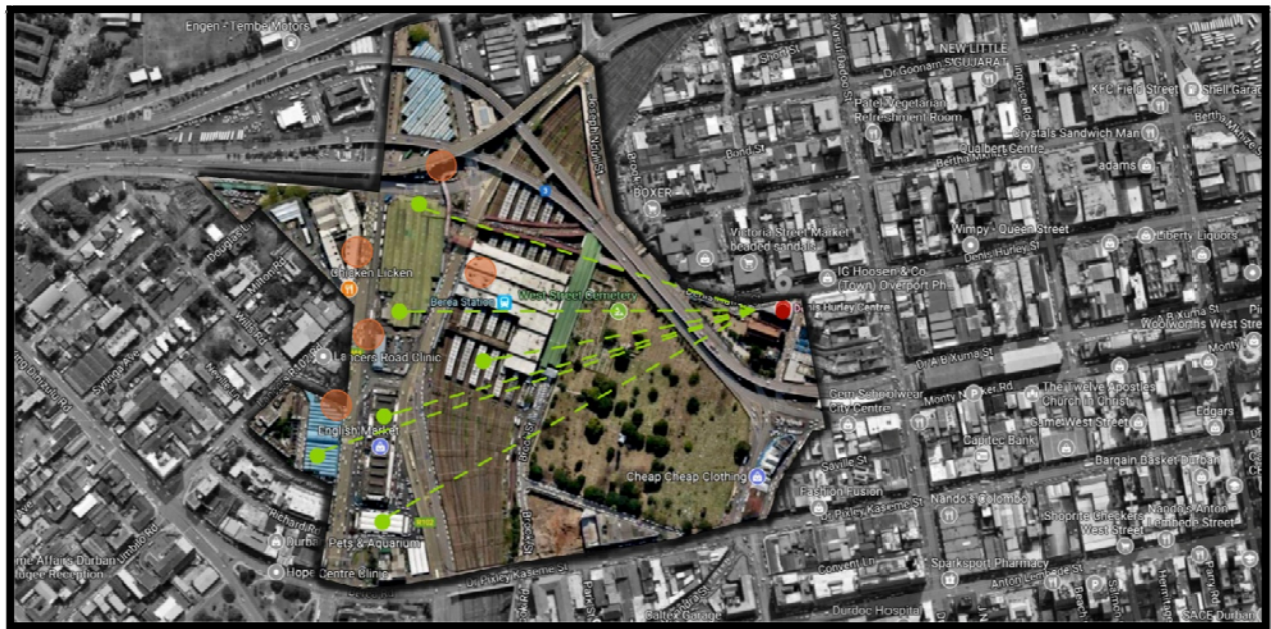
**Source:** (<https://www.specifile.co.za> - accessed May 2017)

The Centre honors the Archbishop through the provision of support services for the disadvantaged to aid their economic and social development towards a transformed city. The Centre provides daily meals, clean clothing, shower facilities, health clinic, skills and training programs, arrange overnight accommodation and counseling for the Homeless.

### **5.2.2 Location and Building Environment.**

The Centre is located on a heritage site where the demolished hundred and six year old Parish Centre was located. The Centre incorporated a few recycled materials from the old centre including handrails, decorative cast iron air grills and five hundred bricks which is used to build the cafe counter.

The Centre is located on a triangular shaped site adjacent to Emmanuel Cathedral, Durban. This location was chosen as it have a strong link to the church. The way the Centre operates and functions is strongly influence by the faith of the church (hence the name: Denis Hurley Centre). The Centre is in close approximately to public Transport Hub, Warwick Market and Homeless Hotspots. The Centre is a distance from public spaces (Durban Beach Front), no connection to public green space for social interaction and community development.



- Denis Hurley Centre
- Haven of Hope Homeless Shelter
- Homeless Hotspots
- Connections to Public Services and Facilities (Informal Markets and Public Transport)

**Figure 71: Location and connections to Denis Hurley Cake**

**Source:** (Google Maps - accessed June 2017, edited by Author)

### 5.2.3 Response to empowering the Homeless.

The Denis Hurley Centre provides a number of programs that aid the empowerment of the homeless:

#### ***The Nkosinathi Project***

- **Food:** Breakfast and lunch four days a week. Total of approximately 350 meals daily. The feeding scheme is aided by food donations, volunteers, special agreements with local traders and cash donations from Cathedral parish.





**Figure 72 and 73: Feeding Scheme at the Denis Hurley Centre.**

**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com/769446/denis-hurley-centre-ruben-reddy-architects-> accessed May 2017)

- **Showers and Clothes:** Provide showers and clean second hand clothing to help maintain their personal hygiene.

### ***Referrals and Advice***

- Provide free health care through the onsite Clinic and individual counselling by UNISA Social Work students, to identify the client's needs and redirect them to the appropriate Outreach project for assistance.

### ***Advocacy***

- Voice the rights of the homeless community. Office allocated to the committee of homeless representatives. Organise meetings with the police and the Homeless to discuss issues. In collaboration with Human Sciences Research Council in a city sponsored research project for the homelessness in Durban. Also in collaboration with Safer Cities(eThekweni Municipality), Urban Futures Centre (DUT) and Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry towards identifying innovative ways to help the homeless.

### ***Usizo Lwethu Afrisun Clinic***

- Onsite Clinic for free medical treatment. Provides HIV Testing with pre and post counselling, Comprehensive patient-centred primary health care and Advocacy and community mobilization.

### ***Refugee Pastoral Care***

- Focuses on foreign nationals whom are assisted through several programmers by offering pastoral and social services. This helps the foreign nationals to gain their faith and hope in God once again.

### ***Sewing for Africa***

- Group of Females, attend a three day course per week for three to four months. They are trained in the skill of sewing in order to gain employment in clothing factories or opening up their own tailoring business. Most work done by students are small scale tailoring such as pillowcases, napkins for hotels and restaurants, religious clothing for church groups and Shweshwe dressing gowns for Durban Boutique Hotel. The project is facilitated by experienced and knowledgeable volunteers and the equipment was donated by the Hindu Organisation and the Divine Life Society. This project is aimed at enabling woman to generate an income towards becoming socio-economically sustainable.

### ***Community Projects***

- Aims to address the disadvantaged needs of the Homeless and enhance the lives for all.
- Narcotics Anonymous, Drama and Movement Workshops, Voice and Singing Workshops, Inner City Ministries, One to one Counselling, Centring Prayer, Catechism classes for children, Sacramental Preparation and Personal Empowerment Programs.

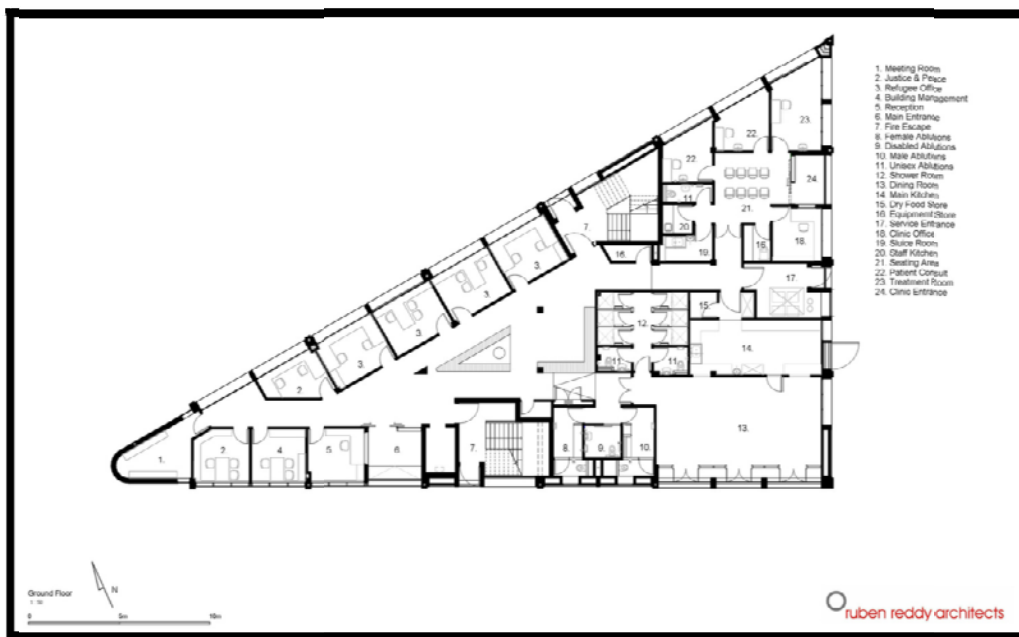
## Future Projects

- JobLinx, Basic introduction to Computing, Ycare and Health Education.

### 5.2.4 Program, Planning and Objectives

The Centre has three objectives:

- Provision of care for disadvantaged and marginalised groups through a refugee office.
- Health clinic and feeding scheme.
- Religious education and skill and training development and community development in a multicultural and diverse urban environment.

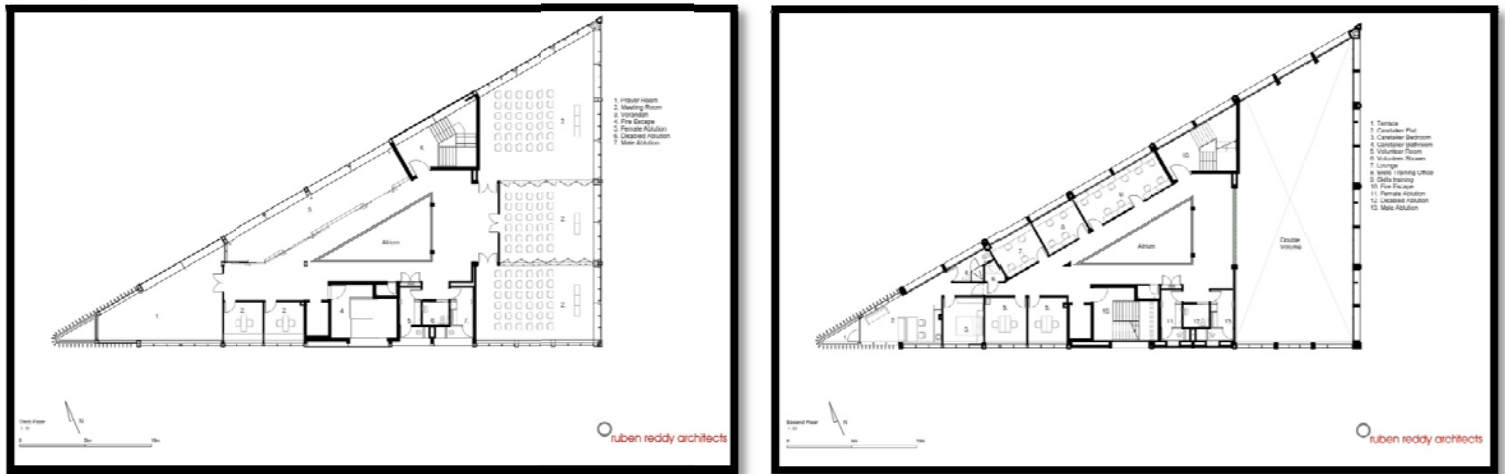


**Figure 74: Ground Storey of the Denis Hurley Centre.**

**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com> - accessed May 2017)

The Architect used the triangular shaped site, (see Figure 74), to create a central atrium space within the building which interconnects all spaces. It also was designed in a triangular form to create a courtyard space between the Centre and Cathedral adjacent. The courtyard is used for feeding the homeless and a social interactive spaces which

encourages community development. The spatial design reinforces the Centre's main aim which is to create community spaces which can be used by all.



**Figure 75 and 76: Third and Second Storey Plans of the Denis Hurley Centre.**

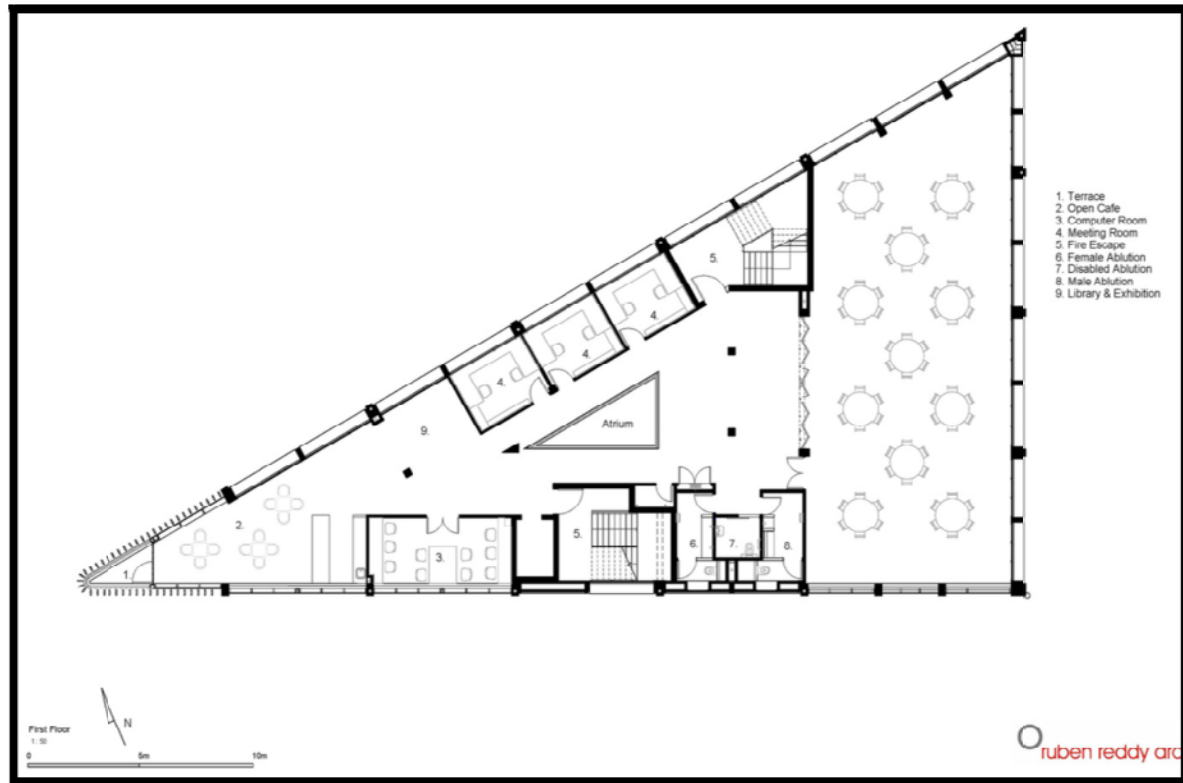
**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com> - accessed May 2017)

The atrium space draws in natural light and ventilation to light up the circulation spaces which improves their spatial quality (large windows, see Figure 75 and 76). The building envelope acts as a transparent skin which maximizes the natural light and ventilation while providing protection from direct sun rays. Passive solar design was used in the building to reduce the dependence on mechanical cooling. The ground storey accommodates public and community support service facilities. The first storey accommodates more semi private facilities. The second storey accommodates private facilities for the staff members of Centre.

### **5.2.5 Operation Costs and Management**

The Centre depends on cash and food donations to aid the kitchen and operating costs of the building. The building also relies on volunteers to help run the Centre. The building is also environmentally friendly reducing the dependence on artificial sources and saving costs. The Centre also has spaces such as the Library and Exhibition on the first storey which is hired out to generate income for the Centre, (see Figure 77).





**Figure 77: First Storey Plan of the Denis Hurley Centre.**

**Source:** (<http://www.archdaily.com> - accessed May 2017)

### **5.2.6 Suitability of the Denis Hurley Shelter**

The Centre is constructed from durable and sustainable materials, energy efficient, passive solar design and sustainable strategies used to reduce operating costs. The Centre operates on a tight budget therefore depend on food and cash donations and volunteers. The building was designed with spaces that could generate an income. The Centre is a symbol of hope for the Durban homeless and a catalyst for more developments in the area. This case study is relevant for the proposed intervention as it demonstrates the approach towards empowering the Homeless in Durban, CBD. This is done through architecture take seeks to be environmentally and economically sustainable and seeks to produce socio-economical sustainable individuals.

### **5.2.7 Researchers Analyses**

The Centre provides a firm platform for Empowerment skills and Social Support Services. This is where the "Theory of Empowerment" is displayed in the Centre, the spaces provided to address skills development and encourage it among the Homeless. The faith based programs reinforce the teachings and guidance provided by the Centre. The design of the Centre support the programs as it provides the facilities and service spaces required. The building also adopts many environmental sustainable strategies which displays that the building itself it moving towards being sustainable just like its users.

The "Theory of Representation" is displayed through the Centre becoming a symbol of hope for the Homeless to become part of society and empower themselves. At night the building is lit up and the unique shape of the building acts as a beacon of hope for the Homeless.

Through researching the Centre, I have discovered that the Centre is limited in helping people due to not being able to provide accommodation. Accommodation has to be arranged by the Staff with surrounding Shelters. This does not take the candidate out of their normal situation and help them transition. If accommodation was provided on site, then the candidates would be able to be monitored continuously and engage with each other. This would allow them to transition from formally being homeless to their new empowered identity more effectively. This would also prevent the candidates from leaving half way through the program and ensure commitment throughout the program.

In the proposed Socio-Economic Transition House, would provide the accommodation and structured programs to further the Skill programs and Support Services offered at Dense Hurely Centre. I would also provide Life Skills Training. The Homeless would be recruited from Dense Hurely Centre as serious candidates that want to change their lives. This proposed Transition House would provide 24 hour support to ensure that the Homeless does not relapse into their previous "street culture".

## 5.3 Case Study: Strollers Overnight Facility

### 5.3.1 Project Description

**Architects:** Elphick Proome Architects

**Location:** 55 Mansel Road, Durban, CBD

**Project Year:** 1998



**Figure 78:** *Strollers Overnight Facility.*

**Source:** *Emile Xerxes Glass, L (2013:80)*

Rodney Harbour designed the Mansel Road urban planning scheme for Durban, CBD. This scheme included the Bath House, Block AK (Live and work units) and the Boot Markets. At a later stage Elphick Proome Architects were appointed by eThekweni municipality, to design the Strollers Overnight Facility. The Building is located on an island between the railway tracks and Umgeni Road creating a dynamic atmosphere during trading hours.

The Strollers was developed by Durban City Council, aimed at providing short term shelter for female traders of Mansel Road. The Mansel Road Market was initiated by the female traders who sold blue drums on the sidewalks to rural traders. The female traders were faced with a challenge of finding shelter after daily trading hours were completed. Thus resulted in them using the blue drums and black plastic bags turned opened to make large sheets, to construct shelter for themselves along Mansel Road sidewalks.



**Figure 79 and 80: Female Traders with sleeping outside Block AK while guarding their goods.**

**Source:** (<http://www.kznia.org.za> - accessed May 2017)

In 1998, the informal market and the beachfront market were combined, upgraded and relocated to Mansel Road development scheme. The urban design scheme aimed at providing the female traders with residential and retail space in a single unit within Block AK, (see Figure 79 and 80). The design scheme was aimed at providing skills and management training for the female traders. The success of the market and single units helped the municipality to recognize the needs of the female traders. The project continued as there was a maintained cycle of replacement female traders to occupy the units every few months. Thus created a strong link between the rural and urban Market.

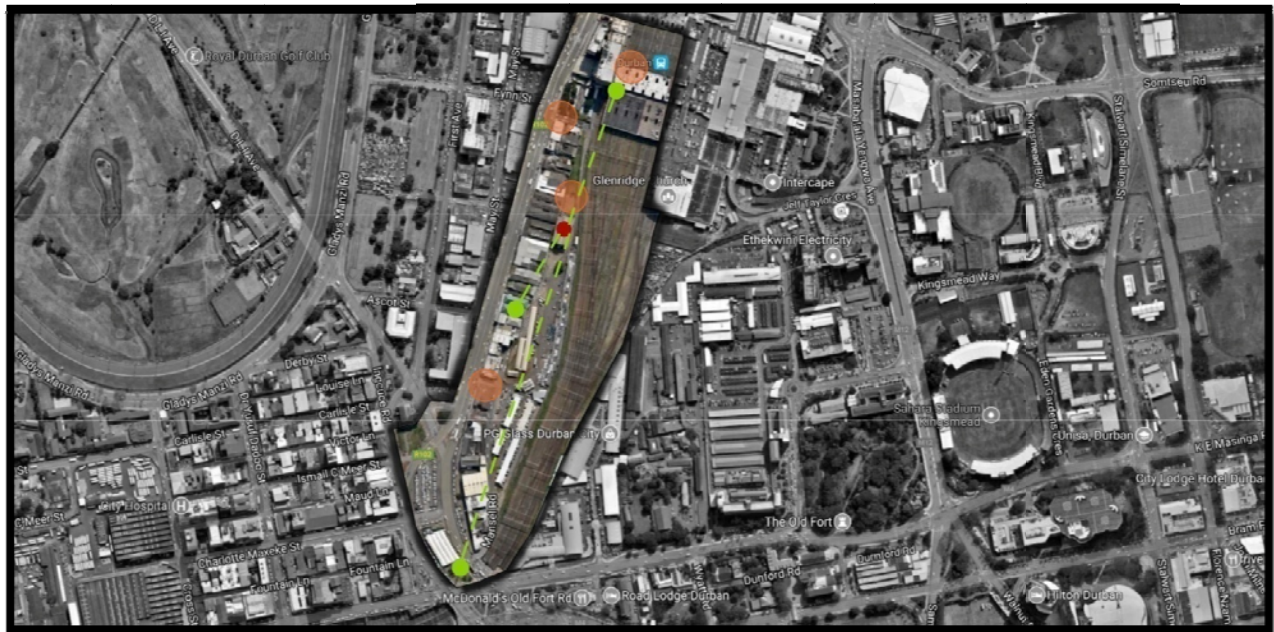
The Strollers building was designed to be a four storey mixed-use building, the ground floor accommodates small commercial units and the above three floors accommodate residential units for temporary shelter. These residential units were aimed to serve the

traders of the market. The building was aimed to respond to the community needs and encourage economic growth. The Strollers project is the first transitional housing addressed by public housing policy that was designed to meet the housing needs of traders.

The Strollers since 2004, were not used for its initial purpose. The Municipality gave a notice of eviction to the Ark Homeless Shelter in 2004, which resulted in relocating the fifty homeless people to the Strollers building. The relocated homeless people were accommodated on the fourth story of the mixed-use building while maintaining the other storey initial functions respectably. The building is able to accommodate three hundred and thirty four people per a night at a fee of R 90.00. The fee collected is used for the operational and maintenance costs of the building. There is also a rent fee for the commercial units which is quite expensive (R500) which traders from Lesotho and Eastern Cape are forced to pay or have to sleep on the streets. The relocated homeless however do not pay a fee to stay each night. This results in the poor conditions and facilities on the fourth floor which are worse than the other floors in the building. The relocated homeless are forced to live in these conditions until permanent housing is provided by the Government.

### **5.3.2 Location and Building Environment**

The Strollers Overnight Facility is located on an island between the Umgeni Road and Durban train station railway track. It is also near the public Transport Hub, Informal Markets and Bath House which creates easy access to for the traders . Placing the building near the train station provides transport for the traders with goods to travel to far areas and back safely and cheaply. The Stroller is located in an industrial area with many surrounding warehouses and commercial buildings, (see Figure 81).



- *Strollers Overnight Facility*
- *Homeless Shelters*
- *Homeless Hotspots*
- *Connections to Public Services and Facilities (Informal Markets, Public Transport and Green Space)*

**Figure 81: Location and connections to Strollers Overnight Facility.**

**Source:** (Google Maps - accessed May 2017, edited by Author)

The building is located at the end of the road with no regular customer flow for the small commercial stores on the ground floor. Regular customer flow is near the main market which is located at the entrance of Mansel Road. The abandoned building behind the Strollers which encourages undesirable activities to occur especially squatting of homeless people. The disposal of waste in the area is a huge challenge which creates an unsafe and unhygienic environment around the Stroller building.

### **5.3.3 Response to empowering of the Homeless**

The Strollers Overnight Facility has two buildings connected by a central courtyard, (see Figure 82 and 83). The courtyard was aimed to function as a "street", however this was not achieved due to the disconnection between the facility entrance and main market to



draw in a regular flow of customers. The buildings are linked by bridges on each storey which are lockable by residents and often used to dry their clothing. The Strollers does not meet the needs of its residents which is evident by the high roofed courtyard which connects the two buildings. It does not address human scale and when you stand in the courtyard you feel intimidated by the two tall buildings on each side. Makes it difficult to relate to the building.



**Figure 82 and 83: Courtyard view of the Strollers Overnight Facility.**

**Source: (<https://kznaijournal.wordpress.com> - accessed May 2017)**

Irrespective of the commercial units on the ground floor, the building fails to respond to a human scale due to the large bridges and high roof. The curved roof sheeting and large volume courtyard is used to maximize natural lighting into the building however the small windows prevent this from occurring. The large volume courtyard also allows for cross ventilation keeping the space feeling and smelling fresh. The "Theory of Phenomenology" was demonstrated in the courtyard with the play of natural light on the residents senses. The "Theory of Critical Regionalism" can be seen in the building as it fits within its context, the building uses locally produced materials and similar architectural features such as the curved roof (markets curved roofs), however the

building location creates a detachment from other buildings and a challenge to draw people to the building, (see Figure 81).

The residential units for temporary accommodation (see Figure 85), are limited with accommodating a bunk bed and the only source of natural light and ventilation is through a small window, (see Figure 84). Along the hallways airbricks are used to allow natural light and ventilation into the space. The floors are finished with epoxy coating. The provided communal bathrooms are in bad condition yet the residents are charged R8.00 to use them.



***Figure 84 and 85: Strollers Overnight Facility Accommodation Rooms with small windows for natural ventilation and lighting.***

***Source: Emile Xerxes Glass, L (2013:86)***

The fourth floor faces many challenges including overcrowding, not enough natural lighting and ventilation and unhygienic conditions. The residents use cardboard boxes to create various individual spaces for themselves and the use of colour, pictures and furniture allows them to create their own identity within the building and community. The building lacks social spaces results in no community development. The courtyard could



be used as a social space however the residents on the fourth floor have limited access to it and are often denied access completely by the security guards.

The long dark passageways which link the rooms, end with an air brick wall which was aimed at allowing in natural lighting and ventilation. However due to the limited space, residents have claimed that end space to live or store their goods. The dark closed up passages also encourage undesirable behavior such as assault. The challenge for these residents is that they are unable to express themselves culturally or their identity. There is no provision of various spaces beyond catering for temporary shelter.

#### **5.3.4 Program, Planning and Objectives**

The Strollers Overnight Facility allows for the residents to generate an income by the commercial units on ground floor to function as workshop spaces (Truck shop, Small workshops, dressmaking, laundry services, lockers etc). These spaces are not always designed to suit each function, the spaces are more suited for storage rather than workshops or retail. There is a general design (small space, no windows and a garage door) duplicated on the ground floor expected to suit all commercial functions. The building provides for the practical temporary accommodation space yet lacks the emotional connection for permanent accommodation.

The initial planning and concept of the building did serve the development plan of Mansel Road Market. However with the relocated former Ark Shelter residents, it fails to meet the current residents needs. The once sought out temporary accommodation has turned into a permanent one for many of the residents.

#### **5.3.5 Operation Costs and Management**

The Strollers Overnight Facility initially was aimed to charge traders for temporary accommodation and the commercial units however the fee that is charged has become expensive. Thus results in traders sleeping in the commercial units or seeking alternative shelter options. The Strollers has become a profit making facility rather than a facility that helps traders grow economically. The initial aim of the facility was to

provide the commercial units and temporary accommodation however not provide Life Skill Development and Social Support Services. Therefore the people whom are living in the above units are not provided with the support to actually relocate or get a job. The fourth floor does not pay a fee each night therefore they experience poor service delivery and poor living conditions. The focus of management is to collect rent which is used for the building operating costs.

### **5.3.6 Suitability of the Strollers Overnight Facility**

The Strollers Overnight Facility illustrates how SEWU and eThekweni Municipality, handles the homeless phenomenon, by providing only temporary accommodation and assuming their needs have been met. The Architect Dobson stated that some traders choose to rather sleep on the sidewalks than pay for the accommodation as saves them money, this is where the Strollers Facility fell short. The Strollers does not meet the needs for the traders either. The Strollers also face challenges with regard to foreigners occupying their spaces which leads to many social problems within the city such as racism and xenophobia. The Strollers Overnight Facility illustrates that there is a need for a balance between meaningful architecture and social variables in order to aid the economic and social growth of a community.

### **5.3.7 Researchers Analyses**

The Strollers Overnight Facility provides an ideal place for rural traders to trade within an urban framework. However the traders would have to come with their finished products as there is no space for producing the products on the ground level. This concept would work in an idealistic world however it does not in reality. The rural traders bring the materials to their units and then manufacture or produce their finish products while selling a few finished products. This saves them time and money. The design of the Facility no longer works because there is a need for a production or manufacturing space, relocated Ark Shelter residents and the detached link between the building location and Mansel Road, Durban.

In the proposed Socio-Economic Transition House I would provide a trading space and a space to manufacture and produce the finished product. Also spaces for Life skills development to ensure that the candidates actually leave and relocate out of the building towards being independent.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

Denis Hurley Centre and Strollers Overnight Facility illustrates how the City of Durban responds to the Homeless Phenomenon, what support services are provided for them and what facilities are provided to empower the homeless. The Shelters offer different yet are limited in their approaches towards aiding the social and economic growth of the Homeless. Both Shelters limit or ultimately don't allow the homeless to express their culture or identity. There is also no social interaction space to build a community among the Homeless. Denis Hurley Centre provides many support services but no accommodation. Strollers Overnight Facility provides accommodation without the many support services. Both facilities are limited in providing the necessary services to meet the needs of the homeless not just for socio-economic empowerment and sustainability but also for community development.

Analysing the case studies in Durban highlighted what is actually provided for the Homeless and what is lacking in order for the Homeless to be empowered and move towards a socio-economic development. This research highlights what the needs are for the Homeless (spaces, facilities, support services and the number required to be catered for) within Durban context. Using the information gathered in the precedent studies and case studies provides further understanding as to what questions need to be asked when visiting Homeless Shelters. Questions firmly based on what is required to empower the Homeless within the context of Durban.

# Presentation of Data and Analysis

Analysis & Discussion

6

CHAPTER

*Figure 86: Hardship and struggle of Homelessness seen on the face of the Homeless Woman*

*Source: (<http://syanniskoukakis.files.wordpress.com> - accessed June 2017, edited by Aithor)*

## 6.1 Introduction

Chapter Six focuses on questionnaires and interviews taken in the study. The investigation was directly undertaken in three Homeless Shelters (The Nest, Strollers Overnight Facility and Denis Hurley Centre), ITrump EThekwini Municipality and Warwick Junction. The interviews were undertaken with the staff members and managers of Homeless Shelters and provided an understanding of the existing spaces and support services provided and what is still required for homeless to become socio-economic sustainable within the Durban, City. The interview with ITrump provided insight into the strategies taken by EThekwini Municipality when dealing with the homelessness phenomenon, provided an appropriate guideline approach to deal with the homeless within Durban context. The theories and concepts were highlighted in the precedent and case studies to illustrate the approach taken and if it is effective when dealing with homelessness.

The combination of literature review, primary and secondary data aims to address the problem statement of this research study and achieves the aim of this research study.

*The aim of this research is to understand the transitional requirements of a Socio-Economic Homeless Shelter in order to design and investigate spaces that empower the homeless to become active members in society.*



**Figure 87: Worn out feet of a Homeless Man from walking without shoes on the streets.**

**Source: Drawn by Author, 2017**

## 6.2 Analysis of Research Findings

### Culture and Empowerment of the Homeless

Understanding the theories of Culture and Empowerment in this research study, has helped understand the Homeless culture (lifestyle) and how the homeless try to empower themselves on a daily bases. Twenty Staff members from two different Homeless Shelters: The Nest and Strollers Overnight Facility, within Durban context were interviewed and results are presented in a percentage format.

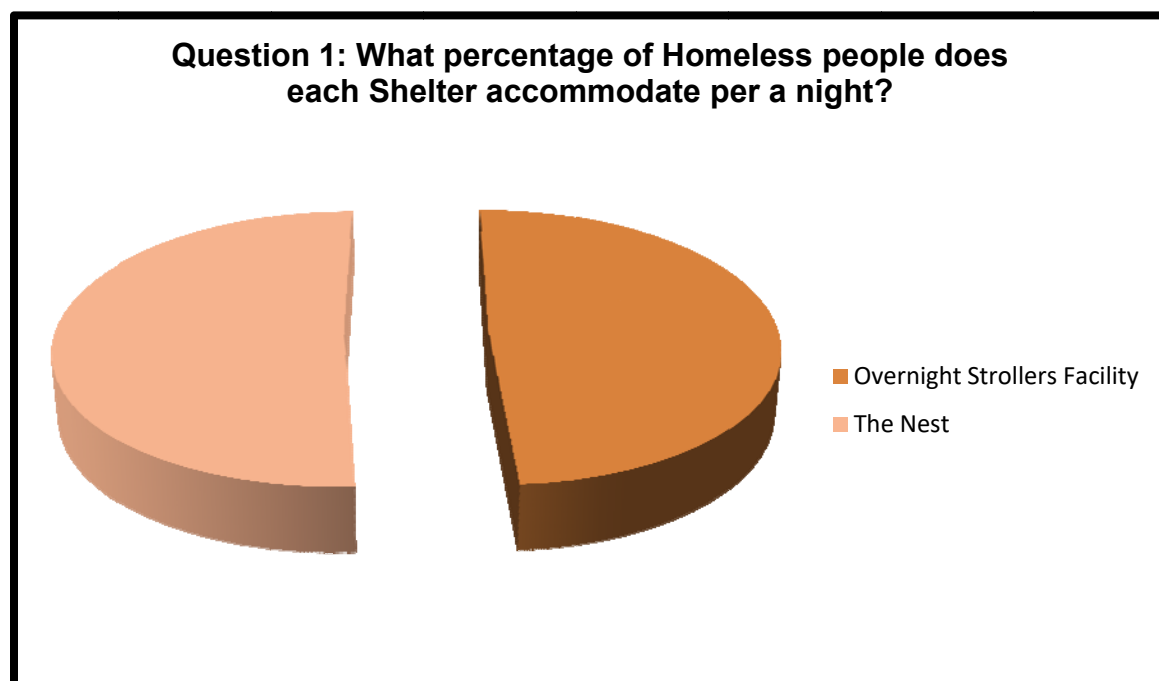


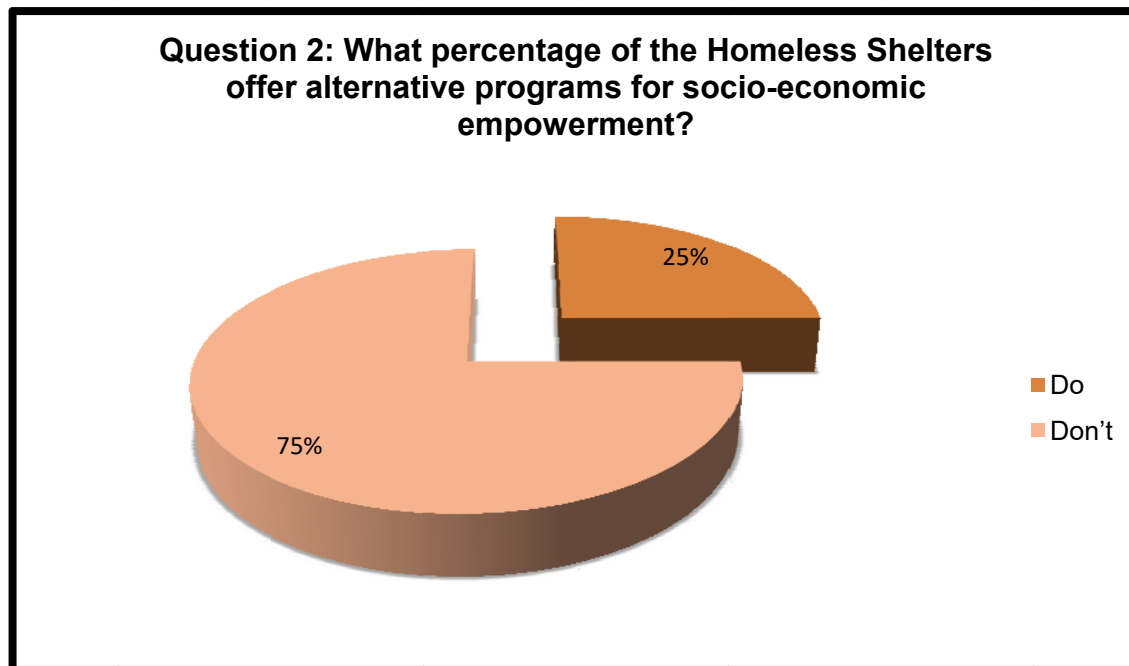
Figure 88: Question illustrates the Homeless Shelter options in the city of Durban.

Source: Drawn by Author, 2017

The research results illustrate the shelter options which the Homeless have within the city of Durban. The Nest Shelter accommodates most of the Homeless however this is not including the Homeless who cannot afford the shelter fee. Most of these Homeless resort to sleeping in Berea Train Station or underneath bridges, abandoned or dilapidated buildings. A few responds provided by staff members of the Homeless Shelters with regard to the living conditions of the Shelters:

- "With the income we have, we try and keep it as neat as possible, The Nest"
- "First three floors are good condition however the Fourth Floor is in very bad conditions due to overcrowding, Strollers Overnight Facility"

The response gathered when posed with the question: What are the facilities and services provided in the Shelter? Most staff members said the Shelter only provides meals. Meals are provided by sponsorships, donations and by the fee payment. It is also difficult for the Shelters to provide food even if they wanted to as they require a permit. The conditions are not always good and some Shelters the homeless sleep on mattresses which have bed bugs. The spaces they sleep in are closed not allowing fresh air to flow through causing diseases and bacteria to grow and the Homeless become sick. Security in the Shelter is limited and some people are scared to sleep in case they are attacked or their belonging are stolen.



**Figure 89: Question illustrates Homeless Shelter approach to alternative programs to aid the residents socio-economic empowerment in the city of Durban.**

**Source: Drawn by Author, 2017**

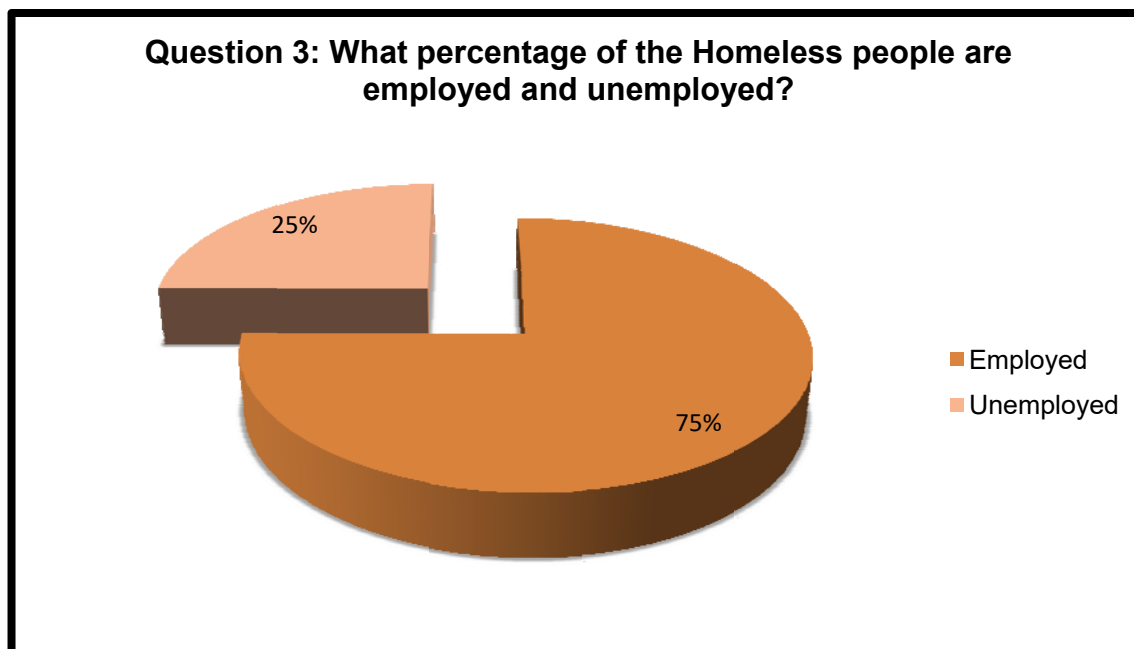
The research results illustrate that most Homeless Shelters currently operating in the City, do not offer alternative programs to aid the socio-economic empowerment of the

Homeless ,(see Figure 89). The primary service provided is shelter and not all shelters provide food such as Strollers Overnight Facility. People from these shelters are sent to Denis Hurley Centre to receive a meal three times a day. There is a lack of long term empowerment methods for the Homeless, the current approach taken by current operating shelters is to deal with the symptoms of Homeless not aiding the elimination of it. A few responds provided by staff members of the Homeless Shelters with regard to the programs provided to alleviate the residents from Homelessness:

- "No alternative programs, just a place to sleep at night a meal at night and in the morning"
- "No money for any other programs to help the Homeless"
- "Only Denis Hurley Centre provides programs and they provide shelter in other Shelters in Durban"
- "Have to commit to a program at Denis Hurley Centre to be provided with shelter"

The responds gathered when posed with the question: Does the shelter provide a facility for skills development to the Homeless? and Does the shelter have any plans for helping the Homeless to be uplifted from their current situation? Most staff members said no, unfortunately the money is only enough to be used for running expenses and food for the residents. Only one shelter in Durban provides alternative programs however do not provide shelter, this limits the number of people they can help and does not meet all the needs for a Homeless person to become active members in society.





**Figure 90:** *Question illustrates the Homeless employment level, towards a means of empowering them from Homeless.*

**Source:** *Drawn by Author, 2017*

The research results illustrate that the Homeless seek ways in order to generate an income daily, (see Figure 90). The primary reason for generating an income is to pay for their night stay at a Homeless Shelter. Other Homeless people used the money for drugs or alcohol which is not acceptable in the Homeless Shelters. The Homeless do retain a skill however find it difficult to generate an income from it, due to not being accepted into society. A few responds provided by staff members of Homeless Shelters how the Homeless generate an income:

- "Work as car guards"
- "Beg on the Beach Front or at stop streets"
- "Sell beads or craft items"
- "Petty crime: pick pocket"

The information gathered when posed with the question: What are the alternative means of generating an income for the Homeless? Most staff members said they resort to desperate measures such as crime: pick pocketing, smash and grab, stealing copper,

selling drugs or hijacking. This creates a negative stigma towards Homelessness, and society resists helping them. Society creates a stigma which the Homeless conform to and makes it difficult for them to reach out or accept help to empower themselves.

Evidently from the research responds, Society plays a vital role in empowering the Homeless as they cannot do it themselves. The limited opportunities prevent them from using their skills to develop and empower themselves towards becoming active members in society. The Homeless do retain the ability to empower themselves however the means are lacking.

### **6.3 Discussions and Theoretical Implications**

The theories Culture and Empowerment in this research study have been used to understand the lifestyles of the Homeless and their act towards empowering themselves. The theories Phenomenology, Home and Place-Theory have been used to aid and support the Homeless towards becoming socio-economically sustainable through the design of spaces within a Homeless Shelter.

Phenomenology is used to generate a healthy environment through its multi-sensory stimulation. Architecture which does not respond to the human senses places the users under various stresses which results in health issues and social withdrawal. Therefore phenomenology is used abundantly throughout a building when designing for the Homeless. Current operating Homeless Shelters in Durban City, tried to embody Phenomenology however failed.

Green spaces and natural elements seen in the Pacific Garden Mission aids the Homeless social and economic growth. The two buildings are designed around large courtyard spaces used for social interaction and community development. The courtyards also serve as a green space which increases the fresh air in the building. This reduces the risk of diseases and infections in the building,(see Figure 88). Thus aids the health of the Homeless in a natural approach.



**Figure 91: Pacific Garden Mission illustrating the large green courtyard space.**

**Source:** (<https://www.google.co.za/maps/place/Pacific+Garden+Mission>), edited by Author.

Pacific Garden Mission has a Green House building which is used to help the Homeless gain skills for future employment opportunities and serves as a green space for the residents to socialize and interact together. Current operating Shelters in Durban, do not incorporate green spaces into the design of the building.



**Figure 92: Pacific Garden Mission illustrating the large bands of windows.**

**Source:** (<https://www.google.co.za/maps/place/Pacific+Garden+Mission>), edited by Author.

Large windows used in the Pacific Garden Mission to allow natural lighting and ventilation into the buildings. The natural lighting and ventilation does not only provide sustainable benefits but also health benefits (psychological wellness) for the Homeless,

(see Figure 89). Most windows in current operating Shelters in Durban, have small windows therefore atmosphere created is dark and depressing.

Air Bricks are also known to be used to allow natural lighting and ventilation and encourage reflective spaces. The use of air bricks in Strollers Overnight Facility was not as effective as it was intended to be,(see Figure 93). The spaces required more facades with airbricks to allow large flows of cross ventilation and lighting to penetrate the hallways and staircase circulation, also to create that spiritual atmosphere.



**Figure 93:: Strollers Overnight Facility use of airbricks.**

**Source: Emile Xerxes Glass, L (2013:80) and Govender (2014:116)**

Critical regionalism is evident in both precedent and case studies through the materials used which relate to their surround context. Critical regionalism aims to illustrate the context in which the building sits in, while featuring the sites culture and identity. From both precedent and case studies the Strollers Overnight Facility achieves critical regionalism most successfully. The building is able to feature the culture of the Homeless within the building while connecting the building to the street and inner courtyard space. The construction materials used in the building reflects the contextual urban character. The site location illustrates the political and community influence over the Homeless phenomenon.

## 6.4 Conclusion

In this research study, primary data collection (interviews, discussions, precedents, case studies and visual observations) played a vital role in understanding the concepts and theories to design appropriate spaces for the Homeless within Durban context. The analyse of architecture and urban environment illustrated the impact it has on the Homeless lives. This research study highlighted many questions on empowerment and culture of the Homeless and how architecture could aid the empowerment of the Homeless. The research illustrated the current operating Shelters responds towards the Homeless and their abilities to aid the empowerment of the Homeless. The existing Shelters lack the spaces and the programs to meet the Homeless basic needs yet alone means to empower them.



*Figure 94: Homeless Man with a true reflection of his emotions.*

*Source: Drawn by Author, 2017*



# 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

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## CHAPTER



*Figure 95: Hopeful face of a Homeless Woman*

*Source: (<http://ss-media-cache-ak0-pinimg.com> - accessed June 2017, edited by Author)*

## **7.1 Introduction**

This research study aimed at understanding the culture (lifestyle) of Homeless in order to socially and economically empower them.

The research gathered in the study has provided insights into the Homeless lives and used to create opportunities for the Homeless to ensure sustained empowerment through architectural spaces.

## **7.2 Conclusions**

The research study illustrates the importance of culture (which is understanding the lifestyle) in designing a building which responds to its users, in this case specific requirements are needed to address the Homeless phenomenon. Architecture has the ability to aid the transition process of the Homeless towards becoming active members in society.

The theoretical framework is based on understanding the Homeless culture and using it to aid their empowerment. The "Theory of Culture" was investigated in order to understand how in current times societies are formed and the reason behind the Homeless creating their own isolated "street culture". This also highlighted how the Homeless have chosen to adapt to the globalization and multiculturalism societies in the City.

The act of insurgency has illustrated the Homeless adaptive approach to their situation, it is gathered that these spaces created by the Homeless have their own cultural identity and meet some of their needs. These spaces taken over by the Homeless embrace a community as they share a similar fate. Themes identified can be used in the proposed intervention to create a community that can be linked back into society.

Durban Homeless Shelters lack social programs to aid the empowerment of its users. The current operating Shelters (case studies) provide a temporary solution in attempt to resolve a permanent problem. An effective Shelter should be able to provide services and facilities to help resolve the Homeless phenomenon. The buildings that the Shelters

are accommodated in, lack designed spaces which could be used for social programs. The research gathered illustrates that there is a need for social services and facilities to help aid the empowerment of the Homeless which would reduce the Homeless phenomenon in the City.

The precedent study illustrate a global response to the Homeless phenomenon. The Pacific Garden Mission presented theories (Phenomenology, Empowerment, Critical Regionalism and Genius Loci) which was used to create a building which aid Homeless rehabilitation. The spaces accommodate social programs which aid the users transitional process back into society. Phenomenology was used to create spaces which improve the users mental health. Empowerment through providing opportunities for the Homeless to gain skills and training towards becoming employed. Critical regionalism was used to create a connection between the building and its context thus creating a building the Homeless can relate to. Genius Loci was used to create a street like atmosphere to further comfort the Homeless through relatable places. Spaces that the Homeless feel comfortable in increased their interaction with each other and made them feel at home.

The gathered research has illustrated that meaningful architecture is created through spaces which aid an individual's development and impact positively on an individual's life. Enhancing its users mental and physical strength in order to become sustainable and independent. Understanding the users culture would highlight their specific requirements in order to create meaningful architecture.

### **7.3 Recommendations**

Guidelines for the proposed Socio-Economic Transition House for Warwick, City of Durban. Understanding the Homeless social and economic status is vital in order to meet their specific needs. The literature review aimed to analyze the Homeless culture and provide an insight towards their needs and lifestyle. The guidelines provided in the literature review would be considered to design spaces which the Homeless can be empowered in.



- Social and economic empowerment: Provide specifically designed spaces for social programs, skills development and training which the individual could use to empower themselves towards becoming sustainable and independent models in society. Spaces should also cater for cultural practices and expression of the user.
- Overnight accommodation spaces: Different types of accommodation spaces for the Homeless to stay overnight: sharing units. Essential living spaces: dining hall, soup kitchen and lounges
- Human scale spaces: Spaces which make individuals feel safe and secure. This would make the user feel comfortable to interact and heal in.
- Safety and security: Limited access to sleeping dorms, separate male and female sleeping dorms, measures put in place to prevent crime, drugs and alcohol in the facility. Further separate the permanent residents and temporary residents.
- Community development: Facilities that can be used by the community to develop, house community projects, public interaction and support for the Homeless. Community hall which could be hired to generate an income for the facility.
- Green spaces: Connect the Homeless to green spaces for natural healing, gain skills (gardening) for future employment opportunities, generate income for the facility or Homeless from produce sold and provide opportunity for ownership of a portion of land, aiding their well being. Large courtyard space which the Homeless could use to interact (recreational spaces) and mediate or reflect upon their issues.
- Easy accessible: The facility should have easy circulation routes to spaces and easy access via foot or vehicle for circulation and encourage people to experience services and facilities provided in the building.
- Health care: Provide spaces for personal grooming and laundry services at a fee. Provide easy access to mental and physical healthcare space. Basic health care should be provided such as counselling, support groups and onsite clinic with separate spaces for contagious sicknesses such as TB.

- Mixed-use spaces on the ground floor which relate to the context of site. Spaces which the community can use such as restaurant, coffee shop, library, lockers, laundry services and internet cafe. Space for trading either fresh produce or crafts to generate an income for the facility.
- Staff and management spaces should be included such as sleep area, meeting room and bathroom facilities.
- Environmentally friendly: Sustainable and durable materials, sustainable methods: harvest rainwater and solar panels for heating water used in the buildings and optimize natural lighting and ventilation.

#### **7.4 Site Selection Guidelines**

Site selection is a critical decision in the design of a Socio-Economic Transition House. The guidelines for a suitable site to be selected is derived from understanding the needs of the homeless within the City of Durban. Also taking note of how the precedent and case studies buildings connect and relate to their contextual site which generates the buildings successfulness. The site selected for the homeless would play a vital role towards the homeless transitional process towards becoming active members in society. The existing operating Shelters in Durban are located in areas which lack opportunities to aid their social and economic growth. These are the primary site selection guidelines for a Socio-Economic Transition House.

- Positioned in the City near Informal Market activities.
- Close proximately to public Transport Hub and amenities.
- In public view to raise awareness of the homeless phenomenon and public interaction.
- Positioned near the City centre.
- Positioned near pedestrian traffic and easy accessible by foot.
- Positioned near homeless hotspots.
- Positioned near easy access to public health care facilities.
- Make use of adaptive reuse infrastructure.

## 7.5 Conclusion

The recommendations and site selection guidelines only valid if they are addressing the Homeless phenomenon and aimed at empowering the Homeless. The Socio-Economic Transition House is defined as a facility which is a platform for the transition process to occur and a safe and secure temporary accommodation for the Homeless to freely use to their benefit. The Transition House acts as a link for the Homeless towards a socio-economic sustainable life in society. The Transition House also serves as an opportunity which is evidently lacking in the Shelters in Durban. Drawing from the precedent studies and case studies provides a framework that can be used to design a Socio-Economic Transition House which would meet the needs and empower the Homeless towards becoming socially and economically sustainable.



**Figure 94:** *Homeless Man playing his guitar to earn some money.*

**Source:** *Drawn by Author, 2017*

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