



---

# DETERMINING PRACTICES AND POWER RELATIONS BETWEEN STREET RECLAIMERS WITH A VIEW TO HOW THEY CONTROL THEIR SPACES

---

By Kamogelo Maema

A research report submitted to the School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Sciences,  
University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE WITH HONOURS IN GEOGRAPHY**

17 November 2017

STUDENT ID: 841709  
SUPERVISOR: DR MELANIE SAMSON

## ACNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge and extend my sincere appreciation to many people who have contributed valuable inputs to this research. Firstly, I would like to thank my research supervisor, Dr Melanie Samson for guiding my research, as her views were very useful and I could not have done this without her help. Secondly, I would like to thank the informal reclaimers of Bekezela in Newtown who welcomed me with open arms and agreed to participate in this research; I have learnt a lot from this small community and this has been an eye-opening journey. Thirdly, I would like to thank my Parents and Uncle Mike, your constant support for my studies and belief in me has brought this far! I am eternally grateful. To my friends, IZINTO MAJIMBOS and my awesome Geography clique, thank you for the sweet memories. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the funding from CSIR-DST as part of my research project.

## ABBREVIATIONS

CoJ	– City of Johannesburg
WIEGO	– Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising
S@S	- Separation At Source
PRASA	- Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa

## ABSTRACT

This study seeks to focus on practices and power relations that shape the working spaces of street reclaimers in the surrounding suburbs of Johannesburg. The research was carried out as an ethnographic qualitative study. This include two days of field observations with street reclaimers from Bekezela, semi-constructed interviews and ethnographic analysis of the events that occurred. The study highlights Henri Lefebvre's theory on production of space and how it created practices and social constructs that shape the behaviour of street reclaimers. The study gives opinions and understandings of how street reclaimers establish claims to street and how do they maintain them. The literature of the study brings an insight on the socio-political struggles that reclaimers encounter and deals with. The literature focuses on waste as commodity, social relations of waste, conflict in boundary making, power and racism and racial exclusion.

Keywords: Space, street reclaimer, social construction, power relations, social relations.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Contents

ACNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	1
ABBREVIATIONS .....	2
ABSTRACT.....	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	4
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES .....	6
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION .....	7
1.1. Overall introduction to the report .....	7
1.2. Problem Statement .....	8
1.3. Rationale.....	9
1.4. Overall Structure of the report .....	10
Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
2.1. Waste as commodity.....	11
2.2. Social relations of waste.....	12
2.3. Power .....	13
2.4. Conflict .....	14
2.5. Racism and Racial exclusion .....	14
2.6. Conclusions.....	15
Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS.....	17
3.1. Introduction .....	17
3.2. Study Area .....	18
3.3. Research Design.....	20
3.3.1. Qualitative approach.....	20
3.3.2. Ethnographic approach .....	20
3.4. Theoretical Framework .....	22
3.5. Policy Documents Consulted .....	23
3.6. Data Collection Methods.....	24

3.6.1. Semi-structured interviews .....	24
3.6.2. Sampling techniques .....	25
3.6.3 Field Observations.....	25
3.6.4. Ethical considerations.....	26
3.6.5. Limitations of the study.....	26
Chapter 4: Results and Discussion of Findings .....	27
4.1. Ethnographic study .....	27
4.2. Description of Interview Process and Participants .....	34
4.3. Discussion of findings.....	35
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	46
REFERENCES .....	47

## LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1 Community of Bekezela situated under the M1 highway in Newtown (Photo by Yeshiel Panchia, The Citizen, 06 June 2017). .....	19
Figure 2 Litter from unused and uncollected material in Bekezela (Photo by the author, 25 August 2017) .....	19
Figure 3 Street reclaimer's routes in the CoJ (ArcMap, 2017). .....	21
Figure 4 Recyclables collected t Auckland Park (Photo taken by author, 25 August 2017).....	29
Figure 5 Reclaimer pushing a trolley in Houghton (Photo taken by author, 15 August 2017) .....	32
Table 1 Methods Table .....	17

## Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Overall introduction to the report

Street reclaimers are often found on the streets in the early mornings, pushing their trolleys to go and look for recyclables that they can sell for profit. The society has different insights or opinions about reclaimers and most people prefer not to think about them. In order to challenge this view, this research seeks to identify practices and relationships that reclaimers have amongst themselves, with a view to how this shapes the spaces they work in and the social relations that emerge from the practices. Furthermore, this research pursues an insight on how reclaimers are people that we can relate with and support their livelihoods by commodifying waste and using the profits to obtain things they need in order to alleviate poverty.

This research is based on an ethnographic qualitative study of reclaimers in Bekezela, situated in Newtown. The study includes field observations and semi-structured interviews that focused on concerns over power, social relations and experiences of street reclaimers working in the surrounding suburbs of Johannesburg. The study also highlights how reclaimers organize themselves informally, control spaces that they use, negotiate access to streets and how they handle people that encroach on their territories.

Based on the findings of the study, I argue that street reclaimers use different methods of managing the environments they work in. The most effective method is establishing a street and marking it as your own territory by showing power, a fearless attitude and use speed to demonstrate hard work and determination. Another method of controlling space is creating alliances with other reclaimers or security guards to gain their trust and information on when waste is collected by the municipality.

To support this evidence, I engage with theoretical frameworks that link to different relations to power and control of space with a central focus on street reclaimers that move in the City of Johannesburg. I highlight Lefebvre's (1991) argument on production of space, whereby he

conceptualizes the idea of space being controlled by citizens and it is not always concrete, it expands to rhythms of the city that consider what he calls perceived space, conceived space and lived space. These processes of producing space will be expanded in the paper, to provide a theoretical approach of how reclaimers relate to space. I also bring Foucault (1991) in highlighting how power plays a role in liberal societies by indicating practices that constitute humanity such as racial division or spatial mobility and these shape different forms of power.

## 1.2. Problem Statement

Street reclaimers collect waste materials from different collection points in businesses and residential areas, where waste is usually left aside for the municipality (Mkhize *et al.*, 2015, p. 9). However, accessing this waste comes with difficulties, such as harassment from property owners or their recyclables being stolen by other reclaimers and it is often on the “first come, first served” basis (Mkhize *et al.*, 2015, p. 9). There is also evidence that some street reclaimers arrange with property owners or local people in that certain area to access recyclable waste (McLean, 2000, p. 16).

This demonstrates that the reclaiming market is competitive and if a reclaimer does not have an understanding with a residential owner or storekeeper, it becomes difficult to collect a good number of recyclables to generate more money. McLean (2000) also argues that some reclaimers are sceptical about being represented by organisations because they cannot trust each other with their belongings. In order for reclaimers to generate good money, they have to wake up very early, to access recyclables and also handle people or other reclaimers that contest their spaces and also protect their goods. These are the problems that emerge in street reclaiming, therefore, the purpose of this research is to ask, *how do street reclaimers control the spaces where they reclaim recyclable material in the surrounding suburbs of Johannesburg?* This research will also focus on the sub questions that emerge from the research question and this is how they are phrased:

- How do street reclaimers in the Johannesburg CBD establish claims to streets they work in?
- How do street reclaimers handle authorities or people that encroach their spaces or territories?
- What are the power dynamics between reclaimers in establishing and maintaining claims

to streets?

### 1.3. Rationale

Most people look down on reclaimers because they are associated with filth and many municipalities do not want to integrate them into formal waste management systems (Samson, 2008, p. 2). Therefore, this research project aims to bring different insights on how reclaimers live “normal lives” by focusing on how they interact with each other, their daily routines and practices that make them human beings who bring valuable contributions to society such as reducing municipal waste. According to Samson (2008) little is known about reclaimers in South Africa and the society estranges them by viewing them as people who belong in the dump and to date, there is no legislation that acknowledges their role.

Some of the important aspects of this study is to look at the role of reclaimers in the City of Johannesburg, the challenges they face daily and how they deal with them in order to conquer poverty. According to Schenk and Blaauw (2011) street reclaimers are small-scale, self-employed agents, characteristically encountered in the urban informal sector. They are sometimes referred to as waste pickers or scavengers and Samson (2010) argues that a wide range of terms are used within the literature reviewed to refer to people who extract materials from the waste stream, including salvager’, recycler, ‘informal sector collection worker’, ‘garbage picker’, ‘picker’; ‘cart pusher’ and ‘waste harvester’ (Samson, 2010, p. 4).

In this research, I use the term “street reclaimer’ because I focus on individuals who reclaim recyclables in the streets by going through bins in the surrounding suburbs of Johannesburg. Arguably, the term “reclaimer” is fitting for this study because it emphasises the labour that is put in reclaiming recyclables that are cast aside by households and in turn reclaimers commodify the unwanted materials, by reclaiming the value and essentiality that is within the materials (Samson, 2008, p. 16).

Street reclaimers also encounter a number of problems in the city such as negative stereotyping by urban residents, harassments from security guards and conflicts amongst themselves over waste materials (Sentime, 2011, p. 107). Through encountering these problems, this research

brings an insight to how reclaimers deal with conflicts, what measures do they take in ensuring that they collect enough recyclables and how do different environments contribute to the way they behave.

The importance of this study is to emphasise the social relations that reclaimers have to waste and how does this make them relate to different spaces they work in and what are the relations they have amongst themselves and society. Through conducting this study, I have found that there is not enough literature that focuses on discourses on race and how it can shape the lives of street reclaimers. Therefore, this study brings an insight on how waste relates to different forms of race and suggests a way to close the gap in knowledge towards racial exclusion that reclaimers experience, by providing opinions and understandings from reclaimers that addresses this concern.

#### 1.4. Overall Structure of the report

The first chapter of this research projects provides a brief introduction to this study and the issues that will be addressed. The second chapter will focus on the literature review, which engages with academic debates on themes that relate to the research topic. The third chapter will discuss the methodology and methods that the researcher engaged with in collecting data and explains why these particular methods were chosen. The fourth chapter gives a brief ethnographic analysis of how the researcher spent time with the participants and how information was acquired. Along with that is a discussion of results that analyse the findings of this study. Finally, the fifth chapter draws on conclusions from the study and ties the argument.

## Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature reviews is a collection of books, scholarly articles, and any other sources that are being critically evaluated in relation to the research problem being investigated (Dellinger, 2005, p. 41). Researchers review literature for various purposes including planning a study or reframing a body of literature (Dellinger, 2005, p. 43). The aim of a literature review is to construct the validity of a single study, by demonstrating the researcher's own story about what was considered worthwhile, meaningful and valuable in a set of studies and how those studies fit together (Dellinger, 2005, p. 45).

This literature review engages with five themes within relevant literature: waste as commodity, social relations of waste, power relations, conflict and racism & racial exclusion.

### 2.1. Waste as commodity

Geographies of waste reflect the shifting social structures and places of individuals in society, therefore, this means we categorize, place and conceal waste in the production of social order (Whitson, 2011, p. 1413). Waste can be considered as a commodity that can be bought and sold in the market and this gives an attachment of monetary value (Moore, 2012). In addition, Samson (2009) provides an insight on how the Metsimaholo municipality attempted to formalise recycling on the Sasolburg landfill by allowing a private company to manage the landfill and cast out reclaimers that have been working there for decades (Samson, 2009, p. 13). This demonstrates waste being seen as a commodity for capital accumulation and it also highlights how the value of waste brings contestation over space, whereby reclaimers view this space as a source of sustaining their livelihood, whereas the municipality wants to use this space to gain profits.

Elsewhere, Benson and Vanqa-Mgijima (2010) argue that generation of waste is important for reclaimers to survive and earn an income and Medina (2007) highlights that waste collecting and selling is an activity that saves unemployed people from starvation. This demonstrates that waste is not only valuable as a commodity, it is also seen as an essential resource that marginalised people need to survive. Marginalised communities often turn to salvaging

recyclable material because they could not find formal employment and Samson (2009) uses a concept developed by Chari (2005) called 'detritus' and it captures "how capital accumulation and colonialism create surplus populations compelled to find ways to reproduce themselves outside of the wage labour relation and how these marginalised populations are often forced to contend with the toxic industrial detritus generated by capitalist production" (Samson, 2009, p. 16). From these debates, we see different meanings to waste as a commodity and how this further marginalises poor people.

## 2.2. Social relations of waste

Social relations enable us to understand what is happening in our social sphere, how our relation to material objects shapes our behaviour and understanding the practices that occur in social spaces. Therefore, it is crucial to conceptualize the meaning of waste, as people have different relations to it and it is also important to know how waste shapes the production of social space.

Waste can be defined as unwanted materials that we get rid of because we have no further use for it (Muhammad and Manu, 2013, p. 143). In most societies, waste is associated with filth, something that is rejected and needs to be discarded after consumption (More, 2012). However, it is also important to note that waste shapes different ideas of social constructs such as recycling and identities that are formed. Medina (2007) highlights that waste pickers recover materials from rubbish bins and dump sites because they are disadvantaged individuals who need to fight poverty. They play a significant role in recycling and Dias (2016) gives an emphasis on waste pickers as agents that use waste and transform it into a recyclable, which brings profits for recycle centres. In addition, they also enhance the cities' solid waste management systems because they reduce the amount of waste that goes into landfills (Dias, 2016, p. 4). However, According to Medina (2007) waste pickers are stigmatized due to their daily contact with, they are perceived as nuisance and crime bearing individuals. The stereotypical views and stigmatization of waste pickers can be linked to the relationship between space and power (Kudva, 2009). Waste pickers constitute the urban informal and this creates precarious communities that do not 'belong' in cities. As Kudva (2009) highlights, "conceived abstract spaces are the sanitized, formal spaces of the planners' and policy makers' imaginations of urban spaces and those in power work to restrict the mobility of people in the urban informal" (Kudva,

2009, p. 1619). In other words, those who work in the urban informal are pushed to the outskirts and periphery because they do not enhance the 'urban image' of the city (Kudva, 2009).

Elsewhere, Samson (2017) argues municipalities and private companies constantly encroach on waste picker's terrain and tries to remove them from their working spaces by using laws. This in turn, questions their citizenship and identity as human beings who do not have a sense of belonging to their working spaces.

### 2.3. Power

From a Foucauldian perspective, power is seen "as a productive, enabling and local force in the social rather than something that denies and can be possessed" (Foucault, 1982, p 221). Another Foucauldian approach to power speaks from various notions such as governmentality, and his interest stems from how governing happens and how it is thought (Foucault 1991; Barnett 2001). Governmentality is linked to modernity and it is a form of power that is produced out of the modern ways of ruling, defining and controlling subjects (Jensen, 2011, p. 259). The term "government" did not refer only to political structures, rather it is the way in which the conduct of individuals or different groups might be directed (Barnett 2001, p. 16). Governmentality also speaks to the rationalities that are produced by the government such as policies or legislations and these rationalities govern their subjects by shaping their identities and behaviours (Jensen, 2011, p. 259).

Power can also be viewed from geography of feminism which suggests that gender is inseparable from social differences and it connects to constructions of race, racialized places, mobility and most existing geographical knowledge about borders is epistemologically masculinist (Silvey, 2004, p. 501). In addition, power can be exercised from a space that is racialised and Munoz (2012) focuses on Mexicans, who reside in Los Angeles, and were working as immigrant street traders who were not authorized by the state because of their nationality and racialization as "Mexicans". In addition, Whitson (2007) also looks at informal work as a space of power and resistance, whereby people who work in the informal economy usually label themselves as their own bosses to resist exploitation. The experiences of workers cannot be generalized; however, the activity of informal work as a whole can be understood as a space in which relations of power in their multiple forms are made evident (Whitson, 2007, p 2924).

## 2.4. Conflict

In this theme, I examine key literature debates on space and boundaries, to explore how conflict can be caused from various understandings of how reclaimers relate to their own territories and boundaries. From Lefebvre's perspective, space is a social production of everyday experiences comprised of three mediums known as conceived, perceived and lived space (Watkins, 2005, p. 210). Each aspect brings characteristics of how spatial events of life relate to everyday functions of society and the one that relates to this theme is lived space, which suggests that lived realities are structured through people's interactions and relationships they have with each other and this shapes their lived realities (Lefebvre, 1991). Furthermore, Lefebvre suggests that lived space is oppressive and it can produce discriminatory practices such as racism, homophobia and sexism, however, lived spaces also produce counter spaces that demonstrate resistant, oppositional and diverse practices (Van Ingen, 2003, p. 204). Elsewhere, De Certeau argues that a spatial strategy is something that controls an area, physically and conceptually, and it projects its power on to other people (De Certeau, 1998, p. 32). In terms of boundaries, Sibley focuses on how the society produces boundaries as forms of social organisations and the author highlights that boundaries define the processes of inclusion and exclusion and they are subject to contestation and subversion because of rising politics and conflicts (Sibley, 1988, p. 414).

## 2.5. Racism and Racial exclusion

"Racism is a set of beliefs that organic, genetically transmitted differences (whether real or imagined) between human groups are intrinsically associated with the presence or absence of certain socially relevant characteristics" (Jackson, 1987, p. 6). The debates on race in geography have questioned the various forms of essentialism and the recognition of categories such as race, gender and class being socially constructed (Jackson, 1998, p. 99). Social construction theories have played a role in determining racialized ways of thinking and shaping practices of racism as a significant construction to think about (Jackson, 1998). Jackson's understanding of race is linked to a historical construction and he uses the notion of 'whiteness' as an ideal construction of spatial racism (Anderson et al., 2002, p. 10). "Whiteness works at its most powerful level when it is hegemonic, creating landscapes in which people of colour do not even figure and this

creates processes of exclusion and inclusion, out of which segregated cities are produced” (Anderson et al., 2002, p. 10).

The debates on racial segregation in cities are influenced by the historical intersections of racism (Anderson et al., 2002, p. 8). Kipfer (2007) engages with debates from Fanon and the city as a spatial oppression. Racism occurs as an alienating spatial oppression, whereby black communities are separated in the city based on race instead of economic status (Kipfer, 2007, p. 709). In South African context, the Group Areas Act of 1950 that was implemented in the apartheid era, was imposed on black people to segregate them from cities (Jackson, 1987). “Richard Harris questioned the significance of racial segregation, particularly in terms of whether it serves to promote class consciousness within a particular residential community or whether it lowers the potential for conflict by reducing the possibility of interaction between different groups” (Harris cited in Jackson, 1987, p. 13). (Yeoh (2001) also argues that black people maintain a large population of South Africa, however, through direct rule and constrained development, black locals were pushed to the outskirts of the city, but still controlled by the core. Furthermore, Cock (2015) identifies the concept of ‘environmental racism’ whereby she explains how black communities are exposed to damaged land and pollution and many do not have access to proper infrastructure and this, as demonstrated by Pulido (2000) shows that racism is environmentally produced and white people exploit the benefits of their skin colour by living in cleaner areas. Finally, black people’s struggles should be understood as different practices of racism, that have severely affected their lives and threatened their present and future well-being (Jackson, 1998).

## 2.6. Conclusions

In conclusion, this literature review has provided different ways of thinking about academic debates that focus on the value of waste, social relations of waste, conflict, power and racism & racial exclusion. Academic scholars argue that there are different ways of viewing waste as a commodity and they intersect with different meanings such as privatization of waste versus loss of livelihoods. Debates on social relations conceptualize the meaning of waste and this brings an insight on how waste pickers promote recycling, however, due to their stigmatization their effort are not recognized because their identities are rooted in waste. The notions of power and governmentality, enable us to understand how people in informal communities are controlled by

authorities. The debates on space and boundary highlight the practices that could give rise to conflict and finally, the discourses on racism focus on race as a social construct and speak to how the notion of racial segregation came about. The project aims to highlight how street reclaimers use power and resistance to claim and own streets and the behaviour and practices they develop to do so.

The research project will integrate the themes of this literature review with the findings of this study. The arguments on waste being commodified will be related to how street reclaimers view the value of waste and how they associate different areas with the benefits they receive from certain suburbs. This debate on social relations will bring an insight to how different spaces relate to street reclaimers, how society perceives their roles in waste management and how recycling activities forge an understanding of reducing waste and sustaining livelihoods of the marginalized in the society. This study also aims to highlight how street reclaimers use power and resistance to claim and own streets and the behaviour and practices they develop to do so. How reclaimers relate to their own territories and boundaries and the necessary means they take in marking their territories and lastly, the study brings the notions of race and the environment, which does not have a specific focus on the overall project, however the debates are useful in determining power relations in terms of racial inequalities and how this can impact the spaces that reclaimers use.

## Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

### 3.1. Introduction

According to Mouton (1996) methods apply to the way something is done and methodology gives reasons and assumptions of how and why something is done in a particular way. The significance of providing methods and methodology of any research is to show how data is developed. It is important to identify methods that are unique to this study and in this section, I demonstrate how the methods that I initially proposed, were applied to this study and justify why these methods were chosen. Methods were selected on their ability to answer the sub questions of this research and how this contributes to answering the overall research question. The sub questions and methods chosen for this study are presented in the table below (Table 1)

*Table 1 Methods Table*

<b>Sub Questions</b>	<b>Methods</b>
<b>How do street reclaimers in the Johannesburg CBD establish claims to streets they work in?</b>	<b>Semi-structured interview Observations Ethnographic study</b>
<b>How do street reclaimers retain control of their spaces in Johannesburg CBD?</b>	<b>Semi-structured interview Observations Focus groups</b>
<b>What are the power dynamics between reclaimers in establishing and maintaining claims to streets?</b>	<b>Semi-structured interviews Observations Ethnographic study Focus groups</b>

### 3.2. Study Area

The study was carried out with street reclaimers who reside in an informal area called Bekezela (see figure 1 below) which is situated in Newtown, Johannesburg. According to Brodie (2008), Newtown developed around 1908 as the first city to show urban regeneration. “Multiracial slums dotted south-central Johannesburg and Newtown comprised a cluster of three locations, namely Brickfields which was inhabited mainly by poor Whites, the others, ‘Coolie Location’ and ‘Kafir Location’ were set aside for Indians and Africans respectively” (Gaule, 2005, p. 2339). In the 1980s, much of the Newtown area fell into decline and there was an agency to urban renewal in the area, which resulted to the designated “cultural precinct” we see today, with growing cultural museums, trendy places and residential developments (Gaule, 2005, p. 2342). The history suggests that the area was multi-racial during the apartheid era, however, today we only see black people residing in Newtown due to regeneration and urban decay, some buildings became affordable for middle and lower-class people to move in and some became abandoned spaces occupied by homeless people.

Bekezela, situated under the M1 highway in Newtown, is a home to about 500 residents and majority of them are waste recyclers (Sejake, 2016). Historically, Bekezela used to be a college that was dedicated to propelling development, however, it was closed in 2001 and it is alleged that around the same time, the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) took control of the vacant building and accommodated some members of their security staff on the premises (Panchia and Bega, 2017). Other members of the community, including those that participated in this study, work as recyclers and their reasons for moving there are based on access to shelter and proximity to buy back centres. Recyclers earn a living by collecting waste recyclables from residential areas with their trolleys. They do not have access to waste recovery facilities, therefore, they sort out their recyclables in the yard. The material that is not in good condition is not taken to buy back centres and because the municipality does not collect solid waste from Bekezela, this results to large amount of waste in the landscape (see Figure 2 below). Although the society has stereotypical views about Bekezela as an informal settlement, surrounded by waste and improper infrastructure, reclaimers see a home, a place of comfort and a sense of satisfaction in having a roof over their heads. Lefebvre, in his notion of the ‘right to the city’,

suggests that a specific form of citizenship in an urban space refers to a set of rights, to appropriation and participation (Purcell, 2003, p. 578). Therefore, each inhabitant of the city (including waste reclaimers who are often seen as impoverished people who belong elsewhere) has a right to decision making and physically occupying the central areas of the city. In addition, waste reclaimers who inhabited the old Bekezela college stand, created a new space for themselves and they contribute to the production of urban space by recycling and reducing solid waste material.



*Figure 1 Community of Bekezela situated under the M1 highway in Newtown (Photo by Yeshiel Panchia, The Citizen, 06 June 2017).*



*Figure 2 Litter from unused and uncollected material in Bekezela (Photo by the author, 25 August 2017)*

### 3.3. Research Design

#### 3.3.1. Qualitative approach

This study adopted a qualitative approach because the researcher needed to determine opinions, understandings and beliefs of participants. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) indicate that a qualitative research method is an approach that seeks to understand human behaviour in a natural setting and it also focuses on life from a subjective point of view. In this study, the researcher interacted with street reclaimers from Bekezela, residents and security guards from Auckland Park and Melville. The researcher explored different ways of analysing evidence such as focusing at different methods that used by reclaimers to establish streets, behaviour and attitude towards each other and community members and opinions and beliefs from security guards and residents. This method was relevant to my study because it consisted of interviews, ethnographic analysis and observations of participants and this was useful to obtaining evidence that answered the research question.

#### 3.3.2. Ethnographic approach

An ethnography is a method of research that denotes a temporary visit amongst a group of people whereby the researcher immerses in the daily activities of the people being studied, reflecting on kept field notes and learning social understandings of the group of people (Megeran, 2006, p. 265). Anthropologists describe this approach as fieldwork and it can be done through participant-observation or non-participant observation. It is based on interviews, questionnaires and analysis of focus groups and images (Megeran, 2006, p. 265).

In this study, an ethnographic qualitative approach was applied in order to view the social practices, use of space, relationships and hardships of street reclaimers and provide an in-depth case study analysis of the experiences. The study was conducted over two days of field observations with street reclaimers from Bekezela. The first field observation took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of July 2017, whereby I walked with two reclaimers from Bekezela to Auckland Park. The second day of field observation took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August 2017 and on this day, I walked with three reclaimers from Bekezela to Houghton. I approached the method of doing fieldwork as a non-participant observer because I wanted to understand the practices, behaviours and

movement of reclaimers through the city, from a non-judgemental lens and I also did not want to force my opinions on their methods of reclaiming because this was a new learning experience for me. The next chapter will provide an in depth ethnographic study on the experience and interactions I had with the reclaimers and how this contributed to my ethnographic research. Illustrated below is a map of the routes we took during the two days of field observations in the suburbs.

Map demonstrating street reclaimer routes in the City Of Johannesburg

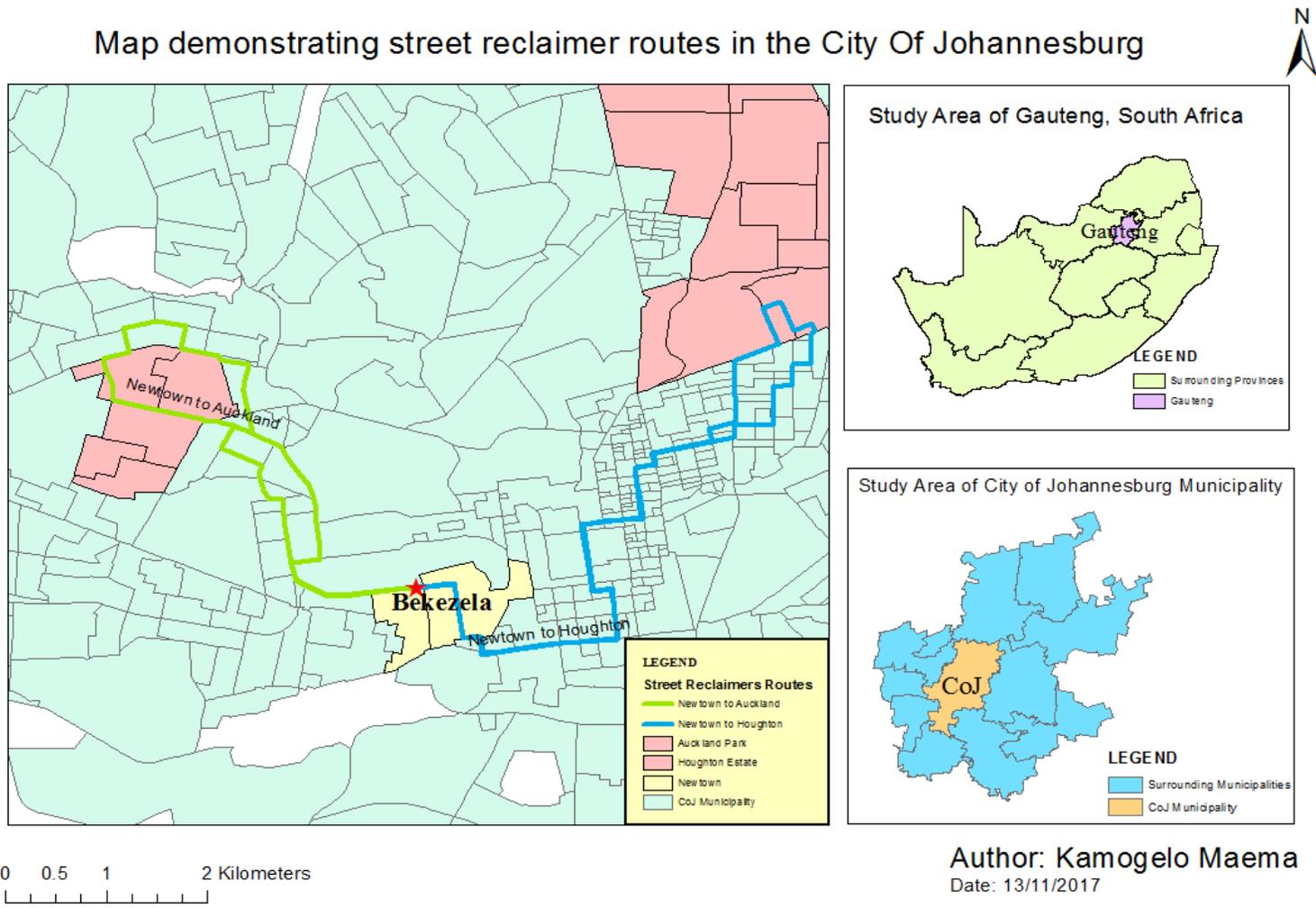


Figure 3 Street reclaimer's routes in the CoJ (ArcMap, 2017).

Author: Kamogelo Maema  
Date: 13/11/2017

### 3.4. Theoretical Framework

In this study, I use Lefebvre's theory on production of space to demonstrate the importance of how street reclaimers move through space. I initially proposed to include De Certeau's spatial tactics and strategies, however, I did not find the theory useful to my findings as they engage more with understanding street reclaimers' social use and production of space and Lefebvre's spatial triad explores space as an important aspect of all social relations.

Lefebvre (1991) identified three moments in the production of social spaces: spatial practices, representations of space and spaces of representation. According to Van Ingen (2003) a spatial practice signifies the production and use of physical space. It is a space that is perceived and it can be mapped empirically, examples include a shopping centre, a corner on the street or any public 'place' (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 16). In this research, I demonstrate that street reclaimers occupy physical space through the everyday routines they engage in. Moving from Bekezela in the early mornings to the suburbs and pushing their trolleys on the streets, constitutes their human activity, behaviour and experience. This use of social space also demonstrates "the way in which bodies interact with material in space" (Van Ingen, 2003, p. 203).

Representations of space on the other hand, are spaces that are conceived and engage with our thoughts, ideas, plans and memories (Purcell, 2003, p. 577). Lefebvre indicates that this space implies what is in the head, rather than in the body and it is tied to the relations of social order in a society (Merrifield, 2004, p. 109). This form of space reveals knowledge within its representation, for example, it is known that many street reclaimers are males because this method of reclaiming involves walking long distances and pushing heavy trolleys, therefore one can say that this representation of space reveals power through showing masculinity. Lastly, Lefebvre (1991) identified the third term in his spatial triad and it is called spaces of representation. "It is the social space through which life is lived directly" (Van Ingen, 2003, p. 205). Lived spaces are not concrete or empirically mapped, however, they constitute social struggles, social relations and social practices (Van Ingen, 2003, p. 204). As street reclaimers explain in this study that they have experienced racism through walking in the suburbs and conflict over waste recyclables with security guards and the police, this reveals lived spaces as the site where marginalisation is produced and enforced. It is also important to note that lived

spaces combine all three moments of the spatial triad by showing practices that occur in a physical space, their symbolic importance and how they create the social space we live in (Merrifield, 2004, p. 115). Lefebvre's theoretical framework will be applied to the findings of the research in the next chapter.

### 3.5. Policy Documents Consulted

The purpose of explaining policy documents in this study is to establish the role that Pikitup has played in managing waste in the CoJ and how has this encroached on street reclaimer's terrain. I also explain the separation at source (S@S) programme that was introduced by Pikitup that aims to separate waste in households and reduce the amount of waste that goes to landfills and how it infringes on the work done by street reclaimers.

Pikitup is a waste management private company that was established in 2001 and its role is to serve and provide a range of waste management services in the City of Johannesburg (Pikitup, 2014). It provides services to approximately 4.4 million people and approximately 1.2 million tons of waste is collected and disposed on an annual basis (Pikitup, 2014). The aim of the company is to adhere to the Polokwane Declaration of zero waste in landfill sites and it encourages this by involving communities to take part in recycling (Pikitup, 2014).

Pikitup implemented a S@S project as a strategy to reduce the amount of waste to landfills by targeting CoJ residents to recover recyclable materials at the source of generation (Pikitup, 2015). It has done this by distributing different plastic bags to households and separate waste recyclables from solid waste. Pikitup has also suggested in its 2015/16 business plan to collaborate with private sectors in order to expand to other areas in the greater CoJ, integrate reclaimers into education and awareness campaigns (Pikitup, 2015).

However, a range of literature on waste management in the CoJ suggests that Pikitup has attempted several times to alienate reclaimers from being integrated into formal waste management systems. According to Dlamini and Simatele (2016) local municipalities have not put efforts in conducting policy frameworks for reclaimers. There is negative attitude towards reclaimers and it is motivated by lack of knowledge, from companies such as Pikitup, in terms of the contribution of informal recycling that is made by reclaimers (Dlamini and Simatele, 2016, p. 21). Street reclaimers are often involved in conflicts with residents and Pikitup workers because

the society and municipalities have stereotypical views about reclaimers. They are seen as crime bearing individuals who should not get access to recyclables or even get access to gated communities (Dlamini and Simatele, 2016 p. 24). Reclaimers also mention that households do not practice S@S as some residents do not see the need to recycle because there are no resource recovery programmes (Dlamini and Simatele, p. 21). Pikitup has also attempted to remove reclaimers from the Marie Louise landfill, Soweto in 2001 in order to grant a private company to collect recyclables (Samson, 2017, p. 51). From these concerns, it is clear that Pikitup only serves to collect waste without considering the important role of reclaimers in recycling waste. There should be strong efforts that are put into education and awareness of street reclaimers in the CoJ by introducing bottom up activities such as workshops, community meetings, radio and television programmes to change the public's perceptions and enhance participations of various stakeholders (Charlton, 2014, p. 216).

### 3.6. Data Collection Methods

In a qualitative research, data is collected in a systematic way that enables the researcher to obtain opinions, understandings or beliefs from the respondents (Burns and Grove, 2005). The researcher chose methods that are relevant to this study and that were helpful in answering the research question. Participants were selected on willingness to contribute to this study and I gave all individuals the chance to retract from the study, if they did not feel like partaking anymore. For this research, the methods employed to collect data are sampling techniques, semi-structured interviews and ethnographic field observations. Evidence from data included looking at opinions, behaviour and understandings of all participants.

#### 3.6.1. Semi-structured interviews

According to Chung and Lo (2004) semi-structured interviews allow elaborate and follow up questions to create more information that will enable the researcher to explore other dynamics that are relevant and that were not considered initially for the research. Semi-structured interviews also focus on key questions that are central to the research topic. Main questions were structured for the purpose of answering the research questions. Elaborations were only raised when the researcher received more information that was useful to this study.

Interviews were conducted with street reclaimers, residents and security guards. Interviews conducted include 7 street reclaimers from Bekezela and they took place between August –

September 2017, 3 security guards from Auckland Park and Melville and this took place on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 2017 and lastly, 5 residents from Auckland Park and Melville and this took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 2017.

### 3.6.2. Sampling techniques

According to Marshall (1996) sampling plays a significant role in identifying or using the correct selection methods of participants. In this study I employed the method of snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is sometimes referred to as chain referral sampling whereby one research participant refers another, and that person refers another participant and this creates a chain of people that were referred to the researcher (Marshall, 1996). "It is a useful strategy to use when the researcher's group of interest is likely to be difficult to find, not only because of some stigma associated with the group, but also because the group may be relatively scarce" (Marshall, 1996, p. 31).

For the purpose of this research, participants were introduced to the researcher through a meeting organised by WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing) which is an organisation that my supervisor is involved with. I met a street reclaimer from Bekezela at the meeting that took place on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2017 in Johannesburg, CBD. Then after the first day of doing field observations, the reclaimer introduced me to other reclaimers, residents and security guards that he is familiar with and they were willing to participate in the study. Through referrals from my participants, I ended up with 3 sample groups of participants: 7 street reclaimers, 3 security guards and 5 residents.

### 3.6.3 Field Observations

"Observation is a way of viewing participants behaviour without interference and this helps to have a clear picture on how individuals behave in a studied situation" (Hancock *et al*, 2009, p. 19). Observations were carried out in this study in order to view personally, the practices and experiences of street reclaimers in controlling spaces. They took place at Auckland Park and Houghton on different days between July-August 2017. The researcher looked at negotiation to access bins, maintaining control of that space with regards to how street reclaimers handle people that harass, steal or contest their space and the power dynamics they have with each other. I chose to do field observations, as a non-participant observer rather than a participant-observer because I was not equipped with information on how street reclaimers deal with encounters or

negotiate with each other, therefore, it was insightful for me to learn how the dynamics occur. I carried a fieldwork diary and noted down all my thoughts, emotions and interactions I had with street reclaimers. The next chapter which describes the ethnographic study and discussion of findings will go into detail and outline the events that occurred.

#### 3.6.4. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are principles that guide research in addressing issues arising in a qualitative study in order to achieve the goals of the study and also not compromising the rights of the research participants (Shaw, 2008). Before conducting fieldwork, the researcher received ethical clearance from the School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental studies and then proceeded to collect data. Participants were told the full purpose of this study and those that were willing to participate, were given a consent form to sign. A recorder was used for interviews, with consultation and agreement from participants. Interview processes generally took between 20 to 25 minutes and anonymity was reassured to participants. No under-age (<18) individuals were considered for this study. The interview processes were carried out in languages that participants could understand including IsiZulu, Sesotho and Setswana. Participants were not forced to partake in this study.

#### 3.6.5. Limitations of the study

The main challenge of this study was waking up at 3 am to go to Bekezela and walk with street reclaimers. It was something new that I have never done before and it involved lots of effort and strength. Another challenge was keeping in contact with street reclaimers, as most of the time when I tried to call them, their phones were off and this delayed the time I had initially planned to do fieldwork. Approaching residents was also another challenge because most of them were not keen on participating and the researcher only managed to get access to five households. The use of vernacular languages was also difficult because some of the questions that are phrased in English did not translate well to participants and this limited the information I could get from them.

## Chapter 4: Results and Discussion of Findings

This chapter discusses the key results and findings of this research project. The chapter is broken into three sections. The first section describes an ethnographic study that provides details of how I met street reclaimers, the events that occurred during fieldwork observations and the general conversations we had with each other. The second section focuses on the interview process and what evidence emerged from the data. The third section describes themes that emerged from the data and this is integrated with findings of this study.

### 4.1. Ethnographic study

Through my four years of living in Johannesburg and seeing reclaimers with their trolleys every day, I never thought I would see the day where I interact with reclaimers, in a boardroom! My journey with street reclaimers began on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2017 at a meeting in Ghandi Square, Johannesburg. The meeting was facilitated by a foundation that my supervisor is involved with and the discussion was on guidelines and ways of integrating waste reclaimers into waste management systems. There were about 6 to 8 reclaimers in the meeting and the first impression I got was seeing the way reclaimers provided inputs and engaged in issues that affect them. They also looked clean and decent and this was far from the stereotypical views I had about reclaimers.

One week later, the general mass meeting of reclaimers from different parts of Johannesburg took place. This gave me the opportunity to identify reclaimers that I wanted for this study. The meeting was very insightful and touched on a number of concerns that are relevant to my study such as dealing with conflict in the streets, harassment from the police/security guards and how reclaimers encroach on each other's territories. One reclaimer that caught my attention spoke about how he carries a weapon to defend himself on the streets and people know that they should not mess with him. From that moment, I knew he was the one for my study!

However, after a failed attempt at convincing him to participate in this study, I came to a realisation that it is going to be difficult to convince reclaimers to be part of this research. After the meeting, we were approached by Jafta from Bekezela and we had conversation about his life as a reclaimer and the difficulties he had faced since he started this job. He started reclaiming in 1996. He was previously employed as a security guard, however, they wanted his CV and he did not have one. He looked for other jobs until he saw other people reclaiming then he joined them.

He squatted with his friends for a few years after he became a reclaimer, then he moved to Bekezela in 2008. I was intrigued by how open he was and his interest in students from Wits, as this is how we were labelled at the meeting and he agreed to participate in my research. It was quite fortunate that I had access to the meetings, as it was much easier to forge relationships with reclaimers and learn more about their lives.

Now the daunting moment I dreaded had finally arrived! Waking up at 03:30 in the morning to do field observations. This happened on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2017, two months after meeting Jafta at the mass gathering. I forgot how he looks like, I have never been to Bekezela before and I am scared for my life! I used an uber to take me to the area and when I arrived there, I waited for him outside the yard. Luckily, he had his phone with him always and as he answered the call, I could recognise him. We walked inside the yard and the time was 04:15 am. I took out my fieldwork diary to write down the things I could see. This happened in winter, it was really cold and dark!

It felt like I was in a small community outside Johannesburg. Everything looked informal, from the rooms being built close to each other, piles of litter on the ground and the smell of smoke. It reminded me of the townships and informal settlements that I have been exposed to during my childhood. I waited outside Jafta's room, as he was fixing his trolley and preparing his sack. He told me that the guys he usually goes to the streets with had left him. He also indicated that a lot of reclaimers wake up early and leave the premises at 03:30 in the morning because some neighbourhoods such as Norwood, Randburg and Houghton are far, therefore, you need to travel early and be fast.

We left the premises at 04:42 am and headed to Auckland Park. Jafta also mentioned that the reason why reclaimers wake up early is to avoid a lot of cars because it is much easier to push a trolley on the road than on the sidewalks. As we moved through the city, I noticed how a lot of reclaimers were familiar with him and he explained that he has been reclaiming for over two decades in areas around Johannesburg.

When we arrived in Auckland Park, the time was 05:52 am, a number of streets were occupied by reclaimers. Jafta indicated that on Tuesday, the area is dominated by reclaimers from Fietas. He added that reclaimers usually go to an area as a group, however, they work individually in the

streets. Jafta mentioned that he also travels with people from Bekezela, however, he enjoys working alone because in groups, people can coerce you into fights with Pikitup workers and security guards. The reclaimers in this area were working at a relaxed pace and there were no conflicts whatsoever. When I asked Jafta if he has encountered any conflict with other reclaimers, he mentioned that he has always avoided conflicts. He explained that the reclaimers he walks with are his friends, they work with each other and when they get to an area, they work on a first come, first served basis. “Even this thing of owning streets, started recently! Back in the day there was no one who owned a street, so I do not work with people who go to war when they collect recyclables”, he explains. As we moved from one street to another, collecting all sorts of recyclables including paper, cardboards, plastic bottles and tins, we approached an old Indian lady who was standing by her gate. Jafta reaches for a plastic bag and she yells “Do not touch that! Pikitup gave it to me and I am standing here to make sure that no one touches that bag”. We moved away from the plastic bag and continued to go through other bins. I was not shocked or surprised by the woman’s behaviour because I have read literature that demonstrates how reclaimers are constantly harassed by residents and security guards.

As we continued to look for recyclables, we came to a realisation that most bins have been emptied out and as you can see from Figure 5 below, taken at 08:39 am, we had collected very few recyclables. This is when I realised the importance of waking up early and being fast as a reclaimer. Jafta and I worked at a very relaxed pace and perhaps he did this because it was my first day of walking with street reclaimers, therefore, he did not want to overwhelm me. At 09:08 am we decided to walk back to Bekezela because the Pikitup truck has already took most of the recyclables we need.



*Figure 4 Recyclables collected t Auckland Park (Photo taken by author, 25 August 2017).*

Our walk back to Bekezela was very long. My body was starting to give up on me and I hardly communicated with Jafta. As we entered Newtown, we saw a lot of reclaimers walking back from the suburbs with piles of recyclables on their trolleys. We finally arrived at Bekezela and we stopped by Njabulo's place. He is a reclaimer from Bekezela and I recognised his face from the general mass meeting. We found him sorting his materials and he told us that he arrived 20 minutes ago. He looked at Jafta's trolley and commented with a grin on his face, "Auckland Park has nothing! You need to go to places like Norwood and Houghton, where competition is rife". Njabulo mentioned that he went to Norwood and Houghton that morning because that is where he usually goes on Tuesdays. He spoke about something strange that happened in Houghton. He mentioned that Pikitup trucks usually collect garbage at Houghton on Tuesdays, however, they collected garbage on Monday instead and security guards told them this information. Pikitup also told Houghton residents to take out S@S plastics on Tuesday and the trucks will come to collect them. When reclaimers heard this information, they moved from Norwood to Houghton, to collect those plastics. Reclaimers fought with Pikitup workers and Njabulo mentioned that some of his friends got physical with the workers. We continued to have a conversation about S@S and Njabulo commented that residents think that the S@S plastics are not meant for reclaimers, therefore, we need to put pamphlets in these plastics and educate residents on how reclaimers contribute to recycling and they should allow reclaimers to take these plastics. Jafta had to go to a meeting, he left me with Njabulo and we continued to talk about the problems that reclaimers have with Pikitup. "Pikitup is a huge problem for reclaimers and the contracts they are hiring are taking away our jobs", he explained. He continued to sort his material and after he is done, he mentioned that he will take his recyclables to Remade, which is a buy back centre in Newtown. We exchanged contacts and both agreed that my next field observation will be with him.

After many attempts of trying to get hold of Njabulo, we finally agreed on a date to do my second field observation and this took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 2017. Going to Bekezela at 3 in the morning was much better this time because I was familiar with the surroundings. I found Njabulo and other reclaimers preparing their trolleys. He introduced me to Nkosinathi, one of the reclaimers he walks with. I asked Nkosinathi if he remembers me from the meeting but he could not recall. I told him that I approached him and explained my research, however, he was not interested. This is the reclaimer I spoke about earlier on during the mass meeting, the one who

caught my attention when he started to speak about the weapons he carries to the streets. When I mentioned this to him, he laughed and showed me his pocket knife and something that looks like a saw, I did not really know what it was but one thing I knew is that if it lands on someone's head or any other part of the body – that person will die!

At 03:40 am we headed to the streets. There were 5 reclaimers that were walking to Houghton, however, 3 of them started to increase their speed and walked faster. Njabulo, Nkosinathi and I walked from behind and it still felt like we were walking fast as well. I have never walked so fast and covered a long distance in a short amount time. By 04:46 am we were approaching Houghton and this means it took us an hour and six minutes to walk to an area that is 8,4 kilometres away from Newtown! Walking with young and energetic reclaimers made me realise how groups of reclaimers are formed according to age. The reclaimers that work with Jafta and that were working at Auckland Park, on the day of my field observation, were old and less energetic. Whereas, Njabulo's group is more fast, energetic and they all have streets that they own. Everyone was working in their 'territories' and some would jokingly invade other reclaimer's streets and try to take recyclables there. When I asked Njabulo about how he established a street he told me that he had to fight with other reclaimers, he carried a knife every morning and he used it to intimidate other reclaimers of the streets. There were also reclaimers from Alexander and they did not have any disputes with reclaimers from Bekezela. Some of the reclaimers mentioned that they know they should not mess with Nkosinathi because he is very aggressive. Reclaimers also demonstrated a sense of unity and I saw this when Nkosinathi allowed some reclaimers from Alex to take material from the bins in his street. Most reclaimers worked very hard on that day and by 06:00 am, most people had full piles of material in their trolleys (see figure 5 below).



*Figure 5 Reclaimer pushing a trolley in Houghton (Photo taken by author, 15 August 2017)*

Some of the reclaimers that had full piles, including Nkosinathi and Njabulo, took breaks on the street corners and waited for other residents to take their bins out. At around 07:30 am, Pikitup workers started to take plastics from the bins. Some residents only took their bins out when they heard the truck. When the truck approached one of Nkosinathi's street, a young lady took out two plastic bags. One of them was a S@S plastic and as Nkosinathi tried to reach for that plastic, a Pikitup worker stopped him and told him it is not for him to take. The two got involved into an argument and Njabulo came with others to try and stop the argument. Things got heated when other Pikitup workers started to call reclaimers with ugly names. Nkosinathi went inside the truck and took the driver's keys and yelled "this rubbish is not going anywhere". Witnessing this from a distance, I was praying and hoping that Nkosinathi will not use his weapons and fortunately, he did not. After a long-heated argument, while some workers and reclaimers tried calm the situation down and others continued to shout and yell at each other, the Pikitup workers decided to leave the S@S plastics and proceeded to other bins. Nkosinathi gave the keys back to the driver and the truck drove away swiftly.

This made me realise how S@S is a huge concern to street reclaimers and on our way back to Bekezela, some of the reclaimers mentioned that residents think that we are stealing from Pikitup and that is not the case. Njabulo added by mentioning how they work under difficult conditions,

they do not have umbrellas, there is no regulated space where they work and they need to be registered as working citizens for the government to recognise them. When we arrived to Bekezela, reclaimers dispersed to their sorting areas and I remained with Njabulo. He sorted his materials and we had a conversation about he got introduced to WIEGO. He mentioned that he found out about the organisation through the internet and a reclaimer who used to stay in Bekezela brought one of the representatives one day and after meeting the representative, he started to get involved in meetings, workshops and Pikitup meetings.

He also mentioned that the idea of being exposed to organisations such as WIEGO and workshops that are conducted by my supervisor, has helped people and the government realise that waste pickers are human beings and they contribute to society. Having this conversation with Njabulo made me realise that reclaimers are trying very hard to change people's perceptions. They are a community that contributes to the country's economy. Some of the reclaimers have jobs as construction workers and they only do reclaiming as something to fall back on, in case their contracts end. Njabulo also mentioned that he has a daughter to feed, therefore it is important for him to make money and to get involved in organising ways of making reclaiming a formal recycling system.

When they were done sorting their materials, the boys gathered under a tree that is next to Njabulo's room and played a game of cards. As I was sitting outside the room, with my fieldwork diary, I noted down the views and perceptions that I had before I started my field observations. When I saw a reclaimer pushing a trolley on the streets, I only thought of *nyaope* and alcohol! I expected to find people high and dirty when I first came to Bekezela, however, I was surprised to find families and citizens that have actual jobs, that know the meaning of recycling and that engage in meetings/workshops in order to change their lives. Doing these field observations and interacting with reclaimers has been an eye-opening journey and I have learnt a lot from the reclaimers. As you continue to read the findings of this study, I hope you will be able to see and learn how reclaimers are not in the streets to steal, harass or get money in order to buy alcohol. They are normal citizens who are trying to sustain their livelihood and alleviate poverty.

## 4.2. Description of Interview Process and Participants

The process of doing was split into three phases. The first phase of interviews consisted of three security guards that I was introduced to by a reclaimer from Bekezela that I worked with. These interviews took place in Auckland Park and Melville, which are the areas where I did my first day of field observations. The interviews took place on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June in the following locations:

- Security guard #1 – Street security in Melville, 7<sup>th</sup> street.
- Security guard #2 – Street security guard in Auckland Park, Kingston Avenue
- Security guard #3- Security guard at SABC, Radio Park, Auckland Park.

The second phase of interviews was with street reclaimers who reside in Bekezela. I did not have a specific number of reclaimers I wanted to interview. I planned to interview reclaimers who were comfortable with my answering my questions and contributing to my research. I ended up interviewing seven street reclaimers. The interviews were conducted in four vernacular languages (Setswana, Sesotho, IsiZulu and IsiXhosa) and they took place on the following days:

- Three reclaimers – 08 August 2017
- Three reclaimers – 22 August 2017
- One reclaimer – 12 September 2017

The last phase of interviews took place on the 12 of September and this was interviews of residents. It was difficult to find residents that were willing to participate, therefore I targeted communes around Auckland Park and Melville and some residential houses that a street reclaimer was familiar with. I interviewed three participants from Auckland Park and two participants from Melville.

For the next chapter, I did not include all my themes as I was not sure if I was integrating them correctly with my data.

### 4.3. Discussion of findings

#### *SOCIAL RELATIONS*

##### *Familiarity and Association*

A range of academic literature views waste picking activities as key roles of harvesting waste as a source of livelihood and rendering public services and this could propose a model for waste pickers to be integrated and included solid waste management systems (Dias, 2016; Whitson, 2007; Whitson, 2010). Waste pickers are also recognised globally and Dias (2016) demonstrates how cities in countries such as Brazil, Colombia and India, recognize waste picker's efforts and they reflect well on municipalities. To unpack more from this, I argue that street reclaimers attach their meaning of work to recognition and association and as a result, they want to be formally recognized as people who contribute to waste management systems. In a reclaimer general meeting that was organized by WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing) that took place on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2017 in Johannesburg, reclaimers from different areas highlighted their issues, difficulties and concerns of their working conditions and their work not being recognized by companies such as Pikitup.

“We need to be clear on what we want as reclaimers. Our main issue is integration and us being registered formally. The municipality is aware of our issues but they are playing duck and dive with us. Let us be clear on what we want and we should not look down on each other. Let us remain strong”!

- (Informal Reclaimer #8, 11 June 2017).

The above quote from the informal recycler, demonstrates how reclaimers are all fighting for one goal and this also enables them to become familiar with each other and bring a sense of unity amongst them. In addition, one of the interviewees highlighted the following:

“I read a lot of books and newspapers to familiarise myself with what is happening around the world. I read about WIEGO in a newspaper article and I saw that there are other waste pickers, like me, who collect scrap materials overseas. That is when I realised that my job is important and I started to find out about the meetings and the people involved in this organisation”

- (Informal Reclaimer #3, 22 August 2017).

There is a sense of relation to street reclaiming. Besides reclaiming being a source of livelihood, it is attached to meaning and importance. Organisations such as WIEGO, that are recognised globally also help in enhancing familiarity amongst reclaimers and bringing them together by building a sense of unity in this undermined informal work that the society associates them with.

On my first day of field observation, I also noticed how reclaimers are open to engaging and assisting me with my research. Perhaps it was good idea to attend meetings and familiarise myself with them, nonetheless, this changed my way of thinking about reclaimers and as I walked with them through the city, I realised that I relate to them in many ways. Conversations were mostly about Pikitup integration, as this is a pertinent issue for waste pickers in Johannesburg, however, we also conversed about soapies, soccer, music and other ordinary things that people talk about. As Lefebvre (1991) the right to the city is earned by merely living in the city and everyday life is a central pivot to the city. This enabled me to understand that street reclaimers live and exist in the city, the city is their space that they can use for their daily routines and they are human beings who constitute elements of social life.

### *WASTE AS COMMODITY*

#### *Worth and Benefits*

The significance of waste in this research is important because it will help us to understand why waste is important to street reclaimers and how do they really benefit from it. People have different perceptions of waste, some see it as valuable in terms of something that could be useful for recycling and “green environment” purposes and some see it as filth that should be out of sight and both these views influence the way waste is viewed by different people in the society (Moore, 2012).

“I understand that waste is valuable to recyclers and people that work in waste management companies, but to me it is not valuable because I do not practice recycling as I do not have time and waste is filth”

- (Resident #4, 12 September 2017).

The question that I asked was do you see waste as something that could be valuable? The above quote is an answer from one of the residents I interviewed and in agreement, the security guard shared the same view and he said:

“Waste is filth. I would be lying if I told you that I see value in it”

- (Security guard #1, 27 June 2017).

These views demonstrate how different people have different opinions regarding waste being valuable and in this section however, I argue that street reclaimers see waste as something that is valuable and this contributes to the understanding of why they use speed to collect recyclables and show power by claiming their streets because they need to “protect” their valuables. In their case, waste is a commodity that has value, therefore, they would do anything to protect that commodity because it brings money for them and they also benefit from it. As one of the informal reclaimers said:

“Money is scarce! I must go out there and look for waste because waste will not come to me. Waste enables me to make money every day and it is the reason why I wake up every morning to go and fight with security guards and Pikitup workers. We also get valuables such as old clothes, cell phones and these are the things that we did not have exposure to when we grew up”

- (Informal reclaimer #6, 22 August 2017).

The interesting point in what the respondent said is that he fights for something that people throws away and to him, it is valuable that he did not have previously. The sentence highlights how historical contexts of upbringings or surroundings, play a role in shaping the behaviours and practices of people in the present moment. It also brings how as a marginalised individual he is driven by waste, associated with filth and pollution and it is a pertinent issue in informal areas. This highlights how his position in society is in a place where there is inferiority. This is how the individual views value in waste and this value motivates him to wake up every morning and face the hardships of being a reclaimer.

## *CONFLICT*

### *Daily practice of showing control*

Furthermore, in this section I highlight how conflict is used a measure to control spaces by establishing territories, fighting and showing fearlessness. Sibley (1988) argues that societies produce boundaries as forms of social organisations and boundaries define the processes of inclusion and exclusion and they are subject to contestation and subversion because of rising politics and conflicts. In this study, the process of boundary making stems from owning streets and making them your territories. If someone encroaches on your terrain, it will either result to an argument or dangerous violence.

In my ethnographic study I introduced the aggressive Nkosinathi who went to a Pikitup truck driver's seat and took out the keys of the truck because Pikitup workers were collecting S@S plastics that the reclaimer usually collects and this was happening in his street. The aggression and forceful behaviour from reclaimers highlights how they are willing to take extreme measures to fight for materials, however, it also amidst the fighting and disputes, reclaimers who were working in other streets and who are not from Bekezela, came to defend Nkosinathi who was involved in the fight and this illustrated to me, a sense of unity and bond between reclaimers.

“With owning territories, you have to fight! I had to fight with other reclaimers and Pikitup workers to claim streets and people know not to work in my streets because I will rough you up”

- (Informal reclaimer #6, 22 August 2017)

From Nkosinathi's quote, I took away two things; power and ownership. As Foucault (1998) argues, power is neither an agency nor a structure, it is embodied from knowledge and regimes. In other words, we can find power anywhere. It does not have to be through surveillance from the government only, it can also be demonstrated among a marginalized group or a homogenous group.

One of the assumptions I had before I conducted my interviews was thinking that you need a certain reputation or street credibility to own a street. I asked some of the reclaimers, how do they really establish a street and mark it as their ow territory?

“I started reclaiming material in the South, in areas such as Omonde and South-gate. It was tough! I used to witness reclaimers fighting over recyclables every day. Some were using drugs, so they were always high and I had to leave those areas because it was too much. When I came to the North, it was very relaxed. Therefore, I took advantage and started to carry my hammer in my trolley and threatened to kill people. I had to toughen up because this job is very difficult”

- (Informal reclaimer #5, 22 August 2017)

“I did not have a street when I started reclaiming, however, we were constantly fighting for materials and stealing from each other, so my friends and I decided to create our own territories and we started to take own streets in Norwood, then we moved to Randburg and Rosebank as well. Everyone knew that they should not mess with the boys from Lesotho”

- (Informal reclaimer #2, 12 September 2017)

The views from both reclaimers demonstrate that there are different ways of establishing a territory. Reclaimers use any tactic or strategy they can think of to find a way of establishing power and control. De Certeau (1998) introduced the difference between spatial tactics and strategies. A strategy is something that controls an area and it may be physical or conceptual (De Certeau 1998). In the context of street reclaimers, they use weapons or any other method of fighting physically to show their territories and other reclaimers know that they should not cross boundaries. In addition, a tactic is established on a borrowed space and it is made up of everyday practices (De Certeau, 1998). A tactic also involves an action or strategy that is carefully planned and looking at the example from informal reclaimer #2, they mobilised as a group to take over spaces that they were not familiar with before and they claimed territories.

#### Use of speed

Speed is very important in reclaiming. In the ethnographic study, I mentioned that Jafta and I came back with a few recyclables because we were working at a very slow pace. When we arrived at Auckland Park, the streets were already occupied and most trolleys were almost full. In the interviews reclaimers mentioned that the ‘first come, first served’ rule applies when they are working.

“We need to collect as many recyclables as we can so that we can get more money. Therefore, I do not allow that rule on my streets unless I see someone coming with an empty trolley, I let him collect material in my street. However, it gets tricky when you allow people to work in your street. I allowed someone to work in my street because he came late and I felt sorry for him. One of the residents in my street gave a washing machine away and the guy who was working in my street took it. I was so angry at myself for letting him work there. I fought with him and I knew I was being unreasonable but that is my territory he can’t take my valuables”

- (Informal reclaimer #6, 22 August 2017)

Lefebvre argues that the use of social space also demonstrates “the way in which bodies interact with material in spaces” (Van Ingen, 2003, p. 203). The quote from informal reclaimer #6 shows how the materials are important to them and they are willing to take any measures to sustain their livelihoods.

Residents that were interviewed mentioned that they have never witnessed conflict amongst reclaimers or the fact that they have streets that they own.

“I have never seen or heard reclaimers fighting. The only time I see them is when I go to work in the morning and I didn’t know that they own streets. That is very interesting.

- (Resident #3, 12 September 2017)

“Interesting” was a very popular word amongst the residents I interviewed. It appeared like they found some of the revelations about street reclaimers “interesting”, like the fact that they own streets, they have families or they get involved in meetings with Pikitup. Security guards on the other hand, are aware about some of the issues and practices that reclaimers are involved with.

“I have known Jafta for many years and he is a nice person. We have small chats sometimes when he is taking a break and we talk about the reclaimers owning streets and the conflicts. I have personally never been involved in a conflict with a street reclaimer but I do let reclaimers know that my bosses do not allow them inside to take the materials they need. I speak to them in a polite way because they are human beings as well”.

- (Security guard #1, 27 June 2017).

However, there are reclaimers that have stressed ill treatment from security guards, which resulted to conflict. Most reclaimers from Njabulo's group have had bad encounters with street reclaimers due because security guards do not allow them inside the premises. In the next section, I employ a Foucauldian approach to reclaimers being treated as subjects who are under surveillance.

## *POWER*

### *Foucauldian approach*

The literature on Foucault has looked at various ways of understanding power. I described the notion of governmentality according to Foucault (1991) as the modern way of governance that is done through ruling, surveillance and discipline. Placing street reclaimers in the context of South African governance, I highlighted debates from Samson (2010) and Dlamini and Simatele (2016) to explain that reclaimers are not recognized by any South African legislation and there are means to integrate them into formal waste management systems, however, the government and municipalities are not showing interest or taking action in ensuring that the needs and demands of reclaimers are met.

Most reclaimers do feel neglected by the government. They stress their concerns at the general meetings and being registered workers is a pertinent issue that arises in the conversations they have.

“We want recognition for our work, we need proper resources like having umbrellas, mobile toilets and protective gear for those who work at dump sites. We work under difficult conditions and companies like Pikitup that claim to be on our side, are making decisions without us. “Nothing for us, without us!”

- (Informal reclaimer, 11 June 2017)

The quote mentioned above is by a reclaimer who voiced out some of the concerns that reclaimers have. What I found fascinating about attending these meetings is that reclaimers have a space where they can share their difficulties and a space where they can get hope. They are marginalized citizens who know the extreme poverty and go through hardships on a daily basis, therefore, a space like this is important because it restores their dignity.

The state continues to exercise its power by further marginalizing poor communities and Samson (2009; 2017) has mentioned many attempts by Pikitup to try and remove reclaimers out of dump sites. Pikitup has also introduced a S@S program that aims to take recycling practices to households and reduce the amount of waste that goes to landfills. However, as I highlighted in the previous sections, the program causes conflicts between reclaimers, residents and Pikitup workers. Security guards also encroach on reclaimer's terrain and some reclaimers have mentioned that their white bosses are the problem.

“Security guards don't like us! However, I do not blame them because they take orders from their authorities. I do not fight with them. Why would I try to fight with another black man or why would he try to fight with me? What will he gain by taking my bread away from me”

- (Informal reclaimer #6, 22 August 2017)

The reclaimer draws attention on race as a construct of oppression and this goes back to Munoz (2012) and her argument on informal work that is not recognized by the government. Power can be used as a tool of oppression in different ways. The previous section looked at power through conflict and violence and it was practiced in a homogenous community, whereas, this section considered power through a lens of governance, whereby the same homogenous community experiences oppression from higher authority and this marginalizes the position of street reclaimers in the social sphere.

### Creating alliances

In this section I highlight how owning a street is exercising power and having relationships with reclaimers, residents or security guards. As I have mentioned in my ethnographic study, Jafta has never encountered any conflict because he believes that creating relationships with the people you work with will make reclaiming easier.

I have never been kicked off streets. I worked on being friendly with street reclaimers to form alliances with street reclaimers, residents and security guards, in order for them to be familiar with my face and think about me when they take out their bins.

- (Informal Recycler #1, 08 August 2017).

The method of exercising power also stems from instilling fear and showing aggressiveness. Some of the reclaimers I interviewed said that they stay away from areas that have aggressive reclaimers because they do not want to get involved in fights. This shows how power causes exclusion of people from certain spaces. Moreover, power is also exercised through forging alliances with security guards or residents. The relationship that a reclaimer has with a security guard can create benefits in a sense of more materials being collected and we see this from a respondent:

“I have places in Houghton, where I have friends who work as security guards and I have numbers of some of them. I have three bags that I take to them once a week. I collect them on weekends and I find them full. It’s a way of bypassing this separation at source that was introduced by Pikitup, so we do separation at source through them and they cooperate with me”

- (Informal Reclaimer #3, 22 August 2017).

This form of alliance shows power in the sense of being “known as the guy who benefits” from having close relationships with security guards and also having the most collected recyclables. It is power that manifests in social relations as well, it comes with being friendly and always showing respect to security guards and residents and in turn, you benefit to getting more recyclables or even materials such as cell phones or clothes.

### *RACISM AND RACIAL EXCLUSION*

Social construction theories have played a role in determining racialized ways of thinking and shaping practices of racism as a significant construction to think about (Jackson, 1998). In this section examine ways in which reclaimers experience forms of racism and how this has an impact their working conditions.

The Group Area Act of 1950 has shaped the way areas are distributed and racially segregated. Segregation has pushed black people out of the city and placed them in townships, informal settlements and rural areas (Yeoh, 2001). Black communities experience spatial inequality, in terms of travelling long distances to get to work. Street reclaimers live in the city; however, they still travel long distances to look for materials. Their home which is situated in the inner city of

Johannesburg, is still characterised by informality, as they do not have access to electricity, they only have a few taps for water and they are constantly harassed by PRASA because they do not have a formal permission to live there. These concerns highlight the notion of Fanon and the city as a spatial oppression.

In the context of street reclaimers, I argue that their bodies are racialised because of their identity being rooted in waste. When we see street reclaimers, we see an embodiment of waste and the city pushes them off to the periphery. Many reclaimers have mentioned incidents whereby they have experienced different forms of racism. Jafta made the following comment about a situation that occurred in Westcliff:

“In 2009, white people from Westcliff did not want us! After S@S was introduced, they hired security guards to chase us away. Other places that we lost completely because they became gated communities are Forest Town and Lynden and we got expensive material from these places.

I asked Njabulo about his relationship with white residents and he made the following comment:

“Racism is still alive! A guy that lives next door was bitten by a dog and fortunately the owner of the dog is arrested as we speak. He opened his gate and sent his dog to bite the reclaimer that lives next door!

Lastly, Nkosinathi made the following comment about his relationship with white residents:

An old white lady gave me expired food. This is someone who has known me for a long time, she has seen me go through her bin several times. She mentioned that the food is still fresh but I could smell that it is not and I saw the date as well. She probably thought I was illiterate or I eat the rubbish that I take from her bin”

From these testimonies, it is very clear that racism is alive indeed! As Sivanandan argues “most forms of racism, unlike racialism or ‘race prejudice’, are structured (in the sense that they occur

in the context of deeply entrenched, asymmetrical power relations)” (Sivanandan cited in Jackson, 1998, p. 8).

Lefebvre (1991) has also stated that lived spaces are not concrete. They encompass social constructs of lived realities, socio-economic inequalities, racism, diversity and so on. These are spaces where we become human and anything can happen. A street reclaimer’s lived reality is pushing a trolley and collecting his or her recyclables. They have to deal with any encounter they face, it is part of their reality. The streets are where they can be themselves, where they fight for bread and where they see a bit of hope, because they are not alone, they have a space where they can come together and find means of alleviating poverty! All these social constructs shape where the shape and produce the spaces they work in.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

Street reclaimers are self-employed agents that look for recyclables that they can sell for profit. Their access to waste comes with difficulties they have to face on a daily basis such as harassment from authorities, competition for collecting recyclables working under harsh conditions, such as walking long distances. This study has used an ethnographic qualitative method of studying reclaimers based in Bekezela. The study has highlighted that practices and relationships between reclaimers emerge from the social relations they have with each other and the broader society. The study has engaged with literature debates on waste as a commodity, social relations of waste, power, conflict and racism & racial exclusion. The debates bring an insight to socio-political struggles that reclaimers face such as racism, unrecognition from the state, stigmatization, notions of boundary making and exclusion.

The findings of the study follow the story of reclaimers as they navigate through the surrounding suburbs and their social behaviour shape the spaces they work in. The ethnographic study gives an analysis of three reclaimers that have contributed to the study by sharing their experiences and opinions on how they use and control space. In the study, the author argues that reclaimers employ different methods of controlling their environment by dealing with conflict, creating alliances and using speed to demonstrate hard work and understanding. The study has also considered Lefebvre's theory of production of space as a fundamental tool to understanding how street reclaimer's practices create the social space they inhabit and what are the meanings of those practices.

This study has also focused on powerful views that highlight racism and social inequality that is experienced by street reclaimers. The debates on race in geography have contributed to the different understandings of how racism can inform space and what does it mean for the people that live in that space. Considering reclaiming and how it further entrenches the notion of spatial racism could be a possible future research topic that one can look at.

## REFERENCES

- Anderson, K., Domosh, M., Pile, S. and Thrift, N. eds., 2002. *Handbook of cultural geography*. Sage.
- Barnett, C., 2001. Culture, geography, and the arts of government. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 19(1), pp.7-24.
- Benson, K. and Vanqa-Mgijima, N., 2010. Organizing on the streets: A study of reclaimers in the streets of Cape Town. *International Labour Research and Information Group (ILRIG), WIEGO Organizing Series*. Available at: [http://www.inclusivecities.org/toolbox/Organizing\\_on\\_the\\_Streets\\_web.pdf](http://www.inclusivecities.org/toolbox/Organizing_on_the_Streets_web.pdf). [ 15 May 2017]
- Brodie, N. (2008). *The Joburg book: A guide to the city's history, people & places*. Johannesburg: Pan Macmillan.
- Burns, N and Groves, S.K. 2005. *The Practice of Nursing Research Conduct, Critique, and Utilization* (5th edition). Elsevier-Saunders, Texas
- Chari, S., 2005, 'Political Work: the Holy Spirit and the Labours of Activism in the Shadow of Durban's Refineries', in *From Local Processes to Global Forces*. Centre for Civil Society Research Reports, Volume 1, Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal ([www.ukzn.ac.za/ccs/files/RReport\\_30.pdf](http://www.ukzn.ac.za/ccs/files/RReport_30.pdf) , accessed 28 October, 2017).
- Charlton, S., 2014. Learning from the Field: Informal Recyclers and Low-income Housing in Johannesburg, South Africa. In *Planning and the Case Study Method in Africa* (pp. 202-223). Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Chung, S. and Lo, C, W. 2004. Waste management in Guangdong cities: The waste management literacy and waste reduction preferences of domestic waste generators. *Environmental Management*, 33(5), 692-711.
- Cock, J. 2015. "Environmental justice - how South Africans are rising to fight for our world." Times Live, 02 November, 2015.
- De Certeau, M., 1998: *The Practice of Everyday Life: Living and cooking*, University of Minnesota Press, Vol 2.
- Dellinger, A.B., 2005. Validity and the review of literature. *Research in the Schools*, 12(2), pp.41-54.
- Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S., 1994. *Handbook of qualitative research*. Sage publications, inc.

- Dlamini, S.Q. and Simatele, D., 2016. Unrecognised informal solid waste recycling in an emerging African megacity: a study of Johannesburg, South Africa. *WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment*, 202, pp.13-25.
- Domosh, M., 1998. Geography and gender: home, again?. *Progress in human geography*, 22(2), pp.276-282.
- Foucault, M. (1982) The subject and power, in: H. L. Dreyfus & P. Rabinow (Eds) *Michel Foucault – Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, pp. 208–226 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Foucault, M. (1991) Questions of method, in: G. Burchell, C. Gordon & P. Miller (Eds) *The Foucault Effect. Studies in Governmentality*, pp. 73–86 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Gaule, S. (2005). Alternating Currents of Power: From Colonial to Post-apartheid Spatial Patterns in Newtown, Johannesburg, *Urban Studies*, 42 (3), 2335-2361.
- Gutberlet, J., 2012. *Recovering resources-recycling citizenship: Urban poverty reduction in Latin America*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.
- Hancock, B., Ockleford, E. and Windridge, K. 2009. An Introduction to Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Research*, 1, 6-35.
- Harvey, D., 1990. Between space and time: reflections on the geographical imagination1. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 80(3), pp.418-434.
- Jabri, V., 2007. Michel Foucault's analytics of war: The social, the international, and the racial. *International Political Sociology*, 1(1), pp.67-81.
- Jackson, P., 1987. The idea of race and the geography of racism. *Race and racism: Essays in social geography*, pp.3-21.
- Jackson, P., 1998. Constructions of 'whiteness' in the geographical imagination. *Area*, 30(2), pp.99-106.
- Jensen, A., 2011. Mobility, space and power: On the multiplicities of seeing mobility. *Mobilities*, 6(2), pp.255-271.
- Kipfer, S. 2007. "Fanon and Space: Colonization, Urbanization, and Liberation from the Colonial to the Global City." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25 (4): 701–26.
- Kudva, N., 2009. The everyday and the episodic: the spatial and political impacts of urban informality. *Environment and Planning A*, 41(7), pp.1614-1628.
- Lefebvre, H. (1991) *The production of space*. Blackwell, Oxford.

- Marshall, M.N. 1996. Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice*, 13, 522- 552.
- McLean, M., 2000. Informal collection: a matter of survival amongst the urban vulnerable. *Africanus*, 30(2), pp.8-26.
- Medina, M., 2007. Waste picker cooperatives in developing countries. *Membership-Based Organizations of the Poor*, 105, p.21.
- Megoran, N., 2006. For ethnography in political geography: Experiencing and re-imagining Ferghana Valley boundary closures. *Political Geography*, 25(6), pp.622-640.
- Merrifield, A., 2006. *Henri Lefebvre: A critical introduction*. Taylor & Francis.
- Mkhize, S., Godwin, D. and Tasmi, Q., 2015. Informal Economy Monitoring Study: Waste Pickers in Durban, South Africa. Manchester, UK: WIEGO.
- Moore, S.A. 2012. Garbage matters: Concepts in new geographies of waste. *Progress in Human Geography*, 36, 780-799.
- Mouton, J. 1996. Understanding social research. Van Schaik Publishers, Pretoria: South Africa.
- Muhammad, M.N. and Manu, H.I., 2013. Gender roles in informal solid waste management in cities of Northern Nigeria: A case study of Kaduna Metropolis. *Academic Research International*, 4(5), p.142.
- Muñoz, L., 2012. Latino/a Immigrant Street Vendors in Los Angeles: Photo-Documenting Sidewalks from 'Back-Home'. *Sociological Research Online*, 17(2), p.21.
- Panchia, Y. and Bega M 2017, *Photo and video feature: Bekezela, the Newtown community defying the Red Ants*, The Citizen, viewed 29 October 2017, <https://citizen.co.za/news/features-news/1545233/photo-feature-bekezela-the-newtown-community-defying-the-red-ants/> .
- Pikitup. 2014. Pikitup Separation at Source. Available from [http://www.joburg.org.za/index.php?option=com\\_content&id=8279:26-september-2012-pikitupseparation-at-source&Itemid=114](http://www.joburg.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&id=8279:26-september-2012-pikitupseparation-at-source&Itemid=114), accessed 28 October 2017
- Pikitup. 2015. 2015-2016 Integrated annual report. Available from [www.joburg.org.za/.../PIKITUP/pikitup%20integrated%20annual%20report%2020132](http://www.joburg.org.za/.../PIKITUP/pikitup%20integrated%20annual%20report%2020132), accessed 30 October 2017.
- Pulido, L., 2000. Rethinking environmental racism: White privilege and urban development in southern California. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 90(1): 12-40.
- Purcell, M., 2003. Citizenship and the right to the global city: reimagining the capitalist world order. *International journal of urban and regional research*, 27(3), pp.564-590.

- Samson, M., 2008, Reclaiming Livelihoods: The Role of Reclaimers in Municipal Waste Management Systems, Pietermaritzburg: Groundwork.
- \_\_\_\_\_, M., 2009. Wasted citizenship? Reclaimers and the privatised expansion of the public sphere. *Africa Development*, 34(3-4).
- \_\_\_\_\_, M., 2010. Reclaiming reusable and recyclable materials in Africa. *A Critical Review of English Language Literature*.
- \_\_\_\_\_, M., 2017. Not Just Recycling the Crisis. *Historical Materialism*, 25(1), pp.36-62.
- Schenck, R. and Blaauw, P.F., 2011, December. The work and lives of street waste pickers in Pretoria—a case study of recycling in South Africa’s urban informal economy. In *Urban Forum* (Vol. 22, No. 4, p. 411). Springer Netherlands.
- Sejake, M 2017, *BEKEZELA: THE INNER CITY INFORMAL SETTLEMENT PT. 1*, JHB LIVE, viewed 29 October 2017, <http://www.jhblive.com/Stories-in-Johannesburg/article/bekezela-the-inner-city-informal-settlement-pt-1/61914> .
- Sentime, K., 2011. Profiling solid waste pickers: a case study of Braamfontein-Greater Johannesburg. *Africanus*, 41(2), pp.96-111.
- Shaw, I., 2008. Ethics and the practice of qualitative research. *Qualitative Social Work*, 7(4), pp.400-414.
- Sibley, D., 1988. Survey 13: Purification of space. *Environment and Planning D: Society and space*, 6(4), pp.409-421.
- Silvey, R., 2004. Power, difference and mobility: feminist advances in migration studies. *Progress in human geography*, 28(4), pp.490-506.
- Solomons, J., 2014. Stuart Hall: articulations of race, class and identity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37(10), pp.1667-1675.
- Van Ingen, C., 2003. Geographies of gender, sexuality and race: Reframing the focus on space in sport sociology. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 38(2), pp.201-216.
- Viljoen, J.M.M., Blaauw, P.F. and Schenck, C.J., 2016. “Sometimes you don’t make enough to buy food”-An Analysis of South African street waste pickers’ income (No. 603).
- Watkins, C., 2005. Representations of space, spatial practices and spaces of representation: An application of Lefebvre’s spatial triad. *Culture and Organization*, 11(3), pp.209-220.
- Whitson, R., 2007. Hidden struggles: spaces of power and resistance in informal work in urban Argentina. *Environment and Planning A*, 39(12), pp.2916-2934.

Whitson, R., 2011. Negotiating place and value: geographies of waste and scavenging in Buenos Aires. *Antipode*, 43(4), pp.1404-1433.

Yeoh, B.S.A. 2001. "Postcolonial Cities." *Progress in Human Geography* 25 (3): 456–68.

