Living with diversity in Jane-Finch

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Foreword

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Contents

List of Abbreviations

CDA	CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
CMA	Census Metropolitan Area
GTA	Greater Toronto Area
IRPA	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
JFAAP	Jane-Finch Action against Poverty
LEF	The Learning Enrichment Foundation
LGBTQA	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Asexual
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NHS	National Household Survey
TFWP	Temporary Foreign Workers Program
TTC	Toronto Transit Commission
WMF	Women Moving Forward
YEN	Youth Enterprise Network

Summary

1   Introduction

In the past decades, diversity has become a popular catchphrase in theoretical, policy and public discourses in Canadian cities. Toronto is Canada's most diverse city, wherein a long-standing immigration history coupled by the introduction of the Canadian Multiculturalism policy in the 1970s have rendered diversity a prominent value for the city's inhabitants (Ahmadi and Tasan-Kok, 2014). Celebration of diversity has become a popular theme in Toronto's policy and image making, such that many policy documents have proclaimed diversity as the city's biggest strength. However, while the celebration of diversity has attracted funds and services to inner city Toronto, stereotyping based on different categories of diversity (particularly ethnicity and class) has resulted in the stigmatization and criminalization of poor racialised neighbourhoods located at the edges of the city.

Diversity in urban areas may derive from multiple factors such as behaviour, lifestyles, activities, ethnicity, age, gender and sexuality profiles, entitlements and restrictions of rights, labour market experiences, and patterns of spatial distribution. Research on diversity in the past decades has resulted in the creation of an extensive body of work on the notion. However, there are a few gaps in theory which the present study seeks to address, namely: (a) Research on diversity often overlooks the complexity and dynamic nature of diversity and maintains an overemphasis on ethnicity. (b) Despite plentiful evidence for the diversification of peripheral neighbourhoods, the available body of research focuses primarily on inner-city areas, leaving out the more remote rural and suburban areas (Humphris, 2014). (c) There is a tendency to present a 'flat' or 'horizontal' type of differentiation of diversity, which does not account for the various positions and hierarchies within and between different categories of difference.

In light of these gaps, this study seeks to add to our understanding of urban diversity, as perceived and experienced by those who inhabit, frequent and govern urban areas. It answers the following primary research question: *How is diversity experienced at the neighbourhood level, as (a) discourse, (b) social reality, and (c) practice?* Diversity as discourse refers to the public narratives around diversity, while diversity as social reality concerns the descriptive characteristics that render an area diverse. Diversity as practice refers to policies, programs and local practices that aim towards managing diversity (see also Berg and Sigona, 2013). The research question is investigated in four interconnected chapters, which engage with the three formerly mentioned

dimensions to various degrees. The study further makes use of a variety of qualitative and participatory techniques (i.e. qualitative interviews, roundtable talks, participant observations, and focus groups) to gather rigorous empirical data on living with and managing diversity in an inner-suburban neighbourhood of Toronto, namely Jane-Finch.

2 The Study Area

The research was conducted in the city of Toronto, Canada, which boasts a current population of 2.79 million (Bourne, Hutton, Shearmur & Simmons, 2011). Toronto is considered to be one of the most diverse cities in the world based on its population statistics. According to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), Toronto's metropolitan area population comprises 46.0% foreign-born and 52.4% Canadian-born (non-immigrant) citizens. Of the Canadian-born nationals, 0.7% are Aboriginal (Statistics-Canada, 2011). While factors of globalisation, population flow, and increased migration have led to greater diversity within the city, many newcomers face discrimination in the labour market, they have limited access to resources (in particular, affordable housing), and are subject to poor quality of life. In reality, Toronto is a polarised city wherein spatial and socio-economic inequality among residents is steadily increasing (Joy & Vogel, 2015). As a result, many immigrants have settled in areas of concentrated poverty, including two of Toronto's inner-suburbs, Scarborough and North York.

In Toronto, the study focused on Jane-Finch, a neighbourhood located in the inner-suburb of North York in the northwest end of Toronto. The neighbourhood is currently home to approximately 80,000 residents. Jane-Finch was originally developed as a model suburb in the 1960s with adequate public housing, and was intended to be host to a socially diverse population. Initially it included a large stock of public housing and experienced a considerable wave of immigration from the Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia, Africa, and South America. Today, the neighbourhood has one of the highest proportions of youth, sole-supported families, refugees and immigrants, people without a high-school diploma, low-income earners, and public housing tenants of any community in Toronto. Jane-Finch provides an excellent case study for understanding the complexity of diversity as well as the potentials and pitfalls of its political deployment given its demographic characteristics (showcasing high levels of both diversity and poverty), as well as its positioning within the current context diversity celebration on the one hand, and segregation along racial and income lines on the other.

3 Is diversity our strength?

Chapter 3 explores the relationship between the discourses of diversity in Toronto policy and those reproduced and perpetuated by Jane-Finch inhabitants who experience diversity on a daily basis. It does so through the juxtaposition of the primary policy discourses (derived from interviews with policy actors and by analysing policy documents) with inhabitants' everyday experiences of diversity. The analysis reveals a mismatch between policy rhetoric on diversity and its materialisation in the daily lives of the inhabitants of Jane-Finch. It brings to light how civility towards diversity in Toronto policy and public discourse appears to go hand in hand with essentialisations and categorisations on the basis of different identity markers, as well as negative stereotyping of what is not considered to be acceptable or desirable diversity. Ultimately, it argues that the concept of diversity can be deployed politically to euphemise systemic discrimination and inequality based on race, class and gender.

4 Diversity and social cohesion

Chapter 4 focuses on the inter-relation between the two concepts of 'diversity' and 'social cohesion'. Specifically, it analyses the perceptions of the residents of Jane-Finch regarding multiple aspects of social cohesion, namely common values, formal and informal interactions and neighbourhood attachment. It further provides critical insights into socioeconomic and political structures underlying inhabitants' perceptions and interactions in Jane-Finch. The findings suggest that poverty, institutionalisation and the internalisation of gendered and class-based racism appeared to have played a much more significant role in shaping residents' perceptions and interactions than diversity. The analysis also shows that living with diversity can create opportunities for cultural exchange and increased recognition; however, existing hierarchies among cultures and income groups continue to play an important role in shaping perceptions and interactions. The article ultimately problematises the positioning of diversity at the centre of the social cohesion debate, arguing that diversity can function to divert attention away from systemic, structural and political issues such as poverty, inequality and racism.

5 Diversity, public space and places of encounter

Chapter 5 studies the influence of diversity on inhabitants' perceptions and use of public space. It interrogates the perceptions of and interactions in the public spaces of Jane-Finch and the extent to which public space plays a role in facilitating encounters between diverse groups and catering for diversity in the area. The analysis shows

that there is little evidence for encounters between diverse groups in public spaces, due to the lack of spatial infrastructure anticipated in the modernist design of the neighbourhood. Physical factors, such as the layout of the neighbourhood, public space design, location and accessibility, greatly influenced inhabitants' perceptions and use of public spaces in the neighbourhood. In addition, social factors such as surveillance and policing, poor maintenance, lack of appropriate symbols catering for different user groups, presence of gangs and violence, and loitering have resulted in residents' self-exclusion from public spaces and undermined their social encounters. The analysis further suggests that creating encounters in public spaces requires the adjusting and finetuning of these spaces to meet the needs and preferences of their diverse users. The paper concludes that facilitating social encounters in public space requires going above and beyond mere physical improvements to address wider structural inequalities in urban areas.

6   Serving diverse communities

Chapter 6 closely investigates a sample of 10 community initiatives in Jane-Finch to unravel whether they were successful in terms of achieving their goals and the factors which contributed to their effectiveness. It further discusses the relevance of the experience for other neighbourhood initiatives targeting diversity. The analysis reveals that services currently available in Jane-Finch are still insufficient in relation to the overall scale of need within the neighbourhood. The effectiveness of the available programs, as well as their potential for collaboration are further limited due to a number of existing barriers. The most pressing barriers facing initiatives concern funding, e.g. lack of long-term funding, lack of funding for staff and administration, budget cuts, lack of organisational support, compartmentalisation of funding, and an overall environment of competitiveness, precarity and insecurity. In addition, the complexity and multiplicity of problems faced by Jane-Finch inhabitants restrict their participation and civic engagement. The article further sheds light on the fact that initiatives often operate in the face of deep-rooted structural inequality which seriously undermines their efforts in line with improving the living conditions of inhabitants. It ultimately argues that systemic change is needed in order to bring about and sustain long-lasting outcomes.

7   Conclusions

Diversity as discourse

The interrogation of discourses and narratives surrounding diversity (chapters 3, 4, and 5, in particular) shows that diversity is most often celebrated at the level of rhetoric. At the city level, we are increasingly witnessing the articulation of diversity as an asset, whereby diversity is presented as a marketable commodity which helps the city attract funds and capital in the competitive market of global cities. Meanwhile, the findings show that implicit in this celebratory discourse is a clear-cut distinction between *desirable* and *undesirable* forms of diversity. However, even at the level of rhetoric, there are contradictions evident in the way the celebratory narrative is shaped and reproduced. The positive talk around diversity often does not go beyond lip-service to influence inhabitants' perceptions and daily interactions. Diversity as a narrative further presents society as a horizontal space of value-neutral and power-neutral plurality. Diversity does not address hierarchies and social relations of power and socio-economic disparities. Rather it can promote a superficial account of social reality which essentialises differences between cultural groups while leaving unattended the underlying power structures.

Diversity as social reality

The analysis shows that diversity is often utilised descriptively to refer to socio demographic characteristics of urban areas. Moreover, when the term diversity is evoked, focus remains by and large on ethnic and cultural difference. Diversity does not concern internal heterogeneity or hierarchies within and between categories. The empirical analysis suggests that diversity often does not transcend its descriptive function to address complexities, highlighting the analytical limitations of the concept. Taking into account these limitations, the concept of diversity can be approached as a demographic reality (as opposed to an analytical toolkit) which could, in turn, be analysed using the lens of 'intersectionality'.

Diversity as practice

The analysis of diversity practices shows that diversity is on the agenda of urban policy and community programs, in both implicit and explicit ways. Diversity remains a celebrated notion in city policy. However, this celebration has come without recognition of structures of power and inequality which fuel exclusion and segregation in the city. Underlying the management of diversity in Toronto, is further a philosophy fuelled by financial motives and competitive advantage. Furthermore, focus on diversity within policy has emerged in the context of a broader shift towards neoliberal politics and

austerity, whereby diversity is used to promote individualisation of policy and social issues since it focuses on the individual level at the expense of collective experiences. The focus is increasingly put upon what 'diverse individuals' can bring to the table, and diversity is commonly reduced to a consumable commodity.

Meanwhile, the four empirical chapters all shed light on the impact of the underlying structural inequalities present in Jane-Finch on the conditions and perceptions of its inhabitants. The analysis brings to light how diversity can have a concealing or depoliticising impact since it detracts attention from such systemic issues. Ultimately, the study argues that diversity does little to achieve meaningful transformation of the structures that produce inequalities within and between categories. It thereby urges diversity workers and theorists to go beyond recognition and representation, to address transformation through rigorous anti-racist and feminist critique, mobilisation and conscientisation.

8   Implications

In light of the research findings, a number of implications for future diversity research and practice can be outlined.

— From a research stand point, diversity is best approached as a more descriptive tool. Alternatively, intersectionality can provide a viable analytical framework for painting a more nuanced picture of social reality, since it goes beyond recognition of plurality to address axes of power, privilege, and oppression; and takes account of the historical struggles of marginalised groups. Intersectionality further allows for analysing the micro-dynamics of everyday experiences and interactions as well as local and trans-local forces, histories and patterns of belonging. Future research on diversity in urban areas can thus benefit significantly from fine-grained ethnographic analyses informed by an intersectional framework.

— Diversity cannot function as an alternative to classic systems of categorisation such as race, gender and class. Much of the appeal of the diversity narrative to corporations and neo-liberal governance regimes lies in the way the concept provides a euphemism for discourses which have historically been tied to struggles for freedom and radical change. Meanwhile, there is clear evidence for continued racial, class-based and gendered inequality in urban centres such as Toronto. This entails that these systems of categorisation remain essential for any scholarship addressing urban diversity or inequality.

— From a policy perspective, the imposition of a top-down diversity agenda is arguably ineffective as it leaves unchallenged hierarchies and prejudices that are deeply internalised by inhabitants. Diversity work thereby requires 'conscientisation', achieved through context sensitive bottom-up pedagogical interventions.

— Research on urban diversity is often pre-occupied with the 'other', and their inclusion, integration or assimilation into the mainstream. Future scholarship may bring to light the perceptions and experiences of the dominant group and how they contribute to the reproduction of material and discursive inequality structures.

— Critical research on urban diversity may further go one step beyond naming and examining structures of inequality to unravel new practices, interventions and forms of organising to tackle these structures.

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Samenvatting

1   Inleiding

In de afgelopen decennia is diversiteit van de bevolking een populair begrip geworden in het theoretische, beleidsmatige en openbare discours in Canadese steden. Toronto is de meest diverse stad van Canada. Deze stad heeft een lange geschiedenis van immigratie die er – in combinatie met het in de jaren zeventig van de twintigste eeuw geïntroduceerde Canadese multiculturalismebeleid – voor heeft gezorgd dat diversiteit een belangrijk thema is geworden ten behoeve van de inwoners van de stad (Ahmadi en Tasan-Kok, 2014). Diversiteit is een populair thema geworden in de beleids- en beeldvorming van Toronto; zodanig dat de overheid diversiteit de grootste kracht van de stad noemt. Maar hoewel het omarmen van diversiteit fondsen en diensten naar de binnenstad van Toronto heeft gebracht, heeft stereotypering op basis van de verschillende categorieën van diversiteit (met name etniciteit en klasse) geleid tot het stigmatiseren en criminaliseren van arme, gekleurde wijken aan de rand van de stad.

Diversiteit in stedelijke gebieden kan zich op verschillende manieren manifesteren, zoals gedrag, leefstijl, etniciteit, leeftijd, gender, seksualiteit, burgerrechten, positie op de arbeidsmarkt, welvaart en patronen van ruimtelijke verdeling van deze aspecten. Onderzoek naar diversiteit heeft in de afgelopen jaren een grote hoeveelheid materiaal over het begrip opgeleverd. Er zijn echter een aantal theoretische hiaten waarop dit onderzoek nader zal ingaan, te weten: (a) onderzoek naar diversiteit gaat vaak voorbij aan de complexiteit en het dynamische karakter van diversiteit en legt te veel nadruk op etniciteit; (b) ondanks het vele bewijs voor de diversificatie van buitenwijken richt het beschikbare onderzoeksmateriaal zich hoofdzakelijk op binnensteden en worden de meer afgelegen plattelandsgebieden en voorsteden buiten beschouwing gelaten (Humphris, 2014); (c) de neiging bestaat om diversiteit eendimensionaal weer te geven, waarbij geen rekening wordt gehouden met dat er veel verschillende typen van diversiteit zijn die onderling op elkaar inwerken. .

Met het oog op deze drie hiaten is het doel van dit onderzoek om een bijdrage te leveren aan het begrip van stedelijke diversiteit zoals die wordt gezien en ervaren door bewoners, bezoekers en bestuurders van stedelijke gebieden. Het onderzoek geeft antwoord op de volgende primaire onderzoeksvraag: *Hoe wordt diversiteit ervaren op buurtniveau als (a) discours, (b) maatschappelijke realiteit en (c) praktijk?* Diversiteit als discours verwijst naar de openbare verhalen rondom diversiteit, terwijl diversiteit als maatschappelijke realiteit betrekking heeft op de beschrijvende kenmerken die een gebied divers maken.

Diversiteit als praktijk verwijst naar de beleidslijnen, programma's en lokale praktijken die gericht zijn op het beheren van diversiteit. (Zie ook Berg en Sigona, 2013). De onderzoeksvraag wordt uitgediept in vier onderling samenhangende hoofdstukken die in verschillende mate ingaan op de drie genoemde dimensies. De studie maakt verder gebruik van diverse kwalitatieve en participatieve technieken (te weten kwalitatieve interviews, rondetafelgesprekken, observaties van deelnemers en focusgroepen) om robuuste empirische gegevens te verzamelen over het leven met en omgaan met diversiteit in Jane-Finch, een deel van een buitenwijk dicht bij het centrum van Toronto.

2   Het onderzoeksgebied

Het onderzoek is uitgevoerd in de Canadese stad Toronto, een stad met 2,79 miljoen inwoners (Bourne, Hutton, Shearmur en Simmons, 2011). Op basis van bevolkingsstatistieken is Toronto qua herkomst van de bevolking een van de meest diverse steden ter wereld. Volgens de National Household Survey (NHS) van 2011 is 46,0% van de inwoners van de metropool Toronto in het buitenland geboren en 52,4% in Canada (exclusief immigranten). Van de in Canada geboren burgers behoort 0,7% tot de Aboriginals, de oorspronkelijke bevolking (Statistics-Canada, 2011). Globalisering en binnenlandse en buitenlandse migratie hebben geleid tot een toename van diversiteit in de stad. Veel nieuwkomers hebben te maken met discriminatie op de arbeidsmarkt, beperkte toegang tot voorzieningen en diensten (in het bijzonder betaalbare huisvesting) en een lage levensstandaard. In werkelijkheid is Toronto een gepolariseerde stad waarin de ruimtelijke en sociaal-economische ongelijkheid tussen de inwoners steeds groter wordt (Joy en Vogel, 2015). Als gevolg daarvan wonen veel immigranten in wijken met een concentratie van armoede, waaronder twee buitenwijken niet ver van het centrum van Toronto: Scarborough en North York.

Het onderzoek in Toronto richtte zich op Jane-Finch, een buurt in de centrale buitenwijk North York in het noordwesten van Toronto. In deze buurt wonen momenteel zo'n 80.000 mensen. Jane-Finch is gebouwd in de jaren zestig als een modelbuitenwijk met voldoende sociale woningbouw voor een sociaal diverse bevolking. Aanvankelijk vond er een aanzienlijke immigratiegolf plaats vanuit het Caraïbisch gebied, Oost-Azië, Zuid-Azië, Afrika en Zuid-Amerika. Tegenwoordig telt de buurt een groter aandeel jongeren, eenoudergezinnen, vluchtelingen en immigranten, mensen zonder middelbareschooldiploma, mensen met lage inkomens en huurders in de sociale sector dan andere buurten in Toronto. Jane-Finch is gezien haar demografische kenmerken (met een hoge mate van diversiteit en armoede en segregatie op basis van etnische afkomst en inkomen) een uitstekende casus voor het begrijpen van de complexiteit van de diversiteit aan bewoners en het begrijpen van de mogelijkheden en struikelblokken bij beleidsuitvoering.

3 Is diversiteit onze kracht?

Hoofdstuk 3 gaat als eerste van de vier onderzoekshoofdstukken in op de relatie tussen de perspectieven op het diversiteitsbeleid van Toronto en hoe inwoners van Jane-Finch, die dagelijks met diversiteit te maken hebben, dit ervaren. De primaire beleidsstandpunten (verkregen uit interviews met beleidsmakers en door de analyse van beleidsdocumenten) worden hier geplaatst tegenover de ervaringen van alledag van de bewoners. Uit deze analyse blijkt een scheve verhouding tussen de beleidsretoriek over diversiteit en de werkelijke situatie in het dagelijks leven van de inwoners van Jane-Finch. We zien hoe de positieve houding ten aanzien van diversiteit in het beleid en het openbare discours in Toronto staat tegenover een andere praktijk in Jane-Finch. Jane-Finch wordt aangeduid en kent een negatieve stereotypering als een concentratie van wat wordt gezien als niet-acceptabele of niet-wenselijke vormen van diversiteit. Tot slot wordt geconcludeerd dat het concept diversiteit door beleidsmakers kan worden ingezet om systemische discriminatie en ongelijkheid op grond van ras, klasse en gender te bagatelliseren.

4 Diversiteit en sociale samenhang

Hoofdstuk 4 is gericht op de wisselwerking tussen de twee concepten 'diversiteit' en 'sociale samenhang'. Het analyseert in het bijzonder wat de inwoners van Jane-Finch verstaan onder sociale samenhang, namelijk gedeelde waarden, formele en informele interacties en hechting aan de buurt. Daarnaast bevat het hoofdstuk kritische inzichten in de sociaal-economische en politieke structuren die ten grondslag liggen aan de percepties en interacties van de inwoners van Jane-Finch. Uit de bevindingen komt naar voren dat armoede, institutionalisering en internalisering van discriminatie op basis van gender en klasse een veel grotere rol hebben gespeeld in het zich vormen van de percepties en interacties van de bewoners dan diversiteit. De analyse wijst ook uit dat leven met diversiteit kansen kan bieden voor culturele uitwisseling en meer onderlinge erkenning. Er bestaan in de praktijk hiërarchieën tussen culturen en inkomensgroepen die een belangrijke rol spelen in percepties en interacties. In het hoofdstuk wordt tot slot gesteld dat diversiteit als kernpunt van het debat over sociale samenhang een probleem is omdat dit de aandacht kan afleiden van systemische, structurele en politieke kwesties zoals armoede, ongelijkheid en racisme.

5 Diversiteit, openbare ruimte en ontmoetingsplaatsen

In hoofdstuk 5 komt de invloed van diversiteit waarop de bewoners de openbare ruimte zien en gebruiken aan de orde: de percepties van en interacties in de openbare ruimten van Jane-Finch en de mate waarin openbare ruimten een rol spelen in het mogelijk

maken van ontmoetingen tussen diverse groepen en het ondersteunen van diversiteit in de buurt. De analyse laat zien dat er weinig bewijs is voor ontmoetingen tussen diverse groepen in de openbare ruimte omdat het modernistisch ontwerp daartoe te weinig uitnodigt. Fysieke factoren, zoals de opzet van de buurt en het ontwerp, de locatie en de toegankelijkheid van de openbare ruimte, zijn van grote invloed op de manier waarop de inwoners de openbare ruimten in hun buurt ervaren en gebruiken. Daarnaast hebben maatschappelijke factoren, zoals toezicht en politieaanwezigheid, slecht onderhoud, het ontbreken van passende symbolen voor de verschillende gebruikersgroepen en de aanwezigheid van bendes en hanggroepen ertoe geleid dat inwoners de openbare ruimten zijn gaan mijden, wat de sociale contacten ondermijnt. De analyse wijst verder uit dat het voor het tot stand komen van sociale ontmoetingen in openbare ruimten noodzakelijk is dat deze ruimten worden aangepast en afgestemd op de behoeften en voorkeuren van hun diverse gebruikers. De conclusie is dat er meer nodig is dan alleen fysieke verbeteringen voor het faciliteren van sociale ontmoetingen in de openbare ruimte en het aanpakken van bredere structurele ongelijkheden in stedelijke gebieden.

6   Diverse gemeenschappen dienen

In hoofdstuk 6 worden van tien gemeenschapsinitiatieven en buurtprogramma's gericht op diversiteit in Jane-Finch geanalyseerd om erachter te komen of de beoogde doelen zijn bereikt en welke factoren hebben bijgedragen aan hun effectiviteit. Ook wordt besproken in hoeverre deze initiatieven van belang zijn voorinitiatieven in andere wijken. Uit de analyse blijkt dat de voorzieningen die op dit moment beschikbaar zijn in Jane-Finch nog onvoldoende zijn om in de totale behoefte binnen de buurt te kunnen voorzien. De effectiviteit van de beschikbare initiatieven en hun mogelijkheden voor samenwerking worden beperkt door een aantal barrières. De grootste barrières voor de initiatieven zijn gebrek aan langetermijnfinanciering, gebrek aan financiering voor medewerkers en administratie, bezuinigingen, gebrek aan organisatorische ondersteuning, verdeling van financiering en een algemene sfeer van concurrentie en onzekerheid. Daarnaast wordt de deelname aan en burgerlijke betrokkenheid van de inwoners van Jane-Finch bij buurtinitiatieven beperkt door de vele en complexe problemen waarmee deze initiatieven te maken hebben. Het hoofdstuk belicht verder het feit dat initiatieven vaak te kampen hebben met diepgewortelde structurele ongelijkheid waardoor de inspanningen om de leefomstandigheden van de bewoners te verbeteren ernstig worden ondermijnd. Gesteld wordt dat er een structurele verandering nodig is om langdurige resultaten mogelijk te maken.

7 Conclusies

Diversiteit als discours

De bestudering van debatten en verhalen rondom diversiteit (in het bijzonder te vinden in de hoofdstukken 3, 4 en 5) laat zien dat diversiteit meestal wordt beleden op retorisch niveau. Op gemeentelijk beleids- en bestuursniveau wordt diversiteit steeds vaker als iets positiefs gezien, waarbij diversiteit wordt gepresenteerd als een handelsgoed waarmee de stad op de concurrerende markt van wereldsteden fondsen en kapitaal weet aan te trekken. Intussen laten de bevindingen zien dat er in dit positieve discours impliciet een scherp onderscheid wordt gemaakt tussen *wenselijke* en *onwenselijke* vormen van diversiteit. Zelfs op het retorische niveau zijn er duidelijk zichtbare tegenstrijdigheden in de manier waarop het positieve discours wordt gevormd en beleden. De positieve uitspraken over diversiteit gaan vaak niet verder dan het bewijzen van lippendienst om de percepties en dagelijkse interacties van de bewoners te beïnvloeden. Diversiteit als verhaal stelt daarnaast de maatschappij voor als een eendimensionale waardenneutrale en machtsneutrale pluraliteit, maar diversiteit verandert niets aan hiërarchieën, maatschappelijke machtsverhoudingen en sociaal-economische ongelijkheden. Deze versimpelde voorstelling van de werkelijkheid kan zelfs een oppervlakkig beeld van de maatschappelijke realiteit versterken, waarin verschillen tussen culturele groepen worden benadrukt en de onderliggende machtsstructuren worden genegeerd.

Diversiteit als maatschappelijke realiteit

De analyse laat zien dat diversiteit vaak beschrijvend wordt gebruikt om te verwijzen naar sociaal-demografische kenmerken van stedelijke gebieden. Als de term diversiteit wordt gebruikt, blijft de nadruk bovendien liggen op etnische en culturele verschillen in plaats van dat het betrekking heeft op interne heterogeniteit of hiërarchieën binnen en tussen categorieën. Uit de empirische analyse blijkt de analytische beperking van het concept diversiteit, namelijk dat het vaak alleen een beschrijvende functie heeft en de complexiteiten niet benoemt. Rekening houdend met deze beperkingen kan het concept diversiteit worden benaderd als een demografische realiteit (in plaats van een analytische toolkit), die op haar beurt geanalyseerd zou kunnen worden aan de hand van het begrip 'intersectionaliteit'.

Diversiteit als praktijk

De analyse van diversiteitsinitiatieven laat zien dat diversiteit op de stedelijkebeleidsagenda staat en op de agenda van lokale gemeenschappen, zowel impliciet als expliciet. Diversiteit blijft een positief begrip in het stedelijk beleid. Deze

positieve kijk gaat echter voorbij aan de machtsstructuren en ongelijkheden die de uitsluiting en segregatie in de stad versterken. Daarnaast ligt aan het streven naar diversiteit in Toronto een filosofie ten grondslag die wordt gedreven door financiële motieven en concurrentievoordelen. De nadruk op diversiteit als onderdeel van beleid is ontstaan in de context van een bredere verschuiving in de richting van neoliberale politiek en overheidsbezuinigingen. Daarbij wordt diversiteit ingezet om beleid meer op de bewoners te richten en maatschappelijke kwesties te promoten door te focussen op het individuele niveau in plaats van op de gemeenschap als geheel. Het accent komt steeds meer te liggen op wat bewoners met uiteenlopende achtergronden' kunnen inbrengen en diversiteit wordt algemeen teruggebracht tot een bereikbaar consumptiegoed.

Alle vier de empirische hoofdstukken belichten de gevolgen van de onderliggende structurele ongelijkheden in Jane-Finch voor de omstandigheden van en de beeldvorming van de inwoners. De analyse laat zien hoe diversiteit als onderdeel van beleid een verhullend en depolitiserend effect kan hebben, doordat het de aandacht afleidt van de werkelijke problemen. Tot slot blijkt uit het onderzoek dat het diversiteitsbeleid weinig bijdraagt aan het tot stand brengen van zinvolle omvorming van de structuren die ongelijkheden binnen en tussen bewonersgroepen veroorzaken. Diversiteitswerkers en -theoretici worden opgeroepen verder te gaan dan het onderkennen van het probleem, maar om veranderingen te bewerkstelligen door middel van felle antiracistische en feministische kritiek, en het mobiliseren en bewustmaken van bewoners en beleidsmakers.

8   Gevolgtrekkingen

In het kader van de bevindingen van dit onderzoek kunnen enkele gevolgtrekkingen voor toekomstig onderzoek naar en werk op het gebied van diversiteit worden geformuleerd.

— Vanuit onderzoeksstandpunt kan diversiteit het best worden benaderd als een meer beschrijvend hulmiddel. Intersectionaliteit kan daarentegen een geschikt analytisch kader vormen voor het schetsen van een genuanceerder beeld van de maatschappelijke realiteit, aangezien het niet alleen pluraliteit erkent, maar ook machtsbases, privileges en onderdrukking aan de orde stelt en rekening houdt met problemen die gemarginaliseerde groepen tot nu toe ondervinden. Ook biedt intersectionaliteit de mogelijkheid tot het analyseren van de microdynamiek van dagelijkse ervaringen en interacties en de lokale en externe krachten, geschiedenissen en hechtingspatronen. Toekomstig onderzoek naar diversiteit in stedelijke gebieden kan dus sterk profiteren van gedetailleerde etnografische analyses op basis van een intersectioneel kader.

— Het begrip diversiteit kan niet als alternatief dienen voor klassieke categoriesystemen als ras, gender en klasse. De aantrekkelijkheid van het diversiteitsverhaal voor bedrijven en neoliberale overheden bestaat voor een groot deel uit de manier waarop het concept een eufemistisch beeld geeft van onderwerpen die van oudsher in verband zijn gebracht met vrijheidsstrijd en radicale veranderingen. Intussen is er duidelijk bewijs voor het voortbestaan van ongelijkheid op grond van ras, klasse en gender in stedelijke gebieden zoals Toronto. Dat betekent dat deze categoriesystemen essentieel blijven voor elke wetenschappelijke benadering van stedelijke diversiteit of ongelijkheid.

— Vanuit beleidsperspectief gezien kan worden gesteld dat het van bovenaf opleggen van een diversiteitsagenda niet effectief is, aangezien het niets doet tegen de sterk door de bewoners geïnternaliseerde hiërarchieën en vooroordelen. Voor werk op het gebied van diversiteit is daarom bewustmaking nodig, die bereikt kan worden door contextgevoelige pedagogische interventies van onderaf.

— Onderzoek naar stedelijke diversiteit vaak vooral bezig is met de 'ander' en diens insluiting, integratie of assimilatie in de massa. Toekomstig onderzoek kan licht werpen op de percepties en ervaringen van de dominante groep en hoe die bijdragen aan de reproductie van materiële en discursieve ongelijkheidsstructuren.

— Kritisch onderzoek naar stedelijke diversiteit zou ook een stap verder kunnen gaan dan het benoemen en onderzoeken van ongelijkheidsstructuren, en nieuwe praktijken, interventies en organisatievormen ontdekken om deze structuren aan te pakken.

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1 Introduction

On May 23, 2007, 15 year old Jordan Manners was shot and killed in a hallway inside the C. W. Jeffreys high school in the Jane-Finch neighbourhood of Toronto. Four days later, two 17-year-old male suspects, who lived in the same neighbourhood, were arrested and charged with first-degree murder. In the aftermath of this shooting, Jane-Finch appeared in virtually every Canadian news outlet. Despite a lack of insight into the motives of the accused males whose identities were protected due to the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the media heavily framed the shooting as having roots in the very nature of Toronto's racialized poor inner-suburbs (O'Grady, Parnaby, and Schikschneit, 2010). The neighbourhood of Jane-Finch in north-west Toronto has since gained considerable publicity for its high crime rate and concentrated poverty. Today Jane-Finch is considered one of the most stigmatised neighbourhoods in Canada, heavily associated with guns, gangs and racial divide (Richardson, 2008).

A post-war modernist estate accommodating a predominantly poor racialized population, Jane-Finch is by no means the first of its kind to receive such negative and mixed coverage by the media. A 2010 study of deprived communities in Glasgow documented a high recognition of the existence of negative external reputations among residents in peripheral housing estates (GoWell, 2010). In 1999, a study of 500 Danish estates, contended that the concentration of ethnic minorities in an area was among the most important factors in explaining poor external reputation (Skifter-Andersen, 1999). Similarly, in a study focusing on housing estates in Utrecht, Permentier et al. (2011) found that ethnic composition and average income strongly influenced the perceived neighbourhood reputation. The same study concluded that distance to the city centre was negatively associated with neighbouthood reputation, i.e. the farther the neighbourhood from the centre, the worse its external 'image'.

The framing of Jordan Manners' death by the media is llustrative of essentialised and stereotypical representations of poor, ethnic-minority communities. As stressed by O'Grady et al. (2010) *"the 'cause' of the shooting was framed in a fashion that was suggestive of social and/or cultural inferiority (single-parent families, unwed mothers, welfare dependency, a high concentration of subsidized housing, etc.) […] A dysfunctional local community was seen as ostensibly the root cause of Jordan Manners' death"*. The negative reputation of Jane-Finch is established and sustained along not only the axis of race and class, but also gender, since single mothers are the ones commonly blamed for the stigmatisation and criminalisation of the area since they are seen as *"the producers of unruly youth."* (Narain, 2012: 80).

Narain (2012) underscores that Toronto's lower-income neighbourhoods are often 'racialized', a categorization which is attributed not just to the concentration of visible minority households, but also the lack of social, economic and political resources in these areas (Teelucksingh, 2007). However, while Toronto's racialised poor communities have become social locations of fear and othering (Narain, 2012), celebration of *diversity* has become a popular theme in Toronto's policy and image making, such that many policy documents have proclaimed diversity as the city's biggest strength. But why is it that some communities are celebrated for their diversity, while others are criminalised and stigmatised?

Like many other countries across Western Europe and North America, Canada has experienced considerable economic restructuring in the past decades, which has rendered the market a more prominent actor in social regulation of Canadian cities. Various studies over the years have shown that economic restructuring has intensified the processes of racialization and feminization in the labour market, leading to increased economic, social and political inequality. Racialized groups, immigrants, refugees and women have particularly suffered the consequences of restructuring. As well, many Canadian urban centres have experienced considerable polarisation along the lines of income and race (Galabuzi, 2005; Galabuzi, 2001; Jackson, 2001; Yalnyzian, 1998). Ethnic minority residents and aboriginal peoples are, as stressed by Galabuzi (2005), *"twice as likely to be poor as other Canadians because of the intensified economic and social and economic exploitation of these communities whose members have to endure historical racial and gender inequalities accentuated by the restructuring of the Canadian economy and more recently racial profiling. (17)"*

Galabuzi (2005) has used the term 'racialisation of poverty' to refer to the process by which poverty has become more concentrated and reproduced inter-generationally among racialized group members in cities such as Toronto. This process is manifest through *"a double digit racialized income gap, higher than average unemployment, differential labour market participation, deepening and disproportionate exposure to low income, differential access to housing leading to racial segregation, disproportionate contact with the criminal Justice system, particularly for racialized youth leading to the criminalization of youth and higher health risks. (38)"* The racialisation of poverty in Canadian cities further seems to follow a specific geographic pattern since increasingly, racialized people are settling in peripheral areas which are characterized by high poverty and unemployment rates, welfare dependency, and high school dropout rates, all of which are condition that reproduce poverty. Often they find themselves surrounded by others in similar circumstances in neighbourhoods that are heavily populated and segregated from the rest of society (Ibid).

Racialised groups living in these geographical areas further deal with social deficits such as inadequate access to counselling services, life skills training, child care, recreation, and health care (Galabuzi, 2005; Kazemipur and Halli 2000). The racialization of poverty has further had a major impact on neighbourhood selection and access to adequate housing for new immigrants in Toronto who are much more likely than nonimmigrants to live in racially segregated neighbourhoods with high rates of poverty (Ibid). Hulchanski (2010) similarly argues that the city is falling apart into 'three cities', i.e. three areas with distinct income and racial characteristics, underscoring that the low-income (mainly newcomer or ethnic) neighbourhoods, located in the inner-suburbs of the city, have been consistently facing decreasing income levels since the 1980s.

Despite evidence for segregation and stigmatization of racialized neighbourhoods in Toronto, diversity remains a popular catchphrase with an appealing ring both to policy makers and mainstream society. In fact, Toronto's long-standing immigration history coupled by the introduction of the Canadian Multiculturalism policy in the 1970s have rendered diversity a prominent value for Torontonians (Ahmadi and Tasan-Kok, 2014). Diversity is largely framed as a 'marketable asset' in Toronto's policy context (Boudreau et al., 2009). Kipfer and Keil (2002) underscore that diversity functions as the primary aesthetic backdrop to the city's beautification and development plans. They further argue that the promotion of Toronto as a diverse global city is connected to the social cleansing of inner city Toronto, through racialised segregation, racial profiling and repressive policing. Diversity management in Toronto, thus, may be more pre-occupied with promoting a more competitive city image than tending to the realities of racialised poverty and segregation in the city. It thus appears that while the celebration of diversity has attracted funds and services to inner city areas, stereotyping based on different categories of diversity (especially ethnicity and class) has resulted in the stigmatization and criminalization of poor peripheral neighbourhoods. Herein lies an important question: why is diversity sometimes regarded as an asset and sometimes a deficit? And is it possible to move beyond such dichotomous understanding of the notion? Answering these questions firstly requires understanding what the concept of diversity means and how it has come to be defined in theoretical and policy debates.

What is diversity?

Diversity in urban areas may derive from multiple factors such as behaviour, lifestyles, activities, ethnicity, age, gender and sexuality profiles, entitlements and restrictions of rights, labour market experiences, and patterns of spatial distribution. Traditionally, diversity has been defined adopting different unidimensional approaches which consider diversity across a single dimension at a time (e.g. ethnicity) (Gopalda

and DeRoy, 2015). A common critique of these approaches is that they fail to take account of the complexity of diversity, and the multiple and dynamic affiliations of an individual. Furthermore, unidimensional definitions of diversity may result in generalisations and stereotyping on the basis of categories such as ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic class. By contrast, there have been a number of recent theoretical efforts to capture the complexity of diversity, perhaps the most notable of which is the notion of Super-diversity developed by Steven Vertovec in 2007. Grounded in the critique of the 'ethnic lens' in diversity and migration studies, super-diversity is a multidimensional perspective on diversity which goes beyond the ethnic group as the only object of study and acknowledges the interplay of multiple factors that impact people's living conditions (Vertovec. 2007).

Despite its contribution to capturing the complexity of urban diversity, super-diversity has received criticism for matters ranging from its epistemological shortcomings (difficulties in operationalization and research conduction) to its potential for the promotion of individual liberty at the expense of collectivist notions of interest (see also chapter 2). Placing individual difference at the centre of understanding diversity promotes the individualization of policy whereby all differences are regarded as irreconcilable (Campbell 2006). While failing to address individual differences in interests and needs can result in the exclusion of vulnerable groups, individualization of policy can also create exclusionary and unjust outcomes. Likewise, addressing diversity, without paying attention to the intersection of various forms of oppression and privilege (e.g. on the basis of race, class, gender, ability, and sexuality) can exacerbate exclusion and injustice in urban areas. Theoretical and policy debates on diversity can thus benefit from critical research that takes account of the complex nature of diversity while grounding its understanding of the notion in the pre-existing and intersecting structures of power and privilege in society.

§ 1.1 Gaps in theory

Diversity research in the past decades has resulted in the creation of an extensive body of work on the notion. However, there appear to be a number of theoretical gaps which are not sufficiently addressed by the current state of the art literature:

1 Research on diversity often tends to overlook the complexity and dynamic nature of the emerging diversities in urban areas. Recent efforts to capture this complexity, most notably super diversity (Vertovec, 2007), have maintained an overemphasis on ethnicity.

To really address the complexity, research needs to go beyond the singular focus on ethnicity to address not only multiple categories of difference at once, but also the internal heterogeneity within these categories. It is further important to account for the interconnections between these categories.

2   Much of this research focuses primarily on inner-city areas, leaving out the more remote peripheral and rural areas outside of global cities (Humphris, 2014). This is despite plentiful evidence for both the diversification and the concentration of poverty in suburban outlying areas (see for example Puentes & Warren, 2006; Murphy, 2007; Holliday & Dwyer, 2009). The urban focus begs the question: what is 'outside' global metropolises? And are these areas relevant subjects of inquiry for diversity research?

3   Within the current body of scholarship, there is a tendency to present a 'flat' or 'horizontal' type of differentiation of diversity, which does not account for the various positions and hierarchies within and between different categories of difference (see Humphris, 2014; Meissner and Vertovec 2015). An emphasis on power and position will compliment diversity research both methodologically and analytically.

§ 1.2   **Aims and Significance**

In light of the issues previously outlined, this study adds to our understanding of urban diversity, as perceived and experienced by those who inhabit, frequent and govern urban areas. In so doing, it aims to contribute to the ongoing theoretical efforts to address complex forms of diversity beyond ethnicity, and more importantly to politicise the debate on diversity. Research on diversity is of particular relevance in this day and time when we are witnessing nationalist and anti-immigrant sentiments gain momentum in many countries across North-America and Europe, which has led to intensified xenophobia and fear of the 'other', leaving uncertain the future of the increasing number of asylum seekers who are fleeing war and violence at home to seek refuge in Western societies such as Britain, Canada and the United States. Recent examples of political developments backed by right-wing populist discourses include Brexit and the rise of politicians such as Donald Trump in the United States and Marine Le Pen in France. A common thread in all of these movements has been the blaming of immigrants and problematisation of Islam as the engine driving global terrorism, discourses which continue to fuel hate crimes against minority groups and threaten the growing diversity of our cities.

The present study further sets out to develop theoretical insights on diversity as a quintessential first step in understanding reality and steering policy change. Research on urban diversity can benefit from rigorous empirical work that improves our situated knowledge of diversity in urban areas. This study thus opts to create a thorough database and conduct a rigorous analysis of the data using qualitative frameworks to unravel how a range of actors including inhabitants, policy makers and community service providers experience and navigate diversity in the lower-income suburban neighbourhood of Jane-Finch in Toronto. The study of diversity in Jane-Finch is of particular relevance for other similar post-war modernist neighbourhoods where inhabitant diversity goes hand in hand with lack of resources and planed infrastructure. By unravelling the potentials and pitfalls of diversity policy and management in Jane-Finch in particular and Toronto in general, this work hopes to facilitate and direct policy change in the Greater Toronto Area and further stimulate the exchange of knowledge among policy makers in Canada and beyond.

The primary question this research seeks to answer based on the Jane-Finch context is the following:

How is diversity experienced at the neighbourhood level, as (a) discourse, (b) social reality, and (c) practice?

The study builds on a framework previously introduced by Berg and Sigona (2013) in which they outline three inter-related dimensions of diversity namely (a) diversity as *discourse*, referring to the public narratives around diversity; (b) diversity as *social reality*, which refers to the descriptive characteristics that render an area diverse; and (c) diversity as *practice*, which concern policies, programs and local practices that aim towards managing diversity. The scale of analysis in this study is further identified as the neighbourhood level. Diversity manifests itself differently in different contexts, at different scales, and in different places. This is due to the fact that there are histories, memories, and identities specific to each neighbourhood which underlie the conjunctures of diversity and difference in that particular context (Berg and Sigona, 2013). Understanding these local manifestations and dynamics is a fundamental step towards unpacking the concept of diversity.

The research question is further investigated in four interconnected chapters. Each chapter engages with the three aforementioned dimensions to various degrees. The first empirical chapter (chapter 3) explores the relationship between the discourses of diversity in Toronto policy and those reproduced and perpetuated by Jane-Finch inhabitants who experience diversity on a daily basis. It does so through the juxtaposition of the primary policy discourses (derived from interviews with policy actors and by analysing policy documents) with inhabitants' everyday experiences

of diversity. The second empirical chapter (chapter 4) focuses on the inter-relation between the two concepts of 'diversity' and 'social cohesion'. Specifically, it analyses the perceptions of the residents of a diverse neighbourhood regarding multiple aspects of social cohesion, namely common values, formal and informal interactions and neighbourhood attachment. It further provides critical insights into socioeconomic and political structures underlying inhabitants' perceptions and interactions in Jane-Finch.

Chapter 5 studies the influence of diversity on inhabitants' perceptions and use of public space. It interrogates the perceptions of and interactions in the public spaces of Jane-Finch and the extent to which public space plays a role in facilitating encounters between diverse groups and catering for diversity in the area. While the first three empirical chapters are pre-occupied with critical explorations of perceptions, discourses, and everyday experiences with diversity, the final empirical chapter (chapter 6) is more practice-oriented and engages matters related to diversity management and service provision in Jane-Finch. It closely investigates a sample of 10 community initiatives in Jane-Finch so as to unravel whether they were successful in terms of achieving their goals and the factors which contributed to their effectiveness. It further discusses the relevance of the experience for other neighbourhood initiatives targeting diversity. A summary of findings in all four empirical chapters as well as how these findings connect to one another is presented in the final chapter.

Methods, Fieldwork, and Case Study[1]

The research was conducted mainly within the framework of the EU FP7 project: DIVERCITIES - Governing Urban Diversity. Creating social cohesion, social mobility and economic performance in today's hyper-diversified cities. DIVERCITIES was a large-scaled comparative study which focused on case studies across thirteen European countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland, Turkey, the UK) and Canada. The project aimed to critically analyse policies, initiatives, and arrangements in a large number of cities that explicitly or implicitly aim at profiting from urban diversity.[2]

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1   More elaborate information regarding methodology and analysis can be found in each chapter.

2   For more information on the DIVERCITIES project visit: https://www.urbandivercities.eu/

Fieldwork was conducted according to a 4-year plan and was carried out in three different stages. During each fieldwork stage, qualitative and participatory techniques (i.e. qualitative interviews, roundtable talks, participant observations, and focus groups) were used in order to gather the empirical data. The first phase of the fieldwork involved 23 semi-structured interviews, conducted during October-November 2013 in Toronto, with selected stakeholders from diverse layers of governance (see Appendix). The second stage of the fieldwork took place between 26 March and 5 April 2014 in Toronto with a set of activities including face to face interviews with 13 community service providers, observations, field trip to the Jane-Finch neighbourhood, and a round table with the participation of number of local scholars, experts and practitioners (see Appendix for the list of the interviewed persons and the list of the participants of the round table). Prior to the field work standard info sheets were prepared for each initiative which encompassed categorized information acquired through public and online sources.

The third and final stage of the fieldwork was carried out between September and November 2014 whereby one-to-one interviews were conducted with 50 residents of Jane-Finch neighbourhood (see Appendix). Informants were mobilized through various channels so as to ensure the diversity of the research sample. My initial plan was to approach the formerly studied community initiatives as entry points into the neighbourhood and then continue by snowballing. Once in the field, however, my research was received with a degree of scepticism at first, both by organization members and Jane-Finch residents. Their reluctance was understandable since Jane-Finch has suffered a so-called 'research fatigue' due having been the target of many research projects over the years, some of which have contributed to the further stigmatisation of the area. Therefore, I had to prove myself worthy of their trust, and ultimately their cooperation. During my time in Jane-Finch I attended multiple community meetings using my previous ties with the community initiatives and local experts. This provided me with the opportunity to establish ties with Jane-Finch residents, activist and community workers, who would later become my gatekeepers into the community. In order to avoid early saturation, I asked for no more than two referrals from any one source while using snowball sampling (see Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2015).

Prior to the interview, each informant was handed a short (one page) informed consent sheet, containing information regarding the aim of the project, the collection of data, its usage and storage. The informants were further ensured that (a) the information shared would be confidential and kept anonymous so as to ensure their privacy; and (b) participation was entirely voluntary and they could choose to discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

The research focuses on the city of Toronto, Canada. The city has 2.79 million inhabitants (5.5 million in the Greater Toronto Area). Half of Toronto residents are immigrants, of which nearly half are members of a racialized group (Ontario Trillium Foundation, 2007). The 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) demonstrated that 46% of the population of the Toronto census metropolitan area (CMA) were foreign-born (immigrants) and 52.4% were Canadian-born (non-immigrants), of which 0.7% had an Aboriginal identity. Meanwhile non-permanent residents constituted 1.7% of the population (Statistics-Canada, 2011). Toronto is considered an economic engine for Canada, generating 10% of Canada's GDP in 2010. Historically, it the second largest metropolitan city of Canada after Montreal since the early 1980s, it has become the largest since due to a combination of economic and demographic factors such as de-industrialisation, the shift to service economy, and changing migration dynamics (Hiller, 2010; Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2015). Toronto was selected for this research due to its reputation as one of the most diverse cities in the world. As well, the longstanding immigration history and the premise of Multi-culturalism and a pluralist tradition in diversity management within Toronto, make this city a curious case for studying inhabitant and policy experiences with urban diversity.

Meanwhile, there have been a number of recent structural and symbolic changes happening in the City of Toronto. After the 1998 amalgamation, Toronto has shifted towards a more neoliberal, de-regulated municipality (Narain, 2012). Initiated by the conservative Harris government in 1998, amalgamation meant the merger of the six municipalities and the former city of Toronto as a cost-saving measure (Lafleur, 2010). Toronto has since seen considerable development in its downtown core and inner city neighbourhoods. Meanwhile, there has been a rapid decline in the formerly middle class suburbs of Toronto that are now amalgamated into the city (Lafleur, 2010). The level of poverty has subsequently increased during the last decade in Suburban Toronto, wherein Canada's 10 most ethnically diverse federal voting constituencies are located (Mustafa, 2013). Toronto's urban/suburban divide, therefor, seems to follow a spatial pattern of race, ethnicity, and poverty.

Within Toronto, the study focuses on the inner-suburban neighbourhood of Jane-Finch. Jane-Finch provides an excellent case study for understanding the complexity of diversity as well as the potentials and pitfalls of its political deployment given its demographic characteristics (showcasing high levels of both diversity and poverty), as well as its positioning within the current context diversity celebration on the one hand, and segregation along racial and income lines on the other. It further provides an opportunity to address the conditions leading to diversity's coupling with social inequalities in other similar peripheral neighbourhoods within and without Toronto.

§ 1.4 **Organisation of the thesis**

The following chapters of the study are structured as follows. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the policy context in Toronto, followed by a brief history of the case-study area, Jane-Finch. Chapter 3 presents the paper "Is diversity our strength? An analysis of the facts and fancies of diversity in Toronto", which was presented at the Contested Cities conference and is currently under peer-review. Chapter 4 includes the article "Diversity and social cohesion: the case of Jane-Finch, a highly diverse lower income Toronto neighbourhood" published in the journal of *Urban Research and Practice.* Chapter 5 presents the paper "Diversity, public space and places of encounter: unpacking perceptions of public space in a lower-income highly diverse neighbourhood" which is currently under review. Chapter 6 comprises of the paper "Serving diverse communities: the role of community initiatives in delivering services to poverty neighbourhoods" published in *Cities.* Finally, Chapter 7 summarises the research findings and presents the answer to the research question. It concludes with a discussion on the relevance of the findings for broader debates, and the lessons and implications they carry for future research and policy concerning urban diversity.

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2 The Study Area

Introduction to Toronto's Policy Context

This sub-chapter includes excerpts from the previously published report Ahmadi, D. & Tasan-Kok, T. (2014). Urban policies on diversity in Toronto, Canada. Delft: TU Delft.

Dominant narratives and discourses of diversity in Toronto have for long been predominantly based on ethnic origin and immigration due to the migration history and tradition in Canada which is increasingly reliant on immigration for population and labour market growth (Wayland, 2006). In Canada, national and city level diversity policies are often very different, although discourses at the federal level have an important impact upon city and even community-level efforts in addressing diversity in Toronto. A number of important shifts have taken place at the federal level with regards to diversity policy in the recent years when the Stephen Harper-led Conservative Party won the 2006 federal elections. These shifts include increased decentralization of administrative and financial responsibilities, cut-backs to federal funding of social programs, introduction of conservative values in public social services (especially concerning health issues, women and newcomers), changes in the Temporary Foreign Workers Program (TFWP), and immigration policy, all of which have impacted on policies at the local level (Russo, 2008; Caron and La Forest, 2009).

Canada has a longstanding policy framework regarding immigration and diversity. Since the very founding of Canada through the appropriation of Aboriginal land resources, immigration policies have been central to the production of the Canadian nation (Thobani, 2000). Evidently, in-migration has fluctuated considerably over the past century and the most significant spikes have occurred in the 1910s, the post-war immigration boom of 1950s, and later by the close of the 20th century. Within the Canadian immigration policy, two pro-dominant principles of admission can be identified namely *economic contribution*; and *family reunification*, the latter of which only came to be clearly defined in the late 1960s. The removal of national origin as a criterion of admission, and the introduction of a system, which assigned points based upon notions such as education, age, language skills, and economic characteristics of applicants, also took place in those years. The point system (entrenched in the

Immigration Act of 1967-1977) classified immigration under two main categories, the independent and family classes. Subsequently selection criteria for the former category were based on levels of education and occupation and on kinship ties for the latter (Thobani, 2000). The upholding of the formerly mentioned principles by the immigration policy had an important impact upon the composition of the immigrant population as it entailed that applicants from all nations, particularly non-traditional immigration source countries could be admitted on the condition that they met the new criteria. It further allowed for the entry of refugees from non-European countries as the new strands of policy also incorporated humanitarian-based admissions (Boyd and Vickers, 2000).

In line with the change in the population composition of Canada and the increasing cultural diversity due to in-migration flows, in 1971 the federal government adopted a formal multiculturalism policy, declaring multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian society. The policy recognised the equal contribution and entitlement to rights, privileges and powers, of all Canadians (by birth or by choice) regardless of their gender, race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion, and further confirmed the rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada (Department of Justice, 1985). In 1988, Parliament passed the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, which provided a legal framework to guide federal responsibilities and duties with regards to multiculturalism. (Fleras & Kunz, 2001).

Prior to the 1990s, Canada adjusted in-flows based on the nation's absorptive capacity. Subsequently, immigration policy was designed with short-term goals in mind. In contrast, during the 1990s immigration policy was tailored to promote longer-term growth regardless of the perceived state of the economy at the time. (Grant and Sweetman, 2004). In the late 1990s, the Canadian government launched an extensive legislative review regarding immigration policies, which re-emphasized the objective of enriching through immigration the cultural and social fabric of Canada and further called for the reinforcement of the family class as the cornerstone of Canada's immigration program. (CIC, 1998) The recommendations within the document, particularly those in relation to the family class, sponsorship and spousal immigration fuelled many public debates and active criticism –especially by women's organisations and female advocacy groups. Furthermore, the structural changes and welfare cuts initiated by the progressive conservatives in mid-1990s continued when the new Harper government implemented reforms in 2008. These reforms were in line with privileging economic objectives over other immigration goals which heightened the immigration minister's discretionary authority to hand-pick economic immigrants by bypassing the department's own lengthy and complicated selection procedures.

In 2001, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, anti-terrorist measures and security-related policy apparatus were reinforced swiftly in Canada as well as many other states. In fall 2011, Bill C-11: The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) was passed by Parliament which evinced a considerable concern with matters related to security (Adelman, 2002). It further elevated the standards for eligibility and provided the citizenship and immigration minister with more authority with regards to immigrant and non-citizen detention. Bill C-31 received considerable criticism regarding its redefinition of the status and right of entry of permanent residents; the lack of judicial review for permanent residents and refugee claimants; the 'raise' of barriers for access to the refugee determination process; and the increased reliance on administrative discretion (Russo, 2008: 299). Furthermore, the provided for immigration law to become the focus of Canada's anti-terrorism efforts, particularly due to the fact that it allows procedural short-cuts and a considerable degree of secrecy, one which would normally not be tolerated in criminal law.

Furthermore, the events of September 11th marked a shift towards the reinforcement and legislation of security through immigration laws. As Russo (2008) contends, the past two decades have witnessed the reshaping of the approach towards Canadian immigration from building citizenship to importing labour resources and economic capital, to protecting state security (a shift towards thinking about diversity and order). The Harper establishment continued to call for increased limits upon immigration. Moreover, some controversial measures were introduced to limit public health care for many refugee applicants; cut back on family reunification programs; limitations over settlement funding; cancellations of applications (Ibbitson, 2012); increasing the selectiveness in immigration process; the introduction of a new and more thorough citizenship test; the banning of veils, *burqas* and *niqabs* at citizenship ceremonies; and the introduction of additional language requirements for the citizenship applications, etc. Since 2006 deportation proceedings against illegal workers have accelerated, high profile deportation actions have increased, and the integration of security, intelligence and immigration agencies has re-emerged as a focal point in federal decision-making.

In March 2008, Immigration Bill C-50 was introduced which was heavily criticised on a number of grounds; namely favouring efficiency at the expense of fairness (as it proposed reducing immigration queue by rejecting more applications to prevent further backlog), granting too much discretionary power to the Immigration Minister and creating a closed and non-transparent immigration system (See Russo, 2008). While the federal government maintains a significant steering capacity and remains partially in control over aspects of the process (such as overall levels of admissions and security regulations), provinces have increasingly become significant, autonomous players (separation of powers). Moreover, supported by the economic crisis, the Harper government implemented budget cutbacks, which had a direct impact on policy priorities for communities or neighbourhoods at the city level (Toronto Star, 2013).

2006 Population:	80,150
% Change Since 2001	-6.0%
Area	21.0 Km2
Population Density	3,817 persons / Km2
Pop. of Children (0-4 yrs)	7.2%
Pop. of Children (5-14 yrs)	15.3%
Pop. of Youth (15-19)	6.7%
Pop. of Youth (20-24)	7.1%
Pop. of Seniors (65+ yrs)	13.6%
Pop <15 and >64	36.0%
Total Employment	37,382
Part-Time Employment	5,714
Unemployment rate (Ages 15 and over)	9.1
Visible Minority	70.6%
South Asia (India, Pakistan etc.)	38.8%
South America	16.4%
Western & Eastern Africa	11.0%
Western Central Asia & the Middle East	10.6%
Southeast Asia (ex. Philippines)	4.9%
Other	18.4%
Not Visible Minority	29.4%

TABLE 2.1 Key Characteristics of Jane-Finch / Source: City of Toronto, 2008

In summary, prior to the 1960s, immigrant admissions were regulated on the basis of national origin and immigrants' rights to sponsor family members to enter Canada were hardly addressed by policy. Thus, economically motivated immigration was the sole primary immigration category defined within the highly selective policy framework. The 1970s and 1980s arguably witnessed a shift towards a more pluralist policy discourse as the introduction of a formal 'multiculturalism' policy, the Multiculturalism Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Employment Equity Act entrenched the concept of multiculturalism within the Canadian institutional body and contributed to the establishment of a more diverse Canadian identity. The tone of the new wave of policies and the approach to diversity as a public relations strategy (Boudreau, Keil, & Young, 2009), put forward by the conservatives, however, may continue to pose a threat to sustaining Canada's pluralist approach towards diversity in the long run.

Jane-Finch: An Overview

The area commonly known as Jane-Finch today is home to approximately 80,000 residents. It is located in the north-west end of Toronto, in the North York district of Toronto. Jane-Finch is, in fact, not the official name of this area, rather a colloquial name by which it has come to be known. The area consists of four different neighbourhood units: Humber Summit, Humbermede, Black Creek and Glenfield-Jane Heights (Tasan-Kok and Ozugol, 2017).

Jane-Finch was originally inhabited by Aboriginal communities (1400 to 1550). Later in the 1800s, settlers began to arrive and build houses in the area. The development continued in the 1900s with the construction of churches, schools, farms, and later a railway in 1853 (Richardson, 2008). The population of the Jane-Finch area continued to grow, with the real boom happening after World War II. In the 1960s, the development of Jane-Finch proceeded with the addition of major paved roads and bus services. The neighbourhood as it is today, was developed predominantly on the basis of Modernist principles in the 1960s and 1970s in response to a significant growth in the area's population (2000 percent in a decade) (Ibid). Its high rise, high density apartment towers, abundant open spaces and wide streets wherein the pedestrian and vehicular routes which are completely separated all reflect the principles of modernism and Ideal City (Boudreau, Keil & Young, 2009). Besides high-rise apartments, the area accommodates semi-detached dwellings and townhouses. There is as well, an industrial site to the west of Jane Street. Jane-Finch also accommodates a number of commercial sites, most notably the Yorkgate Mall and Jane Finch Mall, located at the intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue. Additional commercial activities can be found along Jane Street in the form of strip malls (Tasan-Kok and Ozugol, 2017).

Over the years, the availability of affordable housing in the area has attracted a high immigrant, working class and urban population with newcomers from the West Indies, Asia, Africa, South America and India (Narain, 2012; Richardson, 2008). However, social infrastructure and services have not developed sufficiently to cater to the area's exponential population growth. Today, Jane-Finch has one of the highest proportions of youth, sole-supported families, refugees and immigrants, people without a high-school diploma, low-income earners, and public housing tenants of any community in Toronto. Jane-Finch was negatively branded very early in its development as a "*suburban ghetto –a poorly planned, ugly, dangerous, and undesirable place in the city*" (Boudreau, Keil & Young, 2009: 127), a stigma which prevails to this very day. In addition to the stigma, Jane-Finch residents face issues of gang violence, poverty, racism, access to education and employment. (Khosla, 2003; United Way of Greater Toronto, 2004).

In 2005, Jane and Finch was selected as one of the city's 13 Priority Neighbourhoods. The selection was made on the basis of the challenges these neighbourhoods faced in terms of economic position, education, urban fabric, health and demographics. (United Way of Greater Toronto, 2004). In March 2014, the City of Toronto further identified 31 neighbourhoods as Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. Jane-Finch was again selected as one of the areas in need of special attention (Tasan-Kok and Ozugol, 2017).

Despite the evident lack of planned social infrastructure needed to sustain community life in the area, Jane-Finch is home to many community initiatives, civil society organisations, and grass-roots activities which continue to impact the socio-economic

conditions of residents (Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2014). The area thus provides a fascinating case for exploring the challenges and opportunities of living with and catering to diversity when a neighbourhood originally designed for a homogeneous population accommodates a diverse population.

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3   Is diversity our strength? An analysis of the facts and fancies of diversity in Toronto

Abstract

A prominent characteristic of the city of Toronto is its increasing diversity, with half of the city's population being foreign-born. While the concept of diversity appeals to Toronto's reputation as a multi-cultural haven, the city's approach to managing diversity is becoming increasingly instrumentalist, i.e. diversity is considered an asset as long as its benefits are economically valuable. As a result, inner-city neighbourhoods in Toronto are thriving due to development projects and services, while the most diverse neighbourhoods in the inner-suburbs are left in a dire state.

This article presents an analysis of how the concept of diversity used within policy euphemises systemic discrimination and inequality based on race, class and gender. It serves to reveal the mismatch between policy rhetoric on diversity and its materialisation in the daily lives of the inhabitants of a low-income Toronto inner-suburb, by juxtaposing policy discourses with inhabitants' everyday experiences. By illustrating how inhabitants reproduce negative essentialised stereotypes based on diversity markers, the article argues that talking diversity as an alternative to or an escape from problematising the intertwined systems of race, class and gender oppression, could potentially serve to perpetuate them.

Keywords: *diversity, racism, class-based racism, gendered racism, Toronto*

§ 3.1   **Introduction**

The concept of diversity has recently evolved into a post-multiculturalism policy catchphrase. From education and employment to insurance and healthcare, catering to a diverse public has become a point of debate. With urban diversity on the rise due to trends including intensified global migration, population mobility,

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and transnationalism, cities are adopting various methods of accommodating the increasing diversification of their populations. Similarly, within academic debates, there are increasing efforts to develop theories that address diversity in urban areas. Vertovec (2007) introduced the term 'super diversity' as a multidimensional perspective on diversity, referring to the interplay between social variables that pertain to the existence of social differences in urban areas. More recently, Tasan-Kok et al. (2013) have used the concept of 'hyper-diversity' to refer to an approach which goes beyond the unidimensional focus on ethnicity to address the complexity of diversity. Both the 'super-diversity' and 'hyper-diversity' approaches identify 'individual difference' and 'diversity within diversity' as central elements to the conceptualisation of diversity.

With over half of its population being foreign-born, Toronto is no stranger to urban diversity trends. Since 1997, the city has adopted the motto 'Diversity: Our Strength', which suggests the popularity of the discourse surrounding diversity. While the city brands itself as a multi-cultural haven, recent research indicates that the increasing diversity has been accompanied by a growth in income inequality, characteristic of the city, and segregation along income and ethnic lines (see Hulchanski, 2010). Although the city seemingly capitalises upon its diversity in its self-promotion, many of the diverse neighbourhoods located on the periphery of the city receive little attention and funds from the planning apparatus (Joy & Vogel, 2015). Similarly, Boudreau et al. (2009) contend that Toronto's approach to managing its diversity, although positive, is instrumentalist and. The instrumental approach to diversity diversity as a 'marketable asset', as long as its contributions are measurable in economic terms. In other words, diversity is positively perceived only as long as it can be capitalised upon for profit and economic gains. This approach to diversity is thus subject to dispute, due to its potential to exacerbate exclusion and inequality in the city. This is exemplified by the case of Jane-Finch, an inner-suburban neighbourhood in the North-west of Toronto, which reflects the highest levels of both diversity and poverty amongst all Toronto neighbourhoods. While affluent Toronto inner-city neighbourhoods thrive as a result of investments and development plans, insufficient attention is accorded to diverse inner-suburban areas such as Jane-Finch, where policy interventions are most needed. This suggests a disparity between the positive discourse surrounding diversity in Toronto and its manifestation in practice.

In light of the mismatch between diversity rhetoric and action, the primary objective of this paper is to explore the relationship between the discourses of diversity in policy and those reproduced and perpetuated by inhabitants who experience diversity on a daily basis. This is achieved through the juxtaposition of the policy discourses (derived from interviews with policy actors and by analysing policy documents) with inhabitants' everyday experiences of diversity. The study focuses specifically on an inner-suburban

neighbourhood, Jane-Finch, which is noted for both its demographic diversity and high concentration of poverty. The selection derives from the assumption that, if diversity is an asset, its positive contributions should pertain not only to affluent inner-city areas, but to all neighbourhoods including impoverished, peripheral areas like Jane-Finch. Does diversity contribute positively to all neighbourhoods, or is a luxury commodity from which only a select group of affluent inner-city patrons can benefit? Does positive diversity discourse go beyond rhetoric to guide behaviour? Answering these questions requires not only a close interrogation of the discourses surrounding diversity, but also grounding these discourses in concrete contexts i.e. exploring how diversity is experienced by inhabitants in practice. While multiple research contributions have highlighted epistemological paradoxes and contradictions in diversity, much of the research on diversity to date remains particularly theoretical in nature. The few existing empirical studies on critical diversity focus predominantly on diversity within organisational settings, management and higher education, rather than on inhabitant diversity at the urban scale (Ahmed, 2007a; 2007b; Benschop, 2001; Essed, 1991; Janssens & Zanoni, 2005; Litvin, 2002; Zanoni & Janssens, 2004). Furthermore, existing research favours the narratives of diversity practitioners and policy makers over the narratives of those belonging to historically-disadvantaged groups (Zanoni, Janssens, Benschop & Nkomo, 2010). The existing body of critical literature can benefit from deep empirical investigations of the discourse and practice of urban diversity which takes into account the perspectives, narratives and experiences of inhabitants (as opposed to the perspectives of policy makers and practitioners only). This is a goal to which this article seeks to contribute.

The paper is structured as follows. Firstly, a brief overview of existing literature on diversity is presented. Secondly, the research approach and methods used to analyse diversity discourses in urban policy and in the lives of inhabitants are outlined. After a brief introduction to Toronto and the case study area respectively, the analysis is presented. Lastly, the results of the comparative analysis are discussed along with the implications of these findings for Toronto policy as well as for future research.

§ 3.2   **Diversity theory and discourses**

§ 3.2.1   **Diversity**

In academic literature, various approaches have been used to conceptualise diversity in urban areas. Some approaches are singular in their focus and concentrate on identifying the 'differences' leading to diversity. These include assimilation, neo-assimilation and cultural pluralism. Other approaches like multi-culturalism, post-multi-culturalism and cosmopolitanism address multiple dimensions of diversity. Although both sets of approaches have contributed significantly towards conceptualising diversity, they have been subject to criticism. The former category is criticised for its failure to capture the dynamic and multiple affiliations of individuals (Hollinger, 1997; Vertovec, 1999), while the latter tends to focus on ethnic and cultural identities, and does not sufficiently address additional factors influencing new diversities in the contemporary urban society, e.g. lifestyles, opportunities, attitudes and activities (Vertovec, 2010; Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010; Tasan-Kok et al., 2013). These criticisms make way for a third category of more recent theoretical developments and approaches to diversity, which address multiple dimensions of diversity as well as the interplay and interaction between them. Examples of these approaches include inter-culturalism, super-diversity and hyper-diversity.

Vertovec's (2007) concept of super-diversity refers to the interplay between the variables contributing to the creation of social difference and population diversity in urban areas, and is presented as a multidimensional perspective on diversity (Humphris, 2014; Vertovec, 2007). While super-diversity has broadened the understanding of diversity, the concept is fairly limited in its scope, focusing only on contemporary immigrant-based urban diversity. Tasan-Kok et al. (2013) further criticise the concept for its limited spatial focus on new patterns of segregation, particularly in relation to new immigrant groups, and on new experiences of space and contact. As an alternative, Tasan-Kok et al. (2013) introduce the concept of 'hyper-diversity'. Unlike super-diversity, hyper-diversity does not focus only on new immigrant communities, but on "a wider scope of a diversity that includes different lifestyles within and between groups, and spatial segregation in terms of ethnicity and socio-economic variables as well as including trends in the native population, and their impact on the relationships with newcomers" (18). At its core, hyper-diversity acknowledges that people belonging to the same ethnic group may demonstrate different attitudes, orientations, values, and activity patterns, and engage in

different daily and lifetime routines. Thus, categories under which people are usually classified (e.g. class or immigrant groups) have less and less predictive power over these matters.

Problems with diversity and its variations

The concept of diversity has been subject to stringent criticism, particularly from feminist, critical race and post-colonial scholarship (Stratton & Ang, 1994; Essed & Goldberg, 2002; Puwar, 2004; Gunew, 2004; Ahmed & Swan, 2006; Ahmed, 2007a; 2007b). Ahmed (2007a) criticises diversity for being detached from histories and struggles for justice, thus propagating rather than transforming organisational structures. For Benschop (2001), the notion of diversity does not appeal strongly enough to social justice. Critical scholarship in educational studies and management studies often problematise diversity, highlighting its depoliticised deployment within management, which individuates difference and conceals collective experiences of systemic discrimination and inequality. In addition, talking about diversity does not necessarily entail commitment to practising diversity (Deem & Ozga, 1997).

While more recent approaches to diversity (i.e. super-diversity and hyper-diversity) address population diversity more comprehensively, they too have been criticised for focusing primarily on 'global cities', overlooking the more deteriorated, dilapidated and remote rural and suburban outlying areas (Humphris, 2014). This is despite increasing evidence for both the escalating poverty and racialisation of north-American suburbs (Frey, 2001; 2006; Puentes & Warren, 2006; Murphy, 2007; Holliday & Dwyer, 2009). Furthermore, these theories tend to 'flatten differences' i.e. fail to consider the various social positions and hierarchies within and between categories of difference. Issues of power, social position and politics are thus often neglected in the methodology and analysis of frameworks such as super-diversity and hyper-diversity. In addition, addressing many different categories within one theoretical approach, or in the words of Judith Butler (1990), 'the exhaustion of the et cetera', brings about challenges in the conceptualisation, operationalisation and conduction of research (Ibid). Super-diversity research has been said to cause analytical confusion (Sigona 2013), in that its scope of analysis is particularly broad. As a result, it may be unclear whether the super-diversity is related to an individual, the neighbourhood, the city, or society as a whole. The absence of power from super-diversity scholarship further results in a non-critical stance in relation to diversity. In summary, conventional unidimensional notions of diversity allow for the consideration of one category at a time, while multi-dimensional diversity frameworks like super-diversity and hyper-diversity address

different categories at once. Neither approach, however, takes into account the intersection of different categories, and thus fails to adequately address issues of privilege and oppression.

§ 3.2.3   **Diversity and multiculturalism in Canada**

In Canada, multiculturalism is a state-initiated enterprise, with its dedicated legal structures consisting of legislation, policies and administrative bureaus. Sociologist Himani Bannerji (2000) identifies multiculturalism as a state-sanctioned, state-organised ideological affair which found entry onto the Canadian political stage following the influx of immigrants from ex-colonised third world countries throughout the 1960s and 1970s. This increase in immigration is attributed to the Liberal Party's open-door immigration policy, adopted in alignment with Canada's aspiration for capitalist growth and liberal democracy. As a result, multiculturalism did not target, nor was it inspired by, European immigrants, despite their outstanding cultural and linguistic differences (Bannerji, 2000).

The discourse of multiculturalism in Canada holds at its core the notion of diversity, which, in its political use, transcends its descriptive function as a discourse and emerges instead as a social management tool. From a purely descriptive stance, diversity addresses heterogeneity and difference without considering the underlying power relations. As a political tool, however, the notion of diversity detaches difference from its political and cultural content. Diversity's political function is thus to depoliticise, i.e. On the one hand, it culturalises our existence and politics by presenting social being as a matter of cultural essence. On the other hand, it disarticulates culture from hegemony, providing a de-politicised and de-materialised reading of culture (Bannerji, 2000; 1991; Kymlicka, 1995; Goonewardena, Rankin & Weinstock, 2004). In the words of Bannerji (2000), the ideological nature of diversity is evident from *"its frequent use and efficacy in the public and official, that is, institutional realms. [...] serving as a form of moral regulation of happy co-existence, [...] it helps to obscure deeper/structural relations of power, such as racism and sexism or racist heterosexism, [...] and reduces the problem of social justice into questions of curry and turban"* (547; 549). Thus, by obscuring power and structure (de-politicization), and erasing Canada's colonial history (de-historicisation), the discourse of diversity and the politics of multiculturalism can hinder structural and social change and result in maintaining the status quo of inequality and domination.

In addition to Bannerji's critical work, multiple studies have indicated a gap between official word and deed when dealing with multiculturalism generally (Qadeer, 1997; Milroy & Wallace, 2001; Siemiatycki et al, 2003) and Canadian multiculturalism particularly (Goonewardena, Rankin & Weinstock, 2004; Goonewardena & Kipfer, 2005; Siemiatycki, 2011; Rankin & McLean, 2015). There is, however, much to be gained from deep empirical investigation as the existing critical literature mostly stays at the level of theorization. This study thus aims to contribute to the same line of inquiry, by providing empirical evidence to our understanding of how the reality of diversity compares with its premise as a political discourse.

§ 3.3   Research Methods

§ 3.3.1   Data collection

Data was collected across two different fieldwork periods, conducted between September and November 2013, and September and October 2014 respectively. In the first period, qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted with 22 key government and non-government policy actors and social planners. The purpose of these interviews was to highlight the dominant discourses regarding diversity in Toronto's policy sphere. In addition to the data arising from the interviews, 21 of Toronto's urban policy documents were analysed. The selection of policy documents encompasses documents that were identified by informants as most relevant for the governance of diversity in Toronto. These documents fall under 9 policy areas, viz. General Urban Policy; Children and Youth; Citizenship, Integration, and Newcomers; Education; Housing; Neighbourhood Policy; Safety; Social Services, including policy for Women, Homeless and Disabled people; and Work and Income. In addition, governmental and non-governmental views on policy addressing diversity were elicited.

The second fieldwork period consisted of 50 semi-structured interviews conducted with inhabitants of the Jane-Finch neighbourhood, each lasting between 45 and 90 minutes. The informants were initially recruited through local associations, and later via snowballing. The aim of these interviews was to identify the main discourses commonly used by inhabitants and to explore how diversity is experienced by people in their day-to-day lives. While the interview sample represents multiple dimensions

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of diversity in Jane-Finch, it comprises mostly female informants (36 out of 50 informants). For detailed information regarding the informants, see appendix. This was partly due to logistics i.e. time constraints and limited access to male informants due to their low participation rates in local associations. Interviews were also conducted mostly during working hours when the male members were unavailable due to work, school, etc. Young racialised males aged 18-35 were especially hard to reach. This in itself is an interesting observation, as many of the interviewed service providers and youth outreach workers admitted to facing difficulties in serving and accessing young racialised males, who are considered to be most at risk of becoming involved in drugs, gangs and violent acts in the area (Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2014).

The data was analysed using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), a methodology allowing for the exploration of not only the meaning and construction of discourses, but also their relation to the social structures and power relationships that shape them. It also allowed me to investigate why certain representations seem to dominate our thinking, despite the potential diversity of the discourse (Bryman, 2008). The Nvivo software was used to code and categorise the qualitative data, which eased navigation of the data, given that the sample was relatively large for qualitative research. It further allowed for the identification of themes in the data and the creation of linkages and relationships.

The analysis was guided by the following research questions:

1   *To what extent do dominant policy discourses regarding diversity in Toronto resemble those of the inhabitants, based on their daily experiences with diversity?*
2   *How do diversity discourses impact inhabitants' perceptions of their neighbours?*
3   *How do these discourses impact inhabitants' interactions with neighbours?*
4   *To what extent do inhabitants prioritise diversity when making relocation decisions?*

Therefore, this study seeks to both explore the discourses of diversity reproduced by policy and inhabitants, as well as how inhabitants experience diversity in their daily lives.

Discourses, as defined by Rogers (2004), are systemic clusters of themes that function as 'ways of representing'. In other words, discourse is "a *way of constituting a particular view on social reality*" (Bryman, 2008: 501). Discourses give meaning to social life, make certain actions possible or desirable, and are used by different actors in society to legitimise their activities and positions (Ibid). Gibson (2005) suggests that research should avoid a reductionist approach by pursuing detailed analyses of discourses which are situated in "*the material context of both their production and reception*" (1693). Gotham (2004) similarly stresses the merits of investigating the "*economic, political and social forces that are entangled with cultural images and discursive practices*".

The importance of situating an analysis of discourses in socioeconomic and political context is further emphasised by Young et al. (2006). This study seeks to further contribute to literature which grounds textual and discursive analysis in context, in alignment with contributions made by Gotham (2004), Gibson (2005), and Young et al. (2006).

Introduction to the case study area

The research was conducted in the city of Toronto, Canada, which boasts a current population of 2.79 million, with 5.6 million in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) (Bourne, Hutton, Shearmur & Simmons, 2011). Toronto is considered to be one of the most diverse cities in the world based on its population statistics. According to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), Toronto's metropolitan area population comprises 46.0% foreign-born and 52.4% Canadian-born (non-immigrant) citizens. Of the Canadian-born nationals, 0.7% are Aboriginal (Statistics-Canada, 2011). While factors of globalisation, population flow, and increased migration have led to greater diversity within the city, many newcomers face discrimination in the labour market, they have limited access to resources (in particular, affordable housing), and are subject to poor quality of life. In reality, Toronto is a polarised city wherein spatial and socio-economic inequality among residents is steadily increasing (Joy & Vogel, 2015). The city's population reflects more than 200 different ethnic groups, many of whom were original settlers to inner-city Toronto, and who, in recent years, are facing increasing suburbanisation (Joy & Vogel, 2015; Siemiatycki, 2011). As a result, many immigrants have settled in areas of concentrated poverty, including two of Toronto's inner-suburbs, Scarborough and North York. Toronto's 'new' immigrants face challenges in finding affordable and adequate housing, discrimination in the housing market, and overcrowding (Preston et al., 2011). In addition to insufficient affordable public and private housing, Toronto's inner-suburbs reflect a high resident turn-over, poor infrastructure, and gang- and gun-violence-related issues (Joy & Vogel, 2015). Planning efforts in Toronto have thus been criticised by multiple scholars for promoting elitist inner-city reformist politics, which grants insufficient attention to working-class and migrant populations in the inner-suburbs, particularly in terms of their access to housing and their employment conditions (see Joy & Vogel, 2015; Boudreau, 1999; Boudreau, Keil & Young, 2009).

The research was conducted in Jane-Finch, a neighbourhood located in the inner-suburb of North York in the northwest end of the GTA. Jane-Finch was originally developed as a model suburb in the 1960s with adequate public housing, and was

intended to be host to a socially diverse population. Initially it included a large stock of public housing and experienced a considerable wave of immigration from the Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia, Africa, and South America. The neighbourhood has one of the highest proportions of youth, sole-supported families, refugees and immigrants, people without a high-school diploma, low-income earners, and public housing tenants of any community in Toronto. In addition, an equally diverse population is accommodated in middle-class detached and semi-detached houses, townhouses, and high-rise tower blocks in Jane-Finch (Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2014). Contradictions in Toronto's planning (i.e. valuing diversity in rhetoric, but overlooking the working class and minority-occupied inner-suburbs despite their rich diversity) render Jane-Finch the ideal case study in which to compare discourses surrounding diversity in policy and in practice.

	TORONTO	JANE-FINCH
Area (km^2)	632	21
Total population	2,503,000	80,150
Age		
0-19	16.1%	43.4%
20-64	69.9%	43.1%
>65	14.0%	13.6%
Percentage of population not born in Canada	50.0	60.0
Persons 25 or over without a school certificate, diploma or degree	18%	35%
Average household income	C$80,300	C$53,900
Unemployment rate	6.7%	9.2%

TABLE 3.1 Key characteristics of Jane-Finch and Toronto / Source: Statistics Canada, 2006

§ 3.4   Policy diversity discourses

Diversity is considered a positive attribute by Toronto policies, and the concept is used to promote Toronto's image as an inclusive and tolerant city. Diversity is defined in policy as a "*key competitive strength upon which the City must build*" (Immigration and Settlement Policy Framework, 2000), and "a *source of social, cultural and economic enrichment and strength, and of national/international prestige*" (City of Toronto Multilingual Services Policy, 2002). Although the City of Toronto's Strategic

Action 2013-2018 policy identifies the promotion and celebration of diversity as key components of the city's vision (3), it also suggests that diversity be considered an is an economic driver and asset that should be leveraged (14). These examples all show how in Toronto policy diversity is embraced mainly because it can potentially be capitalised on for economic gain. Diversity is thus celebrated for its economic and monetary potential and for its capacity as a competitive tool. However, regarding diversity as positive only when it can bring about economic benefits requires rendering invisible types of diversity that are not economically beneficial. For example, racialised lower-income families would be unlikely to contribute to a positive, potentially economically-beneficial view of diversity, and are thus overlooked by policy-makers in talking about diversity. For instance, it would be hard to believe that a racialized lower-income family is perceived to contribute to such diversity.

The instrumentalisation of diversity as a competitive advantage is most visible in the Toronto Economic Development Strategy (2000), which states that:

"Regional competitive advantage is derived from building upon the particular and unique strengths of that region, the strengths that Toronto has that its competitor cities may not. These strengths include Toronto's ethnic diversity. [...] Toronto also has the greatest cultural, linguistic and socio-economic diversity of any city in the world. These are key competitive strengths the City must build on. [...] [diversity] is what inspires creativity and innovation, creating opportunities in so many different areas of endeavour, and it is why Toronto is home to so many talented artists, educators, entrepreneurs, skilled tradespeople, researchers, professional, and community leaders."

As stated in the quote above, diversity in Toronto is marketed as a competitive strength in policy, bolstered by those groups who contribute to creative industries, arts and culture and the economy of the city. However, by disregarding groups who are considered unable to contribute to economic competitiveness (e.g. the homeless, the racialised poor, welfare recipients etc.), policy discourses create a subtle differentiation between what is perceived as desirable and undesirable diversity. Therefore, the types of diversity that cannot be capitalised upon for economic gains are regarded as undesirable. Because income inequality is closely related to geographical location in Toronto (i.e. a concentration of poor, racialised communities in the inner-suburbs), undesirable diversity and those groups representing it are disregarded not only in policy discourses, but also in property investments. This in turn bears further spatial consequences for the city (e.g. segregation and gentrification in the inner-city).

Discourses reproduced by policy actors during interviews reflect the celebration and promotion of diversity as a marketable asset evident in policy documents. Identifying

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Toronto's diversity as a *tremendous asset and strength,* one policy maker stated the following:

"People who uproot their lives, sometimes taking significant risks to come to this country, are already somewhat entrepreneurial. I think we still need to figure out how to unleash some of that entrepreneurial potential [...] and think about how to take advantage of the fact that Toronto is one of the most diverse cities in the world. in terms of both developing a more entrepreneurial based economy, providing more opportunities for people to unleash those energies and also taking advantage of their amazing connections across the globe to better situate ourselves competitively in a global economy." [Male, City of Toronto's Employment and Social Services, Director]

Emphasis on the financial benefits of diversity appeared to be a common thread among many interviews. Furthermore, the interviews highlighted the fact that even though the discourses surrounding diversity in policy transcend the conventional categories of ethnicity and gender, they often operate at an individual level.

"Often everybody thinks about diversity as a room full of different colours, but it is not about that. For me it was recognising individual diversity and the uniqueness of the individual". [Female, City of Toronto's Park, Forestry & Recreation, Community Recreation Branch, Manager of community development]

Therefore, while diversity appears to be widely celebrated in policy, implicit differentiations between types of diversity are evident, based on whether the type of diversity is considered to be competitively advantageous or not. This in turn creates a hierarchy among diversity types and those who embody them.

§ 3.5   **Inhabitants' diversity discourses**

Living with ethnic and cultural diversity is considered a daily reality in Jane-Finch. The majority of informants were aware of their neighbours' cultural backgrounds, and positively appraised the diversity in their immediate surroundings. The area's long history with and extensive experience of diversity, coupled with the legacy of the Canadian multiculturalism policy, has promoted a general civility towards diversity in the neighbourhood. Diversity has thus become 'common place' in Jane-Finch, and local residents experience it as a normal aspect of their daily lives. Common-place diversity emerges over time as an outcome of processes of neighbourhood

diversification (Wessendorf, 2013). However, despite the normalisation of diversity in Jane-Finch, the interviews revealed a disparity between the reproduction of positive narratives about diversity and the inhabitants' daily experiences of diversity. In fact, *civility towards diversity* in Jane-Finch goes hand in hand with *essentialisation* based on race, class, and gender, among other markers i.e. categorising people into groups which exhibit fixed mental and behavioural traits (Biddis 1979). While diversity is generally positively appraised, inhabitants' perceptions of themselves, each other, and the area in general are shaped largely by racist and classist stereotypes. Although diversity is celebrated, tension along axes such as class, gender and race still exist. This resonates with some residents' understanding and perceptions of diversity, and a common discourse amongst the residents is the fear or pathologisation of the undesirable 'other', for example the poor, welfare recipients, blacks, single mothers, and racialised youth. This is exemplified in a quote by Johnny, a middle-aged Indian homeowner, who commented on the difference between how he perceives other homeowners in his street and those living in Toronto housing:

"This part is all retired people and people who have settled down here and bought houses, right? But I think if you go a bit down there is a lot of people living on welfare and so they have a different set of constraints. [...] There should be work done, I think in terms of people getting educated and more civically conscious so that they know their civic duties. That okay this is a house for us and we can take ownership as opposed to being entitled. Turning from a purely welfare mentality. For some of us because of that background and upbringing it comes naturally but for some people it does not happen at all." [Male, Indian, 46-60, homeowner]

The quote provides an example of how essentialised characteristics are attributed to welfare recipients, especially regarding civic consciousness, responsibility and entitlement. It also suggests a sense of superiority and paternalism on the part of non-welfare recipients, evident in Johnny's suggestion that welfare recipients need to *be educated into civic responsibility*. It should be noted that the existing stock of Toronto housing in Jane-Finch accommodates mostly racialised (often female-headed) households, and that essentialisation and stereotyping of these households take place at the intersection of race, class and gender. Stereotypes targeting working-class residents, welfare recipients in particular, were especially common among homeowners and households living in the slightly more affluent parts of the area.

In many instances, civility towards diversity did not go beyond lip service as many seemed to hold double standards when it came to attitudes towards diversity, especially in terms of the tensions experienced in daily encounters. For example, Gloria, an elderly Jamaican resident, expressed very positive sentiments towards the

general diversity of the neighbourhood but adhered to stereotypes when describing a conflict with a neighbour:

"She uses the Muslim card, oh you don't like me because I'm a Muslim. So if anybody says anything she'll complain that you are doing it because she is a Muslim! So people don't want to talk. Diversity is not supposed to be like that. And if a Muslim person is someone like that who can come in and terrorise other people, you can't do anything because she is a Muslim." [Female, Jamaican, 61-75, Private housing resident]

Gloria, in this quote, emphasises the religious identity of her neighbour above any other marker when putting the tension experienced into context. The expression 'using the Muslim card' further trivialises issues such as Islamophobia and discrimination towards Muslims (Hooks, 2003).

Notwithstanding the general positive sentiment towards diversity among informants, individuals belonging to minority groups commonly reported facing prejudice and micro-aggressions in the area. Heba, an Egyptian Toronto-housing resident in her 50s, described her experience of prejudice from neighbours for wearing a hijab as follows:

"No, I am not similar to lots of people in Jane-Finch because of my culture and my religion. I am different because you know, I'm a Muslim. They are Christian and have different religions. Some people mind or don't agree that I wear that [points to her scarf]". [Female, Egyptian, 46-60, Public housing resident]

Furthermore, we observed that informants' perceptions of diversity influenced their interactions with others. For example, the aforementioned double standard of civility towards diversity on the one hand, and stereotyping and prejudice on the other, impacted the way that residents interacted with one another. A common reaction from informants who have internalised negative stereotypes was that they would prefer to avoid contact with specific groups and using certain spaces, rather than embracing diversity. Gita, an Indian homeowner, expressed her disdain for the Toronto-housing-occupied part of the neighbourhood:

"I like my street mostly and the nearby area here. I don't like to go close to the Jane-Finch area, I don't know, because of crime, the black people live there, they bother the people sometimes." [Female, Indian, 31-45, homeowner]

This is an example of stereotyping at the intersection of race and class as it targets, particularly, black Toronto-housing residents. Gita also indicated that her perception was not based on first-hand experience, but on rumours and negative representations in the media. Jane-Finch suffers from a long-standing stigma which further impacts

inhabitants' perceptions of the neighbourhood. It is important to note here that stereotypes and essentialised traits are not only imposed on minority groups by the white Canadian majority, but are also internalised and reproduced daily by minorities themselves. As Gita exemplifies, some informants actively tried to dissociate themselves from the most stigmatised part of the area which is the Jane-finch intersection, associated with poverty, crime, gang-related shootings and drugs. Efforts to dissociate often included residents reproducing negative narratives about the area. This signals the internalisation of an '*inferiority complex*' by minorities, in which they are made to feel inadequate for not adopting the social, cultural and racial norms of the dominant white society (Fanon, 1967). Interestingly, many of the minority residents project this inferiority complex onto other groups deemed more inferior, for example the poor or welfare residents, by reproducing degrading stereotypes.

Regarding the impact of diversity on relocation decisions, based on the interviews it can be stated inhabitants' primary motives for moving to Jane-Finch included affordability of housing and goods in the area, availability of Toronto housing, having social ties in the area, and size and conditions of the dwelling (see Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2015). As previously indicated, Toronto has experienced an ongoing trend of segregation by income. In less than a decade, the city has polarized into wealthy inner-city neighbourhoods and low-income neighbourhoods in the inner-suburbs (Hulchanski, 2010). The polarization is further accompanied by geographic segregation along axes of race, ethnicity, and poverty (Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2013; Hulchanski, 2010; Mustafa, 2013). Thus, the assumption that inhabitants simply 'choose' to relocate to inner-suburban neighbourhoods is simply benign to the broader structural forces that ultimately direct housing decisions. As Hulschanski (2010) rightfully contends, "*it is money that buys choice*". The influx of racialised residents into lower-income inner-suburban neighbourhoods like Jane-Finch over the past years is thus an outcome of the reality that a growing number of ethnic and racialized households in Toronto hold relatively few resources and as a result fewer choices in the housing market. This is exemplified by a quote by Julia, an Argentinian homeowner in her early 40s, regarding her purchase of a house in Jane-Finch despite finding the area unattractive:

"It was because of our budget that we had to buy in this area, because if we were going to go to another area it was really expensive but I don't really like the area." [Female, Argentinian, 31-45, homeowner]

Diversity is thus a de facto outcome of the availability and affordability of housing in Jane-Finch to lower-income ethnically racialised households, rather than a direct pull factor. When making relocation decisions, household resources and specific housing market characteristics tend to outweigh diversity. Diversity influences relocation decisions in the form of preference for proximity to members of the same ethnic group

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or already existing social ties. However, for most informants, affordability was said to be the main reason for choosing to live in Jane-Finch (see Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2015). Juan, a Chilean resident in his 50s who works as a service provider in the area, similarly recognises diversity in Jane-Finch as consequential:

"Yes, in many instances you can say that probably people want to live close to their friends and family but I would say, and you know it is natural that you want to make the best out of the reality […] I will suggest to you that a lot of people end up living here and you know simply because that's what you can afford". [Male, Chilean, 46-60, homeowner]

Diversity appears to be secondary to issues such as poverty, discrimination in the housing market and socio-economic inequality.

Many of the discussions with community workers and non-profit actors revealed that diversity talk is often used to avoid talking about structural inequality (particularly based on race and class) and thus euphemises the subtle oppressions encoded therein. In the following quote, an informant explains the political nature of discourses of diversity and multiculturalism and how they can result in exclusion:

"At the policy level, we have a problem in Canada because we must hide the problem under the disguise of multiculturalism. Oh, we have a wonderful life, we are very inclusive. But when we talk about inclusion we actually marginalise a lot of other groups. […] Multiculturalism works at the very political level. I call them photoshoot opportunities!" [Female, Social Planning Toronto, Community planner]

Similarly, another social worker based in Jane-Finch contended that positive diversity talk, often accompanied by images of 'happy colourful faces' as a visual translation of the metaphor (see Kandola & Fullerton, 1994), does not go beyond rhetoric to create inclusive outcomes:

"On many levels we have been able to come up with languages that will mask the bad odour so the whole notion of inclusion and all those, Canadians are very good at saying those things and that makes you feel very welcome. But if you look at the practices that will tell you where the problems are. […] In some ways, the glamorisation [of diversity] is like those Benetton ads." [Male, Chilean, 46-60, homeowner]

Diversity and multiculturalism can thus be instrumentalised within policy to side-line socio-economic inequality and discrimination. By leaving locations of marginality and subordination unattended, diversity runs the risk of not only failing to implement structural change, but potentially preventing it.

Analysis and discussion

The empirical analysis indicates that diversity is largely normalised in Toronto. There does, however, seem to be an unwritten distinction between desirable and undesirable forms of diversity, as certain forms are left out of the policy discourse. The policy discourses have thus led to a normalization of hegemonic discourses regarding diversity. On the one hand, they have set the agenda that diversity is good, thereby creating civility towards it. On the other hand, this normalization does not pertain to any type of diversity but rather to its acceptable forms (e.g. entrepreneurs and creative types). Diversity is therefore simultaneously valued and pathologised.

In marketing the imagery of Toronto as a city that accepts and celebrates diversity as its strength, marginalized groups and lifestyles are excluded, as keeping up with this imagery requires not only economic capital but also cultural capital and performance of certain lifestyle which includes particular forms of consumption and taste. Similarly, the marketed identity of a hyper-diverse individual as mobile and fluid contradicts that of the immobile working-class other. This explains why Jane-Finch, despite its diversity, is clearly not a development and investment 'hub'. Thus, in the words of Latham (2003), *"the diversity celebrated within contemporary cities is mediated, engineered, and packaged"* (1702). While inner-city Toronto is marked by its diversity, this is a diversity that is planned, legitimated, organised and commodified as part of the process of promoting the city (Young et al., 2006).

Furthermore, as reflected by the interviews with Jane-Finch inhabitants, diversity as a concept is celebrated, but tensions along the axes of class, gender, race, and religion still dominate residents' daily encounters with diversity. Again, at the neighbourhood level, civility towards diversity goes hand in hand with essentialisations and categorisations on the basis of these markers and their intersections, as well as negative stereotyping of what is not considered to be acceptable or desirable diversity. These essentialised stereotypes in turn shape the residents' general perceptions of one another. The analysis further shows that within Toronto policy, diversity can function to render the intersection of multiple historically-marginalised identities invisible, thereby exacerbating exclusion and inequality, proving that diversity discourses are inherently political in nature. The use of diversity within an instrumentalist approach further signals a hierarchy between different types of diversities i.e. desirable and undesirable, which stigmatises the intersection of certain identity categories, requiring their elimination, either via exclusion and urban cleansing or assimilation (Anthias, 2013).

Multiculturalism in Canada has brought about a shift in terminology from categories of identity to a broader notion of diversity. The concept is, however, as concealing as it is encompassing. While diversity does promote recognition of the complexity of identities, it fails to address how pillars of identity (race, class and gender, among others) can be sources of social inequality and, therefore, does not promote social justice. It does not challenge inequalities, nor does it aspire to, as long as it affirms the existing power structures and social hierarchies. By euphemising structural inequalities, diversity can in fact prevent transformative change and function as an agenda for reproducing inequality.

In conclusion, while there seems to be a resemblance between policy and inhabitant discourses regarding diversity at the level of rhetoric (i.e. normalisation of and civility towards diversity), the manifestation of these discourses in practice often does not match the rhetorical stance. From a research point of view, it is therefore important to differentiate between discourses and practices. By exploring discourses without contextualising them in existing practices, societal structures and local histories have only but 'scratched the surface' of the problem. Critical research could further investigate how processes of marginalisation on the basis of race, class, gender, and multiple other markers are reified and reduced to easily marketable constructions of difference and identity, such as diversity. Ultimately, whether the discourse of diversity, with its epistemological deficits, can advance the agenda of social justice by going beyond its current political deployment within capitalism in line with safeguarding the status quo, remains a burning question.

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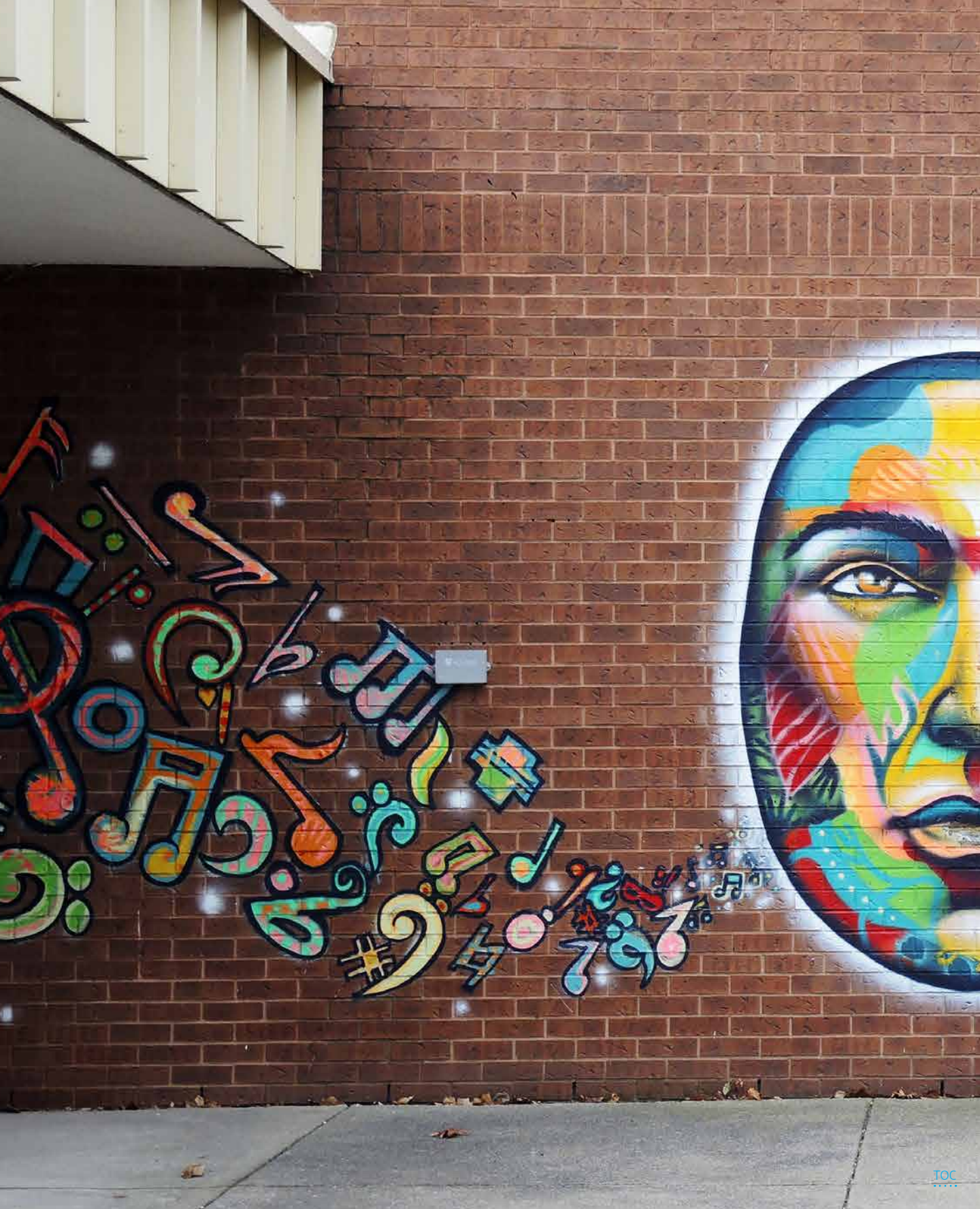
4 Diversity and social cohesion: the case of Jane-Finch, a highly diverse lower income Toronto neighbourhood

Abstract

Diversity has increasingly emerged as the core focus of many studies concerning factors impacting on social cohesion. Various scholars have concluded that diversity is detrimental to cohesion. Most of this research, however, draws generalisations based upon quantitative data and fails to account for the impact of inequality, segregation and discrimination, and their interconnectedness to diversity. This research provides an in-depth qualitative analysis of the perceptions of inhabitants of a diverse Toronto neighbourhood regarding formal and informal interactions, common values and attachment. The findings suggest that the internalisation of gendered and class-based racism by inhabitants plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions and interactions.

Keywords: *diversity, social cohesion, Toronto*

§ 4.1 Introduction

In recent decades, diversity has occupied a central position in academic and policy debates concerning social cohesion. From politics to journalism, we are witnessing the wide-spread sentiment that diversity, particularly racial and ethnic diversity due to migration patterns, population movements and increasing numbers of asylum seekers, has an overwhelmingly erosive impact on national identity and is threatening our societal cohesion. The public and political rhetoric, although emotionally based and populist, often relies on a specific line of scholarship which primarily argues that communities with high levels of racial and cultural diversity have lower levels of trust and fewer formal and informal interactions (Putnam, 2007; Alesina and Ferrara, 2000; 2002; Costa and Kahn, 2003). Thus, according to this logic, for there to be

social cohesion, a certain level of homogeneity must be maintained. Such theories have been instrumentalised to advance agendas in favour of assimilating the 'other' into the mainstream (i.e. assimilationism), abandoning multiculturalist and pluralist approaches in the realm of policy and shifting public opinion (Letki, 2008). However, while assimilationist tendencies in theory and policy prevail, we have also witnessed the emergence of a wave of counter-theories grounded in the belief that diversity is positive and must be embraced as a trait that can bolster social cohesion (among other things). The contributions of such works are especially notable in the area of social mixing – both in terms of theory and policy practice (see Graham et al., 2009; Camina and Wood, 2009; Joseph and Chaskin, 2010). Social mixing policies identify and encourage greater mixing across income groups and between ethnic communities as a tool for establishing and strengthening social cohesion (Tasan-kok, van Kempen, Raco, and Bolt, 2013).

These two lines of argument, despite their differences, share one fundamental similarity. They both posit diversity as having a central role in relation to social cohesion, with one putting diversity on a pedestal, while the other seeks its erasure. However, by promoting a one-dimensional relationship between diversity and social cohesion, we lose sight of other important factors that impact on cohesion (such as deprivation, neighbourhood status and institutionalised racism). Research increasingly shows that low neighbourhood status, poverty, stigmatisation of lower income areas with high concentrations of ethnic minority households, and racial discrimination have a great impact on how inhabitants of an area perceive and interact with one another (Li et al., 2005; Oliver and Mandelberg, 2000; Oliver and Wong, 2003). The framing or priming of racial attitudes and interracial relations, the presence of explicit information and implicit cues about racial relations, and the racial coding of crime and welfare in the minds of citizens all significantly influence attitudes towards diversity (Letki, 2008). Moreover, there is evidence for the fact that socio-economic polarization and segregation often develop geographically along racial lines. Thus, neighbourhoods with high rates of poverty and low socioeconomic status often tend to exhibit high racial diversity (Hulchanski, 2010; Sampson and Groves, 1989; Sampson et al., 1997).

Diversity is a complex concept that encompasses a wide array of categories. Ethnicity is often regarded as the dominant category of diversity, such that many studies have used the concepts of 'diversity' and 'ethnic diversity' interchangeably (Lancee & Dronkers, 2011; Talen, 2010; and Piekut, Rees, Valentine, & Kupiszewski, 2012). However, diversity can go beyond the conventional demographic categories and include various collective and individual markers, on the basis of which identity is constructed, from socioeconomic class to lifestyles and hobbies. Despite recent efforts to address different categories of diversity within one theoretical approach (e.g. 'super-diversity' in Vertovec, 2007; and 'hyper-diversity' in Tasan-kok et al., 2013), analytical confusion

around the notion of diversity remains largely intact as theory has yet to offer an adequate response to the challenges of operationalising the concept. While it is difficult to offer a clear-cut definition of diversity – not least because informants had various subjective understandings of the notion – within the confines of this research, the main categories of diversity addressed include those readily visible, or in the words of Harrison, Price and Bell (1998), 'surface-level diversity' categories such as age, race and gender, as well as deep-level diversity categories such as religious beliefs, cultural and class-based norms.

In this paper, I argue that an overemphasis on the impact of ethnic diversity on social cohesion (either in the form of demonisation or glamorisation) euphemizes the problem of structural inequality. The current politics of social cohesion in Western societies seem to be primarily concerned with integrating the 'other' into what is perceived as 'normal', or in the words of Yuval-Davis et al., 'reasserting the view that the progress of groups away from racism and disadvantage lies in convincing them to go mainstream' (529). The concept of social cohesion does not convey the same level of awareness of issues of inequality, racism and exclusion as the concept of social justice (Baeker, 2002; 1998; Jenson, 1998). In fact, a depoliticised deployment of the notion through the sensationalisation of diversity and cultural difference can function to divert focus away from the root causes of marginalisation, which is a by-product of economic, political and institutional practices. The prevention of exclusion of marginalised groups relies less on achieving social cohesion and more on addressing power dynamics that perpetuate systemic discrimination and inequity (Baeker, 2002).

The main aim of the article is to unpack the perceptions of the residents of a diverse neighbourhood regarding different aspects of social cohesion, in particular common values, formal and informal interactions and neighbourhood attachment. Adopting a qualitative approach, the article provides insights into socioeconomic and political structures underlying inhabitants' perceptions and interactions in the Jane-Finch neighbourhood of Toronto as an example of a highly diverse lower income neighbourhood. While a number of rigorous qualitative efforts to analyse the relationship between social cohesion and diversity have been made (e.g. Hudson, Phillips, and Ray, 2007; Hickman, Crowley, and Mai, 2008; Jayaweera and Choudhury, 2008; Harris and Young, 2009; Noble, 2009; Wise and Velayutham, 2009; Hickman, Mai, and Crowley, 2012; Wessendorf, 2013, 2014), the use of qualitative methods is still innovative in this research domain. An in-depth qualitative analysis of the relationship between diversity and social cohesion would be beneficial insofar as it allows us to interrogate the protagonists' perceptions and discursive practices in light of the socioeconomic and political forces that shape and reproduce them, thereby examining the relationship in a more systemic manner. Furthermore, minority groups are often treated as objects of politics rather than political subjects (Pero, 2013).

Engaging with the narratives and experiences of inhabitants (in particular those in the margins) allows the shifting of our gaze to see them as 'subjects' who are influenced by institutionalised racism, exclusion and criminalisation, while simultaneously being subject to essentialised public representations by the state and media.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Firstly, a brief overview of the current literature on social cohesion in general and its relation to diversity in particular is presented. Subsequently, the research methodology and the specifics of the fieldwork experience are outlined. After a brief introduction to the case study area and an overview of Canadian multiculturalism respectively, the analysis is presented. In the final section, the research results are discussed along with implications for further research.

§ 4.2 Social cohesion

Social cohesion has undoubtedly been a popular notion in urban research and policy over recent decades. While many studies have offered various definitions and operationalisations of the notion, the lack of unanimity around what constitutes, strengthens and undermines social cohesion signals the complex, multifaceted nature of the concept (see Portes and Vickstrom, 2011). The definitions of social cohesion provided by the literature generally remain at an abstract level, such as, 'the glue that holds society together' (Tolsma, van der Meer & Gesthuizen, 2009; Maloutas & Pantelidou Malouta, 2004), or what makes a society 'hang together so as to ensure that all the component parts of society fit together and contribute to its collective objectives and well-being, and eradicate conflict and disruptive behaviour' (Kearns and Forrest, 2000). Detailed elaborations of the concept have often included the breaking down of cohesion into its constituent elements, most commonly outlined as social contacts and social networks, social solidarity, social order, shared values and norms, place attachment and a shared identity (Forrest and Kearns, 2001; Tasan-Kok, van Kempen, Raco, & Bolt, 2013; Letki, 2008). Moreover, some scholars have emphasised the conceptual and operational similarities between social cohesion and social capital, and some have used the two concepts interchangeably as a result (Letki, 2008; Laurence, 2009; Osberg, 2003). Focusing on social capital, these studies tend to place more emphasis on social networks, trust and participation in associations in their understanding of cohesion (see also Putnam 1995, 2001). It is clear that social cohesion is a fuzzy concept and admits of various understandings. A rigorous analysis of the phenomenon thus demands a careful operationalisation.

This study specifically examines residents' perceptions regarding the following components of cohesion: common values, formal and informal interactions, and neighbourhood attachment. Common values and norms constitute a widely shared perspective on social cohesion in the literature. Kearns and Forrest (2000) identified common values as a primary component of cohesion, as they enable society to identify with and pursue common objectives and have a set of moral and behavioural norms and codes of conduct in common. Common values are generally considered to reinforce political engagement and participation rather than indifference and apathy, which often characterise modern-day individualism (Bellah, 1985; Wilson, 1985). An emphasis on common values can also carry integrationist and assimilationist undertones, as it often relies on the construction of an essentialised national identity (e.g. Canadian-ness) which minorities are expected to integrate into. The discourse of integration into national values also relies upon assigning homogenised cultural essences – described as traditional values – to minority groups. The problem is, however, that many of these assigned values stem from orientalist perceptions of non-Western countries (e.g. regarding patriarchy or violence against women as congenial to the national identity of Muslims, Indians and South Asians). The discourse on common values in Western countries such as Canada thus embodies a hierarchy of cultures which is simultaneously shaped by and shaping colonial and imperialist discourses (Bannerji, 1991, 2000).

The existence of social ties and networks of varying kinds also plays a quintessential role in creating cohesion in a neighbourhood. Social ties not only help maintain social cohesion but also provide support networks among inhabitants, and prevent isolation and marginalisation (Kearns and Forrest, 2000). While previous scholarship has placed a lot of emphasis on the density and strength of social ties, Pahl and Spencer (1997) contended that it is the content, meaning and quality of ties and relationships that are most informative in the study of social cohesion. In addition to ties with family, friends, neighbours, etc., which, in the current study, are regarded as informal ties, another set of social networks, referred to here as formal ties, are deemed important in creating cohesion. Formal ties can be broadly defined as networks of civic engagement, including membership and associational activity in neighbourhood organisations (Kearns and Forrest, 2000). Nevertheless, the literature on social capital and cohesion does not consider all social ties to have a positive impact on social cohesion. Laurence (2008) emphasises that, much like common values, social networks and social capital are politicised concepts, given the delineations between good and bad ties in relation to social cohesion in neighbourhoods. Building on Putnam's (2001) framework of bonding and bridging ties, Laurence further contends that bonding ties among racial minority groups are often seen as threatening to the creation and maintenance of cohesion, while bridging ties across groups are perceived as beneficial and non-threatening.

Furthermore, in addition to social ties and common values, another characteristic commonly associated with social cohesion is neighbourhood attachment. Neighbourhood attachment emphasises the emotional experiences and bonds of people with their neighbourhood (Low and Altman, 1992). There is a general presumption that strong feelings of belonging and attachment to a neighbourhood positively affects adherence to common values, building social networks, creating a sense of security, bonds and solidarity, which are collectively important for creating social cohesion (Low and Altman, 1992; Kearns and Forrest, 2000). However, attachment to one's neighbourhood can have a double-edged impact on social cohesion. One possible downside to place attachment is isolation, namely that people can come to exist in small worlds. This is particularly exacerbated by external forces such as access to affordable housing, racial and socioeconomic segregation and limited mobility for inhabitants of lower income neighbourhoods. In relation to diversity, place attachment coupled with strong bonding ties among ethnic minorities are commonly perceived to pose a threat to the cohesion of the broader community (on the neighbourhood, city or national scales) (Ibid).

§ 4.3   **Diversity and social cohesion**

In theory, diversity is often posited to impact on cohesion dichotomously (either in a positive or negative way). One set of studies, generally comprising quantitative inquiries, ground their argument in the claim that increasing diversity (in particular in relation to ethnicity and socioeconomic status) negatively impacts on social capital and connectedness among inhabitants. Perhaps the most notable among such studies has been Putnam's 'E pluribus unum' study (2007), in which he argued that people tend to retreat from social life or 'pull in like a turtle' in the face of ethnic diversity (149) (for other examples see Kearns and Mason, 2007; on the negative impact of diversity on attachment/belonging see Dekker and Bolt, 2005; Greif, 2009; Feijten and van Ham, 2009; and on eroding trust see Stolle, Soroka, Johnston 2008). Another set of theories (e.g. Kazemipur, 2006; Phan, 2008; Marschall and Stolle, 2004) maintain that diversity reinforces tolerance, acceptance and social interactions among inhabitants. In reality, however, these two patterns are by no means mutually exclusive. The relationship between diversity and social cohesion is rather complex, depending on prior conditions and experiential, historical and personal factors both at the individual and group level (Laurence and Bentley 2015; Livingston, Bailey, and Kearns, 2010). The complexity of the relationship thus casts doubts on the generalisability of either of the two theoretical strands (Schaeffer, 2014; Laurence, 2009; Meer and Tolsma, 2014;

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Ahmadi and Tasan-kok, 2015). Underlying factors such as socioeconomic inequality, neighbourhood status and institutionalised discrimination play important roles in defining the relationship between diversity and social cohesion (see e.g. Letki, 2008; Li et al., 2005; Oliver and Mandelberg, 2000; Oliver and Wong, 2003).

Academic and public discourses concerning cohesion often tend to problematise ethnic and racial diversity above any other factor (e.g. socioeconomic class and gender). The overemphasis on ethnic and cultural differences overshadows the issue of power imbalance and culturalises our existence. Cultural essentialism proposes cultural descriptions as concrete, static, fixed, objective, consensual and uniformly shared by all members of a group, hollowing them out of underlying social relations and thereby obscuring any understanding of difference as a construction of power (Grillo, 2003; Rutherford, 1990). Similarly, ethnicity appears as a 'fact of life' that appeals to supposedly natural distinctions to explain cultural differences (Baumann and Sunier, 1995). Social existence thus becomes a matter of a cultural essence when the social relations of power that create difference are overlooked (Bannerji, 2000). If our cultural differences pose a threat to our societal cohesion, then a solution would be to erase or minimise these differences. However, the homogenisation of cultural traits is arguably not the recipe for success. The approach is often criticised for being grounded in assimilationist notions. Moreover, the very assumption that cohesion is the absence of conflict needs to be revisited. Beaker (2002) suggested a radical change to our approach to social cohesion by proposing that cohesion be regarded not as the absence of conflict (through achieving liberal consensus), but rather as the capacity to manage conflict. In the same vein, diversity can be approached as an 'ongoing negotiation of intersecting and conflicting interests' (Beaker, 2002: 183). Only then can the complex relationship between diversity and social cohesion be reconciled without compromising equity and inclusion. Rigorous qualitative research is needed to enable critical reflection on the concepts of diversity and social cohesion without depoliticising or flattening them, and to further develop an understanding of the relationship that reflects its complexity.

§ 4.3.1 **Multiculturalism and diversity in Canada**

The intersection of cultural diversity with socioeconomic polarisation in Canadian cities such as Toronto challenges Canada's claim to multiculturalism and tolerance (Beaker, 2002). The seeming mismatch between the promise of multiculturalism in policy and the political reality in Canadian cities such as Toronto has been addressed by various Canadian scholars. Bannerji (2000) argued that there is a considerable

gap between the paradigm of multiculturalism and the actuality of immigrant life in Canada, arguing that multiculturalism may have worked less well for racial minorities than for white immigrant groups, as visible minorities evidently have lower relative household income and much higher poverty rates than immigrant groups of European decent (Reitz and Banerjee, 2007). They further face various employment difficulties, especially the discounting of their qualifications and work experience (Li, 2000). The deskilling of non-European immigrants not only takes place through unemployment and underemployment, but also through the institutional decertification of the professionals among these groups (Bolaria and Li, 1988). Canada's Aboriginal communities have also seemingly been excluded from the practice of multiculturalism (see Bannerji, 2000). Similarly, Gordon and Newfield (1996) argued that multiculturalism in the 1980s replaced the emphasis on race and racism with an emphasis on cultural diversity, assigning a creative power to racial groups that lacked political and economic power. This has involved the translation of problems stemming from socioeconomic injustice into issues of culture.

In fact, despite the positive recognition of diversity, a clear pattern of socio-spatial segregation can be observed in the city of Toronto along ethnic lines. Hulchanski (2010) provides rigorous empirical evidence for the increasing concentration of wealth and poverty, and the consolidation of three different 'cities' within Toronto over the course of 35 years, each with distinct income and racial characteristics. The research also shows that of the three cities, the low-income areas (which exhibit high ethnic diversity and are increasingly located on the periphery of the city) have been facing consistent drops in income levels over the past decades. The 2007 report, 'Losing Ground', by United Way Toronto similarly documented income polarisation, intensified precarity in the job market (a rise in insecure, temporary work without benefits), and an increase in the number of households living in poverty. The polarisation of income combined with a divide between urban and suburban areas in Toronto evidently follows a geographic pattern of race and ethnicity, especially considering that Canada's ten most ethnically diverse voting constituencies are located in suburban Toronto, where there has been a significant increase in poverty levels throughout the last decade (Mustafa, 2013).

Therefore, while multiculturalism and its core discourse of diversity have pushed forward the agenda for recognition, this has limited political impact on marginalised groups (especially in the areas of economic redistribution, social justice and anti-racism) (see also Goonewardena, Rankin and Weinstock, 2004; Goonewardena and Kipfer, 2005; Siemiatycki, 2011; Rankin and McLean, 2015). The present article contributes to the body of scholarship critically interrogating the practice of Canadian multiculturalism by exploring the lived experiences of Jane-Finch inhabitants with this central discourse, namely diversity, and in particular its relationship to different aspects of social cohesion.

Methods and context

The present article used qualitative research methods to explore inhabitants' perceptions regarding different aspects of social cohesion in a highly diverse neighbourhood. It aspired to answer the question: *How do the inhabitants of a diverse neighbourhood perceive common values, formal and informal interactions, and neighbourhood attachment?* The data for the study was gathered over a two-month period between September and October 2014, during which 50 semi-structured interviews were conducted with inhabitants of the Jane-Finch neighbourhood of Toronto. Our one-on-one conversations usually lasted between 45 to 90 minutes, and often took place in informants' homes (unless they had requested otherwise). Alternative locations for interviews included locations within the neighbourhood such as public libraries, cafes, restaurants and other common areas. The conversations mostly centred on inhabitants' perceptions of the diversity of their neighbourhood, particularly in relation to their social interactions with neighbours, their participation in neighbourhood associations, their sense of attachment and the values shared with neighbours. The informants were initially recruited through local associations and later through snowballing. This had implications for the research results, as many of the informants involved in the first two weeks of the fieldwork already had contact with local organisations and demonstrated high levels of community involvement. While the sample represents the diversity of Jane-Finch inhabitants with regards to various factors such as age, ethnicity and socioeconomic status, it is predominantly comprised of female informants (36 out of 50). The primary reason for this was that access to male informants proved more difficult, especially access to young racial-minority male youth, due to their low participation rates in local associations. Many conversations with service providers and outreach workers in Jane-Finch similarly revealed that serving and outreach to this group, which in fact is considered most at risk of becoming involved in drugs, gangs and violence in the area, is rather difficult in Jane-Finch. The particularities of the sample were factored into the analysis and are further elaborated on in the analysis section below (Ahmadi & Tasan-kok, 2014) (for detailed information about the informants see the Appendix).

With each informant's consent, the conversations were recorded, transcribed and coded with the use of Nvivo. The texts were later analysed using critical discourse analysis (CDA), which allowed for a close interrogation of the meaning and construction of discourses while contextualising them in terms of underlying power structures (Bryman, 2008).

The case study for this research was Jane-Finch, an inner-suburban neighbourhood located in the northwest of Toronto. Jane-Finch was originally developed in the 1960s as a model suburb with a large stock of public housing to host a socially diverse population. The neighbourhood has experienced considerable waves of immigration coming from the Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia, Africa and South America. It currently accommodates more youth, single-parent families, refugees, individuals without a secondary-school diploma, low income households and public housing tenants than any other neighbourhood in Toronto. The landscape of the neighbourhood consists predominantly of high-rise tower blocks, wide streets and large green areas, adhering generally to the principles of Green Cities. In addition to the towers, which mostly accommodate lower income households, pockets of more affluent detached and semi-detached houses can be found (Ahmadi and Tasan kok, 2014). The coupling of the neighbourhood's outstanding demographic diversity with a high concentration of lower income households, welfare recipients and unemployment makes Jan-Finch an appropriate choice for an in-depth analysis of residents' perceptions of diversity and social cohesion in the context of poverty and deprivation (see Table 1).

Both Jane-Finch and Toronto exhibit very high levels of diversity based on their population characteristics. Toronto has experienced increasing diversity due to globalisation, population movement and increased migration over the past decades. However, new immigrants continue to face challenges, such as discrimination in the labour market, limited access to resources and affordable housing, and poor quality of life in the city. Income polarisation, inequality and segregation along class and racial lines have in fact become the defining characteristics of Toronto (Joy and Vogel, 2015; Siemiatycki, 2011). As a result, many immigrants have settled in inner-suburban areas of Toronto (in particular Scarborough and North York), characterised by their concentrated poverty, high resident turn-over, poor infrastructure, gang presence and gun violence (Joy and Vogel, 2015). Table 1 presents an overview of the general characteristics of Jane-Finch and Toronto.

	TORONTO	JANE-FINCH
Area (km²)	632	21
Total population	2,503,000	80,150
Age		
0-19	16.1%	43.4%
20-64	69.9%	43.1%
>65	14.0%	13.6%
Percentage of population not born in Canada	50.0	60.0
Persons 25 or over without a school certificate, diploma or degree	18%	35%
Average household income	C$80,300	C$53,900
Unemployment rate	6.7%	9.2%

TABLE 4.1 Key characteristics of Jane-Finch and Toronto / Source: Statistics Canada, 2006

§ 4.5   Data and analysis

The following section closely analyses the data derived from in-depth interviews with residents to explore their perceptions of common values, formal and informal relationships, and neighbourhood attachment.

§ 4.5.1   Values and perceptions of the 'other'

With regards to values, most informants mentioned that they did not necessarily feel that they shared the same values as others. They did, however, almost unanimously contend that proximity to diversity led them to feel more tolerant towards different cultures, lifestyles and values to a certain extent. Many claimed that they felt different from other inhabitants in the area but respected others' differences.

Gloria, a Jamaican senior and long-time Jane-Finch resident, claimed that living with diversity had broadened her horizons, as she had been able to draw parallels between different cultures through intercultural exchanges with neighbours:

"I talk to the Vietnamese ladies, I talk to the Indians, the Egyptians and guess what? I feel like we were all brought up the same! The food is the same, we just call it different names! It was so funny when you really think, I'm from Jamaica, you are from Vietnam, you are from India but the bringing up of our generation was the same! So I feel like we are not that much different except from the fact that we speak different languages, we are all human beings and we were all brought up with our values." [Female, Jamaican, 61-75, private housing resident]

The quote above exemplifies how living with diversity can bring about opportunities to exchange values and cultural traits. However, conversations with informants revealed that these exchanges often do not result in the challenging or changing of pre-existing social hierarchies among residents that are due to their class status and ethnic and religious background, which condition how inhabitants perceive one another. For example, Johnny, who is a middle-aged homeowner of Indian descent, claimed to hold values that were more similar to other middle-income homeowners in his street than low income households living in Toronto housing in other parts of the neighbourhood:

"This part is all retired people and people who have settled down here and bought houses, right? But I think if you go a bit down there is a lot of people living on welfare and so they have [a] different set of constraints. […] There should be work done, I think, in terms of people getting educated and more civically conscious so that they know their civic duties. That OK, this is a house for us and we can take ownership as opposed to being entitled, like I should get all these programs and then that is it. Turning from a purely welfare mentality. For some of us because of that background and upbringing it comes naturally but for some people it does not happen at all." [Male, Indian, 46-60, homeowner]

Implicit in Johnny's statement is a sense of moral superiority in relation to residents who have a lower social and economic status, exemplified by his claim regarding the need for people on welfare to be educated about civic responsibility. Underlying this claim is the assumption that welfare recipients are inherently passive, needy and undeserving of the special treatment they seem to be receiving, all of which are essentialised negative traits attributed to the poor. Other protagonists, such as Rebecca, a young El Salvadorian who was brought up in an Italian pocket of Jane-Finch, shared personal accounts of having experienced discrimination and feelings of inferiority due to their class position and cultural background.

"I was discriminated against by an Italian teacher in Grade 6 and it was hard, I was bullied a lot by a lot of the Italian kids there, and not everyone was friendly. A lot of the teachers were Italian, only one time in Grade 4 there was a black teacher but he had to leave because a lot of the people were racist towards him. And so up until this date there is still an Italian community, […] I can't relate to them because they are more

middle class and higher up so it is hard to relate to and because European countries, they have very different cultures as opposed to Central America. Italian people I feel don't really want to get close. [...] As much as I want to be able to relate to them, I feel like I have done something wrong compared to them so I feel like it is hard to build that connection." [Female, El Salvadorian, 18-30, homeowner]

The general attitude towards diversity in Jane-Finch is in line with what Wessendorf (2013) has called 'common-place diversity', referring to a situation in which diversity is experienced by local residents of an area as a normal aspect of their lives due to their everyday lived experiences with diversity. Such awareness of common-place diversity does not necessarily entail either an appreciation of or disdain for diversity. The conversations further revealed a general civility towards diversity (Lofland, 1989) in the neighbourhood, meaning that residents often highlighted a positive acknowledgement of diversity while also admitting that it sometimes created tensions (see also Lee, 2002; Boyd, 2006; Lofland 2012). Furthermore, the residents seemed to have different perceptions of diversity, often associating the term only with aspects that they deemed positive (regarding behaviour and dress code, for example). Thus, the celebration of diversity, although well intentioned, did not go much beyond lip service. The seeming commitment to remain civil towards diversity often went hand in hand with essentialisations and stereotyping on the basis of race, gender, culture, religion and class. This reflects findings of a study by Incirlioglu and Tandogan (1991), in which they contend that when opposing diversity is no longer politically correct, arguments are reformulated to seem objective. For example, rather than saying that certain individuals or groups are not acceptable because they are different, it is stated that their practices are inherently 'less hygienic, less civil, or more dangerous' (57).

In this study, such cultural essentialisations were not exclusive to any particular group or culture. Informants commonly made contradictory statements when talking about diversity, particularly when addressing tension and conflict arising from it. This is exemplified by a quote from Gloria, an elderly first-generation Jamaican migrant, in which she shares her experiences concerning a Muslim neighbour with whom she had a conflict. While she had formerly expressed very positive sentiments towards diversity, she adhered to stereotypes when contextualising the conflict:

"She uses the Muslim card, oh you don't like me because I'm a Muslim. [...] If a Muslim person can come in and terrorise other people, you can't do anything because she is a Muslim." [Female, Jamaican, 61-75, private housing resident]

It is important to note the fact that the informant highlights the religious identity of her neighbour above any other factor when putting the conflict into context and, in doing so, uses the expression 'using the Muslim card', which is often invoked to trivialise legitimate accounts of Islamophobia and discrimination towards Muslims.

It is evident from the data that exposure to diversity alone did not outweigh the influence of existing hierarchical structures among inhabitants based on markers such as class, ethnicity and religion, which continued to shape their perceptions of one another. In fact, residents' negative, and at times contradictory, statements regarding diversity signal the fact that civility to diversity often does not go beyond paying lip service to the notion. Therefore, while diversity may be embraced in conversation (perhaps merely for the sake of being politically correct), the influence of internalised negative and stereotypical assumptions on inhabitants' perceptions of one another remains intact.

§ 4.5.2 **Formal and informal interactions**

With regard to formal interactions, because I used local associations as my entry point into the community, many of the initial informants were inhabitants who had contact with local organisations and were highly involved in community matters. As a result, part of the sample expressed a high level of engagement with local programmes, while the other (consisting mostly of informants found through snowballing and channels other than associations) demonstrated little awareness and involvement (see also Ahmadi and Tasan-kok, 2015). The inhabitants who showed high levels of involvement (i.e. strong formal relations) mostly consisted of parents of school-aged children, who actively sought neighbourhood services and programmes, and students who engaged in community work as part of their study requirements. In addition, a smaller group also claimed to have sought community involvement to establish social ties.

In contrast, inhabitants who did not proactively seek services often had little or no awareness of the programmes existing in the area. In addition, in our conversations, some participants mentioned that they had experienced negative encounters with social workers and service providers, which resulted in them not seeking any form of support from associations. Bryah, a long-term resident and single mother of Jamaican decent, shared the following anecdote:

"Like the other day I was having a problem with the social assistance worker and every time I spoke to her I would come off the phone in tears. Like why do you need to talk to me like that? I do work or you know I am sick or whatever the situation is." [Female, Jamaican, 31-45, private housing resident]

She further noted that her negative encounters with social workers had led to the creation of a sense of mistrust and scepticism towards them, which in turn discouraged her from seeking help and social assistance. People often spoke of similar instances

of having experienced neglect, degradation or abuse by social workers who have internalised negative stereotypes regarding people on welfare. Black single mothers on welfare, such as Bryah, were most commonly the targets of such stereotyping.

Thus, issues such as poverty and racism had a strong influence on how residents perceived and whether they became involved in community organisations. The following statement by Juan, a senior Latino resident and community worker, outlines the systemic issues undermining community participation:

"There is another level of poverty which is the ignorance and lack of involvement in the community and something which we may call, particularly when we discuss issues of youth and gangs, the issue of self-exclusion. Self-exclusion happens when people give up on the system. So we are not talking about inclusion, here we are talking about the fact that there are many families and individuals and people who feel that there is nothing in there for them and therefore keep withdrawing back into their small spaces." [Male, Chilean, 46-60, homeowner]

Regarding informal interactions, the conversations revealed that individuals did sometimes develop strong ties or mutual support with people from diverse ethnic or cultural backgrounds but only when there were commonalities (shared language, problems, experiences and life stage) and common activities which led to frequent encounters (at school, workplace, common spaces, etc.) (See Ahmadi and Tasan-kok, 2015). Leah, a young resident of Trinidadian decent who was born and raised in Jane-Finch, outlined how commonalities among families with children lead to informal interactions.

"When we were growing up we would be outside playing with a bunch of children and our parents would bond over our relationship cause they had something in common to talk about. So there was this common interest around what we were doing or how we were having fun. Now that we are older and a lot of people have moved out of the community that has been refabricated." [Female, Trinidadian, 31-45, public housing resident]

Rebecca explains how having in common the experience of discrimination and bullying created solidarity and a connection between her and another classmate:

"I have one friend from my high school who was also bullied and we are like two in one. We are always hanging out together. And she feels the same way as I do, it is hard to make friends. [...] It was in the French class and that is how we met. She was being bullied because she was from Iraq. They would call her terrorist and things like that. I was discriminated against because I was Spanish. So I stood up for her and ever since we became very close." [Female, El Salvadorian, 18-30, homeowner]

Inhabitants therefore developed informal ties and support networks with other residents who resided or worked in close proximity to them (immediate neighbours and colleagues) provided that commonalities and/or shared activities existed (Ahmadi and Tasan-kok, 2015).

Neighbourhood attachment

Conversations with inhabitants made it clear early on that any understanding of the notion of neighbourhood attachment would be incomplete without a close examination of the stigma surrounding Jane-Finch as a poor area with a high concentration of ethnic minority households. While stigmatisation often pertains to the neighbourhood as a whole, the most negative sentiments – in the mainstream media and public perceptions – are often targeted towards pockets with the highest concentration of Toronto housing and visible minorities, in particular black residents (the intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue, from which the neighbourhood takes its name). Anti-black sentiment, as well as sexist and paternalistic portrayals of welfare recipients, are quintessential elements of the stigma surrounding Jane-Finch. Stigmatisation further exceeds public imagination and delineates policy perceptions and action regarding the area, as expressed by Mauricio, a long-time Jane-Finch resident and community worker:

"The problem that we have is that the powers that be see this area as a wasteland. Because there are a lot of people on social services and many of the buildings are subsidised housing and they don't see it as people trying to come out, in their eyes, they say why bother." [Male, El Salvadorian, 61-75, homeowner]

In the same vein, Juan pointed out that the positive talk around diversity does not translate into action, as systemic issues are often left unaddressed:

"In Canada, nobody wants to walk about race but we are seeing race emerging as one of the most frustrating things from a diversity perspective. The discourse is good but the reality is not the same." [Male, Chilean, 46-60, homeowner]

The stigma seems to influence neighbourhood attachment in different and often contradictory ways. Among the informants, some actively tried to dissociate themselves from the Jane-Finch intersection, which is highly associated with the stigma (of gang presence, crime, shootings and pick-pocketing among other things). To grasp whether these sentiments derived from personal experiences or were reproductions of

normalised negative stereotypes, in instances when these stereotypes were mentioned by informants, I followed up by asking whether they had experienced any such threats first-hand (see also Ahmadi and Tasan-kok, 2015). The responses made it clear that first-hand experiences of shootings or gang violence at the intersection were close to non-existent among those interviewed. Inhabitants thus seemed to have subscribed to negative stereotypes and stigmatisation not because they had experienced threats themselves, but rather because they had internalised racist representations of ethnic-minority households living on welfare. Gita, a female Indian resident who lived in a privately-owned house a few minutes north of the intersection, expressed disdain for the stigmatised part of the area:

"I like my street mostly and the nearby area here. I don't like to go close to the Jane-Finch area, I don't know, because of crime, the black people live there, they bother the people sometimes." [Female, Indian, 31-45, homeowner]

This quote shows how people living in very close proximity to the stigmatised intersection can dissociate themselves from it by means of reproducing negative narratives about the area. In contrast, another group of respondents expressed feelings of deep attachment to the stigmatised Jane-Finch intersection, because the stigma helped create a sense of solidarity among those who have felt marginalised by it. Alicia, a single mother of Jamaican decent who has raised her son in the San Romanoway towers on the Jane-Finch intersection, expressed a sense of pride in declaring that the stigmatised area was her neighbourhood:

"Yes! All of it is my neighbourhood. You know what? You always hear the stuff on the media! But it goes in here and out of here because unless you live here you don't know. Yes you have got crime all over, the rich areas, the poor areas, it does not matter. There is crime everywhere. You probably don't know about it, you don't hear about it but if anything goes on here it will get sensationalised." [Female, Jamaican, 61-75, private housing resident]

Rebecca also shared her sense of attachment to the area in spite of the stigma:

"What I like about Jane-Finch is that I feel more comfortable with different people of colour because I feel like they understand the same situation. My parents came from El Salvador which is a poverty [sic] country, we came because of the war, there were a lot of gangs so I feel like I can relate to them in that sense in the area. I don't judge them, I understand what they are going through. They are low income. I can relate more to the low income." [Female, El Salvadorian, 18-30, homeowner]

As expressed in the quote, it is not a depoliticised understanding of diversity that created attachment, but a solidarity rooted in identity politics as well as shared experiences of isolation and marginalisation that created a sense attachment to the area. Moreover, informants did not seem to negatively associate diversity with their sense of attachment to Jane-Finch, but the normalisation and internalisation of racist and classist assumptions by residents impacted on how they perceived and felt about different parts of the area. This echoes Bannerji's (2000) claim that an overemphasis on diversity obscures and erases any understanding or naming of institutionalised racism and its implications for gender and class.

§ 4.6 **Discussion and conclusions**

In the case of Jane-Finch, the analysis suggests that, regarding the creation of common values, neighbourhood attachment and formal and informal interactions, inhabitants do not perceive diversity as an asset or a liability. While there were instances in which diversity was perceived to have contributed to social cohesion, the positive contributions were often implicit and required the presence of other factors such as commonalities (language, culture, religion, age and political views), shared activities and a sense of solidarity grounded in situated knowledge and lived experiences. In some cases, such notions derived from belonging to the same group (country of origin, age, class, etc.), while in others they spanned different social and cultural backgrounds and identity politics.

The findings demonstrate that living with diversity often created opportunities for cultural exchange and increased recognition; however, the existing hierarchies among cultures and income groups were persistent in shaping and conditioning perceptions and interactions. Civility towards diversity thus went hand in hand with negative stereotyping and essentialisations based on race, gender, religion and class. Similarly, diversity only led to informal interactions when there were commonalities, shared activities and experiences present among inhabitants. Regarding formal interactions, negative encounters with paternalistic social workers and service providers –signalling once again the internalisation of negative stereotypes directed towards lower income ethnic minorities – were the real factors undermining community participation. The impact of poverty, institutionalisation and the internalisation of gendered and class-based racism in shaping residents' perceptions and interactions were thus much more tangible than diversity.

It is important to once again emphasise the benefits of qualitative research in understanding the dynamics of cohesion and conflict in diverse areas, since qualitative analyses can bring to the forefront particularities that are often overlooked in quantitative research. Thus, the important contribution of this paper is in shedding light on the role played by negative essentialisations on the basis of class and race (encouraged by mainstream media and policy and internalised by inhabitants), on individuals' formal relationships, informed interactions with and perceptions of one another and their neighbourhood. This further signals challenges to coalition-building and grass-roots organisation among diverse populations, given the emergence and maintenance of hierarchies in places such as Jane-Finch. Without taking these existing hierarchies and power structures into account, it will be unlikely that meaningful bottom-up input and grass-roots involvement will occur.

Further research is needed to unpack the institutionalised and internalised classism and racism inherent in the daily lives of inhabitants and thereby obtain an in-depth understanding of the relationship between ethnic, cultural and religious diversity (as well as their intersection with disadvantage in particular) and social cohesion. Moreover, while much attention has been paid to how diversity impacts on aspects such as social cohesion, social capital and safety in neighbourhoods, the reasons why areas predominantly occupied by racial minority households are often the most disadvantaged are usually left unconsidered. Diversity thereby can function to divert attention away from systemic, structural and inherently political issues, such as institutionalised racism, inequality and lack of infrastructure, which need to be addressed in the debate on social cohesion. Its positioning at the centre of the social cohesion debate, while side-lining inequality and racism, is thereby both problematic and alarming.

While research on diversity has contributed to enhancing the recognition of difference, the issue of redistribution has been largely absent from the debate. Unlike recognition, which can be addressed through harmonious affirmative processes (such as liberal multiculturalism), redistribution ultimately demands the transformation of long-established unequal power structures (Fraser, 1995; Tator, Henry and Mattis, 1998). Addressing redistribution thus requires the politicisation of the debate on social cohesion, one in which diversity is also rearticulated in line with issues of equity and social justice.

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5 Diversity, public space and places of encounter: unpacking perceptions of public space in a lower-income highly diverse neighbourhood

Abstract

Increasingly, public spaces are being regarded as important resources for fostering multi-cultural coexistence and for creating opportunities for cross-cultural understanding and dialogue, in that they can provide a platform wherein interactions across diverse backgrounds occur. This article explores the perceptions of public place in a highly diverse, post-war, modernist suburb of Toronto, and the extent to which public spaces play a role in fostering interactions between different groups and catering for diversity in the area. The analysis indicates that there is little evidence for encounters between diverse groups in public spaces, due to the lack of spatial infrastructure anticipated in the modernist design of the neighbourhood. In addition, social factors such as surveillance and policing, lack of appropriate symbols that cater to different user groups, and presence of gangs and violence have resulted in residents' self-exclusion from public spaces and undermined the frequency and quality of their social encounters.

Keywords: *public space, diversity, Toronto, modernism, multi-culturalism*

§ 5.1 Introduction

Public spaces in diverse neighbourhoods are those in which complex negotiations of spatial and identity formations take place (Peters, 2010). Unlike highly organised and managed spaces, public spaces can potentially provide opportunities for diverse people to meet and interact freely, and are therefore appropriate sites for realising multi-cultural coexistence. The importance of public spaces in cultivating diversity has been emphasised in a number of studies. Amin (2002) refers to these spaces as 'local

micro-publics of everyday interaction', where difference is negotiated and possibilities for urban interculturalism are created. Similarly, Wessendorf (2013) contends that public spaces provide opportunities for regular encounters. Both scholars acknowledge that everyday encounters in public spaces do not always lead to enhanced intercultural understanding, but they stress that the absence of such contact can exacerbate disengagement and prejudice. Amin (2002) further highlights the importance of the role of neighbourhood context, including local factors (physical and social) and particularities of place, in accounting for varying experiences vis-à-vis living with diversity in different neighbourhoods. This is particularly significant due to the vast variations in spatial and social formation across neighbourhoods.

Public spaces have always held great political significance as sites wherein the state reasserts its power through management and control, but also as forums for public action, participation and contestation (Madanipour, 1999). They are thus important in the creation and realisation of more just cities. Low (2013) emphasises that public spaces offer 'empirical means' for exploring diversity in relation to social justice, and indicates that one way of working towards justice in diverse areas is to gather knowledge about how public space is used and perceived by local residents with diverse ethnic, class, age, ability, racial and gender identities. Moreover, the study of encounters in public spaces is relevant to the interactional dimension of justice, which is reflected in whether people are treated in discriminatory ways, e.g. being targeted for harassment, insults, or other rude behaviour (Low, 2013). The societal relevance of studying public spaces is particularly significant at this point in history, due to recurring incidents of racially-charged violence (the most recent example of which was the mass shooting in a mosque in Quebec City, Canada), increased policing and fear-mongering, intensified xenophobia, and heated debates regarding the plight of the growing number of refugees in many Western societies.

This paper aims to contribute to our understanding of whether public spaces lead to encounters among different groups. Specifically, it interrogates the perceptions of and interactions in the public spaces of Jane-Finch, a highly diverse, modernist inner-suburb of Toronto. Like most post-war neighbourhoods designed according to modernist principles, Jane-Finch has a particular landscape and specific ways of managing public space. Modernist planning was developed in the early 20th century as an idealistic model rooted in rationality and technocratic modernism, which sought to transform the social order by means of design-based interventions (Harvey, 1989). This approach resulted in the construction of numerous new towns, estates, and neighbourhoods, mostly in the suburban zones of cities, which were developed on the basis of the modernist principles of high-rise apartment blocks overlooking expansive green settings, connected by a network of elevated highways and ground-level service roads (Tasan-Kok, 2015; Kostof, 1992). However, modernist planning approaches

have been extensively criticised. For example, Jane Jacobs, a savvy critic of rationalist planning, has criticized the approach for its lack of attention to the role of people and communities in cities characterised by complexity and chaos (1992). Modernist estates are further critiqued for their lack of planned social infrastructure and amenities (Tasan-Kok, 2015). Today, many of these estates are sites of concentrated poverty, ethnic segregation, and stigmatisation. The study of spatial infrastructure and public spaces in Jane-Finch is relevant to other similar modernist neighbourhoods, and to the role of public space in fostering contact and dialogue across different social groups. This is particularly so in terms of the importance of these spaces for marginalised groups living in the area. The study makes use of semi-structured interviews and participant observations to understand the interactions in and the meaning of public spaces for diverse inhabitants. Ultimately, it seeks to discover whether such 'spaces for encounter' can be found in modernist housing estates like Jane-Finch.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Firstly, a brief overview of existing literature on public space is provided, with a specific focus on its relation to diversity and the role of public space as a place for encounter. Secondly, the methodological approaches in collecting and analysing data are presented. Thirdly, the case study area is introduced and the particularities of the context of the study are described. Lastly, the results of the analysis are presented, along with the implications of these findings for interventions in and beyond Jane-Finch.

§ 5.2   **Public space and diversity**

The term "public space" often refers to formal spaces of planned cities, for example squares and parks (Carr et al, 1992, Carmona et al, 2003). Public spaces, however, transcend their mere physical definition in that they have considerable social significance, i.e. they provide common ground wherein interactions and activities that bind a community are conducted (Brown, 2005; Carr et al, 1992). Thus, public spaces encompass not only objects and spaces, but also "the people, events and relationships that occupy them" (Madanipour, 1996). In this study, a differentiation is made between three different types of space viz. private, semi-public, and public spaces. *Private spaces* refer to places that are owned by individuals or enterprises, wherein activities are controlled and regulated by owners. The term *semi-public space* refers to privately-owned and managed spaces where there is a legitimate degree of public and community use. *Public spaces* thus include all spaces that are not clearly delineated as

private, and accommodate activities for public purposes. Examples of *public spaces* in Jane-Finch include parks and greeneries, playgrounds, and libraries. *Semi-public places* include plazas inside malls, neighbourhood organisations, and community gardens, and *private spaces* include malls and private homes (Ahmadi and Tasan-Kok, 2015; Brown, 2005).

Madanipour (1999) further defines public space as a "place outside the boundaries of individual or small-group control, mediating between private spaces and used for a variety of often overlapping functional and symbolic purposes" (881). He identifies three dimensions of social organisation in relation to public space viz. access, interest, and agency. In terms of these three dimensions, the following propositions can be made about an ideal-type public space. Firstly, public space implies free access, meaning that entry to a public space is relatively unrestricted and should be free of charge. Secondly, these spaces are ideally inclusive, meaning that they are not intended for an exclusive group of people. Thirdly, activities in public spaces are in the interest of the public at large and do not serve a select group of individuals. Lastly, agency and influence over public affairs and resources is not exclusive to a select few. The two dimensions of agency and interest are particularly important in terms of user diversity, due to the multiplicity of views, activities, and values introduced to public spaces by diverse users (Madanipour 1999; Incirlioglu & Tandogan, 1999).

The notions of diversity and difference are becoming increasingly relevant to the planning of public space, which is not only the site where social difference is often encountered, but also the space in which difference is constructed and experienced (Iveson, 1998; 2000). Public spaces have symbolic meaning and convey gendered and class-based messages (Massey, 1994). Brown (2005) further argues that the way public space is defined, managed and used is a manifestation of social and cultural norms and political practice, which can either promote public space use by different groups, or hinder it, resulting in social exclusion. Cultural and behavioural codes are key factors that impact on the usage of public spaces by diverse groups (Morris, 2003). For instance, high security measures and policing can discourage visible minorities and the urban poor from using public spaces, while white middle-class residents are often more comfortable with heavily- surveilled public spaces (Noble 2013). Similarly, Low (2013) contends that new immigrant groups in areas with large newcomer populations are often excluded due to a lack of sensitivity to the cultural barriers they face, e.g. inability to read or speak the official language, non-verbal cues of formal furnishings and dress, and signs of cultural representation. Accommodating diversity in the public space thus requires sensitivity towards and consideration of the different ways in which social classes and ethnic groups value and use public spaces (ibid).

As previously mentioned, public spaces are particularly significant for cultivating diversity and multi-cultural coexistence in that they can create opportunities for encounters between strangers. While public space plays an essential role in shaping public behaviour, it is difficult to predict (let alone engineer) the dynamics of social interaction in the public sphere, since interactions are shaped and mediated by differences in experiences, expectations, and conduct (Amin, 2008). Social interaction between strangers, as Amin (2008) argues, rarely involves transgressing long-established attitudes and practices towards the 'other'. Similarly, multiple studies have shown how daily encounters in public spaces within multicultural neighbourhoods can coexist with the continuity of privately-held negative views towards other groups. (Watson, 2006; Valentine, 2008; Noble, 2011; Wilson, 2014). Amin (2008) further indicates that when diverse individuals are 'thrown together' (Massey, 2005) in public space, social pathologies of avoidance, self-preservation, intolerance, and harm can take shape, especially when power imbalances and exclusionary practices are present. Studying the role of public space in facilitating encounters between strangers in diverse neighbourhoods can help us understand whether or not the sentiment can go beyond 'lip-service to a myth of multiculturalism' (Incirlioglu & Tandogan, 1999: 60) to guarantee intercultural understanding.

§ 5.3   Methods and context

This study employed qualitative research methods to investigate perceptions regarding public spaces in Jane-Finch, as well as the interactions that take place therein. The data was gathered using semi-structured interviews with 50 Jane-Finch residents over a two-month period (September and October 2014). The interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis and lasted between 45 and 90 minutes. Most conversations took place in informants' homes, unless they requested otherwise. Alternative locations for interviews included public libraries, coffee-shops, restaurants, and common areas in Jane-Finch. The conversations centred mostly on inhabitants' perceptions of public spaces in the neighbourhood, their usage of these spaces, and their interactions with other inhabitants in them. The informants were recruited via local associations and later through snowballing. The sample is representative of the diversity of Jane-Finch inhabitants in all but one area, as it is predominantly female (36 out of 50 informants). This was due to the fact that access to male informants, in particular young racialised male youths, proved difficult, due to their low participation rate in local associations. Detailed information about the informants can be found in the appendix.

The Jane-Finch neighbourhood of Toronto

The selected case study for the study is Jane-Finch, an inner-suburban area located in the northwest of Toronto. Jane-Finch was developed as a model suburb in the 1960s according to modernist principles of expansive green spaces, wide roads, and high-rise tower blocks. Originally, the area was designed to accommodate a large stock of public housing in order to host a socially diverse population. Jane-Finch has since witnessed a significant wave of immigration, predominantly from the Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia, Africa, and South America. The area currently accommodates more youth, sole-supported families, multi-family dwellings, refugees, individuals without a high-school diploma, low-income households, and public housing tenants than anywhere else in Toronto. Currently, the housing stock in Jane-Finch consists mostly of high-rise apartment blocks (of five storeys or more), of which 66 percent are rented and 34 percent are privately-owned. In addition to the high-rise buildings, a few pockets of detached and semi-detached privately-owned houses, which accommodate middle-class households, are present in Jane-Finch (Tasan-Kok, 2015; Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2014).

Both Jane-Finch and Toronto have experienced increasing diversity due to increased immigration over the past decades. New immigrants in Toronto, however, face many issues such as discrimination in the labour market and limited access to resources and affordable housing, especially in the context of intensifying income polarisation and segregation along class and racial lines in Toronto (Joy & Vogel, 2015; Siemiatycki, 2011; Hulchanski, 2010). Inner-suburban areas such as Jane-Finch, which offer cheaper housing, have thus been popular destinations for many immigrants. Currently, more than half of the Jane-Finch population (56 percent) speaks a language other than English and French (Census, 2013). More than 70 percent of Jane-Finch's population is comprised of visible minorities (see Table 1 for key characteristics of Jane-Finch). In addition to affordable housing, other key characteristics of the area include concentrated poverty, high resident turn-over, poor infrastructure, gang presence and gun-violence. This area makes a particularly interesting case study for the investigation of the role of public space in facilitating encounters among diverse groups in modernist neighbourhoods, due to its outstanding population diversity on the one hand, and its bleak modernist landscape of large wasteland and limited planned physical infrastructure on the other.

	TORONTO	JANE-FINCH
Area (km²)	632	21
Total population	2,503,000	80,150
Age		
0-19	16.1%	43.4%
20-64	69.9%	43.1%
>65	14.0%	13.6%
Percentage of population not born in Canada	50.0	60.0
Persons 25 or over without a school certificate, diploma or degree	18%	35%
Average household income	C$80,300	C$53,900
Unemployment rate	6.7%	9.2%

TABLE 5.1 Key characteristics of Jane-Finch and Toronto / Source: Statistics Canada, 2006

In addition to interviews, participant observations were used to provide first-hand observations and experiences of public space of Jane-Finch, some of which are reflected in the following excerpts from the author's field diary:

"Often I find myself sitting at the bus stop at Jane and Driftwood to kill time between appointments, eating, reading or writing my notes. Even though there are occasional benches in the green spaces spread out across the area, they don't look all that inviting. They are mostly littered and unused. Sometimes you see people passing through but almost nobody ever sits down. I feel more secure waiting at the bus stop than sitting alone on a bench in the deserted park across the street".

FIGURE 5.1 Example of an open space in Jane-Finch./ Source: Author.

FIGURE 5.2 Examples of two housing types and an open space in Jane-Finch. / Source: Author.

"Once, after finishing an interview in one of the San-Romanoway high-rises, I sat down on a bench in the green area between the towers to have a quick sandwich, only to find out later that I was sitting right in the heart of a wind tunnel. The temperature must've been around 12 degrees Celsius, but the wind chills were so freezing, I could barely last through my lunch" [excerpts from the author's field diary].

The above excerpts imply that functioning and lively public spaces in Jane-Finch are rather scarce. While there are expansive open spaces in the inner-suburban neighbourhood, the majority of these spaces lack either the spatial infrastructure or the social activities to qualify as public spaces. Subsequently, activities of and interactions among Jane-Finch residents take place not only in public spaces, but also in semi-public and private spaces inside the neighbourhood.

§ 5.4   **Data and analysis**

The field observations and extensive conversations with informants reveal that there are a number of physical, organisational and social factors that influence inhabitants' perceptions and usage of these spaces in the area. Firstly, the neighbourhood's fragmented modernist layout comprises a number of physical push factors impacting the perception and usage of public spaces in Jane-Finch. These factors include high-rise towers with expansive open areas, poor public space design interventions (or the complete lack thereof), large distances, and environmental factors such as wind and pollution. Secondly, social and organisational factors negatively impacting public space use include littering, insufficient maintenance, high surveillance and policing, youth congregation and loitering, alcohol and drug use, and the perceived presence of gangs and violence.

Parks and open greeneries are the most common types of public space found in Jane-Finch. They are frequented mostly by families with young children, who make use of the space during the day for leisure, sports and recreational purposes. Many informants shared that, as their children grow up, there are fewer reasons to visit the parks. This is exemplified in the quote by Anna, a Jamaican single mother, who has raised two sons in Jane-Finch:

"The parks are okay but I don't really go to the parks, I just pass through when I am doing my walks and that is it! I guess when your kids were younger we'd go there. I think certain things I just don't do anymore because I have no reason to go there." [Female, Jamaican, 31-45, public-housing resident].

Informants often indicated that parks and open spaces lacked the facilities and pull factors to attract users. Moreover, they commonly complained about the general quality of these spaces. Samantha, a female Ecuadorian resident in her fifties, shared how a sense of seclusion due to the spatial organisation of public spaces negatively impacts her sense of safety:

"There is a small park that goes through the neighbourhood. It is very secluded so I don't feel safe when it is dawn, it has to be broad daylight and if I see families, like if I see a couple walking or kids and students with bicycle I will go. If not I go around on the street" [Female, Ecuadorian, 46-60, private renter].

When asked about the quality of parks, Evie, a Jamaican mother of three, said the following:

"To be honest there is no proper park around here. The park over there, there is dog poop in the sand of the kids. It is nasty. The one behind there is small and the kids [youth] from the building use it and they fight. A long time ago somebody got shot behind the park." [Female, Jamaican, 31-45, public-housing resident].

As suggested in the above quotes, the use of open spaces is further restricted by a perceived presence of gangs and gang-related violence, which undermines residents' sense of safety in the area. While this sentiment was shared by informants across gender, ethnicity, and age, safety concerns were greater for male youths as they are considered most at risk of being targeted or recruited by gangs. Rebeca, an El Salvadorian girl in her late teens expressed her reluctance to use parks due to feeling unsafe:

"I have seen a lot of people selling drugs in the parks so that is what I mean by not being safe. Also, I have heard a lot of women walking their dogs get sexually assaulted. That is the reason why I try to avoid parks, because they are isolated areas. You see a lot of crazy stuff." [Female, El Salvadorian, 18-30, home-owner].

Similarly, Odessa, a mother of two from Guyana, indicated that she does not feel safe being present in public spaces with her children due to gang-related activities and shootings:

"It is bad, shooting, drugs, I don't want my kids there. Last night they shot a 19 year old back at the community centre over there. Yes. He died. Behind there is bad. I don't want to go there with my kids." [Female, Guyanese, 31-45, public-housing resident].

Leah, a single mother of one, of Trinidadian descent, shared similar concerns about the safety of her young son in parks:

"The other day my son saw kids playing basketball in the park and he ran to go and play with these kids and I was like no we can't stay. He said mom, I said no. There were tons of kids having fun doing their own thing you know, but I just did not feel comfortable. I am like hmm will there be gunshots in ten minutes? So I was like no but he did not understand why we could not stay and why he could not go to the park and play with these other kids and it was hard for me because I couldn't explain it." [Female, Canadian-Trinidadian, 31-45, private renter].

These quotes demonstrate that the perceived presence of gangs and the occasional eruption of violence in public spaces greatly impact how residents perceive and use these spaces. The stigma surrounding Jane-Finch in the public imagination, due to negative representations in the media, further exacerbates collective anxiety regarding safety. As a poor area with a high concentration of ethnic minority households, many of which are welfare recipients, Jane-Finch continues to suffer a long-standing stigma. Negative sentiments surrounding Jane-Finch in the mainstream media and public perception are targeted mostly towards pockets of the neighbourhood with the highest concentration of Toronto housing and visible minorities, in particular black residents (most notably at the intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue, after which the neighbourhood is named). Anti-black sentiments, as well as paternalistic portrayals of recipients of welfare, especially single mothers, are quintessential to the establishment of the stigma surrounding Jane-Finch, as one informant shares:

"The stigma is basically people saying bad things about people on welfare and on social assistance, like young mothers being bad in general, being gang members. Just normal things that come with being racialised." [Female, Jamaican-Trinidadian, 18-30, public-housing resident].

Mauricio, an El Salvadorian senior resident who works as a youth counsellor in a Jane-Finch-based community organisation, describes how stigmatisation has undermined political interest and intervention in the area:

FIGURE 5.3 Community gardens in Jane-Finch. / Source: Author.

"The problem that we have is that the powers that be see this area as a wasteland. Because there are a lot of people on social services and many of the buildings are subsidised housing and they don't see it as people trying to come out, in their eyes, they say why bother." [Male, El Salvadorian, 61-75, home-owner].

Latoya, an Afro-Caribbean resident who was born and raised in Jane-Finch, shared similar insights into how political interest and investments in the neighbourhood have declined over the years:

"Growing up we had all day recreation programs, councillors all throughout the summer, after school homework clubs, swimming lessons, free swimming pool. Those were the foundations of our community and that is where we made our friends, and that is where our parents went to talk. Now we don't have camp councillors anymore, our pool was closed because of health reasons. There has been a huge cutback and a lot of the people who live in the community are on welfare, but when we had those services we were much better off. We get blamed for all those stuff but other communities have all these services that we don't have. There needs to be an equal plain field and that

is not sustained by our current regime. [...] We are completely off the radar now and nobody cares." [Female, Jamaican-Trinidadian, 18-30, public-housing resident].

Furthermore, the stigmatisation of Jane-Finch coincides with intensified policing and surveillance measures in public spaces. Many informants indicated that increased policing did not enhance their sense of safety. Some added that they avoid these spaces altogether for fear of being racially profiled. Amidah, a Tanzanian resident in her late teens, says:

"I feel like sometimes they [youth] might be scared, usually a lot of police are out, maybe they don't want to be around the police. Because the last time I heard, when they [the community centre] had a party, the police was all around and guys and other people don't really want to get in, you know? They don't want to be questioned. Sometimes the police scares people away because they are not being nice, like most of them are racist, you know? Because if you are a Black guy, they are saying oh you can't go to school, college, university and they stop you for drugs, not everybody does drugs. [...] They are always stereotyping," [Female, Tanzanian, 18-30, public-housing resident].

It was generally observed that the role of public spaces, like parks in Jane-Finch, is very limited in creating encounters between diverse ethnic groups or individuals. In fact, the lack of planned social infrastructure in the area has resulted in residents turning to semi-public spaces to have their social needs met. Plazas, located inside malls, are a good example of such semi-public spaces. Save for a few chain fast-food restaurants and coffee shops, Jane-Finch does not offer many indoor spaces where residents can come together and interact. Plazas, however, provide a space wherein a diverse group of people (mostly middle-aged and senior residents) can meet and interact across different cultures and genders (Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2015). Emphasising the lack of social infrastructure in the area, Mauricio shares the following observations:

"I do not hang out at any of those places myself, I just go there do my shopping and go. Though I know these guys that hang out there, you go there after work you see them there, you go there on Sunday you see them there hanging out, you will see the same guys until the security guy comes and tells them to move. And they get up and walk and stand by Tim Hortons and after half an hour they come back and sit! But then the thing I want to tell you is that on this table we will have Latin Americans and south-east Asians and Asians. I would say mostly people in their late 40s. Not too many youth. [...] everybody is co-existing and because I will say that it is the only affordable place for people to come and hang around." [Male, El Salvadorian, 61-75, home-owner].

FIGURE 5.4 An indoor community space in Jane-Finch: The Learning Enrichment Foundation. / Source: Author.

In addition to third spaces such as indoor plazas, the lack of planned social infrastructure has also resulted in the creation of informal gathering places in private spaces. A unique example is the so-called "private bars", i.e. private residential dwellings which also function as informal enterprises, where local residents can buy and consume alcohol (see Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2015).

Informants commonly claimed that there are not enough resources to engage youth in the neighbourhood. Amidah, who grew up in Jane-Finch, shares her perceptions of the spaces in Jane-Finch as a young adult:

"You don't really see people my age really hanging out in this neighbourhood, going to community centre, cause there's only kids' stuff, somethings we are not really interested anymore. I'd rather just go downtown and chill more than stay in this neighbourhood." *[Female, Tanzanian, 18-30, public-housing resident].*

Similarly, Jake, a 24 year old native Canadian student at York University stresses the lack of available spaces for youth in the area:

"They don't have a lot of facilities for young people. Like they have the malls yeah but after hours they don't really have any bars or any kind of social area where people can go to. There is one just east of Keele and Finch, but that is a little bit out of Jane-Finch. But in Jane-Finch, there don't really have anything." [Male, White Canadian, 18-30, private renter].

Furthermore, public and semi-public spaces in Jane-Finch seemingly lack the symbols and qualities to engage youth. Vanessa, an El-Salvadorian mother of three, describes her challenges in finding activities in the neighbourhood that would attract her 18-year-old daughter:

"My daughter likes dance, she likes music and there is nothing on that unless in the community centre but there is only one class and when she went to the program it was only her and one other person. So like, even the environment is more for adults in the community centre so I guess it does not attract youth and when you go there it is like death! There is nothing that attracts a young person. I think they have to make it more attractive at least in that community centre and that is the only one in our area." [Female, El Salvadorian, 31-45, home-owner].

Participant observations further confirmed that spaces are not often designed to cater for the youth, and the number of available spaces and programs targeting youth remain scarce. There is often a shortage of funding and support for these spaces (see Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2014) and they tend to lack the spatial and social qualities that appeal to a younger audience.

These observations are congruent with conversations with inhabitants, and reveal that public spaces in the area often lack the factors necessary for exerting a positive attraction or pull (i.e. symbols, planned infrastructure, attractive and functional design, and safety). Furthermore, the push factors of gang-presence, violence, pollution, littering, and policing discourage residents from using the limited number of public spaces in the area. Despite ongoing grassroots efforts to counter the lack of infrastructure (spatial and otherwise) in Jane-Finch, the available spatial resources for facilitating encounter interactions among the diverse members of the community, especially those catering for young people, remain fairly insufficient.

§ 5.5   **Synthesis**

In the case of Jane-Finch, the empirical analysis suggests that while there seems to be a great deal of open spaces and greeneries in the area, spatial infrastructure for inter-cultural encounters remains very limited. Public space in Jane-Finch does not transcend its physical meaning and functional role to fulfil social premises. Physical factors, such as the layout of the neighbourhood, public space design, location and accessibility, greatly influence public space use. In addition, inhabitants' perceptions and use of public spaces are influenced by social factors, including high surveillance and policing, poor maintenance, lack of appropriate symbols catering for different user groups, presence of gangs and violence, and loitering. These factors are relevant to many modernist suburbs which are becoming increasingly diverse and wherein issues and challenges regarding multi-cultural coexistence are on the rise.

This visible lack of planned social infrastructure in the neighbourhood has generated a range of de facto creative responses, e.g. the use of semi-public and private spaces within Jane-Finch, and grassroots organisation of events and initiatives to counter the lack of available resources for facilitating interactions and building community. The findings, however, demonstrate that these spaces are often underfunded, understaffed, and overburdened.

Furthermore, Jane-Finch residents seem to be living in a 'climate of fear', due to the presence of gangs and gang-related violence, and the stigma surrounding the neighbourhood. Public space as a place for encounter can thus become a potential site of hostility. Fear of violence, as Galanakis (2015) indicates, has resulted in inhabitants' self-exclusion from public spaces and affected the frequency and quality of their social encounters. Meanwhile, efforts to improve residents' sense of safety in public spaces have focused predominantly on policing and surveillance measures, which in turn alienate vulnerable and at-risk users, particularly racialised male youths. Interventions in public space which do not take into consideration the existing social reality of the neighbourhood will thus either have a limited impact or exacerbate social exclusion. The case study of Jane-Finch further demonstrates that creating encounters in public and semi-public spaces requires the tuning and adjusting of spaces and facilities to meet the needs and preferences of their intended users. Factors including interior design, cultural and linguistic symbols, colours, and music can influence the appeal of these spaces to different social and cultural groups.

There is also the potential for conflict when different groups compete for space in neighbourhoods where spatial and community resources are limited. The findings of this study demonstrate that, in the case of Jane-Finch, the perceived dominance of

youth gangs in parks and open spaces considerably undermines residents' perceptions and usage of these spaces. Meanwhile, the evident lack of available resources to meaningfully engage youth in Jane-Finch contributes to the congregation and loitering in public spaces and engagement in informal or criminal activities. Improving youth-targeted spaces and resources can potentially create alternative platforms of self-expression and engagement for youth, and ease the conflict over space. Resources may be mobilised so as to counter the lack of resources (spatial and otherwise) in Jane-Finch to stimulate interactions among inhabitants of diverse backgrounds. An argument in favour of enhancing public and semi-public spaces needs to be grounded in an understanding of broader city-wide trends, e.g. income polarisation, segregation, and the unequal distribution of resources across Toronto neighbourhoods. Ultimately, the expectation for public spaces to provide platforms for creating meaningful exchange between strangers and facilitating understanding across cultural and social groups remains well-intentioned. Its materialisation, however, requires going beyond the provision and improvement of physical space, to challenge inequalities in power, position, and access.

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6 Serving diverse communities: the role of community initiatives in delivering services to poverty neighbourhoods

Abstract

The recent decades have witnessed a shift from the traditional top-down model of service delivery led by the state to the provision and delivery of services by community organisations. This article explores the extent to which community initiatives in Jane and Finch, a highly diverse, lower income, inner-suburban neighbourhood of Toronto, were successful in achieving their goals, and the relevance of the experience for current neighbourhood initiatives targeting diversity. It discusses the factors which contributed to the effectiveness of 10 analysed initiatives in terms of reaching their primary objectives. The analysis shows that despite the efforts within community initiatives to improve conditions for inhabitants, their impacts remain limited due to underlying structural challenges such as poverty and institutionalised racism, increasing fragmentation within the over-all network of initiatives and precarious funding, which pit programs against one another and hamper effective collaboration and solidarity needed in order to achieve transformative change.

Keywords: *community initiatives, community participation, neighbourhood, Toronto*

§ 6.1   Introduction

Low-income households living in racially diverse poverty areas often face multi-faceted challenges. Diversity in such neighbourhoods tends to go hand in hand with high levels of inter-generational poverty, lack of physical and social infrastructure and poor quality of life (e.g. Hulchanski, 2010; Sampson and Groves, 1989; Sampson et al, 1997). Research has further shown that low-income households commonly struggle with meeting basic needs due to limited resources, low earnings and inadequate government support, and are

affected by their neighbourhood environment in terms of health, employment, criminal and drug-related activities (Austin and Lemon, 2006; Chow, Johnson, & Austin, 2004; Sampson ,2001). Poverty neighbourhoods are thus not only a symptom of disadvantage, but also a source of it since they negatively impact the opportunities of their inhabitants (Fitzpatrick, 2004). Kintrea (2006) further underscores that poverty neighbourhoods, which are commonly situated at the urban fringes, are often by-products of policy as well as the housing system, which translate labour market driven inequalities into spatial concentrations of poverty and segregation (see also Atkinson & Kintrea, 2002; Lupton, 2003). Furthermore, often in such neighbourhoods there is an inflow of households in extreme need and an outflow of upwardly mobile residents which exacerbates the challenges in service delivery and neighbourhood improvement (Kintrea, 2006).

Meanwhile, policy interventions have traditionally sought to tackle some of these challenges by implementing a range of programs intended to improve neighbourhood quality. Examples of such policy interventions include the new deal for communities in the context of the United Kingdom (e.g. Lawless 2011; 2006; 2004; Dargan, 2009; Wallace, 2007), and Priority neighbourhoods in Canada (Leslie and Hunt, 2013; Cowen and Parlette, 2011; Hulchanski, 2007). Community-based and grassroots programs and projects in the areas of neighbourhood improvement and regeneration have often been described as 'initiatives' (Kintrea, 2006). Neighbourhood initiatives fall in the area of third sector welfare organizations, referring to non-government, non-profit organisations operating in the interstices of formal state institutions, the market sector and the private spheres such as the household whose primary area of focus is welfare (Brown, Kenny and Turner, 2002). Seyfang and Smith (2007) further underscore that grassroots initiatives differ from market-based interventions in that (a) they embody diverse organisational forms including cooperatives, voluntary associations, informal community groups, and social enterprises; (b) Their resource and funding base is similarly diverse, e.g. grant funding, limited commercial activity, voluntary input and mutual exchanges; (c) They exhibit varying degrees of professionalisation and official recognition and support.

Brown et al. (2002) emphasize that third-sector community initiatives are increasingly relevant in the 21st century as an alternative to the traditional welfare state model which is highly centralized, standardized and bureaucratic. The traditional model often fails to take into account public input since it is grounded in patriarchal social relations, which render the decision of social 'experts' the objective truth in determining social needs, how they should be met and the methods through which they should be delivered (Culpitt, 1992). The result of this top-down model is an inherent paternalism in the relation between the provider and recipient of welfare which renders the latter as essentially passive with little will-power for self-determination. On the contrary, the relationships in third sector initiatives are often the inverse, reflecting the voluntary and self-governing nature of these programs (Brown et al., 2002). Community initiatives

can thereby provide an alternative method to service provision and further bolster bottom-up local leadership in disadvantaged communities (O'Conor, 2001).

This paper expands the body of work on community initiatives by providing findings from a highly diverse, poor inner-suburban neighbourhood in Toronto, Canada. It provides an in-depth analysis of how a selected sample of ten community initiatives in Jane and Finch have worked in practice, particularly in relation to two notions: funding and community involvement and outlines the lessons they carry for future initiatives. The paper is based on a wider evaluation of policies to address diversity in Toronto (Ahmadi and Tasan-Kok, 2013) conducted as part of the DIVERCITIES project which investigates the impact of diversity upon social cohesion, social mobility and economic performance of inhabitants across Toronto in addition to 13 European cities. While the observations presented here are drawn from Toronto, many of the themes highlighted in the analysis of the community initiatives in this case have also been echoed elsewhere.

The structure of the paper is as follows. The following section will offer a brief overview of the theoretical background. Thereafter, the research methods and a brief introduction to the selected case study are respectively outlined. The data and analysis are then laid out. The paper concludes by presenting lessons and implications for future community initiatives and the research synthesis.

§ 6.2   The role of community in service delivery

In the context of the declining role of the state in the delivery of welfare and services and the shift from government to governance (Rhodes, 1996), especially its market and partnership-based forms (Jessop, 2002), the role of community organizations has gained increasing relevance. The traditional top-down mode of service delivery by the state has received criticism, from both the left and the right. The political left has criticized the top-down delivery of services for creating welfare dependency and undermining, active citizenship, political activism and autonomy (Oosterlynck, et al., 2013). Nancy Fraser (among others) criticises the liberal welfare state for leaving untouched the underlying socio-economic structures that create and maintain the unequal distribution of resources and class divisions (as opposed to changing the economic structure and transforming the conditions of existence for all) (1995). While the centralised welfare model does provide the poor with aid, it also targets them for stigmatization and hostility via creating essentialised antagonistic group differentiations (i.e. the demonization of the poor as inherently deficient, needy, and undeserving of the special treatment they appear to be receiving) (see also Fraser, 1999; 2003; 2012).

Within the right, a common argument has been that the delivery of welfare by the state undermines individual responsibility, advocating for a model of service delivery that centres on the market and private sector. Central to such model is the belief that the devolution of responsibility from the state to the private sector enhances efficiency and output in delivering services, by creating individual and organizational competition and reducing union protection. This entails the privatisation of public utilities and contracting out welfare programmes. The devolution of responsibility through privatisation has been on the rise in light of the growing hegemonic prominence of neoliberalism in many post-war Western societies. However, there is ample evidence for the failure of the market in meeting its premises in service delivery. The logic of the market model undermines ideals of social justice and collective responsibility, advocates for competition among service providers (a premise which it often fails to deliver since it produces monopolies and oligopolies instead) and prioritises quantity over quality. It further creates an acute distinction between the provider and receiver of services by constructing the latter as consumers who supposedly hold power over the quality of service. However, this is a false promise since in reality, service recipients rarely obtain the fiscal and human resources to dictate the market (Brown et al., 2002; Jessop. 2002).

Meanwhile, advocates of expanding the market economy and self-organisation of civil-society have responded to the inadequacies of the market model by increasing promotion of the notion of community over the past two decades. This is not to say that the language of the market has disappeared. Underlying these new communitarian alternatives remains the assumption that welfare states are costly, inefficient and likely to promote parasitic dependency as opposed to empowerment. State-provided monopoly services should thereby be minimized by contracting out services, promoting internal competition and increasing third-sector (i.e. agents located between state and market) and grassroots involvement (Jessop, 2002). Seyfang and Smith (2007) similarly advocate for 'grassroots innovation', referring to a network of activists and organisations which operate within civil society arenas and generate bottom-up solutions to sustainable community development. They further assert that such grassroots initiatives can deliver viable alternatives where top–down measures fail, by promoting community action which utilises contextualised experience and knowledge about what works in local communities and what matters to their members.

However, the promotion of community, as underscored by Jessop (2002) lacks explicit references to structures of power and authority, exploitation and domination (see also Taylor, 2011; Raco, 2016). Emphasizing human agency, local communities are thereby encouraged to empower themselves, create and sustain informal initiatives despite insufficient funds, support and infrastructure. Thus, there is an inherent contradiction in this model of community promotion which emphasises local contribution on the one hand while undermining the very conditions essential to it on the other. The financial

effectiveness of the downscaling of service provision to community welfare institutions has further been questioned since, in the context of funding precarity, research has shown that decentralisation does not serve the purpose of financial savings (Oosterlynck, et al., 2013). Rather, it results in a prioritisation of the interests of private investors, exacerbating competition and fixation on the economic outcomes of social programs. (Andreotti et al. 2012).

In light of the contradictions outlined above, the paper explores the question of how local community initiatives can work in practice. It specifically analyses a number of initiatives in relation to two primary notions: (a) funding and support, (b) community participation and input. Firstly, the issue of funding is highly relevant to the analysis of community initiatives since it makes explicit matters such as the role and function of the state in relation to the initiative and degree of autonomy. Brown et al. (2002) emphasize that the implications of state-funding are two-fold, underscoring that the concept of state responsibility is often invoked in community funding debates while acknowledging the co-optative implications of dependency on the capitalist state. While accepting state funding reinforces citizen rights to universal welfare, it may simultaneously undermine the right to autonomous action for community initiatives.

Secondly, community input and participation are relevant to the study of community initiatives in that they allow for the exploration of the degree of active citizenship as well as factors contributing to or undermining it, relation between service providers and recipients, and the perception of the beneficiaries within the initiative. Communities are increasingly perceived to have the capacity to improve service delivery and meet local needs through delivering their own services identified in a bottom-up manner, and respond to 'democratic deficit' through re engaging citizens with state institutions (Taylor, 2007). Meanwhile, the notion of community participation has received extensive criticism for presenting an 'idealised normative model' which renders the community a self-evident and unproblematic social category (Hickey and Mohan, 2005), fails to account for issues of power, agency and accountability (Newman, 2001), and can create privileged pathways for traditionally powerful actors (Taylor, 2007). Community participation encouraged from above is often biased in favour of selected interests and positions. Participation arenas can in fact be co-opted by the state so as to push forward neo-liberal agendas (Silver, Scott and Kazepov, 2010). Moreover, grassroots involvement is not always empowering, since the existing power inequalities among citizens can ultimately determine who gets involved and who gets excluded. Members of privileged groups have access to more resources for participation (e.g. time, money and political capital). For instance, marginalized voices may be rendered irrelevant in the participatory process by more affluent or educated groups on the mere basis of their use of language and style of expression (ibid). Thus, it is important to ground any understanding of community participation in the context wherein it takes place and the existing power structures underlying it.

Methods and context

The present article aims to explore a selected sample of ten community initiatives in Jane and Finch to outline how they worked in practice. Specifically, the initiatives were analysed in relation to two primary notions: (a) funding and (b) community involvement. The data for the article was gathered between 26 March and 5 April 2014 in Jane-Finch, Toronto by means of semi-structured interviews with 13 community workers, participant observations and a round table discussion. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. Thereafter, the transcripts and other textual data (written documents, reports, evaluations and online resources) were classified and coded using the NVivo qualitative analysis software. The qualitative data were then analyses using the two aforementioned categories (namely funding and community involvement) as a basis.

Prior to each interview, informants were asked to provide written consent by signing a short (one page) informed consent sheet, which contained information regarding the aim of the project, the collection of data, its usage and storage. The one-on-one interview format provided the opportunity to engage in matters that went beyond the scope of individual initiatives, even though that was the primary point of departure. The Informants were specifically asked about their involvement, experiences and reflections vis-a-vis the diversity-related initiatives. The sample consisted of the following community initiatives: Black Creek Farm, Aging at Home, Black Creek SNAP, Jane-Finch Action against Poverty (JFAAP), The Spot; Women Moving Forward (WMF), PEACH, COSTI specialized housing programme; The Learning Enrichment Foundation (LEF) and Youth Enterprise Network (YEN) Table 2 in appendix provides an overview descriptive information regarding each initiative, namely origin, mission, activities and components. All initiatives had in common a commitment to the recognition of the diversity of Jane-Finch residents and were selected on the basis of recommendations from policy workers and community actors who had been engaged in the previous stages of the DIVERCITIES research (see Ahmadi and Tasan-Kok, 2015). The size of the sample facilitated a close and in-depth investigation of the selected initiatives suitable for a qualitative study, while still allowing for a diversity of inputs to be taken into account.

The selected case study for this research was Jane-Finch, an inner-suburban neighbourhood situated in the northwest of Toronto, Ontario. Jane-Finch is a part of the Ward 8 district in Toronto. The area surrounding Ward 8 has been known as "Black Creek", "Elia", as well as "Downsview". However, it has become popularly known as "Jane-Finch" in the media and to the mainstream public, even though this is not the official name of the neighbourhood. Evidently, the area became colloquially known

as Jane-Finch after an article in Toronto Daily Star (Toronto Star), published in 1965, told the story of a single mother of eight being forced to move to a townhouse in the neighbourhood (Narain, 2012). Jane-Finch was developed in the 1960s based on Modernist planning and green cities principles with a large stock of public housing and still consists predominantly of blocks of residential towers (accommodating mostly lower-income households), wide streets and large green areas. The neighbourhood has since then experienced a considerable wave of immigration from the Caribbean, East Asia, South Asia, Africa, and South America. The area experienced a significant growth in its population in the 1960s. Meanwhile, city services and neighbourhood infrastructure did not grow sufficiently to address this population increase. The neighbourhood began to receive negative publicity from the media already in the 1970s (Richardson, 2008). By the 1980s, mainstream news outlets commonly presented Jane-Finch as "a concrete jungle of social breakdown" and "synonymous with trouble" (DiManno, 1986). Currently, the neighbourhood accommodates more youth, sole-supported families, asylum seekers, individuals without a high-school diploma, low-income households, and public housing tenants than any other neighbourhood in Toronto. As well, there is a diverse population living in middle class detached and semi-detached houses, townhouses, and high-rise tower blocks. (Ahmadi & Tasan-Kok, 2014)

The case study area is a highly diverse neighbourhood not only in terms of ethnic diversity, but also of age, economic background, and gender (see Table 1). Much like Jane-Finch, Toronto show-cases a high level of demographic diversity, especially due to increased migration over the past decades. However, arriving immigrants are increasingly facing issues such as discrimination in the labour market, limited access to resources and affordable housing, and low quality of life. Thus, Toronto continues to be characterised by inequality, income polarization, and segregation along the lines of race and class (Ahmadi and Tasan-Kok, 2015; Hulchanski, 2010; Siemiatycki, 2011). Subsequently, lower-income racialized households are continuously pushed to the outer edges of the city. Thus, inner-suburban areas of Toronto such as Scarborough, North York, and Jane-Finch showcase high concentrated poverty, high resident turn-over, poor infrastructure, gang presence and gun-violence (Joy and Vogel, 2015). Jane-Finch is commonly labelled a high-need area in public and policy discussions and is home to a variety of community initiatives aiming to provide residential support and respond to existing issues. Not surprisingly the stigma surrounding the area prevails to this day, as Jane-Finch residents continue to be portrayed as passive recipients of aid, lazy, lawless and even dangerous in the media and public imagination. Its overall diversity on the one hand, and concentration of programs on the other make Jane-Finch an appropriate candidate for the study of community initiatives catering to diverse inhabitants in high need areas.

	TORONTO	JANE-FINCH
Area (km²)	632	21
Total population	2,503,000	80,150
Age		
0-19	16.1%	43.4%
20-64	69.9%	43.1%
>65	14.0%	13.6%
Percentage of population not born in Canada	50.0	60.0
Persons 25 or over without a school certificate, diploma or degree	18%	35%
Average household income	C$80,300	C$53,900
Unemployment rate	6.7%	9.2%

TABLE 6.1 Key characteristics of Jane-Finch and Toronto / Source: Statistics Canada, 2006

§ 6.4 Data and Analysis

INITIATIVE	FUNDING, AUTONOMY AND RELATION WITH THE STATE	COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND INPUT
Black Creek Farm	- Sources: private foundation, City and government grants. - Tokenistic funding, difficulty in funding administration. - Staff time and resources increasingly spent on writing grant proposals.	- Staffed and supported by community residents. - Catering products and activities to the needs and backgrounds of residents. - Focus on basic needs, in particular food.
Aging at Home	- Source: State funding (ministry of health). - Limited but stable funding due to the program's sole focus on seniors.	- Programs are designed separately for each group and in direct consultation with its participants. - addressing basic needs by providing food and public transport tokens. - Offered at multiple locations and in different languages to ensure accessibility for seniors.
SNAP	- Source: State funding (City of Toronto), private foundation and corporations.	- Hiring assistants from the community. - Developed in collaboration with residents (top down involvement).

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INITIATIVE	FUNDING, AUTONOMY AND RELATION WITH THE STATE	COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND INPUT
JFAAP	- No core funding. Material and non-material support from other community organisations. - Deliberate absence of public funding to ensure autonomy.	- consists of community residents and organization members in Jane-Finch. - No constitution or by-laws or organisational hierarchy. - Addressing basic needs by providing transit tokens, food and childcare. - Meetings organised outside of office hours to ensure possibility for attendance of working residents. - Door to door outreach.
The Spot	- Sources: State funding (citizenship and immigration Canada) and private foundation. - Competition with other youth centres/hubs over funding. - Precarious, short-term funding. - Reactive funding based on incidents such as shootings and gang violence. - Adjusting activities and programming to satisfy funders.	- A strong mandate to hire staff from the community to help youth earn a salary while gaining employment experience. - Enhanced identification of needs by hiring local residents. - Absence of hierarchy and divide between service providers and receivers. - Addressing basic needs by providing food and transit tokens. - Located in a mall to ensure accessibility for youth. - Involving youth's input directly in the design of programs and the space.
WMF	- Sources: State funding (city of Toronto), and private foundations.	- Following up, offering support and assistance to women after completion of the program.
PEACH	- Sources: State funding (municipal government and governmental program specific grants), private foundations, and corporations. - Lack of funding and support administrative costs from the state. - Cut-backs within programs due to lack of funding (inability to address basic needs by providing food and transit tokens). - Precarity in funding leading to employment precarity within the program.	- Cut-backs within programs due to lack of funding (inability to address basic needs by providing food and transit tokens) which in turns undermines community participation. - Following up with youth after making referrals.
COSTI specialised housing program	- Source: State funding (city of Toronto).	- Working on a one-on-one basis with individual clients. - The mobility of the service providers (e.g. visiting clients in their place of residence or preference instead of an office) enhances access to the program.
LEF	- State funding (the federal government and city of Toronto), private foundations, banks and corporations. - Programs are increasingly accountable towards funders (program design catering to funders as opposed to clients) which undermines holistic programming and collaborations. - Evaluation on the basis of numbers and statistics	- Mandate for hiring from within the program (internal hiring). - Addressing basic needs by providing food and child care.
YEN	- Sources: Private foundation and selling of products.	- The retail space is managed and run by community youth, mandate for hiring locals.

TABLE 6.2 Overview of analysis

Funding and support

In regards to funding and support, the review of the 10 community initiatives reveals the following key themes: precarious funding; increasingly tokenistic state support (lack of funds for fundamental work such as administration); state support leading to co-optation and undermining of autonomy; short-term re-active funding (i.e. funds are allocated to specific programs after incidents such as shootings and violent out-breaks take place in the area) as opposed to sustainable preventive funding; compartmenlised funding (difficulty in funding holistic programming).

The first highlighted theme surrounds the precarity in funding community initiatives in the area in general, and holistic programs which cut across different fields in particular. This is especially relevant to smaller initiatives which don't benefit from large foundation and private sector support and rely predominantly on state funding. Informants unanimously agreed that insecurities around funding present the most serious challenge to the effectiveness and continuation of community initiatives. Some informants highlighted the increasingly tokenistic nature of public and private funding, meaning that funding is allocated to symbolic matters such as short-lived publicised events as opposed to fundamental issues such as staff time and administration. which is exemplified in the quote below, provided by the program manager of the Black Creek Farm on the challenges in funding staff and administration related costs:

"As with all NGOs it is hard to get them to fund what you actually need. It is hard to get them to fund staff-time. A community pizza-event, that kind of thing is e relatively easy to get money for, because you know, you can put a plaque up that says: This pizza-oven donated by this foundation. But it is hard to get money to pay somebody to write grants."

An informant involved with PEACH similarly echoes the concern raised around lack of administrative funding and its implications for prospective employees in terms of job security and employment benefits:

"From the government there were fewer and fewer places that would actually support administrative costs so everybody wants to support programming but nobody wants to pay my salary. It is a huge issue right now, how can you run an organization if you do not pay for its administration? [...] Right now we have had to let go of our full time child and youth worker and actually hire two part time child and youth workers so again we are contributing to that insecurity of employment for the labour market and we are not able to offer health benefits to the two part time positions so again it just compounds the issues that are out there in terms of insecure employment, not having full medical coverage, and yet we just can't manage it as much as we would like to."

A frequent theme in the interviews revolved around what one informant calls reactive versus proactive (or preventive) funding, meaning that funds are allocated to specific programs after problems occur. For instance, in the case of the youth drop-in centre 'The Spot', our informant explained how the initiative was funded in the aftermath of violent shootings among youth and suffered cuts when the subject matter appeared to have lost its appeal:

"Youth was a hot topic at the time. Youth had to be hot in order to get funding. So, if next year they decide that they want to focus on the elderly, then our funding will get streamlined and it is going to go into the elderly. […] Funding comes out when things happen. It is very reactive, it is not proactive. And that is what the history of funding has been. Ten youth get shot and we need to put violence prevention strategies in the community. And they provide 3 million dollars for programs and services. Then when everything kind of gets stabilized, they pull the funding. When you see something is working, and you know what was happening prior, why not just maintain that? Like, how could you do, good community work in nine months? It takes nine months to actually get in the door and really start, you know."

Such reactive funding is often short-term and does not allow for sustainable solutions to community issues to take shape. The financial insecurity of initiatives due to the precarious, temporary and reactive nature of most funding available to them has resulted in many initiatives altering their programming in order to appeal to funders. A long term community worker in Jane-Finch who is also involved with the grassroots action group JFAAP shared how insecurities around funding can result in prioritising pleasing funders over meeting the needs of the community:

"All the non-profit sector right now is going through a tough time because of the shift towards more business type approaches, which is basically looking for short-term band aid solution. You have to spend so much of your time, writing proposals for governments and then report to them and all that. And then also you have to change your program so it eventually becomes something else. It becomes about pleasing funders as opposed to getting work done."

In fact, among the initiatives JFAAP is most explicit in its mandate against accepting state funding so as to not risk co-optation.

In light of increasing cutbacks and funding shortages, many initiatives end up prioritising funding over autonomy. Moreover, larger organisations with a diverse range of programming (such as SNAP and LEF) often rely on different public and private bodies for funding. This means that within one organisation, programs may have different funders. Each program would in turn be expected to report to its specific funder and organise its

activities and services so as to appeal to funders' demands rather than the objectives of the organisation. This results in programmes (which are often addressing interconnected issues) functioning in isolation and undermines holistic services (Ahmadi and Tasan-Kok, 2014). One informant shares how increasing focus on funder satisfaction is undermining holistic work in larger organisations such as LEF:

"Increasingly we were seeing people who were feeling accountable to the funder, rather than the organization (LEF). That meant that people were so focussed on hitting that targets, they were not necessarily able to do other things. [...] We were worried that we were not actually working together and our services were starting to feel more and more co-located rather than integrated."

Protagonists often contended that the current climate of competition, precarity and shortage of funding further pits initiatives against each other and hampers collaboration among organisations that do similar or interconnected work. This is echoed in the quote below by a community worker involved with SNAP:

"There are literally hundreds of organisations working here. Most of the time no one knows what the others are doing and there is a bit of duplication of work and competition for funding too. People sometimes don't say what they want to do because they want to apply for some grant and they don't want the other organisation to apply for it."

Thus, issues around funding pose a serious barrier to the effectiveness and sustainability of community initiatives in Jane-Finch. Among the reviewed initiatives, those that had a singular focus (e.g. seniors) were more successful in securing stable funding. Informants often shared concerns regarding difficulties around funding programs that were cross-cutting and took account of the complexity of residents' issues in the area. The compartmentalisation of funding has had negative impact on addressing the multi-faceted and structural nature of many issues in programs such as LEF:

"We start to analyse the problem, so that we don't have to deal with the systemic issue. So if the problem is black boys and I open a black school, I have dealt with the problem, there is nothing wrong with this black school, right? And as long as it is them, I don't have to do anything politically about it. Because you end up getting caught up in just solving the problem for this group. It is classic Machiavelli, right? Divide and concur. And God help you if they ever come together. "

The interviews in fact revealed a vast knowledge of the complexity of the problems in Jane-Finch. All commentators agreed that interconnected multi-faceted problems require matching multi-faceted cross-cutting solutions and that efforts to address singular problems were often compromised by the failure to deal with wider problems.

However, the realities of funding and support, in particular fragmentation and discontinuity, make the realisation of comprehensive approaches as such hardly possible.

§ 6.4.2   **Community participation and input**

Regarding community participation and input, the following important common themes were elicited from the views offered by the informants throughout our discussions: the importance of addressing common barriers, bottom-up vs. top-down involvement, hierarchy within programs and perception of the beneficiaries, disengagement and mistrust. Participation here referred to both contribution of local residents to the programs (through volunteering, attending meetings and providing input) and making use of the services provided by these programs.

Emphasizing the high concentration of lower-income households in Jane-Finch, informants unanimously highlighted the importance of addressing common barriers faced by inhabitants within community programs. Lack of time due to working multiple jobs, limited access to services such as child care and transportation were among the most commonly identified factors which prevent inhabitants from both making use of the programs offered within the community and contributing to them (through volunteering or providing input). All initiatives were thus aware that the inability to meet basic needs undermines participation, and thus adopted a range of strategies to address fundamental issues regarding accessibility, availability, child care, and food (e.g. providing on-site child care, organising events and meetings outside of working hours, providing participants with transit tokens and food).

An informant contended that cutbacks within the program funding have resulted in cutting back on basic services such as transit tokens and food, despite recognizing that not offering these services negatively impacts participation rates.

"We haven't cut back our services but we cut back within the service itself. So whereas we might have given out TTC (Toronto Transit Commission) tickets in the past to enable people to get to us both ways, we are now able to give one ticket only. Access. The programming would have always offered dinner because the young people come in here in the evenings and so now we have to scale that back and we can just give snacks. And knowing that the young people that come to us generally maybe eat one meal a day, we know that food is important."

Bottom up identification of needs through the direct involvement of community members was often highlighted as an important factor influencing the effectiveness of community initiatives. In the larger initiatives, the involvement of local inhabitants in decision making and program design was often top-down, through hiring staff or interns from the community while maintaining internal hierarchy. One informant from SNAP, for instance underscored the advantages of hiring advisors from the community in understanding the neighbourhood. The program staff, however, consisted predominantly of non-local 'experts'. The involvement of members of the community in the program was thus selective, initiated and monitored by the organisation. The distinction, furthermore, between professional service providers and local recipients remained clear cut. Involvement here was therefor rather a matter of internal organisation of the initiatives which was carefully managed through recruitment mechanisms, outreach strategies, and distribution of tasks within the organisation.

Some smaller initiatives, on the other hand, were comprised entirely of current or former residents and one (the autonomous action group JFAAP) even had an explicit mandate for no internal hierarchy. Bottom-up initiatives which were set up by residents often demonstrated less hierarchy and differentiation between service providers and recipients. One informant highlights that having local staff who share experiences with service recipients results in better identification of needs:

"A lot of us, like a lot of people that are working in the space, either grew up in this community, or grew up in similar communities. So, we all knew what we wanted in our own communities. We all knew what we wanted to do in order to, you know, help a lot of these kids get out on the right path. And support their process."

Lastly, a crucial undermining factor vis-à-vis community involvement is a deep-seated sense of mistrust towards the system resulting in disengagement from the community. This is exemplified by the quote below provided by the director of the youth education program PEACH, in which she contextualises disengagement from education among youth in the school system's teachings and failure in addressing diversity. She further emphasises the importance of finding new approaches to outreach and engagement so as to counter the scepticism.

"We are really looking at alternative forms of engagement. Because the young people that we see are disengaged. The school system is from the industrial age with a very colonial curriculum that is not responding to the changes in diversity and multi-culturalism that are here to stay in Canada. So they are disengaged from it. Why do I need to learn about the treaty of Versailles, what impact does that have on our lives? So they don't go to school. And you know there are all these other social issues that prevent them."

Another informant highlights the issues of scepticism and mistrust by pointing out the so called 'self-exclusion' of inhabitants in Jane-Finch referring to the lack of information and involvement in the community.

"Self-exclusion happens when people give up on the system. So, we are not talking about inclusion here we are talking about the fact that there are many families and individuals and people who feel that there is nothing in there for them and therefor keep withdrawing back into their small spaces."

The term 'self -exclusion' is invoked here to shed light on the internals motives for withdrawing from involvement in community matters (whether that be in the shape of participating and contributing to programs or simply making use of the services they offer). Thus, while initiatives may adopt a number of external measures to promote 'inclusion' (e.g. diversifying methods of outreach, providing transit tokens and food), residents' internal motives for self-exclusion remain intact. The informant further noted that despite the efforts within community initiatives to achieve bottom up input, community involvement remains top-down due to the centralised power structure. This means that issues regarding which power is delegated to the community are still dictated from official sources. This is especially done through the provision of funding and support (or the lack thereof), and exemplified by the multiplicity of recreational programs addressing youth such as music studios, while programs that seek to provide skill-training and employment services remain scarce and under-staffed.

"We work in this system with the supply side in which there is a menu of options that community groups can choose from, but in reality we have not really transcended the historic model of power and privilege on the what hand and on the other hand communities trying to survive and make it. The community is the object not the subject of development."

Ultimately, community involvement in Jane-Finch happens in spite of deeper structural and material forces that impede participation.

Discussion and conclusions

The analysis of ten community initiatives in Jane-Finch reveals that the investigated initiatives often face similar barriers and challenges in providing services to Jane-Finch inhabitants. There is unanimous agreement that the most pressing issues facing initiatives are related to funding and support, most notably lack of sustainable long-term funding, lack of funding for staff and administration, constant budget cuts, lack of organisational support, and the general environment of competitiveness, precarity and insecurity resulting from the formerly outlined issues. In addition to financial limitations, cutbacks and uncertainty, funding for programs are often streamlined in the aftermath of events (such as violent outbreaks) and was not sustained long enough to prevent them from happening again.

Moreover, compartmentalisation of funding has often resulted in subject-specific funding, hampered comprehensive programming and caused fragmentation within larger organisations. This means that within larger organisations with multiple sources of funding, programs often end up prioritising funder satisfaction over the collaboration necessary to achieve the over-arching comprehensive goals of the organisation. Providers often showcased a thorough understanding of the complexity of issues but contended that the current environment did not allow for holistic programs to take shape, often leaving them feeling that they were 'swimming against the tide' (Power & Tunstall, 1995). Funding insecurities further exacerbate competition across (and within) initiatives and output pre-occupation which in turn undermined the quality of programming and services. In addition to competitiveness, collaboration across agencies and initiatives have further been undermined by lack of an umbrella organisation to coordinate the large body of diverse (but overlapping) initiatives (See Ahmadi and Tasan-kok, 2014).

Notwithstanding these challenges, within the current context of unequal distribution of power and resources community initiatives still seem to provide inhabitants in poverty neighbourhoods with minimum means to manage their worst problems and maintain better living conditions than they might otherwise. The analysis of the community initiatives in Jane-Finch carries a number of lessons for effective community service provision in poverty neighbourhoods. The first set of lessons especially address policy makers and community planners and include the following: Firstly, service provision needs to be approached as part of a comprehensive, multi-faceted, cross-sectoral strategy involving a range of agencies and scales of intervention. Secondly, sustainable and preventive programming needs to be developed that can survive in the face of issues such as funding precarity and cutbacks. Furthermore, long-term strategies that go beyond short-sighted goals and focus on community capacity building can be combined with short-term strategies that provide resources to community members.

Another important set of lessons concerns grassroots initiatives and community service providers. Firstly, common barriers to participation need to be properly addressed within programs. These barriers include child care, transportation problems, limited access to resources; and improving accessibility by adopting simple strategies such as choosing convenient times and locations for gatherings and programs. General program characteristics such as location, size, interior design, language, and outreach should cater to the particular needs and preferences of their target audience. Flexibility in the design and content of programmes can further ensure that the changing needs of community members are addressed and that programming reflects the visions of inhabitants.

Secondly, creating strong collaborative networks and effective partnerships with other agencies and service providers in the community can help to enhance access to funding and support, and improve service provision by linking the beneficiaries to needed services through making referrals. Thirdly, serving individuals with exceptional circumstances (e.g. isolation, mental health problems) may further require adopting intensive case-specific approaches so that the beneficiaries are provided with individualized plans to overcome barriers or reach goals. It is further important to follow up and maintain contact with the beneficiaries beyond the duration of the program so as to make sure they do not bounce back into isolation. Lastly, the analysis suggests that challenges to community participation in disadvantaged areas (e.g. disinvestment, mistrust and with-drawl) can be partly addressed within community-based programs by adopting creative outreach strategies and out-stationing specialised and expert staff at alternative locations such as schools, malls, libraries and religious facilities to improve access and information about services. Also hiring well-stablished community members can help increase employment opportunities for inhabitants, facilitate access to the local community and bottom-up identification of needs

While the sum of existing programs in Jane-Finch may appear large at first glance, many are disconnected, fragmented, and doing overlapping work. Current services are still insufficient in relation to the overall scale of need within the neighbourhood and their potential for interaction in service design, operation and outcomes is limited. More importantly, initiatives seeking to improve the conditions in Jane-Finch have to operate in the face of deep-rooted structural inequality which brings about fundamental challenges in achieving long-lasting results in regards to improving conditions for inhabitants. In other words, systemic change is required to create and sustain long-lasting outcomes (Fleischer, 2001). The complexity and multiplicity of problems faced by Jane-Finch inhabitants further restrict community participation and civic engagement.

It is thereby important to emphasise the importance of accounting for political and social dimensions of community engagement in service delivery. In neighbourhoods where most households live in poverty, have limited access to basic resources such as healthcare, decent housing and education, participation cannot be regarded merely as a matter of political will detached from socio-economic conditions. This echoes the findings of previous studies urging us to take account of structural barriers to community participation and development (Fraser, 1995; Phillips 2004; Wilson 2008; Giuliani & Wiesenfeld, 2010; Rashid, 2014). The overall assessment of this paper, thus, may not appear surprising. To achieve permanent success in improving conditions in poverty neighbourhoods, basic obstacles such as inequality and institutionalised racism must be overcome. It is thus crucial to problematise and combat structural causes of poverty so as to ensure all inhabitants have equal opportunities for achieving better living conditions.

Notes

List of the interviewed persons: Farm Manager, "Black Creek Farm"; Executive Director, "The Learning Enrichment Foundation"; Research Steward, "The Learning Enrichment Foundation"; Coordinator, "Youth Enterprise Network"; Programme Manager, "Women Moving Forward"; Project Manager I, "Black Creek SNAP"; Project Manager II, "Black Creek SNAP"; Community Development Worker, "Jane-Finch Action Against Poverty"; Project Manager, "Aging At Home"; Project Manager, "COSTI Specialized Housing Programme"; Project Manager, "The Spot"; Project Manager, "PEACH".

Appendix

INITIATIVE	ORIGIN	MISSION	ACTIVITIES AND COMPONENTS
Black Creek Farm	Officially started in 2012 by the farm-based charity Everdale, involved in growing food and providing food and farming education to children, youth, and aspiring farmers.	Engaging, educating, and empowering diverse communities through the growing and sharing of food. Promoting food security, providing affordable fresh produce to the community.	- Focus on career building through offering an extensive internship program which provides a number of local residents with food-based career training. - Promoting diversity via workshops on storytelling through agro-ecology and native and cultural plants relevant to people in the community.
Aging at Home	Founded in 2009, led by the Jane-Finch Community and Family Centre and created in response to high rates of early admittance of seniors to long-term car, and lack of services available to seniors in the community.	Supporting seniors from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds in living independently in their homes for as long as possible.	- Ten different weekly programs offered in different languages to connect seniors, offered at 8 separate locations to ensure accessibility. - Provides participants with free public transport tokens. - Helps seniors establish social ties, reduces isolation, increases access to health care information and services, and lowers number of hospital visits and length and frequency of hospitalization.

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INITIATIVE	ORIGIN	MISSION	ACTIVITIES AND COMPONENTS
SNAP	Launched by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority in 2009 after a social analysis on the physical and societal characteristics of the area.	Improve environmental health, climate change adaptation, enhance food security by increasing local food production opportunities, and create greater job skills training and employment.	- Organizing community barbeques and gatherings, referring clients to other service providers in the community, urban agricultural events, beautification, and creating balcony gardens in high-rise buildings. - Connects home owners to high-rise residents by starting collaborations wherein homeowners open their gardens to other residents for farming. - Focusing on local job creation.
JFAAP	Formed in October of 2008 as a resident-led action group.	Fighting poverty in Jane-Finch, promoting social justice & capacity building.	- Organises regular monthly meetings, community events, rallies, consultations and workshops.
The Spot	A youth drop-in centre established in 2006 following an assessment of the needs of the youth in Jane-Finch, revealing a lack of a space for youth as well as interactive programming and youth services.	Prevent violence and drug misuse, promote healthy lifestyle choices for youth, increase and build leadership skills.	- Offers social, educational, art & recreational programming, newcomer youth settlement, after-school programmes, leadership and mentoring programmes, drop-ins, outings, volunteer and employment opportunities. - Offers resume-writing workshops, summer job programmes, leadership programmes and referrals different employment agencies in the community.
WMF	Established in 2005 by the Jane-Finch Community & Family Centre in response to the lack of support or career-focused programmes for single mothers over the age of 20.	Support and assist young sole-support mothers in the Jane and Finch community in their process of transitioning from poverty to economic self-sufficiency.	- Offering two phases of programmes. Phase I: self-assessment and goal-setting which focuses on life skills, career planning, citizen participation, counselling and literacy. Phase II: Professional Development and Training. - An integrated cross-cutting approach with focus on education, life skills, employment, & civic participation.

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INITIATIVE	ORIGIN	MISSION	ACTIVITIES AND COMPONENTS
PEACH	Established in 1993, as a youth-centred program originally created with an anti-drug focus. Since 2000, the core focus has changed to education or alternative modes of engagement.	Building relationships and partnerships that guide youth in crisis and their families to the supports they need to re-imagine their future and achieve success.	- An integrated model incorporating education, mentoring, and social programmes for youth. - Includes a space where assigned teachers supervise youth at risk of falling out of the school system; a supportive network of relatives and service providers; a music Studio with workshop on theory of music and entrepreneurship; organisational partnerships.
COSTI specialised housing program	Established in 2011, the as a response to a high need for specialized client-specific services for 'vulnerable' seniors.	Provide isolated seniors with support to have easy access to services, fight evictions, relocate to specialised housing with on-site care.	- Works with individuals on a one-to-one basis to identify their needs based upon conditions, mental health state, physical ability, and mobility levels.
LEF	Established in 1978 by the York Board of Education, one of the largest community economic development organisations in Toronto.	Restore self-sufficiency; support an inclusive community focus; celebrate diversity; respond to community needs.	- Offers programs such as settlement services for newcomers, employment services, skills training, language training, child-care, youth services, and entrepreneurship. - Has an on-site open space, which includes a sitting area, a cafeteria, market stands, and a kitchen.
YEN	Created in 2009 by the Black Creek Community Collaborative as a response to concerns around youth employment issues in the community.	Community economic development	- A youth store called Ascend, established in 2012 where products developed by local youth are sold. - Offers workshops which comprise of two phases: training and implementation, arranges community events, gatherings, and flea markets. - Connects youth to micro-credit loan initiatives.

TABLE 6.3 Overview of descriptive information about the initiatives

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7 Synthesis

§ 7.1   **Introduction**

The starting point of this project was the 'paradox' in how the concept of urban diversity is evoked, in theory, in policy and in practice, as something which is simultaneously celebrated and demonised. Diversity is indeed a fashion word, it sounds celebratory, tolerant and harmonious, but not too confrontational (Essed, 2002). Diversity has gained popular appeal especially because it offers an approach that goes beyond 'dated' terms such as equality and anti-racism. Yet diversity workers often tend to experience this very paradox, working within organizations that claim to be committed to diversity but feeling as though they are 'banging their head against a brick wall' (Sara Ahmed, 2012, emphasis mine). The same paradox is evident in the manner in which the city of Toronto approaches its diversity. The premise that diversity is a strength which should be celebrated appears to be a popular notion within Toronto's city policy and mainstream public discourse. Yet, Toronto's most diverse neighbourhoods located at the edges of the city are scapegoated and criminalised. This is especially the tendency when ethnic, cultural and religious diversity coincide with poverty, welfare dependency and poor infrastructure.

This study set out to provide empirical knowledge of what living with and working towards diversity in urban areas looks like. Specifically, it raised the question: *How is diversity experienced at the neighbourhood level, as (a) discourse, (b) social reality, and (c) practice??* This question was broken down to four sub-questions which were investigated in four interconnected chapters (chapters 3 to 6). The present concluding chapter provides a summary of the findings of each empirical chapter and further discusses these findings in relation to one another. It closes with recommendations for both policy and future scholarship addressing diversity in our cities.

Summary of findings

Chapter 3: Is diversity our strength? An analysis of the facts and fancies of diversity in Toronto

This chapter explored the relationship between the *discourses* of diversity in Toronto policy and those reproduced and perpetuated by Jane-Finch inhabitants. It did so through the juxtaposition of the primary policy discourses (derived from interviews with policy actors and policy documents) with inhabitants' everyday lived experiences with diversity. The analysis revealed that while there seems to be a resemblance between policy discourses and inhabitant discourses regarding diversity at the level of rhetoric (i.e. normalisation of and civility towards diversity), the way these discourses manifest in practice often does not match the rhetorical stance. The analysis of policy documents and interviews with policy makers made explicit an instrumentalist approach to managing diversity which signals a hierarchy between different types of diversities i.e. desirable and undesirable. The interviews with Jane-Finch inhabitants further revealed that diversity as a concept is celebrated, but tensions along the axes of class, gender, race, and religion still dominate residents' daily experiences with diversity. Therefore, civility towards diversity appears to go hand in hand with essentialisations and categorisations on the basis of different identity markers, as well as negative stereotyping of what is not considered to be acceptable or desirable diversity.

Chapter 4. Diversity and social cohesion: the case of Jane-Finch, a highly diverse lower income Toronto neighbourhood

This chapter shed light on the inter-relation between the two concepts of 'diversity' and 'social cohesion'. It specifically analysed the perceptions of the residents of a diverse neighbourhood regarding multiple aspects of social cohesion, namely common values, formal and informal interactions and neighbourhood attachment and provided critical insights into socioeconomic and political structures underlying inhabitants' perceptions and interactions in Jane-Finch.

The findings revealed that while there were instances in which diversity was perceived to have contributed to social cohesion, the contributions were implicit and required the presence of other factors such as commonalities, shared activities and experiences, and a sense of solidarity. Importantly, poverty, institutionalisation and the internalisation of gendered and class-based racism appeared to have played a significant role in

shaping residents' perceptions of and interactions with one another. The analysis further demonstrated that living with diversity often created opportunities for cultural exchange and increased recognition; however, existing hierarchies among cultures and income groups played an important role in shaping perceptions and interactions. The article ultimately problematised the positioning of diversity at the centre of the social cohesion debate, arguing that diversity can function to divert attention away from systemic, structural and political issues such as poverty, inequality and racism.

Chapter 5. Diversity, public space and places of encounter: unpacking perceptions of public space in a lower-income highly diverse neighbourhood

This chapter investigated the influence of diversity on inhabitants' perceptions and use of public space. It interrogated the perceptions of and interactions in the public spaces of Jane-Finch and the extent to which public space played a role in facilitating encounters between diverse groups and catering for diversity in Jane-Finch.

The empirical analysis showed that there is little evidence for encounters between diverse groups in public spaces, due to the lack of spatial infrastructure anticipated in the modernist design of the neighbourhood. Physical factors, such as the layout of the neighbourhood, public space design, location and accessibility, greatly influenced inhabitants' perceptions and use of public spaces in the neighbourhood. In addition, social factors such as surveillance and policing, poor maintenance, lack of appropriate symbols catering for different user groups, presence of gangs and violence, and loitering have resulted in residents' self-exclusion from public spaces and undermined their social encounters. The analysis further suggested that creating encounters in public spaces requires the adjusting of these spaces to meet the needs and preferences of their diverse users. In conclusion, the paper argued that facilitating social encounters in public space requires going above and beyond mere physical improvements to address wider structural inequalities in urban areas.

Chapter 6. Serving diverse communities: the role of community initiatives in delivering services to poverty neighbourhoods

This final empirical chapter focused on the practice of diversity management and service provision in Jane-Finch. It closely investigated a sample of 10 community initiatives in the studied area so as to unravel whether they were successful in terms of achieving their goals and the factors which contributed to their effectiveness. It further discussed the relevance of the experience for other neighbourhood initiatives targeting diversity.

The assessment revealed that services currently available in Jane-Finch are still insufficient in relation to the overall scale of need within the neighbourhood. The effectiveness of the available programs, as well as their potential for collaboration are further limited due to a number of existing barriers. The most pressing barriers facing initiatives concern funding, e.g. lack of long-term funding, lack of funding for staff and administration, budget cuts, lack of organisational support, compartmentalisation of funding, and an overall environment of competitiveness, precarity and insecurity. In addition, the complexity and multiplicity of problems faced by Jane-Finch inhabitants restrict their participation and civic engagement. The article further brought to light the fact that initiatives often have to operate in the face of deep-rooted structural inequality which seriously undermines their efforts in line with improving the living conditions of inhabitants, arguing that systemic change is needed in order to bring about and sustain long-lasting outcomes.

§ 7.3 Reflections

Here I'd like to return to the research question posed at the beginning of this dissertation: *How is diversity experienced at the neighbourhood level, as (a) discourse, (b) social reality, and (c) practice?* Based on the findings of the empirical chapters, I herewith present the answer with respect to each dimension.

Diversity as discourse in Jane-Finch

The interrogation of discourses and narratives surrounding diversity in Jane-Finch (chapters 3, 4, and 5, in particular) shows that diversity is most often celebrated at the level of rhetoric. At the city level, we are increasingly witnessing the articulation of diversity as an asset, whereby diversity is presented as a marketable commodity which helps the city attract funds and capital in the competitive market of global cities. Likewise, within the city of Toronto itself, different neighbourhoods and communities often have to rebrand themselves in line with the city's image as an attractive hub of diversity so as to acquire funds and services in an environment of competition. Meanwhile, the findings show that implicit in this celebratory discourse is a clear-cut distinction between *desirable* and *undesirable* form of diversity. The celebration of diversity therefor belies a portrait of Toronto as a harmonious multi-cultural haven and has become a matter of political correctness. It is no longer appropriate or accepted to outwardly oppose the notion.

However, even at the level of rhetoric, there are contradictions evident in the way the celebratory narrative is shaped and reproduced. Chapter 3, in particular, brings to light the fact that Jane-Finch inhabitants are likely to reproduce negative stereotypes and essentialiased categorisations even as they claim to celebrate diversity. The positive talk around diversity often does not go beyond lip-service to influence inhabitants' perceptions and daily interactions. Diversity as a narrative can thus present society as a space of value-neutral and power-neutral plurality. However, hierarchies among groups marked by culture, socio-economic class, gender, sexuality, ability (among various other intersecting markers) remain by and large intact. Diversity does not address these hierarchies and social relations of power. Nor is it concerned with socio-economic disparities. Rather it promotes a superficial account of social reality which essentialises differences between cultural groups while leaving unattended the underlying power structures.

Diversity as social reality in Jane-Finch

The analysis shows that diversity in Jane-Finch is often utilised descriptively to refer to socio demographic characteristics of the area. Moreover, when the term diversity was evoked by informants, focus remained by and large on ethnic and cultural difference. It is evident that the term diversity does not concern internal heterogeneity or hierarchies within and between categories, nor does it address the intersection of categories of difference. The empirical analysis of diversity in Jane-Finch, however, demonstrates that while two people may belong to the same ethnic or cultural category, their positioning in society (as well as how they are perceived) could vary significantly depending on other factor such as their class, gender, age, sexuality, (dis)ability and so forth. Therefore, when different categories intersect, they in turn become decentred and reconstructed. Likewise, people may have certain aspects of their identity privileged while simultaneously having other aspects marginalised. Markers of identity are not static 'boxes', rather dynamic and ever-evolving categories. The empirical analysis suggests that diversity often does not transcend its descriptive function to address these complexities. This, in turn, signals the analytical limitations of the concept.

Taking into account these limitations, the concept of diversity can be approached as a demographic reality (as opposed to an analytical toolkit) which could, in turn, be analysed using the lens of 'intersectionality'. Contrary to diversity, intersectionality posits power and position at the centre of its focus. Central to the approach is the belief that every individual in society is positioned at the intersection of multiple categories and is conditioned to social advantages and disadvantages accordingly (Collins, 1990). These categories together forge a hierarchical matrix of privilege and marginalisation in

society called intersectionality (Gopaldas and DeRoy, 2015). Intersectionality considers diversity across multiple dimensions, especially the trinity of gender, race and class, while acknowledging that these dimensions cannot be analysed without taking account of the interconnectedness of representations. If diversity advocates for the inclusion of all different categories of social identity, intersectionality stresses not only the inclusion of categories but also the intersection of categories., thereby addressing both social inequalities and histories of political struggle, which are pivotal to understanding social practice.

Diversity as practice in Jane-Finch

The analysis of diversity practices (chapters 6 and 3 in particular) shows that diversity is on the agenda of urban policy and community programs, in both implicit and explicit ways. As mentioned earlier, diversity is often a celebrated notion in city policy. However, this celebration has come without recognition of structures of power and inequality which fuel exclusion and segregation in the city. Underlying the management of diversity in Toronto, is further a philosophy fuelled by financial motives and competitive advantage. One cannot help but wonder whether diversity's popular appeal and frequency of usage in policy signals a loss of criticality (that is if the concept had a critical edge to begin with).

Furthermore, focus on diversity within Toronto's policy has emerged in the context of a broader shift towards neoliberal politics and austerity. Within this context, diversity is used to promote individualisation of policy and social issues since it focuses on the individual level at the expense of collective experiences. The focus is increasingly put upon the individuality of the members of society and what they can bring to the table, and diversity is often reduced to a consumable commodity Meanwhile, a common thread among the four empirical chapters has been the impact of the underlying structural inequalities present in Jane-Finch on the conditions and perceptions of its inhabitants. Similarly, we can see that in the case of community based programs, issues such as poverty, institutionalised racism and internalisation of racist and sexist stereotypes play a significant role in undermining the effectiveness of services and programs that seek to improve the conditions of Jane-Finch inhabitants as well as inhabitants' participation in them. The analysis brought to light how diversity can have a concealing or depoliticising impact since it detracts attention from such systemic issues.

My suggestion here is not to do away with the concept of diversity entirely. In fact, diversity's premises for harmony and mutual co-existence remain timely and noble ideals. However, it is important to acknowledge that at a political level, the discourse

of diversity will, at best, promote 'recognition' (Bannerji, 2000). It might even bring about limited and tokenistic group rights, but it does little to achieve meaningful transformation of the structures that produce inequalities within and between groups in the first place. Naming and addressing structural barriers to justice, on the other hand, would be pivotal to fulfilling diversity's promise for harmony.

§ 7.4   Implications

I would like to conclude here by discussing the implications of the concept of diversity, with its analytical and practical limitations, for future scholarship, policy and activism.

From a research stand point, diversity is best approached as a more descriptive tool, meaning that it can be used to *describe* socio-demographic reality which can, in turn, be analysed through an intersectional lens. Intersectionality can provide a viable analytical framework for painting a more nuanced picture of social reality. The intersectional framework can particularly respond to two major analytical deficits of diversity, namely depoliticisation, and scale. First and foremost, Diversity risks depoliticization, as it often remains pre-occupied with recognition, promoting a superficial account of identity politics, while failing to sufficiently take account of issues of power, positionality and access. Intersectionality, on the other hand, goes beyond recognition of plurality to address axes of power, privilege, and oppression, by bringing to light how different members of society experience oppression or privilege based on their positioning at the intersection of multiple categories of difference. It further allows for the identification of intersections of multiply privileged identities as well as historically oppressed identities. The framework approaches identity markers not as rigid essentialised boxes, but as dynamic categories that get decentred and reconstituted by their intersections (Humphris, 2015). It also takes account of the historical struggles of marginalised groups, such as slavery, colonialism, the fight for gender equality and LGBTQA rights.

Second, issues around scale of analysis constitute another major limitation of the concept of diversity (see chapter 3). Diversity focuses on the individual level, arguing that every person in society is diverse. However, as diversity researchers we have yet to determine effective solutions for addressing structural forces and collective experiences when we talk diversity. Achieving this requires transcending the individual level, to address structures at both micro and macro levels. Intersectionality has a long-standing history of research and scholarship that address both the micro-

dynamics of everyday experiences and interactions as well as local and trans-local forces, histories and patterns of belonging. Future research on diversity in urban areas can benefit significantly from fine-grained ethnographic analyses informed by an intersectional framework.

Diversity further cannot function as an alternative to classic systems of categorisation such as race, gender and class. Sara Ahmed (2012) has similarly attested that in contemporary critical theory, *"there is a sense -sometimes spoken and sometimes not- that we need to get beyond categories like gender and race: as if the categories themselves have restricted our understanding. […] New terms can thus be considered a way of 'overring', as if these terms allow us to get over the categories themselves"* (180, emphasis mine). Much of the appeal of the diversity narrative to corporations and Neo-liberal governance regimes lies in the way the concept provides a euphemism for discourses which have historically been tied to struggles for freedom and radical change. Earlier it was established that the language of diversity can allow us to look over the existence of deeply rooted structural barriers to justice such as poverty and institutionalised racism. Meanwhile, there is clear evidence for continued racial, class-based and gendered inequality in urban centres such as Toronto. This entails that we cannot forego these systems of categorisation as they remain persistent in grounding social existence, and therefore are essential for any scholarship addressing urban diversity or inequality (Berg and Sigona, 2013).

Moreover, from a policy perspective, the imposition of a top-down diversity agenda is arguably ineffective as it leaves unchallenged hierarchies and prejudices that are deeply internalised by inhabitants. The analysis rendered clear that just as we all embody diversity, we are all complicit, to varying extents, in reproducing stereotypes and essentialisations that perpetuate inequality structures. Diversity work needs to go beyond its current pre-occupation with recognition and representation, to address transformation of structures that produce inequality through rigorous anti-racist and feminist critique, mobilisation and activism. It requires what Paulo Freire (1970) has called 'conscientisation', i.e. a process through which subjects acquire a critical understanding of political reality and its paradoxes. As such, conscientisation will not be achieved through top-down policies and programs but context sensitive bottom-up pedagogical interventions.

Research on urban diversity is often pre-occupied with the 'other', and their inclusion, integration or assimilation into the mainstream. Future scholarship may bring to light the perceptions and experiences of the dominant group and how they contribute to the reproduction of material and discursive inequality structures. Subsequently, urban diversity literature can benefit from drawing from critical whiteness studies, which have traditionally sought to analyse the social construction of whiteness as a category

of privilege (see Delgado & Stefancic,1997; Roediger, 1998; Frankenberg, 1993; Rothenberg, 2005; Ahmed, 2007; among others). Critical research on urban diversity may further go one step beyond naming and examining structures of inequality to unravel new practices, interventions and forms of organising to tackle these structures. Engaging in diversity work that leads to such praxis would be the quintessential first step towards achieving transformative change.

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Strong Women
Strong Community

Appendix

LIST OF INTERVIEWED GOVERNANCE ACTORS			
Informant	Organisation	Level of governance	Role of Respondent
1	City of Toronto's Park, Forestry & Recreation, Standards & Innovation	Municipal government	Operations Support Officer, Access and Diversity
2	City of Toronto's Park, Forestry & Recreation, Community Recreation Branch	Municipal government	Manager of Community Development
3	Social Planning Toronto (non-profit)	City based NGO	Community Planner
4	Social Planning Toronto (non-profit)	City based NGO	Community Planner
5	City of Toronto's Social Development, Finance & Administration, Social Policy, Analysis and Research	Municipal government	Policy Development Officer, Toronto Newcomer Initiative
6	City of Toronto's Social Development, Finance & Administration, Social Policy, Analysis and Research	Municipal government	Community Development Officer, Toronto Newcomer Initiative
7	City of Toronto's Social Development, Finance & Administration, Social Policy, Analysis and Research	Municipal government	Community Development Officer, Toronto Newcomer Initiative
9	City of Toronto's Social Policy, Analysis and Research	Municipal government	Director Social Policy, Analysis and Research
10	COSTI North York Centre (non-profit)	Provincial NGO	Manager of North York Housing Help
11	COSTI North York Centre (non-profit)	Provincial NGO	Specialised Housing Help
12	St. Christopher's Community House (non-profit)	City based NGO	Immigrant and Refugee Services Coordinator
13	St. Stephen's Community House (non-profit)	City based NGO	Associate Executive Director
14	Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (non-profit)	Provincial NGO	Senior Economist
15	Open Policy Ontario	Provincial government	Policy Consultant and former Ontario Government employee in social assistance, policy and operations
16	City of Toronto's Employment and Social Services	Municipal government	Director
17	United Way Toronto	Private fundraising organisation	Manager, Neighbourhoods and Community Investment
18	United Way Toronto	Private	Team Lead, Neighbourhoods

Farm Manager, "Black Creek Farm"

Executive Director, "The Learning Enrichment Foundation"

Research Steward, "The Learning Enrichment Foundation"

Coordinator, "Youth Enterprise Network"

Programme Manager, "Women Moving Forward"

Project Manager I, "Black Creek SNAP"

Project Manager II, "Black Creek SNAP"

Community Development Worker, "Jane-Finch Action Against Poverty"

Project Manager, "Aging At Home"

Project Manager, "COSTI Specialized Housing Programme"

Project Manager, "The Spot"

Project Manager, "PEACH"

LIST OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE ROUND-TABLE TALK

Date: April 4, 2014
Place: Social Planning Toronto, Toronto

David Hulchanski, Professor, "University of Toronto"

Israt Ahmed, Social Planner, "Social Planning Toronto"

Mohammad Araf, Intern, "Social Planning Toronto"

John Stapleton, Policy Consultant, "Open Policy Ontario"

Diane Dyson, Director, "WoodGreen Community Services"

Victoria Grendys, Community Development Manager, "Jane and Finch Community and Family Centre"

Michael Kerr, Coordinator, "The Colour of Poverty"

Robyn Hoogendam, Research Steward, "The Learning Enrichment Foundation"

LIST OF INTERVIEWED JANE-FINCH INHABITANTS						
N	Pseudo name	Age Group	Gender	Position in house-hold	Housing	Ethnic Group/region
1	Amidah	18-30	f	daughter	Public housing	Tanzania
2	Heba	46-60	f	Single mother of 1	Public housing	Egypt
3	Gloria	61-75	f	single	Private housing	Jamaica
4	Vanessa	31-45	f	Single mother of 3	Home-owner	El Salvador
5	Rebeca	18-30	f	daughter	Home-owner	El Salvador
6	Nicholas	61-75	m	single	Public housing	Italy
7	Kojo	31-45	m	single	Private housing	Ghana
8	Kellisha	46-60	f	Wife and mother of 3	Public housing	Guyana
9	Grace	31-45	f	Single mother of 2	Public housing	Jamaica
10	Kim	46-60	f	Single mother of 5	Public housing	Vietnam
11	Jim	31-45	m	single	Private housing	Ghana
12	Ria	31-45	f	Single mother of 1	Public housing	Jamaica
13	Delilah	31-45	f	Single mother of 2	Private housing	Guyana-Jamaica
14	Odessa	31-45	f	Wife and mother of 2	Public housing	Guyana
15	Holly	18-30	f	Single mother of 2	Public housing	Jamaica
16	Amanthi	46-60	f	Wife and mother of 1	Private housing	Sri-Lanka
17	Evie	31-45	f	Wife and mother of 3	Public housing	Jamaica
18	Anna	31-45	f	Single mother of 2	Public housing	Jamaica
19	Shantel	18-30	f	Single mother of 2	Public housing	Jamaica
20	Eva	31-45	f	Single mother of 2	Private housing	Ecuador
21	Sarah	18-30	f	Single mother of 2	Private housing	White Canadian
22	Kelly	18-30	f	single	Private housing	Caribbean-Cana-dian
23	Bryah	31-45	f	Single mother of 2	Public housing	Jamaican
24	Elizabeth	46-60	f	single	Public housing	Jamaican
25	Jake	18-30	m	single	Private housing	White Canadian
26	Alphonse	>75	m	single	Home-owner	Jamaica
27	Neda	31-45	f	wife and mother of 2	Home-owner	Iran
28	Johnny	46-60	m	Father of one	Home-owner	India
29	Nicole	31-45	f	Wife and mother of 1	Home-owner	Philippines
30	Julia	31-45	f	Wife and mother of 2	Home-owner	Argentina

N	Pseudo name	Age Group	Gender	Position in house-hold	Housing	Ethnic Group/region
LIST OF INTERVIEWED JANE-FINCH INHABITANTS						
31	Mauricio	61-75	m	Single living with roommate	Home-owner	El Salvador
32	Leah	31-45	f	Single mother of 1	Private housing	Trinidadian-Ca-nadian
33	Ali	46-60	f	Single mother of 2	Public housing	White Canadian
34	Gita	31-45	f	Wife and mother of 1	Home-owner	India
35	Latoya	18-30	f	daughter	Private housing	(Jamaican-Trinida-dian) Canadian
36	Alejandra	61-75	f	Wife and mother of 3	Home-owner	Ecuador
37	Fernando	18-30	m	single	Private housing	El Salvador
38	Juan	46-60	m	single	Home-owner	Chile
39	Samantha	46-60	f	Single mother of 1	Private housing	Ecuador
40	Diego	61-75	m	single	Private housing	Peru
41	Jamal	61-75	m	husband	Public housing	Jamaica
42	Amara	31-45	f	Wife and mother of 2	Private housing	Nigeria
43	Chioma	31-45	f	Wife and mother of 2	Private housing	Nigeria
44	Edna	61-75	f	single	Home-owner	St. Vincent
45	Jose	46-60	m	Single living with roommate	Private housing	El Salvador
46	Celine	46-60	f	single	Private housing	Dominican Re-public
47	Alicia	61-75	f	Single	Private housing	Jamaican
48	Keela	46-60	f	Wife and mother of 2	Private housing	Trinidad
49	Tenika	61-75	f	Single	Private housing	Trinidad
50	Julio	61-75	m	Husband and father of 1	Home-owner	El Salvador

Curriculum Vitae

Donya Ahmadi was born in Mashhad, Iran, in 1989. She received her BEng (2011) in Urban Planning and Design from the Art University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran. In 2011, she was granted the Amsterdam Merit Scholarship to participate in the Research Master program Metropolitan Studies at the University of Amsterdam. As part of her studies at the University of Amsterdam, she spent five months in Boston as an exchange student at the School of Public Policy & Urban Affairs at Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts. She obtained her Res MSc in Urban Studies in 2013 from the Graduate School of Social Sciences at the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. In August 2013, she started her PhD research at OTB - Research for the Built environment, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Delft University of Technology. During her doctoral studies, she also took part in the EU FP7 project: '*DIVERCITIES - Governing Urban Diversity. Creating social cohesion, social mobility and economic performance in today's hyper-diversified cit*ies', whereby she contributed to the project as a junior researcher through conduction of fieldwork and composition of reports. Her research interest lies in a variety of fields including intersectional feminism, critical race theory, critical pedagogy, and participatory urban governance.

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