



## Journal of Place Management and Development

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Wessel Strydom, Karen Puren, Ernst Drewes, (2018) "Exploring theoretical trends in placemaking: towards new perspectives in spatial planning", Journal of Place Management and Development, Vol. 11 Issue: 2, pp.165-180, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPMD-11-2017-0113>

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# Exploring theoretical trends in placemaking: towards new perspectives in spatial planning

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Theoretical  
trends in  
placemaking

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Received 7 November 2017  
Revised 10 January 2018  
Accepted 8 February 2018

## Abstract

**Purpose** – While placemaking is a multi-disciplinary concern, it is a key focus within the discipline of spatial planning. This paper aims to explore the development of theoretical trends with regard to placemaking in spatial planning since 1975 to identify current emerging theoretical perspectives. Special attention is given to differences in perspectives between the Global North and the Global South.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The study used an integrative literature review (ILR) to analyse placemaking literature over a period of 41 years and five months. The ILR followed the basic review stages: scoping; planning and review protocol; identification/availability; searching; and screening. ILR differs from other reviews as quality appraisal, data gathering, analysis and synthesis rely on coding, thematic content analysis and synthesis.

**Findings** – Initially, the planning/review protocol resulted in 59 contributions on placemaking in various disciplines (excluding publications in other languages than English). Contributions included spatial and design disciplines (29 contributions), social sciences (14 contributions) and other disciplines (16 contributions). The literature review proceeded with a selection of 23 spatial planning contributions (20 from the Global North and three from the Global South). Theoretical trends include placemaking theorised as a physical construct, a social construct, an economic construct (absent in literature from the Global South), a tool for empowerment, a psychological dimension and an environmental management tool.

**Practical implications** – The most recent theoretical perspectives in literature suggest placemaking as an enabling tool in which people share knowledge and learn new skills to transform their own environment. This empowering process creates a linkage between planning theory and practice.

**Originality/value** – This paper contributes to the current theories of placemaking in spatial planning. It provides a simplified view of an exhaustive list of existing literature. This paper reports on the current trends and the development of placemaking theory.

**Keywords** Global South, Placemaking, Spatial planning, Global North, Integrative literature review (ILR)

**Paper type** Literature review

## Introduction

Placemaking is a concept that is not limited to a single discipline. This concept is theorised by Spatial and Design Disciplines, Social Science, Art, Education, Music, Tourism, etc. (Alvarez *et al.*, 2017; Lew, 2017; O'Rourke and Baldwin, 2016; Toolis, 2017). Being useful to various disciplines, the formulation of a general definition may appear as a daunting task (Lew, 2017, p. 449). Placemaking may be described as a collective effort by individuals living



This work was supported in part by the National Research Foundation (NRF) under Grant SFH150723129706. Any opinion, finding and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and therefore the NRF does not accept any liability in this regard.

within a specific setting (Boeri, 2017, p. 2). A collective effort refers to the action of individuals/groups to re-imagine their surrounding environments (Beza, 2016, p. 245). Individuals may include a single person, household(s), groups, communities and/or organisations (Montgomery, 2016, p. 795). Re-imagination may include projects of renovation, upgrade and/or maintenance of lived spaces (Eckenwiler, 2016, p. 1944). Lived spaces are often repurposed to create a more attractive function. Functions in this sense refer to activities related with places that contribute to the uniqueness of the setting, while uniqueness is usually supported by site-specific characteristics, e.g. community-based arts, historical educational elements and social interaction (Thomas *et al.*, 2015, p. 74). Hague and Jenkins (2005, p. 8) view placemaking as a key purpose in spatial planning as planning aims to create, reproduce or mould the identities of places through the manipulation of various activities, feelings, meanings and fabric that combine into place identity.

The origin of the concept of placemaking in spatial planning can be traced back to key authors such as Jane Jacobs, William Whyte and George Andrews. Whyte (1968) wrote in his book *The Last Landscape* about the negative impact of urban sprawl on people's behaviour in an urban setting. Behaviour became a well-known focus of Whyte's (1989) work as he explored the liveliness of urban settings through observations in his book *City: Rediscovering the Center*. Whyte was regarded as the mentor of Jane Jacobs. Jacobs' (1961) contribution entitled *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* suggested that small-scale changes in an environment may change a neighbourhood. Both Whyte and Jacobs focused on the manner in which urban development impacts a setting's social environment. Andrews (1975) wrote in his book *Maya Cities: placemaking and urbanization* about the physical elements associated with Mayan Cities. Andrews' study mainly revolved around the spatial organisation, spatial function and physical aspects related to the pre-industrial city (Condit, 1976, p. 546). Spatial organisation is an overarching term referring to the manner in which geographical locations are arranged according to their economic and spatial function (Rauws *et al.*, 2016, p. 244). Spatial function refers to the activity practised within a place, e.g. ceremonial purposes, trade and socialisation (Terryn *et al.*, 2016, p. 1093). To make the spatial environment memorable, physical aspects were added, e.g. symbolic elements including architectural features (Elbakidze *et al.*, 2015, p. 272). While planning is probably more central to the profession of planners (and other design disciplines) than to most other social groups, planning is embedded in a larger social context in which decisions are shaped in which planners do not hold monopoly over the making of places (Hague and Jenkins, 2005, p. 8).

Since 1990, a shift in placemaking literature has been observed. This shift mainly revolves around decision-making in placemaking processes (Shibley, 1998, p. 80). Previously, the focus was mainly on the development of physical elements as an end-product of placemaking projects (Day, 1992). Decision-making regarding the spatial arrangement and design of a setting was limited to expert policy makers (O'Brien, 1985, p. 59). However, the observed shift is present in the manner in which decision-making processes are transformed. The viewpoints of various stakeholders became important and subsequently guided the decisions associated with the making of places (Schneekloth and Shibley, 2000, p. 34).

Previously seen as a physical end-product, placemaking has transformed into a democratic process (Shibley *et al.*, 2003). Placemaking as democratic intervention focuses on the active involvement of all interested parties. Interested parties refer to community members, facilitators, local authorities, non-governmental groups, academia, etc. These various interested parties collaborate to negotiate decisions regarding their environment (Toolis, 2017, p. 194; Thomas *et al.*, 2015, p. 83). At its core, placemaking as democratic

intervention aims at fostering respect towards diversity (Rios and Watkins, 2015, p. 217). Diversity in this sense should be reflected in the design and dialogue related to the direct surroundings of site-users (Bilandzic and Johnson, 2013, p. 259).

The aim of the paper is twofold. First, this paper strives to explore trends in placemaking theory. This exploration of research trends guided the choice of the second aim, namely, the attempt to understand and describe the development of placemaking in spatial planning. In the end, the overall purpose of the study is to identify current and emerging theoretical perspectives in placemaking.

### Research methodology: literature review

The overarching purpose of a literature review is to provide a concise summary of existing research regarding a research interest (Coughlan and Cronin, 2016, p. 2). By summarising existing research, a literature review contributes to the general study field. The contribution of a review is found in its ability to generate a simplified view of current trends revolving a certain research interest (Phillips and Pugh, 2010, p. 64). This simplified view of current research enables other researchers to access a broad range of available research materials in a single document (Jesson *et al.*, 2011, p. 106).

The literature review is a dual-purpose term, as it may be used to describe the outcome/end-product of the review or the reviewing process itself (Jesson *et al.*, 2011, p. 104). The literature review as an outcome/end-product refers to a written document that provides a comprehensive understanding of recent academic contributions (Galvan and Galvan, 2017, p. 7). Academic contributions in this study include peer-reviewed academic journals.

All literature reviews follow the same basic steps (Figure 1). These steps refer to:

- scoping;
- planning and review protocol;
- identification of available resources;
- searching and screening;
- quality appraisal standard;
- the gathering of data; and
- analysis and synthesis.

The difference is found in the manner in which some of the steps are conducted (Coughlan and Cronin, 2016, p. 15; MacEachen *et al.*, 2016, p. 4 and Jesson *et al.*, 2011, p. 104).

There are several means of conducting a literature review. The current main methods include the traditional/scoping, systematic, meta-analysis, qualitative and integrative/interpretive forms of review (Figure 2) (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012 and Garrard, 2016, p. 4). Although all the methods share common characteristics, significant differences are noted in terms of their search processes, appraisal standards, synthesis and analysis methods (Coughlan and Cronin, 2016, p. 15 and Heyvaert *et al.*, 2016).

In terms of the general typology of the literature review, the *traditional*, *systematic* and *integrative reviews* all aim at including either quantitative or qualitative studies or a combination (quantitative/qualitative) of studies. Traditional reviews aim at providing a broad description of available research, while the *systematic review* is an evidence-based practice which aims at providing a narrow description of available research. The systematic review has a predetermined aim with relevant review objectives and questions. An *integrative review* strives to provide an extensive description of available research. The integrative review combines both theoretical and empirical studies stemming from

Common characteristics of a literature review	
(i) Scoping	<p><b>Description:</b> Gathering of an overview of existing academic contributions, e.g. academic journals, books, book reviews, conference proceedings, dissertations, electronic resources, e.g. websites and HTML files, patents and unpublished work (Holly, Salmond and Saimbert, 2016)</p> <p><b>Importance:</b> To determine a need for a literature review</p>
(ii) Planning and review protocol	<p><b>Description:</b> Establishment of guidelines for the literature review (Debisette and Vessey, 2010:65). These guidelines include limiting factors, preferred contribution format and a description of the appropriate record-keeping tool (Holly, Salmond and Saimbert, 2016:327)</p> <p><b>Importance:</b> Enhances the transparency and trustworthiness of the literature review. This transparency and trustworthiness depend on the adoption of a rigorous record-keeping method</p>
(iii) Identification of available resources	<p><b>Description:</b> In order to explore available contributions, a credible searching tool needs to be utilised. This searching tool may be provided by a library at a tertiary institution (Coughlan and Cronin, 2017:15). Searching tools allow for access to various databases. Relevant filters may be applied as determined during the <i>planning and review protocol</i> step.</p> <p><b>Importance:</b> Confirmation of full-text availability of contributions and credibility of resources (MacEachen <i>et al.</i>, 2016, p. 4).</p>
(iv) Searching and screening	<p><b>Description:</b> Exploration of all available resources. This step refers to the studying of citations, titles, keywords and abstracts of contributions (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012).</p> <p><b>Importance:</b> This step allows for a decision to be made regarding the usefulness of a contribution (Debisette and Vessey, 2010:65).</p>
(v) Quality Appraisal Standard	<p><b>Descriptions:</b> Although all literature reviews have a quality appraisal standard, this step also provides for a distinction between review typologies (e.g. traditional/scoping, systematic, meta-analysis, qualitative and the integrative/interpretive review). This step strives to assess the standard of the contribution and to reach a final decision regarding the inclusion/ exclusion of explored contributions (Roos and Stainbank, 2017:91).</p> <p><b>Importance:</b> This step represents the final decision in terms of the inclusion/exclusion of contributions. The appraisal standards establish the quality and credibility of the review (Garrard, 2016:04)</p>
(vi) Data Gathering	<p><b>Description:</b> Data gathering in any review refers to the further exploration of full-text contributions. Full-text contributions are read and understood during this step (Heyvaert, Hannes and Onghena, 2016). This is a step found in all review typologies.</p> <p><b>Importance:</b> This step finalises the appropriate contributions for the review. An in-depth understanding of the research interest provides assistance for the following step (Heyvaert, Hannes and Onghena, 2016).</p>
(vii) Analysis and synthesis	<p><b>Description:</b> Gathered data is analysed during this step. The review typology guides the manner in which data is analysed (e.g. discursive, statistical, systematic, thematic or qualitative). Also guided by the review type, analysed data is synthesised into an appropriate format (e.g. discursive or concise) (Petticrew and Roberts, 2006:19).</p> <p><b>Importance:</b> The analysis of data promotes the structuring and arrangement of a large volume of information. By synthesising the analysed data and utilising an appropriate graph, illustration, table or written format the review outcome may be more accessible for other researchers (Schulenkorf and Frawley, 2017).</p>

**Sources:** Compiled from Bloomberg and Volpe (2012); Coughlan and Cronin (2016, p. 15); Debisette and Vessey (2010, p. 65); Garrard (2016, p. 4); Heyvaert *et al.* (2016); Holly *et al.* (2016); MacEachen *et al.* (2016, p. 4); Petticrew and Roberts (2008, p. 19); Roos and Stainbank (2017, p. 91); Schulenkorf and Frawley (2016)

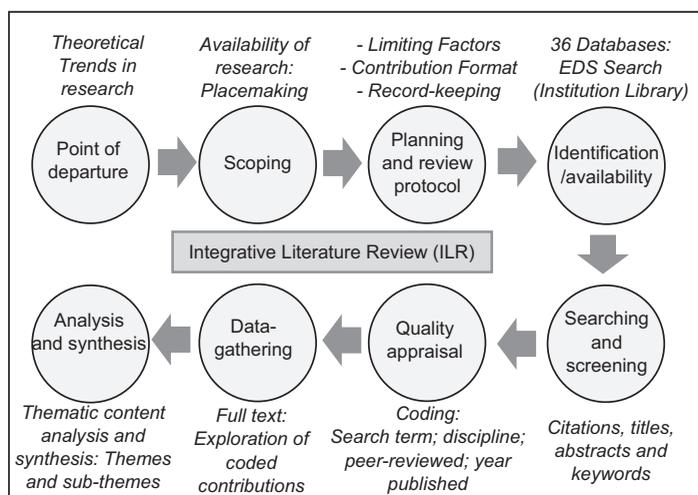
**Figure 1.**  
Common characteristics of a literature review

	Research typology			Search protocol		Appraisal standards		Analysis methods			Synthesis methods			
	Qualitative	Quantitative	Both Methods	Predetermined	Undetermined	Predetermined	Undetermined	Statistical	Thematic	Systematic	Qualitative	Discursive	Discursive	Concise
<b>Traditional review</b>			•		•		•					•	•	
<b>Systematic review</b>			•	•		•				•				•
<b>Meta-analysis review</b>		•		•		•		•						•
<b>Integrative review</b>			•		•		•		•					•
<b>Qualitative review</b>	•				•		•				•		•	

Sources: Bloomberg and Volpe (2012); Garrard (2016, p. 5); Heyvaert *et al.* (2016); Holly *et al.* (2016, p. 327); Jesson *et al.* (2011, p. 106); Roos and Stainbank (2017, p. 91); Rudestam and Newton (2007, p. 63); Schulenkorf and Frawley (2016, p. 177)

Figure 2. Literature review typologies

qualitative and quantitative studies (Figure 3). A *meta-analysis review* is a typology that aims at providing a statistical view of various quantitative studies. Opposed to the meta-analysis review, the *qualitative review* focuses on providing a summary of available qualitative studies (Figure 2).



Notes: Authors' own interpretation of Coughlan and Cronin (2016, p. 15); Debisette and Vessey (2010, p. 65); Jesson *et al.* (2011, p. 104) and MacEachen *et al.* (2016, p. 4)

Figure 3. Integrative Literature Review (ILR) process

In terms of the search protocol, the systematic and meta-analysis reviews have a predetermined protocol. This fixed protocol is based on the review aims, objectives and questions of a study. The search protocol for a traditional review is undetermined, as it is based on the requirements of the individual study. A traditional review in this sense may include a vast array of contributions selected, all based on the reviewer's discretion (Figure 2). An integrative review uses limiting factors after available research has been scoped. These limiting factors assist in providing a simplified and accessible list of available research (Figure 3). Similar to the integrative review, a qualitative review is based on the need for a specific study. This need is determined by the scoping of qualitative studies.

Another difference in literature reviews is the quality appraisal standards associated with each review typology. The appraisal standard refers to the process followed to determine the inclusion or exclusion of a contribution. Each review typology follows a unique appraisal standard. Both systematic and the meta-analysis reviews have an objective predetermined checklist to evaluate the quality of contributions selected during the search process (Figure 2). Appraisal standard in the traditional review is a subjective practice in line with the reviewer's requirements for a study. The qualitative review follows the appraisal standard of only including qualitative studies. Different from the other review typologies, the integrative review follows a process of standard appraisal by classifying contributions according to appropriate codes. These codes are constructed according to the need for the study and may include the search term, publication year and contribution type (Figure 3). The appraisal standard of all the review typologies assists in the selection of appropriate contributions to be explored in full text.

The way in which the selected contributions are analysed should be regarded as the main difference between the review typologies. The traditional review uses a discursive analysis and synthesis of gathered data. In opposition to the discursive nature of the traditional review, a systematic review focuses on a rigorous and scientific analysis method. The systematic review provides a brief synthesis of available research in a tabular format. The meta-analysis follows a numerical analysis. A meta-analysis strives to synthesise analysed data through the combination of statistical data of primarily quantitative studies in graphs and tables. In contrast with the meta-analysis review, the qualitative review analyses data using qualitative data analysis. This qualitative content analysis assists in developing a descriptive synthesis of available research. Such a descriptive synthesis may be in the format of a narrative or illustrated in a table (Figure 2). Similar to the qualitative review, the integrative review suggests a thematic content analysis. A thematic content analysis allows for themes and sub-themes to emerge from the data. These themes and sub-themes indicate a pattern that in the end can illustrate trends, making this type of review suitable to identify and discuss the development of theoretical trends with regard to placemaking. Analysed data can be synthesised in any appropriate format, e.g. graphical illustration, matrix, graph and flowchart (Figure 3).

### **Integrative literature review: explaining the process**

Based on this study's aims, an integrative literature review (ILR) is proposed as the most appropriate review method (Figure 3). An ILR aims at incorporating a vast array of literature without regard to the research approach or design (Heyvaert *et al.*, 2016; Holly *et al.*, 2016, p. 327). Furthermore, an ILR allows for an interdisciplinary study that enables the researchers to initially explore placemaking in various disciplines to gain a holistic understanding of the concept. An exhaustive search assisted in identifying appropriate placemaking contributions (Roos and Stainbank, 2017, p. 91).

Selecting an ILR as point of departure is based on the twofold aim of this paper (first, a multi-disciplinary overview of placemaking concepts and second, a focus on spatial planning trends with regard to placemaking). The step of *scoping* allowed for the gathering of an overview of placemaking literature without regard to discipline or contribution format (Figure 3). This resulted in a large number of contributions and therefore confirmed the need for a literature review. To better gather and arrange this, a *planning and review protocol* had to be established to guide the review process. For this paper, four limiting factors were suggested to select suitable contributions. Limiting factors included the following:

- only contributions with search term “placemaking” in the title (exact spelling);
- contributions published between January 1975 and May 2017;
- only peer-reviewed contributions found in accredited academic journals; and
- only contributions available in full text.

To promote the level of transparency and credibility, *Microsoft Excel* was used as record-keeping tool.

Guided by the planning and review protocol, the *identification/availability* step commenced. For this particular paper, the North-West University Library Search Engine, EDS Search was used. This search engine (EDS Search) enabled the researcher to access different accredited databases. By searching on these databases, contributions were identified. Identification also included the confirmation of availability and accessibility of identified contributions (MacEachen *et al.*, 2016, p. 4). At this stage, the review included contributions from various disciplines. After the identification of available research step, contributions were searched and screened.

*Searching and screening* include a stage where all placemaking contributions were explored. This exploration entailed the studying of citations, titles, keywords and abstracts of contributions which stem from various disciplines (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012). The searching and screening step was followed by the *quality appraisal* standard. As this paper represents an ILR, appropriate codes were allocated to the placemaking contribution to manage a large number of results. Codes included:

- year published;
- author(s);
- title of contribution;
- name of journal – peer-reviewed and accredited;
- discipline – e.g. spatial planning, geography, sociology and psychology; and
- geographical location – contributions categorised according to the Global North or the Global South.

Arranged by the constructed codes, the step of *data gathering* was possible. As this paper focuses on placemaking within spatial planning, only disciplines from the spatial planning discipline were explored in-depth. An in-depth exploration entailed the studying of full-text placemaking contributions associated with spatial planning. These spatial planning contributions ranged over a period of 41 years and five months.

By focusing on spatial planning literature concerned with placemaking, the gathered data were analysed and in the end synthesised. A thematic content analysis was proposed for this study. Thematic content analysis was deemed an appropriate method, as it is mostly associated with the process of an ILR. A thematic content analysis allowed for themes and sub-themes to emerge from for gathered data (Debisette and Vessey, 2010, p. 65). By

focusing on content within the full-text spatial planning contributions, theoretical patterns were distinguished (Schulenkorf and Frawley, 2016). The ILR allowed for a creative and sensible manner to represent the findings. With the assistance of a table and graphical illustration, analysed data were synthesised. This provided an accessible view of available literature found in various disciplines with the focus on the discipline of spatial planning at its core.

### Review outcome

During the step of *scoping*, 947 placemaking contributions were found in various secondary contribution formats. The scoping step illustrated that 864 of the 947 contributions found in all disciplines emerged post-2000 with the most contributions (130) published in 2016. From the 947 contributions, only 327 were legible and available for viewing due to language barriers, credibility of sources, full-text availability and with the duplicates removed. This number was reduced by the limiting factors imposed during the *planning and review protocol* step. The use of exact limiting factors resulted in the reduction of 327 contributions to 59. These 59 contributions represent the result of all the disciplines concerned with placemaking. These contributions were identified and downloaded from the North-West University Library Search Engine, EDS Search and relevant 36 accredited databases, e.g. Academic Search Premier, Art and Architecture Complete and Masterfile Premier. The identified contributions stemmed from 50 accredited journals that included *Cities*, *City and Society*, *Environment and Behavior*, *Journal of Urbanism and Utopian Studies*.

The 59 contributions (Table A1) from various disciplines were explored in the *searching and screening* step. This exploration of citations, titles, keywords and abstracts allowed the study to conceptualise codes which were useful for this review. These codes were used to categorise contributions during the *quality appraisal* step. The quality appraisal standard resulted in contributions organised in terms of publication year, title, author(s), discipline, accredited journal name and geographical location. With the standard set by the quality appraisal step, main disciplines concerned with placemaking included:

- spatial planning and design disciplines;
- social science; and
- other disciplines.

Twenty-nine contributions stemmed from spatial and design disciplines (e.g. spatial planning, urban design and architecture), a total of 23 contributions emerged from spatial planning and six from architecture. The social sciences included 14 contributions. These contributions included disciplines such as anthropology, ecology, human geography, psychology and sociology. The ILR also unveiled 16 contributions from other disciplines. Other disciplines refer to art, education, information technology, music and tourism.

After the quality appraisal step, the focus shifted from all the disciplines concerned with placemaking towards contributions found in spatial planning (excluding Architecture). Data gathering entailed the reading of 23 full-text spatial planning contributions (Figure 4). By incorporating the codes set during the quality appraisal standard, the 23 contributions were divided between the *Global North* and the *Global South*. Twenty spatial planning contributions stemmed from the Global North, while only three contributions originated from the Global South (Figure 4). To conceptualise trends, patterns in selected contributions

<b>The Global South</b> (three contributions)	<b>THEME</b> (First emerged in publication)	<b>The Global North</b> (20 contributions)
<b>Sub-themes</b>		<b>Sub-themes</b>
<u>Physical elements</u> : Architecture; spatial arrangement; representation; aesthetics; culture-based elements	<b>Physical construct</b>  Day, 1992 Samadhi, 2001	<u>Physical elements</u> : Architecture; art; creative form; and physical appearance
<u>Upgrade strategies</u> : Design processes; culture-based design; manifestation; principles		<u>Upgrade strategies</u> : Urban development; upgrade; and design strategies
<u>Social elements</u> : Religious views; Sacred cultural customs and attitudes; social amenities	<b>Social construct</b>  Day, 1992 Samadhi, 2001	<u>Social Justice</u> : Democratic formations; policy/legislation; communication (verbal and non-verbal); and cultural heritage
<u>Social challenges</u> : Segregation (e.g. based on class/ culture/ race)		<u>Social Challenges</u> : Protest; violence and racial inequalities
<u>Social upliftment</u> : Promotion of moral values		<u>Social Media</u> : Digital Technology
-	<b>Economic construct</b> Shibley, 1998	<u>Economic development</u> : Investment; and cost-effectiveness
<u>Intrinsic values and meaning of place</u> : meaning and symbolism; subjective notion; experience; personal feelings towards a place (e.g. meaningless)	<b>Psychological dimension</b> Shibley, Schneekloth and Hovey, 2003 Samadhi, 2001	<u>Intrinsic values and meaning of place</u> : Sense of pride; experience; and entertainment
Natural elements: Topography (e.g. natural landscape); natural context; natural limitations	<b>Environmental management tool</b> Horvath, 2004 Samadhi, 2001	<u>Globalisation</u> : Effects of globalisation
Relationships: People-place relationships		<u>Conservation</u> : Natural habitats, ecosystems
Experts/ professionals empowered	<b>Empowerment</b> : Shibley, 1998 Al-Kodmany and Ali, 2012	<u>Empower</u> ; Learning of skills; community practices

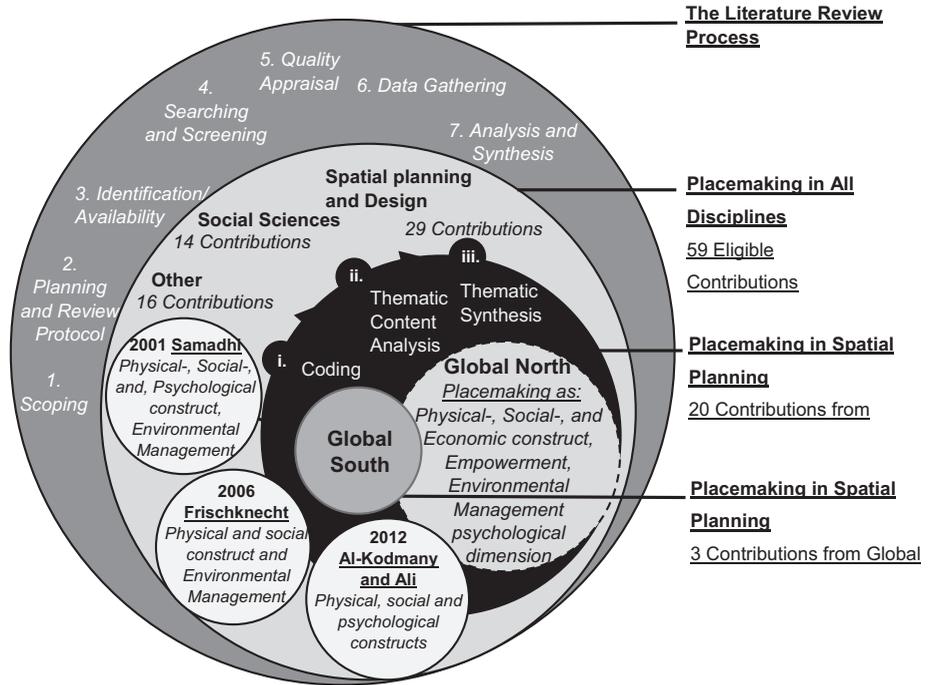
Source: Authors' construction of ILR outcome

Figure 4. Themes and sub-themes of placemaking literature in spatial planning

were observed during the thematic content analysis. These patterns were coded in a tabular manner.

Regarding contributions from the Global North, five originated in the USA, four from Australia, three from the UK, one from Italy and one from Israel. From the Global South, the three contributions respectively represented Indonesia, Argentina and a combination between the United Arab Emirates, China and India.

Apart from the discussion of the review outcome, the results were visualised by means of a graphical illustration (Figure 5). The outer circle describes the process of the literature review. An ILR guided the arrangement of contributions. Limiting factors reduced the number of contributions found among all disciplines to 59 eligible studies. During the quality appraisal step, only 23 spatial planning contributions remained – 20 from the Global North and three from the Global South. Placemaking trends in Spatial Planning literature from the Global North included placemaking as physical construct; a social construct; empowerment; an economic construct; a psychological dimension and a tool for



**Figure 5.**  
The ILR map on  
placemaking

**Source:** Authors' illustration of the ILR process

environmental management. In the three spatial planning contributions from the Global South, most of the trends were also unveiled except placemaking as tool for empowerment and economic construct.

### Discussion

The diverse nature of placemaking is supported by this ILR. Partially, this diverse nature is emphasised by the value of this concept for spatial planning and a multitude of other disciplines. As an interdisciplinary concept, placemaking has developed progressively. This development refers to the transformation of a term concerned with the physical end-product due to a design strategy, towards a process which serves as a social change agent and democratic intervention. Post-2010 research in spatial planning suggests that trends in the process of placemaking continue to shift. This shift relates to placemaking conceptualised as an empowering tool (Figure 5). Although empowerment as a term is familiar to the process of placemaking, its value has expanded in terms of its usefulness.

Previously, experts were empowered to understand and conduct the process of placemaking (Shibley, 1998). However, post-2010 literature illustrates that placemaking has been transformed into a community practice in which individuals have been empowered to learn and share skills (Bilandzic and Johnson, 2013; Delconte *et al.*, 2016; Houghton *et al.*, 2015; O'Rourke and Baldwin, 2016; Sánchez, 2011; Thurlow and Jaworski, 2014). Post-2010 placemaking as a process is not limited to experts but is a practice that can be performed by

ordinary people. Therefore, placemaking in recent literature is conceptualised as an enabling tool.

As observed in the outcome of the ILR, placemaking in spatial planning is a concept still under-researched in the Global South. Placemaking initially described the creation/upliftment of a social setting through physical intervention (Samadhi, 2001). Physical interventions also incorporated intrinsic value associated with the setting. In later research, Frischknecht (2006) explored placemaking as a tool to manage the natural environment. Environmental management in this sense refer to the relationship of site-users with their natural setting. A shift towards placemaking as tool for empowerment is also noted in spatial planning contributions from the Global South. However, this empowerment refers to idea-sharing and learning of skills by experts (Al-Kodmany and Ali, 2012).

As the exact search term “placemaking” was included in this review, more results may have been found in the Global South if variation in the spelling were included in the review (“place-making” and/or “place making”). Although the scope of this paper is limited to “placemaking”, other spelling options may be explored in future research.

### Conclusion

Placemaking is an interdisciplinary, multi-faceted concept that has been widely researched since the mid-1970s (Andrews). Prior to the 1970s, key thinkers (Jane Jacobs and William Whyte) inspired the concept of placemaking as they explored people-place relationships. People-place relationships mainly referred to the effect of the physical and natural environment on the behaviour of site-users. For the scope of this paper, the review focused on placemaking in spatial planning.

In spatial planning, a few important conclusions can be derived from the review outcome. Spatial planners concerned with placemaking should not focus on the end-product in isolation as the process of placemaking is an important part of placemaking, e.g. where the process empower people. Placemaking may have the ability to create positive social change. This positive social change can include sharing ideas and learning new skills to eventually create an end-product. This sharing and learning of skills to transform an environment suggest placemaking as an enabling tool.

This ILR aimed at creating a linkage between placemaking theory and practice. This linkage is due to perspectives found in spatial planning literature. New perspectives refer to power relations associated with decision-making in placemaking processes. Pre-2000 placemaking literature from the discipline of spatial planning indicated that experts and professionals were empowered to make decisions regarding the making of place (Shibley, 1998). However, recent literature from the Global North suggests that spatial planners should be regarded as facilitators of the placemaking process (O'Rourke and Baldwin, 2016, p. 113).

The literature review illustrates a re-orientation of placemaking from being focused on physical (spatial) change of the environment (product oriented) created by designers (e.g. architects, spatial planners) towards placemaking as an enabling tool to be used by planners to facilitate the making of places by numerous people/role-players outside the planning profession. The limited contribution to placemaking from the Global South does not echo this perspective. The scope of authors from the Global South that were included in this review is limited to three contributions which described placemaking as product-oriented with the inclusion of social constructs, intrinsic values and natural characteristics of the setting.

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### Further reading

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- Silverman, D. (Ed.) (2016), *Qualitative Research*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Discipline	Author(s) and publication year
<i>29 Spatial planning and design disciplines</i>	
Spatial planning	Day (1992), Shibley (1998), Schneekloth and Shibley (2000), Samadhi (2001), Aravot (2002), Shibley <i>et al.</i> (2003), Horvath (2004), Frischknecht (2006), Rios (2009), Badcock and Johnston (2009), Sánchez (2011), van Hoven and Douma (2012), Al-Kodmany and Ali (2012), Lara (2012), Bilandzic and Johnson (2013), Nicodemus (2013), Thurlow and Jaworski (2014), Devereux (2015), Mattson (2015), Houghton <i>et al.</i> (2015), Delconte <i>et al.</i> (2016), O'Rourke and Baldwin (2016) and Kelly <i>et al.</i> (2017)
Architecture	Kazemian (1996), Karacor (2014), Beza (2016), Montgomery (2016), Boeri (2017) and Alvarez <i>et al.</i> (2017)
<i>14 Social sciences</i>	
Anthropology, Archaeology, Ecology, Human Geography, Psychology and Sociology	Sutton and Kemp (2002), Lohmann <i>et al.</i> (2003), Wight (2005), Brunnberg and Frigo (2012), Arreola (2012), Foo <i>et al.</i> (2013), Halperin (2014), Peoples (2014), Main and Sandoval (2015), Rios and Watkins (2015), Fields <i>et al.</i> (2015), Hunter, <i>et al.</i> (2016), Eckenwiler (2016), Toolis (2017)
<i>16 Other disciplines</i>	
Art, Education, Information Technology, Music and Tourism	Jacobsen (2009), Mazumdar and Mazumdar (2009), Nguyen (2010), Stevens and Ambler (2010), Sandoval and Maldonado (2012), Denov and Akesson (2013), Carter (2014), Kim <i>et al.</i> (2014), Wilbur (2015), Thomas <i>et al.</i> (2015), Ehret and Hollett (2016) Wynn and Yetis-Bayraktar (2016), Redaelli (2016), Lew (2017), Santos Nouri and Costa (2017), de Brito and Richards (2017)
<b>Source:</b> Authors' construction of the results of the ILR	

**Table AI.**  
Disciplinary  
distribution of 59  
placemaking  
contributions

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