Participation in urban development
An analysis using the example of economically and socially deprived districts

Katja Keggenhoff
Richard-Wagner-Straße 140
katja.keggenhoff@hs-niederrhein.de

Research associate at NIERS
41065 Mönchengladbach
0049 2161 186 6424

First supervisor: Prof. Dr. Gerald Wood
University of Münster
Institute for Geography
Urban and regional research / economic and traffic geography

Second supervisor: Prof. Dr. Rüdiger Hamm
Niederrhein University of Applied Sciences
Niederrhein Institute for Regional and Structural Research (NIERS)
Economics – Regional and sectoral structural policy
Source: Own illustration based on Google Maps
PARTICIPATION IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT
AN ANALYSIS USING THE EXAMPLE OF ECONOMICALLY AND
SOCIALLY DEPRIVED DISTRICTS

INTRODUCTION

QUESTIONS AND GOALS

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

METHODOLOGY

EXAMPLE “THEATER STAIRS IN SOLINGEN”

NEXT STEPS
INTRODUCTION
Introduction
QUESTIONS AND GOALS
Questions

Is there an inconsistency between top down and bottom up approaches of civil society participation in economically and socially deprived districts?

• Is the understanding of citizen participation (engagement, empowerment, activation) consistent amongst the parties involved?
• To what extent do people get involved in their district of their own initiative (bottom up) and to what extend can they be mobilized towards participation (top down)?
• Are planning processes and their outcomes being improved / stalled / complicated / well-founded etc. from the point of view of the participants involved in urban development?
• What role do urban development programmes play?
• How and by what means is power actually being commanded in districts and therefore the future determined?
Goals

• Analysis of participation in economically and socially deprived districts

• Contribution to understand current participation processes

• Comparison of the current “hype” of participation and activation with the actual situation in the districts

• Contribution to understand the motives and inherent logic of the various parties
THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
Theoretical framework

**Rational Choice**

**Public Choice**
- bpb 2016

**Governance**
- Local and Urban Governance
  - Frey 2005, Dunders 2011

**Principal Agent Theory**
- Logan/ Moloch 1996

**Urban Regime Theory**
- Hochhold/Rudolph 2011

**Growth Machines Theory**
- Bevir 2013, Healey 2012, Selle 2016

**Communicative turn**
- Rittel 1992, Selle 2016
Conceptual framework

Enabling state


Informal urbanism


Participation

Participatory governance
HEINELT 2008/10

Urban development funding

Deprived districts
Funding principles
Top down activation
METHODOLOGY
Methodology

• Basic research, data collection and analysis

• Quantitative analysis based on an online survey to select the case studies

• Observation and documentation of the processes through regular attendance and research of local newspapers, trade press, and the internet

• Qualitative interviews
  – 27 problem-centered interviews (WITZEL 1982/85)
  – Qualitative content analysis (MAYRING 2015)

• If necessary: results discussion on the basis of expert interviews
Selection of case studies

Source: BBSR
Selection of case studies

- Spatial level: urban districts
- Urban development funding ("Soziale Stadt" and possibly "BIWAQ")
- Similar circumstances (local economy, socioeconomic characteristics, problem areas)
- Implementation of participation procedures within the scope of urban development projects

Source: Own illustration based on Geschäftsstelle Städtenetz Soziale Stadt NRW 2013
EXAMPLE “THEATER STAIRS IN SOLINGEN”
Source: Own illustration based on Google Maps, City of Solingen
Solingen Nordstadt (northern city)

Inhabitants: 4,774 (12/2017)

Source: Stadt- und Regionalplanung Dr. Paul G. Jansen GmbH 2006: 13
Source: Own pictures
Reconstruction
Konrad-Adenauer-Street

American Association of Geographers. Annual Meeting in New Orleans, April 10-14, 2018

Source: Stadt Solingen o.J.

Source: Own picture
Reconstruction
Surrounding area of the Theater and Concert Hall

Source: Own picture
Stairs to the Theater and Concert Hall

- 35,373 € (43,500 $)

Source: Architekturbüro Landschaft + Garten, Papenfuß - Jochems Gbr, Solingen
Stairs to the Theater and Concert Hall

- 1963 - approx. 1973

Source: City archive Solingen
Stairs to the Theater and Concert Hall

Source: RP online, Solinger Tageblatt and Bürgerinitiative Wir in Solingen
Stairs to the Theater and Concert Hall

Pro-side

- Collection of 175 signatures in favour of stairs
- Letter of intent to take over the costs for the city (7.075 € own contribution (8.700 $))

Source: Own picture
Stairs to the Theater and Concert Hall Contra-side

- Blog
- Public petition
- Collection of 10,457 signatures against stairs
- Next step: referendum
- But: public law agreement

Source: Marcus Gottfried and city archive Solingen
Stairs to the Theater and Concert Hall

- Five designs: none received majority support
- Ongoing reconstruction of the surrounding area

Source: Own picture and city archive Solingen
Stairs to the Theater and Concert Hall

Source: Own picture
Stairs to the Theater and Concert Hall

- 2 years later - The new mayor wants to do a council referendum
- The citizens’ initiative accuse him of breach of law
- The council rules against this
- Council ordered construction of two inversely passing ramps
- A bunker from 2nd World War appears
- 1 year later - The citizens’ initiative bury the theater stairs symbolical
- The bunker is torn down

Source: Solinger Tageblatt, city archive Solingen and own picture
Stairs to the Theater and Concert Hall

• Causes
  – Missing early participation
  – Lack of transparency
  – Media

• Motives
  – Prevention of waste of tax money
  – Theater stairs were the single object that could be prevented (actually against new traffic lights)

Source: Own picture
Stairs to the Theater and Concert Hall

- Patterns
  - Awkward communication
  - Fear
  - Frustration
  - Dependency on individuals
  - Participation on the part of those concerned
  - Sweeping estimations of the “Solinger”
  - “Watering can” - principle
  - “Expertocracy”
NEXT STEPS
Next steps

• Analysis of the interviews in terms of further patterns
• Development of three further examples
• Comparison of the examples and districts
• Finding superordinate patterns
Thank you for your attention!

Katja Keggenhoff
Research associate at NIERS
Richard-Wagner-Straße 140
41065 Mönchengladbach
katja.keggenhoff@hs-niederrhein.de
00492161 186 6424
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