A Speculative Exploration into the Current Planning Paradigm through Academic

Planner Perspectives

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis,

including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

ABSTRACT

This thesis centres on research aimed at understanding the essence of the current planning paradigm, identifying the factors that facilitate or hinder paradigm shifts, and determining the prevailing paradigm that governs contemporary scholarly pursuits within planning in an academic setting. This is achieved through an approach based on findings from interviews with planning academics.

The first objective, vital to this thesis, scrutinizes whether the prevailing planning paradigm represents a novel trend, a continuation of previous paradigms, or perhaps a synergy of both. It seeks to unveil the core attributes of the existing paradigm and questions if we are operating within the thresholds of an unrecognized new approach in planning.

Furthermore, recognizing the critical role of the factors that influence paradigm shifts stands as a focal point in this thesis. The research aspires to elucidate the circumstances and elements that either catalyze or restrain potential shifts in planning paradigms. It delves into understanding the intellectual environment surrounding these shifts, accentuating the critical role played by prevailing perspectives on truth and discourse.

The intellectual landscape is bifurcated into two dominant paradigms: the traditional liberal paradigm, founded on the philosophies of stalwarts such as Descartes, Locke, and Mill, and the critical social theoretical paradigm, deeply influenced by diverse viewpoints including postmodernists, feminists, postcolonial theorists, and critical race theorists. This study navigates the delicate balance between these paradigms, dissecting their roles in fostering or hindering open discourse and critical examination.

By spotlighting the intrinsic value each paradigm brings to the table and the challenges they pose, the research endeavors to craft a roadmap for a more balanced intellectual environment. It underscores the necessity for fostering open dialogue, critical evaluation, and respect for varying cultural contexts, thus nurturing an environment conducive to progressive shifts aligned with societal transitions, equity, and social progress. This is important as paradigm shifts have been largely corrective in nature and frequent shifts help keep planning up to date with rapidly changing societal reality.

Lastly, the thesis is invested in determining the prevailing paradigm of truth within this academic sphere. It seeks to delineate the predominant assumptions, methodologies, and values that characterize this discipline. This involves an analysis of the frameworks adopted by scholars and researchers in their relentless pursuit of truth and knowledge creation, paving the way for a richer and more nuanced academic dialogue in planning theory.

Regarding methodology, this study adopts a pragmatic approach to scrutinize evolving paradigms in the planning field, primarily utilizing Thomas's general inductive approach for qualitative analysis to identify trends within data collected from interviews. This methodology facilitates the transformation of extensive interview data into concise summaries, directly aligning findings with the research objectives and fostering the formulation of insightful theories.

Interviews with planning academics from various Ontario institutions were conducted despite the hurdles presented by the Covid-19 pandemic. This process, albeit impacted by the pandemic, yielded rich insights from 11 academic planning experts.

The interview questionnaire was crafted to delve into current trends, barriers to paradigm shifts, and the prerequisites for facilitating change in the planning field's approaches. It also probed the participants' perceptions of "truth" and the significance of viewpoint diversity in strengthening the discipline's knowledge base.

This thesis is a preliminary exploration into current trends and has several weaknesses. Since an inductive approach was used to analyze data, the presence of larger trends is assumed based on interviewee opinions. Several diverse data sources should have been used to bolster the veracity of these identified trends. Due to time and monetary constraints, this thesis focused solely on interviewing planning professors. Other potential data sources could have included students, administrative staff, planners within the private sector, planners within the public sector, and recent studies published by academic planning institutions, among others. This could be a focus for future research. Only Ontario institutions were considered as the original intent was to conduct interviews face to face and driving distances were considered, as such other planning institutions outside of Ontario were excluded from the study. Another weakness is that only 11 experts were interviewed, increasing this sample size would improve confidence in the veracity of the claims made within this thesis. Due to all of these limitations, the conclusions of this thesis should be considered weakly justified, and additional research will be required in the future to verify the accuracy of the claims made.

This study provides a dive into the shifting currents of academic planning, uncovering a distinct move towards a social justice paradigm. Emphasizing equity, diversity, and inclusivity, the research underscores the planning profession's expansion beyond mere technical urban design into the realm of balancing economic, environmental, and social imperatives.

The dialogues captured shed light on the profession's adaptability, revealing its commitment to creating communities that mirror the diverse needs and contributions of their members. A major finding is the notable convergence towards a critical social justice perspective, which values interpretive truths and has a heightened awareness of power dynamics.

However, the journey towards this shift is intricate, with potential differences in its application and understanding, indicating the need for continuous reflection and examination. The transition from traditional liberal paradigms to a more context-dependent, power-conscious paradigm poses both opportunities and challenges. The research suggests that while this shift promises a more inclusive urban planning outlook, it may also face challenges, including potential epistemic closure and possible conflicts due to diverse interpretations.

In essence, the findings spotlight the evolving landscape of academic planning, highlighting the rise of a social justice paradigm and the complexities accompanying such a paradigm shift. The research concludes with a call for persistent discourse, exploration, and critical assessment to ensure a balanced, sustainable, and inclusive urban future.

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At the end of this remarkable journey, I find myself filled with humility and gratitude for the wealth of support, insight, and encouragement that has enveloped me. Many individuals have contributed to this success, and it brings me great joy to recognize and thank them here.

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I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the esteemed committee members whose expertise and discerning critiques immensely contributed to the shaping of this thesis. Their brilliant comments and constructive suggestions were invaluable in enhancing the quality of my work. A special thank you goes out to Professor Michael Drescher in this regard.

A special acknowledgment is reserved for my dear wife Sandy, who has been my rock throughout this challenging process. Her unwavering love, support, and understanding have been a constant source of strength and inspiration. Sandy, your belief in me has meant more than I can express.

I extend my appreciation to my family as a whole for their continuous encouragement and belief in my capabilities. Their sacrifices, patience, and constant reassurance made it possible for me to pursue my research with full concentration and determination. The unwavering

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"It is important to draw wisdom from different places. If you take it from only one place it becomes rigid and stale. Understanding others, the other elements, the other nations, will help you become whole." Uncle Iroh, Avatar: The Last Airbender

Several life experiences have significantly influenced my perspective, leading me to undertake this thesis. Born in Canada, I spent a significant portion of my childhood in India, which exposed me to contrasting conditions and prompted me to explore the various systems at play that resulted in different outcomes. Additionally, I became aware of problematic similarities between the two nations. This section will discuss several factors that have shaped my perspective, including my schooling, political and religious influences, a personal epiphany, and a growing awareness of biases and the filtering of information.

During my schooling in India, I attended a progressive institution founded by Mary Roy, a renowned women's rights activist. The school emphasized equal treatment for boys and girls, providing a more open and relaxed environment compared to the socially conservative culture outside its walls. Mary Roy's vision focused on creating well-rounded students, promoting gender equality, climate advocacy, and secularism. Growing up in an environment where women lacked representation and witnessing the environmental challenges in my town, I was drawn to progressive ideals and consumed feminist literature, passionately defending these ideologies online.

The political environment in Kerala, India, further shaped my perspective. Kerala is known for its leftist ideologies, with a history rooted in anti-colonial and worker-focused activism. Influenced by the efficacy of the Communist Party in bringing about reform, particularly in abolishing feudalism, I self-identified as a communist and delved into Marxist literature. However, over time, I began to question certain tenets of communism, such as the labor theory of value, and became aware of the violence and authoritarianism associated with attempts to implement this ideology.

Religiously, I grew up in a highly devout and socially conservative setting. Coming from a family with a strong religious tradition, my transition to atheism at a young age was met with resistance and attempts at conversion from various religious sects. This experience led me to question the rival ideologies promoted by different sects and perceive them as competing versions of truth. I also experienced a significant shift in my worldview when I abandoned my religious beliefs, realizing how biases and narrowing of perspectives influenced my previous views.

Through self-reflection, I recognized the limitations of my ideological lens and the importance of considering diverse perspectives. Simply put, I recognized that I held and still hold deep biases in the way I think. I began revisiting the ideologies I held dear and exploring alternate economic systems. My awareness was heightened regarding the perils of common enemy identity politics, emphasizing the necessity for empathy and the pursuit of shared understanding in combatting oppression. I was drawn towards the effectiveness of the liberal common humanity approach, which has demonstrated considerable successes in the realm of civil rights activism. This was particularly apparent through the evolving attitudes within and

between white and black communities. The core emphasis of this approach is the cultivation of a mutual recognition of our shared humanity among different groups, which in turn, reduces tribalism and fosters unity. This focus on commonality over difference appealed to me greatly and reaffirmed my belief in its potential to create a more equitable society.

As my perspective evolved, I developed a keen interest in understanding how information is filtered and presented to the public. I explored the erosion of trust in the media, driven by changes in business models and a shift towards subjective and argumentative reporting. The proliferation of fake news, although a more significant problem in recent times, is not a new phenomenon, as exemplified by historical cases such as Walter Duranty's reporting on the U.S.S.R.

On the incompleteness of ideologies using religion as an example: Upon reflection, I realized that my initial conception of religion was narrow and flawed, a realization that unfolded with increased exposure and access to information. As a newly minted atheist, I embraced the prevailing notion that religion functioned as a system devised to offer explanations for the unexplainable and to wield power and control over the masses. This perspective was strongly influenced by the writings of prominent atheist authors and thinkers who passionately argued against the perceived irrationality and oppressive nature of religious beliefs. I believed that religion has a problematic relation to truth due to its fundamentalist approach (I still believe this).

However, my understanding began to undergo a profound transformation as I delved deeper into the subject and engaged in conversations with individuals from diverse religious

backgrounds. Through these interactions, I came to realize that religion holds multifaceted meanings and serves various functions for different people. While it is undeniable that religion has historically been utilized as a tool to consolidate authority and maintain social order, it also fulfills a deeper purpose by providing individuals with a profound sense of meaning, a sense of community, and moral guidance in their lives.

This newfound awareness challenged my earlier simplistic view and motivated me to embark on a journey of exploration into the complexities and diversity that exist within religious belief systems. I gradually recognized that reducing religion solely to a tool of control oversimplifies its true significance and dismisses the rich tapestry of personal experiences and motivations that drive believers in their faith.

Consequently, my understanding of the intricate relationship between religion, power, and individual agency evolved. As I delved into further reading, I encountered the compelling insights of Jonathan Haidt, who posits in his book "The Righteous Mind" that religion may indeed be an evolutionary adaptation, designed to bind groups together and foster the creation of communities with shared moral values. Haidt also suggests a fascinating connection between hygiene and a divine moral dimension within religious practices, shedding light on the presence of purification rituals aimed at cleansing not only the body but also the soul, religion basically being a tool to influence populations to live more hygienically. This approach, however, presented its own set of challenges. A case in point is the discrimination endured by the Dalit community in India. People conceived that the Dalits' engagement in so-called 'unclean' work rendered them spiritually tainted as well. This belief in a physical-to-spiritual connection precipitated intense discrimination against this caste community.

In addition to Haidt's insights, other scholars have proposed alternative functions of religion, such as its role in terror management. Religion as a form of terror management offers individuals a means to cope with existential fears and anxieties surrounding mortality. The belief in an afterlife, divine justice, or spiritual transcendence provides a comforting framework to navigate the uncertainties and inevitability of death. By offering a sense of meaning, purpose, and continuity beyond earthly existence, religion assuages the existential dread that often accompanies thoughts of our finite existence. It serves as a psychological defense mechanism, offering solace, hope, and a sense of control in the face of life's ultimate uncertainty.

To add to the previous functions of religion discussed, *Darwin's Cathedral: Evolution, Religion, and the Nature of Society* is a book written by evolutionary biologist David Sloan Wilson. It was published in 2002 and presents an evolutionary perspective on the concept of religion.

The primary hypothesis in the book is that religion serves a significant role in human evolution as a force for social cohesion and cooperation. Wilson argues that religious beliefs and practices contribute to the survival and reproductive success of human groups, and thus have been favored by natural selection over time. He posits that religions effectively function like "organisms" that can evolve and are subject to the same principles of natural selection as biological species.

The book's title "Darwin's Cathedral" is a metaphor that refers to the idea of viewing religion as a product of evolution. It's a reference to both Charles Darwin, the father of evolutionary

theory, and to religious cathedrals, symbolizing the intricate and evolved nature of religious systems.

Wilson uses various case studies, ranging from early Christianity to modern religious groups, to illustrate his ideas. While the book generated much discussion and debate, its theories form part of the broader field of the evolutionary psychology of religion. It offers an alternative perspective on religion, differing from both theological interpretations and purely socio-cultural explanations.

While these perspectives have added to my conception on the social role religion has played, certain critiques remain in my mind; the absence of empirical evidence to support the existence of supernatural or divine beings is a significant sticking point. Science and reason, which are primarily based on evidence and testable explanations, find it challenging to corroborate the metaphysical claims that most religions make. In many cases, these religious claims rely on faith, which is inherently subjective and personal, rather than objective and universal evidence. This disparity can often result in friction between religion and scientific reasoning, creating a potential divide in societal understanding and cooperation.

In addition, religion often leads to the "othering" effect, whereby individuals are identified and categorized primarily based on their religious affiliations rather than their individual identities. This religious tribalism, to a great extent, undermines the complexity of human individuality and has the potential to breed discrimination and sectarianism. It erects artificial barriers among people and fosters an "us versus them" mentality. This not only hampers interpersonal

relationships and social cohesion but can also escalate to harmful extents, leading to societal division, conflict, and even violence.

Further, the prescriptive nature of many religions can restrict personal freedoms and autonomy. Dogmatic adherence to religious doctrines often leads to a suppression of critical thinking and individual expression. This could potentially stifle intellectual growth, creativity, and innovation, reducing the scope for personal and societal progress.

Moreover, the issue of literal interpretations of religious texts can cause problems. When texts written in vastly different historical and cultural contexts are applied without adaptation to contemporary societies, it can lead to harmful practices and beliefs. This raises questions about the role of religion in shaping social norms and ethical standards, especially in a diverse and evolving world.

Lastly, the existence of so many diverse religions, each claiming to have the ultimate truth, is another point of critique. This religious pluralism creates an inherent paradox – if all religions claim to possess the truth, but each contains different, sometimes contradictory beliefs and doctrines, they can't all be correct. This presents an epistemological problem that often leads to inter-religious conflict and hinders interfaith dialogue and mutual respect.

It is worth noting that while I hold these critiques, they do not negate the immense value and comfort that many individuals derive from their religious beliefs and practices. Religion often provides a sense of purpose, moral guidance, community, and emotional support to its followers. Therefore, while it's crucial to critique and question religious practices and beliefs,

it's equally important to respect individuals' right to their beliefs, as long as these do not infringe on others' rights or well-being.

Through this expansive and nuanced perspective, I have come to recognize that religion encompasses a vast spectrum of beliefs, practices, and psychological functions. It intertwines with various aspects of human life, including social cohesion, personal meaning, moral guidance, and the formation of communities. As a result, my understanding of religion and its multifaceted role in human societies has grown, acknowledging the intricate interplay between religious beliefs, power dynamics, and individual agency. Although I remain an atheist, my initial understanding of what religion is was incomplete. This understanding is still incomplete, but it is constantly being updated with new theories and information. Our understanding of social phenomena is constantly changing, and I found it a deeply humbling process to acknowledge that I'm always learning and that my biases constantly get the better of me. As such I have embraced a more Bayesian view of the world in which any idea held can be constantly updated and re-evaluated with new evidence. What is true then becomes an emergent property out of an ongoing process of constant re-evaluation through a constant incorporation of new evidence.

Understanding the complexity of social phenomena and the need for an updateable perspective is crucial to paradigm shifts. Planning involves analyzing and addressing complex social issues, such as urban development, environmental sustainability, and social justice. By recognizing that social phenomena have multifaceted reasons and functions, planners can avoid relying on simplistic or outdated theories that fail to capture the full complexity of the issues at hand. Every ideological approach has its biases, blind spots, weaknesses, etc.

Embracing a Bayesian approach, by facilitating an openness to new information from disparate sources which may lead to potential paradigm shifts, allows planners to incorporate new information, research, and diverse perspectives into their ever-evolving decision-making processes. This flexibility enables them to adapt their strategies and interventions as they gain a deeper understanding of the intricate dynamics and complexities of the communities they serve. Ultimately, adopting an open-minded and constantly evolving perspective is essential for effective planning that promotes inclusivity, sustainability, and positive social change.

1   INTRODUCTION SECTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

The field of planning has undergone significant shifts in thought throughout its history, characterized by the emergence of successive planning theories nested within overarching planning paradigms. A paradigm in this context is a set of shared assumptions that make up our understanding of our present reality (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), it is the ideas or beliefs we collectively believe are true. Each paradigm shift in planning has been driven by the recognition of limitations within the preceding paradigm, making these shifts corrective in nature and beneficial to the profession as a whole. Previous planning paradigms and their transitions have been extensively documented in the relevant literature (Alexander, 2000; Banai, 1988; Dzurik & Feldhaus, 1986; Olsen, 1990; Taylor, 1998), providing valuable insights into the evolution of the field.

This thesis aims to address the existing gap in our understanding of the current planning paradigm and its underlying conditions by drawing upon established literature and conducting interviews with planning academics. By exploring the historical context and examining contemporary perspectives, this research seeks to shed light on the prevailing paradigm and its characteristics.

Furthermore, this thesis seeks to investigate the construction of paradigms and identify the conditions that may lead to a paradigm shift. Planning is a field that thrives on ideological innovation, where novel transformative ideas contribute to the creation of effective built environments. Normatively, urban design is viewed as a process through which better urban

environments are achieved, encompassing various traditions of thought such as the visual-artistic tradition (Focusing on the aesthetic qualities of an urban space), the social usage tradition (emphasizing how people use spaces, and perceptions of sense of place), the place-making tradition (a combination of both previously mentioned traditions of thought) and sustainable urbanism (focusing on sustainable development) (Carmona et al., 2010). Nested within these various traditions of thought are various aesthetic and place-making frameworks like Kevin Lynch's five performance dimensions of urban design, and Allan Jacob's and Donald Appleyard's seven goals essential for the future of a good urban design environment (Carmona et al., 2010).

The ideas and approaches employed in planning are reflective of the overarching ideological paradigm of the time, with each influencing and shaping the other. As societal values, ideas, and beliefs evolve in response to changing conditions, it becomes essential for planning approaches and underlying assumptions to adapt accordingly. Creating conditions that foster ideological innovation is crucial for the field to remain responsive to rapidly changing social conventions.

Kuhn's work has demonstrated that significant intellectual progress occurs through periods of dominant paradigms punctuated by paradigm shifts, which often resist heterodox ideas that challenge the prevailing orthodoxy. By gaining a deeper understanding of this process, the field of planning can create an environment that embraces and readily accepts effective and innovative ideas, allowing it to stay abreast of evolving social dynamics.

This thesis seeks to contribute to the planning discipline by uncovering the dynamics of paradigm construction and identifying the conditions necessary for paradigm shifts, while also

identifying the present paradigm in an academic context within planning. By examining the historical context, current perspectives, and the interplay of ideas, this research aims to enhance our understanding of the planning field and foster the acceptance of more effective and innovative approaches. By embracing ideological innovation and adapting to changing societal conditions, planning can continue to evolve and meet the diverse needs of communities in an ever-changing world.

1.2   RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis aims to investigate the existing planning paradigm within academia and understand the factors that contribute to or hinder paradigm shifts. The following research questions will guide this exploration:

1. What characterizes the current planning paradigm?
2. What are the catalysts and obstacles for a potential future paradigm shift within an academic context?

This study intends to examine the ideological framework that underpins planning and how truth-making processes shape it, focusing on the perspectives of planners within academic settings. It acknowledges that much of the construction of this paradigm occurs through research generation and dissemination within academia. Additionally, the thesis will explore the conditions that may facilitate, impede, or prolong a paradigm shift, considering factors such as ideological conflicts, error correction, bias, and conformity.

To achieve these research objectives, the following approach will be adopted:

1. Utilizing secondary data gathered during the literature review, narrative construction and theoretical analysis will be conducted, providing insights into the research questions.

2. Expert interviews will be conducted to gather primary qualitative data, employing Thomas's general inductive approach to identify dominant themes within the interviewees' responses.

3. The significant themes derived from the qualitative data collected through interviews will be compared and contrasted with the findings from the literature review.

By combining secondary data analysis and primary qualitative research, this thesis aims to shed light on the current planning paradigm, its underlying truth-making processes, and the factors that contribute to or hinder potential paradigm shifts.

1.3 STUDY RATIONALE & RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

Throughout the history of planning, the concept of paradigms and paradigm shifts has played a significant role in shaping the dominant ideologies within the field (Dzurik & Feldhaus, 1986). However, there is a notable gap in the planning literature regarding research on the current planning paradigm and the factors that influence its construction. This gap limits our understanding of how planning knowledge is generated and disseminated within academia, which serves as a critical space for constructing and reinforcing paradigms. Consequently, this thesis aims to address this gap by exploring the current ideological paradigm in planning, specifically examining the nature of truth-making that informs it, and the perspectives of planners within an academic context.

Paradigm shifts, throughout history, have functioned as corrective measures that allow for the updating and refinement of previous paradigms (Dzurik & Feldhaus, 1986; Taylor, 1998). They serve as a means to keep planning relevant and adaptable to the evolving societal conditions and challenges. By gaining a deeper understanding of the drivers and resistors of paradigm shifts, we can develop insights and solutions that may facilitate more rapid and effective paradigm shifts in the future, fostering a more dynamic and innovative planning process. Encouraging paradigm shifts becomes essential as they enable the exploration of heterodox ideas and challenge the prevailing orthodoxy, ultimately leading to a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of planning concepts and practices (Kuhn, 1962).

However, paradigms, by their nature, tend to resist ideological innovation, as they create a framework that shapes the understanding of truth and rejects ideas that deviate from the established norms. The process of paradigm shifts allows for the re-evaluation and updating of what is considered true within the field. This thesis recognizes the importance of paradigm shifts in planning and seeks to explore the conditions that drive and resist these shifts.

To achieve these research objectives, a mixed-methods approach will be employed. The secondary data collected through an extensive literature review will serve as the foundation for constructing a narrative and theoretical framework that informs the research questions. The primary qualitative data will be gathered through expert interviews, employing Thomas's general inductive approach to identify and analyze the dominant themes that emerge from the interviewee's responses. These significant themes, derived from the qualitative data, will be contrasted and compared with the findings from the literature review, enabling a

comprehensive examination of the trends influencing the planning paradigm within an academic context.

By exploring the current planning paradigm, understanding the dynamics of paradigm shifts, and identifying the trends that shape knowledge creation within academia, this thesis aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the planning field and provide insights for fostering a more open and innovative planning discourse.

1.4   SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This study aims to examine the current paradigm within the academic field of planning and investigate obstacles and drivers to the emergence of replacement paradigms. The focus of this research is specifically on planning professors within academia, while planners in government and private planning offices have been excluded to narrow the scope of the study. Therefore, this thesis primarily focuses on the academic perspective of planning.

It is important to note that this study is preliminary in nature, as it solely relies on interviews with planning professors, thereby excluding other valuable sources of information such as students and other types of faculty members like administrators. Additionally, by limiting the scope of the study to academia, it overlooks potential trends within the government and private planning sectors. The study acknowledges that the evidence gathered is limited and serves as an exploratory starting point for further inquiry into the subject matter.

The geographic area selected for the study is the province of Ontario, Canada. Planning professors from institutions offering accredited planning programs within this region were chosen as interviewees. Initially, in-person interviews were planned, and the geographical

consideration allowed for easy access by car. However, due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, interviews were conducted over the phone or through video conferencing software. Although the scope of the study could have been expanded beyond Ontario, the decision was made to maintain the original scope for expediency since the study was already in progress.

The following institutions were selected for interviewees based on the aforementioned criteria:

1. Queen's University's School of Urban and Regional Planning

2. York University's Faculty of Environmental Studies

3. University of Waterloo's School of Planning

4. University of Toronto's Department of Geography and Planning

5. Ryerson University's School of Urban and Regional Planning

6. University of Guelph's Rural Planning Program in the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development

It is important to acknowledge the potential limitations of qualitative studies in terms of validity and reliability. Qualitative research, being conducted regarding behaviour in a real-world setting, is difficult to replicate, making it less precise than quantitative research (Wiersma, 2000). Qualitative studies typically have a broader scope and involve messy and unorganized datasets, requiring researchers to identify patterns of association and assumption (McCracken, 1998). Therefore, in selecting key informants, researchers must use a purposive sampling method to ensure individuals with relevant knowledge and skills are included (Tongco, 2007). Tongco suggests that despite the inherent bias in purposive sampling, it can be an efficient and robust method comparable to random probability sampling (Tongco, 2007). However, the

conclusions of this thesis should be approached with caution due to the inherent bias in the sampling method, and further research may be necessary to challenge or falsify any potentially erroneous conclusions.

Given the controversial nature of the subject matter, efforts have been made to minimize controversy and avoid upsetting sensitivities within the academic planning environment. Consequently, certain information may not have been fully addressed during the theory construction phase. However, it is important to acknowledge that a certain level of controversy is inevitable in research that explores heterodox ideas.

Furthermore, as this research delves into personal beliefs and biases, it involves asking personal questions to determine whether the academic planning environment exhibits political homogeneity and to identify the concentration of political bias along the political spectrum. To mitigate controversy, direct personal questions were avoided during the interviewing stage of this thesis. Therefore, information regarding these trends was derived from the literature by drawing comparisons to broader academic trends within the social sciences, resulting in certain assumptions. Further research is needed to verify the accuracy of these assumptions and to ascertain whether they are indeed valid.

This study encountered another limitation in the form of a participant withdrawing from the interview process, which led to a decrease in the total number of participants below the desired threshold of 12-15 interviewees. This reduction in the sample size may impact the comprehensiveness and diversity of perspectives obtained, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings.

Additionally, a challenge encountered during the interviews was the use of broad open-ended questions. While open-ended questions can elicit rich and nuanced responses, they can also make it more difficult to discern clear trends and patterns compared to structured or directed questions. The nature of open-ended responses introduces a level of subjectivity and interpretation during data analysis, requiring careful consideration and examination of the data to identify meaningful themes and insights.

Despite these limitations, the study aims to explore the prevailing paradigm and trends within the academic planning environment. By employing a mixed-methods approach and combining insights from literature review and expert interviews, the study endeavors to provide valuable insights into the nature of the current planning paradigm and the factors that influence its construction and its persistence. It is important to acknowledge these limitations and consider them in the interpretation of the findings, as well as to recognize the potential for further research to build upon this preliminary exploration and address any gaps or limitations identified.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION & LAYOUT OF THE LITERATURE

This thesis examines how paradigms and paradigm shifts have shaped significant thought throughout the history of planning leading to the present moment. In the literature review, we will investigate how this has occurred in the past through the identification of dominant paradigms and the shifts between them, while also exploring how paradigms are constructed through the exploration of knowledge creation processes that lead to shared understandings of what is considered to be true. Enhancing comprehension regarding the occurrence of paradigm shifts proves valuable in the advancement of academic planning, as such shifts have traditionally served as a corrective mechanism for the evolution of thought. Considering society undergoes rapid societal change, a better understanding of this process can assist academic planning thought in being more efficient in keeping up with changing social reality. This is done by understanding what drives paradigm shifts, what resists them, and an increased understanding of the processes that lead to how we derive shared truth claims that construct paradigms. The layout of the literature review is as follows:
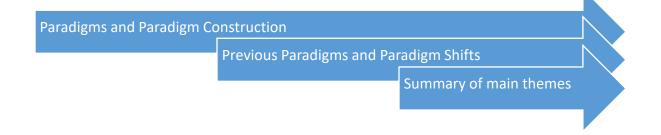
Paradigms and Paradigm Construction

Previous Paradigms and Paradigm Shifts

Summary of main themes

Figure 1 Layout of the Literature Review

The literature will be divided into four sections, Paradigms and Paradigm Shifts, Positioning the Truth Paradigm, and a Summary of main themes. The first section defines what paradigms and paradigm shifts are from a Kuhnian perspective, and further goes over their use in the social sciences as tools to identify periods of dominant thought. Following this, planning paradigms of the past will be identified to create a sequential development of thought in the field leading to the present moment. In addition to determining the nature of past planning paradigms, this is also done in order to demonstrate whether elements of previous paradigms have influenced the present paradigm, determining why shifts occurred between past paradigms, and determining whether or not we are currently in a new paradigm. The truth paradigm, which is largely the ideological frame, has been identified up to the present moment. The truth paradigm we are in will inform the approaches, methods, assumptions, and research interests that construct the current overarching paradigm.

The conclusion section is a summary of the main themes that arise out of the literature review. Furthermore, gaps in the literature will be highlighted.

2.2   PARADIGMS AND PARADIGM SHIFTS

Our modern interpretation of what a paradigm is comes from the work of philosopher Thomas Kuhn who talks of paradigms and paradigm shifts in which there are two periods of science being *normal science* and *revolutionary science* (Bird & Kuhn, 2018). He describes normal science as a period where theories that constitute the overarching paradigm are not questioned and are considered to be true, this period is disrupted by a period of revolutionary science in which these aforementioned theories are questioned and revised, these revisions along with

possible newly constructed theories become the orthodoxy in the next period of normal science (Bird & Kuhn, 2018).

The idea of paradigms was quite popular amongst the social sciences, it allowed what is considered science to be broadened to include disciplines such as sociology and psychoanalysis, these disciplines lacked the track record of established natural sciences (Williams, 2019). They also failed positivist notions of verifiability by reference to its predictive successes, and they commonly failed Popper's criterion of potential falsifiability, where reproducible experiments or observations can refute theories (Bird & Kuhn, 2018; Popper, 1959). Kuhn's notion of a science as being dominated by a paradigm that generated unique puzzles and criteria for assessing solutions to them could much more easily accommodate these disciplines, as well as bestow upon them a legitimacy as science even though they may fail the positivists notions of what a science should be, even if Kuhn himself rebuked these radical extensions of his views (Bird & Kuhn, 2018). Kuhn also put forward the idea of the *Sociology of Scientific Knowledge,* in which the judgements of scientists/researchers are tightly constrained by the dominant guiding paradigm, but they are released partially from these constraints during the revolutionary science period (Bird & Kuhn, 2018), as a result the concepts of paradigms and paradigm shifts became useful tools to illustrate how dominant ideas that construct paradigms persist and change over periods of time, alternating between periods of normal and revolutionary science. This Kuhnian view of science contrasted with Poppers view that scientists refute rather than confirm their theories, Kuhn through his idea of paradigms suggests that science rarely works this way as most scientists do not try to refute theories embedded in their current paradigm as

there is overwhelming agreement with the ideas and methods that construct said paradigm (Naughton, 2012).

Kuhn, and later Mattei Dogan, have argued that the concept of paradigms was not appropriate for the social sciences since the concepts within them are polysemic (have multiple meanings and interpretations), involving the deliberate mutual ignorance between scholars and the proliferation of schools in these disciplines (Dogan, 2001; Williams, 2019). However, these critiques were aimed at broader categories and said little about competing sub-disciplines that may very well be dominated by prevailing paradigms within them (Williams, 2019).

In social science, the term Paradigm is utilized to depict the set of experiences, convictions and qualities that influence the manner in which an individual sees reality and reacts to that observation (Williams, 2019). The term paradigm is predominantly understood to mean a dominant *world view* that is considered true while it is in force (Williams, 2019). A paradigm in this context is a set of assumptions that make up our understanding of our present reality (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). How a paradigm is constructed is then necessarily nested within the knowledge creating structures of the discipline in question.

2.2.1 Paradigms and Paradigm Shifts in Planning

In this section, dominant ideas within the literature of planning theory that could constitute the definition of a paradigm as illustrated in section 2.1 will be identified.

The field of planning has experienced several significant shifts in thought. In an attempt to identify both the dominant paradigms and the paradigm shifts that have occurred, the

dominant paradigms will be identified through a discussion of the paradigm shifts that occurred

between them.

Paradigm Shift 1&2: From Planning as an *art* to a *science*, and the rise to dominance of the

Rational Planning Model

Leading up to and shortly after the second world war planning was seen as an exercise in

"physical design", as planning during this period was more concerned with the physical

location, form and layout of land uses and buildings, and as a result this form of design was

seen as an extension of architectural design, i.e. *architecture writ large* (Taylor, 1998; Taylor,

1998). Since town planning was considered a form of architecture it was considered an *art*,

more specifically a *practical art* that had functional requirements that needed to be

accommodated (Taylor, 1998).

This *art* paradigm slowly shifted through developments within the field of planning, from the

utopian phase (1840-1900) which emphasised three major ideas (scientific efficiency, the city

beautiful movement and social equity) which led to the formation of planning as a formal

practice (Krueckeburg, 1983), to the *pragmatist* phase (1920's-1950's) which emphasised

empiricism and a comprehensive view of urban problems, culminating in the Rational Planning

Model (RPM)(1950's), which was a five step planning process of finding the means to achieve

predetermined ends (Dzurik & Feldhaus, 1986). The advent of rational process views in the

1950's indicated the final paradigm shift from art to a scientific one (Taylor, 1998).

Since systems thinking, towns were seen as complex dynamic systems that were always in flux

and if planners were to control and design these complex systems a more rigorous scientific

approach was needed (Taylor, 1998). Although this new paradigm was a drastic ideological shift within planning, it wasn't a complete replacement of all aspects within the old paradigm as certain aspects of design and aesthetic considerations persisted. Instead, paradigm shifts within planning are better understood as significant ideological shifts (shifts between world views) that arose from needing to deal with certain aspects of the previous paradigm found wanting, and change proceeds as a result creating a paradigm shift addressing the problems with the previous paradigm through newer considerations and methods. This process bolsters the planning process leading to a perceived improvement of planning outcomes.

Planning may still be in this *scientific* paradigm dominated by the Rational Planning Model as much of planning theory that subsequently followed are technical, social, and political adjustments to the RPM, each adjustment proposed to solve possible identified problems with the RPM (Dzurik & Feldhaus, 1986). According to Olsen, this rational paradigm is steadily going out of favour with less value being associated with it over time, and no clear substitute has been established (Olsen, 1990).

According to Dzurik & Feldhaus (Dzurik & Feldhaus, 1986), the RPM can be described in 5 steps:

1. Set goals.

2. Determine alternatives to achieve goals.

3. Compare the results of the alternatives.

4. Choose the most effective alternative.

5. Implement the chosen alternative.

These steps underlie much of the work done in functional aspects of planning and engineering, and it is used as a rational approach to attaining clearly defined goals in which the term rational implies a correct decision, but this correct decision may not be the best solution to the problem in question (Dzurik & Feldhaus, 1986).

The technical, social and political adjustments to the RPM were in response to three major problems identified with the RPM as described by Friedmann and Hudson. These three major problems include the *problem of knowledge*, *community welfare function* which confronts the theoretical nature of the RPM, and the problem of *implementation* (Friedmann & Hudson, 1974).

The first problem of knowledge within the Rational Planning Model (RPM), as identified by Friedmann and Hudson, refers to the challenges associated with making decisions in planning due to the uncertainty and subjectivity involved in predicting future outcomes.

In planning, many situations are unique and non-recurring, making it difficult to rely solely on past experiences or established rules. Decision analyses, which involve assessing different alternatives and their potential outcomes, often require making subjective probability judgments about the likelihood of future events or conditions. These subjective judgments can vary among individuals, leading to disagreements and a lack of consensus on the anticipated future outcomes.

Because these judgments are subjective, influenced by personal perspectives, biases, and interpretations, it becomes challenging for multiple people involved in the planning process to

agree upon the same future outcomes. This subjectivity introduces a level of uncertainty and complexity, making it harder to arrive at definitive and widely accepted decisions.

Another issue is the availability of reliable data for planners, several issues are inherent in the bureaucratic process ranging from blatant misrepresentation of data to the loss of information that occurs when data is aggregated into various mathematical models. A final factor is the limited validity of the social models used in assessing the impact of decisions, a problem that arises due to the cognitive need to limit variables and relationships evaluated (Friedmann & Hudson, 1974).

The second major problem with the RPM according to Friedmann and Hudson is the *community welfare function*, which is defined as "a valuation of trade-offs among societal preferences for different goals." To ascertain these preferences a process of social dialogue and consensus development is required with the community, as a result planners have no objective basis for considering alternatives (Friedmann & Hudson, 1974).

The third and final problem with the RPM identified by Friedmann and Hudson regards implementation of decisions within a bureaucratic system, in which decisions are made without regard of the ability or inability to implement the decisions, a process which does not take into account possible political friction experienced in the decisions being implemented (Friedmann & Hudson, 1974).

To address these issues, several adjustments to the RPM were proposed by planning theorists, these adjustments will be discussed under two broad categories i.e., technical adjustments, and social/political adjustments to the RPM (Dyckman, 1969). Even though the following

adjustments are clustered under the RPM, several of these adjustments may fit the Kuhnian description of a paradigm, Participatory Planning being an example.

The technical adjustments to the RPM include Incrementalism, Optimization, and the Multiple Objective Approach;

- The incremental planning model attempts to accommodate the cognitive limitations of the decision makers (Lindblom, 1959). It's a pragmatic tool that seeks to reduce the amount of data required, scope and the cost of collecting new information. It achieves this through incremental changes from existing policy, where only *important* consequences are evaluated (Etzioni, 1967).

- Optimization is another extension of the RPM in which a planning model is built to ensure all final objectives are expressed, this planning system includes the decision-maker, whose role is to evaluate alternatives to reach initial goals that ultimately achieve the system's ultimate objectives (Churchman, 1979; Harris, 1975). Setting long-term objectives helps us contextualise short-term goals, this helps put them in their right perspective and the goals which are the most important emerge as a result, which in turn helps us optimize the process of planning (Friedmann & Hudson, 1974).

- The multiple objectives approach is the third technical adjustment to the RPM (Hill, 1968), it is a direct response to the single objective cost-benefit analysis of the RPM (Friedmann & Hudson, 1974). This process incorporates incommensurables into its objective function, and it also allows for trade-offs not accounted for in the RPM (Friedmann & Hudson, 1974).

Alongside technical adjustments to the RPM being formed, planning theory branched into the direction of social justice and income redistribution. These theories sought to integrate social and political environments into the planning process, subsequently planning was not just concerned with problem solving anymore as a result (Friedmann & Hudson, 1974). Planning was seen as being part of a larger process of catalyzing social decision-making (Altshuler, 1965).

The social/political adjustments to the RPM include Advocacy Planning, Citizen Participation and Radical Planning;

- Advocacy Planning is a pluralistic planning approach that seeks to represent the interests of different groups within society, inclusivity is a focus in this planning approach as it seeks to incorporate the voices of the marginalised and low-income groups into the planning process (Davidoff, 1965). Advocacy planning challenged the traditional view of a single decision-maker deciding what the public interest is, it also had the effect of shifting social policy formulation out into the open (Davidoff, 1965; Friedmann & Hudson, 1974).

- Radical planning takes an equitable, community-centered approach to managing development. In their seminal text *Foundations for a Radical Concept in Planning*, Heskin and Grabow argue that planning is elitist, centralizing, and change-resistant, and propose a system change vision that emphasizes the role of the community, decentralization, and encouraging sustainable development (Grabow & Heskin, 1973). Furthering this development, a radical planning model based on decolonization, democratization, self-empowerment, and reaching out was promoted in 1987 by John

Friedmann (Friedmann, 1987). In addition, Friedmann further emphasized the importance of decentralizing planning, advocating a planning paradigm based on normative, innovative, political and trans-active planning processes; and social learning as a means of policymaking (Friedmann, 1987).

- Participatory planning is a planning paradigm which involves all communities in the strategic and management processes of urban planning, or community-level planning processes, whether they be urban or rural. It is a component of community development (Kolsteren et al., 2000). Among the efforts to reform the technical planning role was the advent of citizen participation in policy formulation (Friedmann & Hudson, 1974). Citizens' participation programs of the early days were more concerned with reacting to agency plans and programs than proposing their own possibilities for goals and future action (Friedmann & Hudson, 1974).

Paradigm Shift 3: Planners as Technical Experts to Communicators having specialist knowledge

The history of planning has seen a significant shift in the role of Planner, from technical expert that had top-down *utopian* visionary of what ideal town planning should look like, to the modern role of planner as a communicator having specialist knowledge (Taylor, 1998). Before the systems and rational process views emerged on the planning scene, planning was considered an extension of architecture, as a result planning was primarily done by architects, and their approach was focussed on design and technicality (Taylor, 1998). This top-down design-based view saw architects as planners creating grand utopian schemes from the site level to that of the city scale, plans based upon ideas of what an ideal town or space ought to

look like (examples being Ebenezer Howard's Garden city and Le Corbusier's Towers in the

Park). Due to mounting criticisms of this kind of planning, especially due to comprehensive

housing redevelopment and urban road development projects of the 1960's, the idea that

experts knew more than the people who occupied these spaces came into question, and this

was facilitated by the idea that town planning was a value laden and political process, and

experts may not be able to properly make planning judgements by themselves alone (Taylor,

1998). Author and activist Jane Jacobs was partly instrumental in this shift due to her activism

in the 1960's against an American public official named Robert Moses, especially against his

Lower Manhattan Expressway project which would disturb the urban fabric of her home

neighborhood of Greenwich village, which through leading a grassroots movement by

mobilising the surrounding community brought public participation into the planning process.

As a result, a tradition in planning emerged where the role of planner was seen as a form of

cypher or *facilitator* for various stakeholders involved in planning issues, rather than someone

who is better qualified to assess these issues by themselves (Taylor, 1998). Beyond the social

element of activism, changes in planning theory helped facilitate this change starting with the

advocacy view of planning and later the *communicative* planning theory, under which the skills

of interpersonal communication and negotiation are seen to be central to a *non-coercive*

facilitator (Taylor, 1998). Non-coercive implies a lack of power, according to planner Rob

Buchan this is a dishonest view as "it does not recognise the influence planners and other civil

servants, have in sharing knowledge, making recommendations, engaging with the community,

and advising on the many aspects of community development and urban systems" (Buchan,

2019).

As with the discussion of the shift between the *art* and *science* paradigms, some elements of the previous paradigm are carried over in this case as well, technical and specialist knowledge are needed for the facilitator planner to be able to make informed planning recommendations and design considerations, the top-down approach of the previous paradigm is also maintained, albeit less so with the move towards communicative modes of planning where stakeholders have a higher involvement in the planning process.

Paradigm Shift 4: Rise in Communicative Planning

Communicative planning, also known as collaborative planning or communicative action planning, is an approach to urban and regional planning that prioritizes inclusive and participatory decision-making processes (Healey, 1997; Forester, 1989). It acknowledges that planning is not merely a technical exercise but a social and political activity that involves various stakeholders with diverse values, interests, and knowledge (Innes, 1995).

The key objective of communicative planning is to foster dialogue, understanding, and consensus among stakeholders, aiming for more equitable and sustainable planning outcomes (Healey, 1997). Planners, in this approach, assume the role of facilitators and mediators, creating spaces for meaningful participation and engaging in open and transparent communication (Forester, 1989). They strive to build relationships, trust, and shared understanding among stakeholders while ensuring that multiple perspectives and voices are considered in the planning process.

The communicative planning approach emerged as a response to the limitations of traditional planning models, which often involved top-down decision-making, marginalized certain groups,

and relied heavily on technical expertise (Healey, 1997). By recognizing the social, cultural, and political implications of planning decisions, communicative planning advocates for inclusive and deliberative processes to shape those decisions.

This approach draws on the concept of communicative action, which emphasizes the importance of communication as a means to achieve shared understanding and cooperative action (Innes, 1995). It encourages collaborative problem-solving, knowledge sharing, and the recognition of different forms of expertise, including both technical and local knowledge.

Overall, communicative planning seeks to empower communities, foster democratic practices, and enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of planning processes and outcomes (Forester, 1989). By engaging diverse stakeholders and incorporating their perspectives, communicative planning aims to address power imbalances, promote social justice, and create more sustainable and inclusive cities and regions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the concept of paradigms and paradigm shifts, as discussed in the works of philosopher Thomas Kuhn and applied to the field of planning, provides a valuable framework for understanding the evolution of planning theory and practice. Kuhn's notion of normal science, revolutionary science, and shifts between dominant paradigms helps us trace the trajectory of planning from its early roots as an art closely aligned with architecture to its contemporary role as a communicative and inclusive discipline.

The historical shifts in planning paradigms highlight the dynamic nature of this field. Initially, planning was seen as an art, an extension of architectural design, with a focus on physical aspects and aesthetics. However, as societal complexities grew, planners faced challenges that led to paradigm shifts.

The transition from planning as an art to a science marked a significant shift. The emergence of the Rational Planning Model (RPM) in the mid-20th century represented a systematic and scientific approach to planning, emphasizing problem-solving and rational decision-making. While the RPM provided a structured framework, it also faced several challenges, including issues related to knowledge, community welfare function, and implementation.

To address these challenges, planning theorists proposed technical adjustments to the RPM. Incrementalism, optimization, and the multiple objectives approach were introduced to enhance planning processes and outcomes. These technical adjustments aimed to improve decision-making, especially in complex and uncertain situations.

Simultaneously, planning theory expanded to incorporate social justice and income redistribution concerns. This shift led to the development of social and political adjustments to the RPM, such as Advocacy Planning, Radical Planning, and Participatory Planning. These approaches emphasized inclusivity, community engagement, and equity, challenging the top-down decision-making processes of the past.

Another significant paradigm shift in planning occurred when planners transitioned from being technical experts to communicators with specialist knowledge. This change recognized the importance of involving diverse stakeholders in the planning process and promoting open

dialogue. Planners became facilitators and mediators, fostering collaborative decision-making and striving for more equitable outcomes.

Finally, the rise of communicative planning represented a paradigm shift that prioritized inclusive and participatory processes. This approach acknowledged planning as a social and political activity, emphasizing dialogue, understanding, and consensus-building among stakeholders. Communicative planning aimed to empower communities, address power imbalances, and create more sustainable and inclusive cities and regions.

In summary, the concept of paradigms and paradigm shifts provides a lens through which we can analyze the evolution of planning theory and practice. It highlights the changing roles and perspectives of planners and underscores the importance of adapting planning approaches to meet the evolving needs of society, especially considering paradigm shifts have been corrective in nature. Planning, as a dynamic field, should continue to navigate paradigm shifts, responding to new challenges and opportunities in the ever-changing urban landscape.

2.3 POSITIONING THE TRUTH PARADIGM

These ideological frames act as the intellectual bedrock upon which a specific academic discipline or field of study is built, in this case they inform paradigm construction. They encompass the prevailing assumptions, methodologies, and values that guide scholars and researchers in their quest for truth and the construction of knowledge.

Understanding the current ideological foundations that underpin academic planning is of utmost importance. It offers profound insights into the biases that may unconsciously shape

our perspectives, the deliberate or inadvertent prioritization of certain research interests over others, the methodologies we choose to employ, and the broader framework within which we operate.

By delving into these foundational paradigms, we gain a clearer understanding of the intellectual landscape in which we work. It allows us to critically examine the premises that inform our research questions, the approaches we take to answer them, and the implications of our findings. Moreover, it prompts us to reflect on the potential limitations and blind spots that may arise from our adherence to a particular paradigm.

In essence, recognizing and analyzing these paradigms within academic planning not only fosters self-awareness but also contributes to the development of a more comprehensive, inclusive, and reflective approach to research and scholarship. It encourages us to engage in intellectual exploration and to remain open to diverse perspectives, ultimately enriching the academic discourse within the field of planning.

2.3.1   Traditional Liberal Paradigm

According to Daniel Bell, leading up to the 1960s, the dominant social context was characterized by a liberal social paradigm, with liberalism identified as the prevailing ideology. This era witnessed the ascendancy of liberal democracy and the acceptance of liberal values such as individual rights, rationality, and the pursuit of objective truth.

In his book *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties* published in 1960, Daniel Bell argued that liberalism had emerged as the dominant ideology in Western societies (Bell, 1962). He posited that the ideological conflicts that characterized the 19th and

early 20th centuries, such as liberalism versus conservatism and capitalism versus socialism, had diminished. According to Bell, liberal democracy, with its focus on individual rights, representative government, and market-oriented economies, had become the prevailing and accepted political system. He suggested that the triumph of liberal democracy signaled the "end of ideology" in terms of grand political visions and the dominance of a single ideology. Bell further posits that due to the emergence of prosperous welfare states and the institutionalized bargaining between different groups, revolutionary movements seeking to dismantle liberal democracy will struggle to appeal to the working class (Bell, 1962).

Building upon the ideas of Daniel Bell, Francis Fukuyama further explored the dominance of the liberal paradigm in his influential book *The End of History and the Last Man published* in 1992 (Fukuyama, 1992). Fukuyama argued that with the fall of communism and the Soviet Union, liberal democracy had emerged as the final and universally valid form of governance. He posited that liberal democracy represented the endpoint of humanity's ideological evolution and that further ideological struggle was unlikely. Fukuyama's thesis gained considerable attention and sparked debates about the future of political systems and the perceived triumph of liberal democracy. Fukuyama further updates his arguments in support of a liberal system in *Liberalism and Its Discontents* (Fukuyama, 2022). Fukuyama posits that, in recent decades, the principles of liberalism have been stretched to unprecedented extremes by both right-wing and left-wing factions. On one hand, neoliberals have idolized economic freedom, turning it into a sort of cult. On the other hand, progressives have placed greater emphasis on identity, prioritizing it over the concept of universal humanity in their political vision. According to

Fukuyama, this dynamic has resulted in a splintering of our civil society, posing an escalating threat to our democratic system.

The liberal conception of truth posits the existence of objective and universal truths that can be ascertained through rational inquiry and evidence-based reasoning. It draws upon the Enlightenment ideals of reason, individual autonomy, and the pursuit of knowledge. According to this view, truth is independent of personal beliefs, cultural contexts, and power dynamics, and it is accessible to individuals through impartial observation and logical deduction.

Prominent philosophers such as René Descartes and John Locke have contributed to the development of the traditional liberal conception of truth. Descartes, in his work *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Descartes, 2008), sought to establish a foundation of certainty by doubting all beliefs until reaching indubitable truths. This rationalist approach emphasizes the role of reason and logical coherence in attaining objective knowledge.

Locke, in his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Locke, 1690), emphasized the role of empirical observation and sensory experience in acquiring knowledge. He argued that truth could be discovered through the accumulation of evidence and the agreement of ideas with external reality.

John Stuart Mill, a significant figure in liberal philosophy, further expanded the understanding of truth in his work *On Liberty* (Mill, 1859) and *Utilitarianism* (Mill, 1863). Mill emphasized the importance of free expression and the marketplace of ideas in the pursuit of truth. He argued that through the clash of differing opinions, truth emerges and is strengthened. Mill

championed the idea that diverse perspectives, even if initially considered false or unpopular, should be heard and engaged with, as they contribute to the ongoing search for truth.

The liberal conception of truth asserts the existence of objective and universal truths attainable through reason and evidence-based inquiry. Prominent philosophers like Descartes, Locke, and Mill have contributed to its development, emphasizing rationality, empirical observation, and the clash of diverse perspectives in the pursuit of truth. This conception reflects the liberal belief in individuals' ability to discover objective truths through rational exploration.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the liberal conception of truth emerged within the context of the dominant liberal social paradigm of the 19th and 20th centuries. Philosophers such as Descartes, Locke, and Mill played crucial roles in shaping this conception, emphasizing reason, empirical observation, and the clash of diverse perspectives as means to attain objective and universal truths. The liberal conception of truth is rooted in Enlightenment ideals of rationality, individual autonomy, and the pursuit of knowledge.

However, it is important to recognize that the liberal conception of truth has been subject to re-evaluation and critique in contemporary discourse. Scholars and intellectual movements have challenged the idea of a single, objective truth that is independent of personal beliefs, cultural contexts, and power dynamics. Postmodernist thinkers, feminists, postcolonial theorists, and critical race theorists, among others, have critically examined the social and linguistic construction of truth, highlighting its relativity, situatedness, and socially constructed nature.

The re-evaluation of the liberal conception of truth has led to a more nuanced understanding that acknowledges the complexities of knowledge production and dissemination. It recognizes the influence of language, power dynamics, cultural contexts, and intersectional identities in shaping truth. It calls for intellectual humility, an openness to diverse perspectives, and a critical awareness of the limitations and biases inherent in traditional knowledge systems.

While the liberal conception of truth continues to hold significance within certain intellectual and philosophical traditions, it is important to engage in ongoing dialogue and critical examination of its premises. The recognition of the limitations of a singular, objective truth has paved the way for alternative frameworks and approaches that emphasize inclusivity, social justice, and the amplification of marginalized voices in the pursuit of a more equitable and just society.

In conclusion, the liberal conception of truth emerged within a specific historical and intellectual context, shaped by Enlightenment ideals and prominent philosophers. However, contemporary discourse has witnessed a re-evaluation of this conception, with an increasing recognition of the relativity, situatedness, and socially constructed nature of truth. This ongoing dialogue and critical engagement with the liberal conception of truth contribute to the ongoing evolution of our understanding and pursuit of knowledge.

2.3.2   Critical Social Theoretical Paradigm

However, by the 1960s, scholars critical of the liberal conception of truth began to question liberalism as an ideology, pointing out its failure in addressing ongoing inequities. This critique

highlighted the limitations of the liberal framework and sparked a re-evaluation of prevailing notions of truth and power.

This re-evaluation gave birth to the New Left, a dynamic political and intellectual movement that gained momentum in the 1960s and 1970s. The New Left challenged the established liberal institutions and power structures of the time, seeking to create a more inclusive and emancipatory understanding of truth. Scholars and activists within the New Left movement drew inspiration from various intellectual and social movements, including the Frankfurt School (Jay, 1996; Bronner, 2011).

The Frankfurt School, also known as the Institute for Social Research, was a group of scholars based in Frankfurt, Germany, during the mid-20th century. Figures such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse developed critical theories that examined the social, cultural, and economic aspects of liberal capitalist societies (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1982; Marcuse, 1964). Drawing on Marxist analysis, they sought to understand the mechanisms of power, domination, and oppression present in modern society (Wiggershaus, 1994; Rush, 2006). Their work focused on the role of culture, media, and ideology in maintaining and reproducing social inequalities.

The critical theories of the Frankfurt School heavily influenced the New Left movement (Jay, 1996; Bronner, 2011). The New Left embraced the Frankfurt School's critical theory approach and used its ideas to analyze and critique liberal capitalism, imperialism, and power structures. Herbert Marcuse, who was associated with both the Frankfurt School and the New Left, played a significant role in bridging the gap between the two. His work provided a critique of advanced

industrial society and its impact on individual freedom and human liberation (Marcuse, 1964).

Marcuse's ideas resonated with the activists and intellectuals of the New Left, inspiring them to

challenge existing power structures and advocate for radical social change.

The emergence of the New Left marked a significant shift away from the unquestioned

acceptance of liberal ideals. It contributed to a growing recognition of the limitations of liberal

conceptions of truth. This shift was influenced by a range of intellectual and social movements

that critically examined established notions of truth and knowledge, challenging prevailing

narratives and power structures.

Postmodernism played a pivotal role in this re-evaluation of liberal conceptions of truth.

Postmodernist thinkers critically examined the nature of truth and questioned the idea of a

universal and objective truth. They emphasized the relativity and plurality of truths, asserting

that truth is socially constructed and shaped by language, power dynamics, and cultural

contexts.

One influential scholar in the field of postmodernism is Jean-François Lyotard. In his seminal

work *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Lyotard, 1984), Lyotard explores the

impact of postmodernism on conceptions of truth and knowledge. He highlights the skepticism

towards grand narratives, such as the Enlightenment project, and emphasizes the significance

of language games and power relations in shaping knowledge.

Michel Foucault, another prominent postmodernist thinker, has also contributed significantly to

the re-evaluation of truth. In his works, such as *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1976)

and *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1977), Foucault examines the ways in which power

produces and regulates knowledge. He argues that knowledge is not simply a reflection of objective reality but is shaped by complex networks of power and discourse.

Jacques Derrida, a key figure in poststructuralism, has profoundly influenced the understanding of truth and language. In his ground-breaking work *Of Grammatology* (Derrida, 1976), Derrida explores the deconstruction of meaning and the relationship between writing and speech. He challenges the idea of a fixed and stable meaning, arguing that language is characterized by inherent instability and endless deferral of meaning.

Another notable pragmatist and is considered a postmodernist thinker in certain respects, is Richard Rorty, who introduced the concept of "language games" and advocated for a pragmatic approach to truth. In his influential work *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Rorty, 1989), Rorty argues that truth should be understood as a social and linguistic construct rather than an objective reality. He emphasizes the role of contingency and historical context in shaping truth claims and highlights the importance of conversation and dialogue in the pursuit of knowledge.

Feminism, particularly intersectional feminism, also played a significant role in challenging traditional knowledge production and advocating for more inclusive and transformative approaches to truth. Prominent feminist scholars have critically examined the biases inherent in male-dominated knowledge systems and called for a broader understanding of truth that recognizes the intersections of gender, power, and knowledge.

One influential work in feminist theory is *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* by Bell Hooks (Hooks, 1984). In this book, Hooks highlights the importance of centering the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups in the pursuit of truth. She critiques the exclusionary

tendencies of mainstream feminism and calls for a more intersectional and inclusive feminist praxis.

Simone de Beauvoir's seminal work *The Second Sex* (Beauvoir, 1952) is another significant contribution to feminist thought. De Beauvoir explores the social construction of gender and challenges essentialist notions of femininity and masculinity. By examining the ways in which gender shapes knowledge and truth, de Beauvoir opens up new possibilities for understanding the complexity of truth in relation to gendered experiences.

Kimberlé Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality has been pivotal in understanding how different social identities intersect and influence our understanding of truth. In her influential article *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics* (Crenshaw, 1989), Crenshaw argues that multiple forms of oppression and privilege intersect to shape individuals' experiences. These ideas are further expanded on in her book *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color* (Crenshaw, 1991).

Donna Haraway's work, particularly her essay *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective* (Haraway, 1988), challenges the notion of an objective and universal truth. Haraway argues for the recognition of situated knowledge, which acknowledges the subjective and contextual nature of knowledge production.

Postcolonial theory has contributed to the shift in conceptions of truth by challenging Eurocentric perspectives and examining the impact of colonialism on knowledge production.

Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (Bhabha, 1949) explores how power and cultural representation intersect, shaping dominant narratives and marginalizing alternative voices.

Critical race theory (CRT) has played a crucial role in the re-evaluation of truth by highlighting the influence of race, power, and knowledge production. This interdisciplinary field of study examines the intersections of race, law, and society, aiming to uncover and dismantle the underlying structures of racial oppression.

One of the foundational concepts within CRT is the recognition of systemic racism, which posits that racism is not merely the result of individual prejudices but rather embedded within social, economic, and political systems. This perspective seeks to unveil the ways in which racism operates and is perpetuated through institutional policies and practices.

Prominent scholars in the field of CRT have contributed significant works that explore the relationship between race, power, and knowledge. For example, Derrick Bell's *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism* (Bell, 1992) examines the enduring nature of racism in American society and offers critical insights into the impact of racism on marginalized communities.

The writings of Patricia J. Williams, particularly her book *The Alchemy of Race and Rights* (Williams, 1991), delve into the complex relationships between race, law, and social justice. Williams critically examines legal systems and their role in perpetuating racial inequalities, challenging conventional notions of truth within the legal framework.

Through their collective works, scholars within critical theory, postmodernism, feminism, postcolonial theory, and critical race theory have highlighted the ways in which power,

language, and social dynamics shape knowledge production and the dissemination of truth. They advocate for a more critical and nuanced understanding of truth, acknowledging the situated, contextual, and socially constructed nature of knowledge.

These various intellectual and social movements, along with their influential scholars and works, have contributed to the progressive conceptions of truth. They challenge established narratives, power structures, and knowledge systems, promoting a more inclusive, transformative, and socially just understanding of truth.

By critically engaging with these sources and perspectives, scholars and activists continue to shape the ongoing evolution of conceptions of truth in the present context. They aim to address systemic inequities, recognize diverse perspectives, and create spaces for marginalized voices to be heard.

Overall, these developments represent a progressive form of social justice that has emerged as a response to perceived failures in addressing ongoing inequities. It is a form of social justice that recognizes the limitations of traditional liberal conceptions of truth and seeks to transform power structures, promote inclusivity, and challenge dominant narratives in the pursuit of a more just and equitable society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the re-evaluation of liberal conceptions of truth has been a significant intellectual and social undertaking, challenging prevailing narratives and power structures. Scholars and activists from various fields, including critical theory, postmodernism, feminism, postcolonial theory, and critical race theory, have critically examined the nature of truth and knowledge,

highlighting the relativity, situatedness, and socially constructed nature of truth. They have emphasized the influence of language, power dynamics, cultural contexts, and intersectional identities in shaping knowledge production and dissemination.

These movements have sparked a transformative shift away from unquestioned acceptance of liberal ideals and have fostered a more critical, inclusive, and socially just understanding of truth. They have called attention to ongoing inequities, systemic racism, gender biases, colonial legacies, and the limitations of traditional knowledge systems. Scholars such as Jean-François Lyotard, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, bell hooks, Simone de Beauvoir, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Donna Haraway, Homi K. Bhabha, Derrick Bell, Patricia J. Williams, and many others have played crucial roles in this re-evaluation, offering insightful critiques and alternative frameworks for understanding truth.

The recognition of the limitations of liberal conceptions of truth does not imply the abandonment of truth-seeking altogether. Rather, it encourages a more nuanced, critical, and context-sensitive approach to knowledge production and dissemination. It calls for intellectual humility, an openness to diverse perspectives, and a recognition of the complex interplay of power dynamics in shaping truth.

The progressive form of social justice that has emerged from these re-evaluations seeks to dismantle oppressive structures, promote inclusivity, and amplify marginalized voices. It recognizes the importance of intersectionality, challenges dominant narratives, and strives for a more just and equitable society.

However, it is essential to note that the re-evaluation of truth is an ongoing and dynamic process. It requires ongoing critical engagement, dialogue, and reflexivity. As society continues to evolve, new challenges and perspectives will emerge, necessitating constant re-evaluation and adaptation of our understanding of truth.

Ultimately, the re-evaluation of liberal conceptions of truth has brought to the forefront important discussions about power, knowledge, and social justice. It has sparked intellectual and social movements that challenge the status quo, strive for inclusivity, and work towards a more just and equitable world. By critically engaging with these perspectives, we can continue to expand our understanding of truth, address systemic inequities, and promote social progress.

2.3.3   Reaction to the Critical Social Theoretical Critique

In contemporary discourse, critical versions of truth have been subject to a myriad of critiques that delve into the complexities and implications of these theories. This essay aims to comprehensively explore and synthesize scholarly works that offer nuanced critiques, examining various aspects of critical truth. The critique encompasses topics such as relativism, skepticism, essentialism, universalism, epistemic closure, political instrumentalization, lack of empirical grounding, the abandonment of liberal truth, utopianism, and the religious-like characteristics associated with critical theories.

<u>Relativism and Skepticism:</u>

One prominent critique of critical theories focuses on the fear that they can lead to relativism and skepticism, potentially undermining the existence of objective truth. Richard Rorty, in his

book *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Rorty, 1989), challenges the concept of objective truth, advocating for a more pragmatic and relativistic understanding of knowledge. Rorty posits that truth claims are contingent upon historical and cultural factors, emphasizing the importance of social context in shaping our understanding of truth. However, philosopher Charles Taylor, in *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Taylor, 1989), explores the challenges posed by relativism to notions of objective truth. Taylor cautions against the erasure of objective standards and the denial of shared truths, suggesting that while truth may be shaped by multiple perspectives, there is still a place for universal truths that transcend individual interpretations.

Expanding on this critique, philosopher Thomas Nagel, in *The Last Word* (Nagel, 1997), examines the tensions between relativism and objectivity in the realm of moral and ethical truth. Nagel argues that while relativism acknowledges the influence of cultural and individual perspectives, it fails to account for the possibility of objective moral truths that can be discovered through rational inquiry. By engaging with Nagel's work, we can gain a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding relativism and the search for objective truth.

Essentialism and Universalism:

Critics argue that critical theories often engage in essentialism and universalism, oversimplifying and generalizing complex social phenomena. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in her influential essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (Spivak, 1988), cautions against the essentializing tendencies within critical theories. Spivak advocates for a nuanced understanding of marginalized voices, highlighting the need to approach diverse experiences with sensitivity and avoid reducing

individuals to a single dimension of their identity. Philosopher Linda Martín Alcoff, in *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self* (Alcoff, 2006), further critiques universalizing approaches within critical theories. Alcoff argues for the recognition of intersectionality and multiple subjectivities, emphasizing the importance of understanding the complexity and diversity of individual identities within social contexts.

To expand on this critique, philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah, in *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (Appiah, 1992), examines the dangers of essentialism and the limitations of universalizing frameworks. Appiah argues that essentializing marginalized groups perpetuates stereotypes and overlooks the multiplicity of identities within these groups. By incorporating Appiah's insights into the critique, we can deepen our understanding of the challenges posed by essentialism and the importance of embracing diversity and complexity within critical theories.

Epistemic Closure and Dogmatism:

Concerns have been raised regarding the potential for epistemic closure and dogmatism within critical theories. Helen Pluckrose and James A. Lindsay, in their work *Cynical Theories: How Activist Scholarship Made Everything about Race, Gender, and Identity* (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020), highlight the creation of echo chambers and the suppression of dissenting views within critical frameworks. They argue that these stifles open inquiry and critical thinking, as certain ideas are dismissed without proper engagement. Philosopher Miranda Fricker, in *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (Fricker, 2007), examines the limitations of critical theories' approach to knowledge and truth. Fricker emphasizes the importance of open

dialogue and the inclusion of diverse perspectives to avoid epistemic closure and promote epistemic justice.

Expanding on this critique, philosopher Karl Popper, in *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (Popper, 1945), explores the dangers of closed systems of thought and the importance of fostering an open society that encourages critical engagement and the testing of ideas. Popper argues that critical theories should embrace falsifiability and engage with rigorous scrutiny to avoid the pitfalls of dogmatism. By incorporating Popper's insights into the critique, we can further emphasize the need for intellectual openness and critical engagement within critical frameworks.

Political Instrumentalization:

Critics argue that critical theories can be instrumentalized for specific political agendas, potentially compromising the pursuit of truth. Roger Scruton, in *Fools, Frauds and Firebrands: Thinkers of the New Left* (Scruton, 1998), suggests that critical theories can serve as ideological tools that advance particular political narratives. This instrumentalization, according to Scruton, undermines the pursuit of truth and critical thinking, as ideas are evaluated based on their alignment with specific ideological frameworks rather than their evidentiary basis. Similarly, philosopher Nancy Fraser, in *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the 'Postsocialist' Condition* (Fraser, 1996), explores the potential pitfalls of political instrumentalization within critical theories. Fraser emphasizes the need for a critical engagement with power dynamics and the avoidance of reductive ideological frameworks that hinder genuine dialogue and the pursuit of truth.

Expanding on this critique, philosopher Michel Foucault, in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Foucault, 1977), analyzes the ways in which power operates in society and how knowledge can be used as a form of social control. Although Foucault's insights are used in the broader critical movement to critique liberal social structures, they can still shed light on the potential for critical theories to be co-opted by power structures, emphasizing the need for critical self-reflection and an awareness of the political dimensions of knowledge. By incorporating Foucault's perspectives into the critique, we can further illuminate the complexities of political instrumentalization within critical frameworks.

Lack of Empirical Grounding:

Another critique pertains to the potential lack of empirical grounding within critical theories.

Steven Pinker, a cognitive psychologist, linguist, and popular science author, is known for his thoughtful criticisms of various academic disciplines, including those where perspectives associated with critical theory is often applied. His critiques are dispersed throughout his body of work, creating a narrative that weaves together several key themes.

One such theme is Pinker's advocacy for empirical evidence and the scientific method, which he believes should be foundational in all areas of knowledge. He frequently expresses concern about the humanities and social sciences, where he perceives a troubling disregard for empirical evidence and the scientific method.

In *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature* (Pinker, 2002), Pinker mounts a critique of the idea that individuals are entirely shaped by their environment, a perspective he

feels is often implicitly or explicitly supported by critical theory. He argues this viewpoint neglects the significant role of biological and genetic factors in human behavior.

Another recurring theme in Pinker's work is his belief in societal progress driven by science, reason, and Enlightenment values. In works such as *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism* (Pinker, 2018)*,* and *Progress* and *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* (Pinker, 2011), he contends that human society has generally been on an upward trajectory. He criticizes the perspectives frequently found in critical theory, which tend to focus heavily on systemic oppression and paint a picture of a world that has not improved significantly, or has even worsened, over time.

In addition to Steven Pinker's works, philosopher Elizabeth Anderson, in *The Imperative of Integration* (Anderson, 2010), addresses the need for empirical research and evidence in critical social theories. Anderson argues that engaging with empirical studies can help validate or refine critical claims, providing a more robust foundation for the pursuit of truth within critical frameworks. She highlights the importance of empirical grounding to avoid undue speculation and ensure the accuracy of claims made within critical theories.

To expand on this critique, philosopher Sandra Harding, in *The Science Question in Feminism* (Harding, 1986), examines the intersection of empirical research and feminist theory. Harding explores the challenges of incorporating empirical methodologies in feminist inquiry, highlighting the importance of embracing diverse research methodologies and avoiding the exclusionary practices of traditional science. By incorporating Harding's insights into the

critique, we can delve deeper into the complexities of empirical grounding within critical

frameworks and the potential for integrating diverse forms of knowledge.

The Abandonment of Liberal Truth:

Critiques against critical versions of truth claim that proponents of these theories often reject

or abandon the liberal conception of truth and its associated principles. Steven Pinker, in *The*

Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined (Pinker, 2011), argues that liberal

conceptions of truth, rooted in principles such as individual rights, equality, and impartiality,

have played a crucial role in advancing societal progress and addressing historical injustices.

Pinker contends that liberal frameworks have been instrumental in promoting civil rights,

challenging oppressive systems, and advocating for democratic principles. The emphasis on

individual rights and equal treatment under the law has enabled marginalized groups to secure

legal protections and gain social recognition. However, philosopher Martha Nussbaum, in *Not*

for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities (Nussbaum, 1947), emphasizes the

significance of liberal education in promoting critical thinking, empathy, and a nuanced

understanding of truth. Nussbaum argues for a comprehensive approach that integrates the

insights of critical theories with the liberal ideals of reason, tolerance, and open-mindedness.

To expand on this critique, philosopher John Rawls, in *A Theory of Justice* (Rawls, 1971),

presents a comprehensive liberal theory of justice that focuses on fairness and the distribution

of social goods. Rawls argues that a just society is one that ensures the well-being of the least

advantaged members and upholds principles of equality and fairness. By incorporating Rawls's

insights into the critique, we can further explore the tensions between critical truth and the

principles of liberal justice, highlighting the potential for a balanced approach that integrates

the strengths of both perspectives.

Further, in *Kindly Inquisitors: The New Attacks on Free Thought* (Rauch, 1995), Jonathan Rauch

explores a range of principles that pertain to determining truth. These principles serve as

alternative approaches to understanding how society should navigate the complexities of truth-

seeking. Let's delve into each principle and Rauch's critiques in detail.

Rauch's examination begins with the fundamentalist principle, which asserts that those who

possess the ultimate truth should hold the authority to determine who is right. This principle

suggests that a select few individuals or groups hold the key to absolute and fixed truth.

However, Rauch critiques this approach, arguing that it stifles open inquiry, discourages critical

examination, and empowers those who claim to possess the ultimate truth. He contends that

such an approach hampers intellectual progress and limits the discovery of new insights.

Moving on, Rauch discusses the simple egalitarian principle, which posits that all sincere beliefs,

regardless of their validity or soundness, deserve equal respect. While acknowledging the

importance of sincerity, Rauch raises concerns about this principle. He argues that treating all

beliefs as equally valid can hinder the pursuit of truth. Respecting beliefs solely based on

sincerity without evaluating their factual accuracy or logical coherence undermines intellectual

rigor and the objective assessment of ideas.

Building upon the simple egalitarian principle, Rauch introduces the radical egalitarian principle.

This principle adds the notion that beliefs held by historically oppressed classes or groups

should receive special consideration. Rauch acknowledges the significance of addressing

historical injustices but cautions against granting privileged treatment to certain beliefs solely

based on the identity of the individuals or groups holding them. He suggests that such an

approach can distort intellectual discourse, suppress critical examination, and lead to unequal

treatment of ideas, potentially impeding the pursuit of truth.

Additionally, Rauch delves into the humanitarian principle, which encompasses any of the

aforementioned principles but introduces the condition that the first priority should be to avoid

causing harm. While recognizing the importance of preventing harm, Rauch warns against using

claims of harm as a justification to suppress speech or restrict the open exchange of ideas. He

argues that excessively prioritizing the avoidance of harm can limit intellectual growth, hinder

the discovery of truth, and undermine the essential role of robust debate and critical

engagement in intellectual progress.

Through the critique of these principles, Rauch ultimately defends the liberal principle as the

most favorable approach to determining truth. The liberal principle asserts that the only

legitimate way to ascertain who is right is through public criticism and the scrutiny of ideas. It

advocates for open and robust debate, where all beliefs and viewpoints are subject to rigorous

scrutiny and criticism. Rauch highlights that the liberal principle acknowledges the importance

of intellectual diversity, open inquiry, and the continuous testing of ideas through critical

engagement. According to Rauch, this approach offers the most conducive environment for the

advancement of knowledge and the pursuit of truth.

In contrast to the fundamentalist, simple egalitarian, radical egalitarian, and humanitarian

principles, Rauch argues that the liberal principle embraces intellectual diversity, encourages

critical examination, and safeguards against the suppression of dissenting voices. By subjecting

ideas to ongoing critical evaluation, society can refine its understanding, correct errors or

misconceptions, and foster intellectual growth. Through this lens, the liberal principle, as

defended by Rauch, emerges as a preferred approach for navigating the complexities of truth

determination.

However, Rauch's book raises concerns about the current state of affairs. He warns that the

liberal principle is losing ground to other principles, posing a significant danger to free thought.

Rauch sheds light on the rise of notions that view science as oppressive and criticize criticism

itself as an act of violence. These ideas contribute to the growing acceptance of central

regulation in intellectual discourse and inquiry. This trend undermines the principles of free

thought and free speech that are essential for a democratic society.

Rauch emphasizes that this dangerous development disguises itself in a humanitarian rhetoric.

By appealing to the desire to avoid harm, the regulation of debate and inquiry attempts to

justify its actions. However, Rauch argues that this approach limits intellectual growth,

obstructs the pursuit of truth, and suppresses open and critical engagement. The danger lies in

the potential suppression of dissenting voices and the narrowing of acceptable ideas, hindering

intellectual progress and diminishing the diversity of perspectives.

In *Kindly Inquisitors*, Rauch sounds the alarm about these concerning trends. He calls upon

society to recognize the significance of the liberal principle, which upholds intellectual diversity,

open inquiry, and the continuous scrutiny of ideas. By maintaining a robust marketplace of

ideas and embracing critical examination, society can guard against the encroachment of restrictive regulations and preserve the free exchange of thoughts and knowledge.

The book serves as a call to action, urging the preservation of the liberal principle and the defense of free thought. It cautions against the rise of regulations disguised as humanitarian concerns, emphasizing the importance of open debate, intellectual diversity, and the freedom to engage in critical inquiry as vital pillars of a democratic and intellectually vibrant society. By embracing these principles, society can nurture an environment that fosters intellectual growth, supports the pursuit of truth, and upholds the values of free thought and free speech.

Utopianism:

Critiques of critical truth highlight the tendency of these theories to present an idealized vision of society that may be unattainable or unrealistic. John Gray, in *Black Mass: Apocalyptic Religion and the Death of Utopia* (Gray, 2007), argues that utopian visions often fail to account for the inherent flaws and limitations of human societies, hindering the practical implementation of proposed changes. Gray contends that an overly idealistic approach can overlook the complexities and challenges of real-world contexts, potentially leading to unintended consequences. Similarly, philosopher Amartya Sen, in *The Idea of Justice* (Sen, 2011), explores the challenges of utopian visions within the pursuit of justice. Sen emphasizes the importance of practical reasoning, recognizing that societal progress often requires gradual reforms and incremental changes rather than a complete departure from existing institutions and frameworks.

Expanding on this critique, philosopher Ernst Bloch, in *The Principle of Hope* (Bloch, 1986),

offers a comprehensive analysis of utopian thinking and its potential pitfalls. Bloch explores the

tensions between utopian aspirations and the realities of social transformation, emphasizing

the need for critical awareness and a nuanced understanding of the limitations of utopian

visions. By incorporating Bloch's perspectives into the critique, we can further illuminate the

challenges posed by utopianism within critical theories and the importance of maintaining a

pragmatic approach to social change.

Religious-Like Characteristics:

Critiques argue that critical theories exhibit characteristics reminiscent of religious beliefs and

practices. Jonathan Rauch, in *Kindly Inquisitors: The New Attacks on Free Thought* (Rauch,

1993), raises concerns about the potential dangers of stifling free speech and suppressing open

inquiry in the pursuit of critical truth. Rauch cautions against the creation of an environment

where certain viewpoints or expressions are deemed inherently oppressive or harmful,

resulting in the dismissal of dissenting voices without engaging with their arguments. He

emphasizes the importance of preserving a culture of "liberal science" that encourages open

criticism, respectful disagreement, and the pursuit of truth through free and unfettered inquiry.

Jonathan Haidt and Greg Lukianoff in *The Coddling of the American Mind* (Lukianoff & Haidt,

2018), and Helen Pluckrose and James Lindsay in *Cynical Theories* (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020)

share Rauch's critique.

John McWhorter argues in his book *Woke Racism* (McWhorter, 2021) that there is a harmful

form of neoracism that disguises itself as antiracism, causing negative impacts on Black

communities and eroding the social fabric of America. According to McWhorter, the problem stems from a well-meaning but dangerous type of antiracism that has evolved into a rigid religious doctrine, filled with logical inconsistencies, unachievable objectives, and unintentionally promoting neoracist perspectives.

In *Woke Racism*, McWhorter uncovers the mechanisms of this emerging religion. He examines concepts such as "white privilege" being treated as an original sin and the use of cancel culture to silence dissenting voices. He also explores the fervent nature of the "woke mob." McWhorter reveals how this religion, which claims to dismantle racist systems, actually harms Black Americans by treating them as dependent and incapable, setting them up for failure in education, and implementing policies that disproportionately disadvantage Black communities. Despite its guise as "antiracism," this religion espouses a racial essentialism that bears striking resemblance to past racist arguments.

Andrew Doyle in his book *The New Puritans* (Doyle, 2023), provides an exploration of our present cultural landscape and a pressing call to restore a genuinely liberal society. While the puritans of the seventeenth century aimed to reshape society based on their own convictions, they possessed an awareness of their own fallibility and engaged in profound contemplation. However, the contemporary era has witnessed the rise of a contrasting narrative under the grip of the new puritans.

Characterized by identity politics and the pursuit of 'social justice,' the new puritanism movement spearheads a cultural revolution that can be likened to a religion. It lays claim to moral righteousness and doesn't tolerate or accept any disagreement or opposition, exhibiting

its own language, rituals, and an unwavering commitment to rooting out sinners through the notorious "cancel culture."

In *The New Puritans*, Andrew Doyle conducts a compelling examination of the underlying belief systems of this ideology and how it swiftly ascended to a position of dominance in major political, cultural, and corporate institutions. Doyle argues that in order to progress, it is imperative to comprehend the origins and objectives of these new puritans. Infused with a spirit of optimism and comprehension, the book presents a compelling case for reinstating liberal values and underscores the urgency of taking action.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the exploration of critical truth and its critiques reveals a multifaceted and nuanced landscape. The examination of relativism, skepticism, essentialism, universalism, epistemic closure, political instrumentalization, lack of empirical grounding, the abandonment of liberal truth, utopianism, and the religious-like characteristics associated with critical theories sheds light on the complexities and implications of these ideologies in contemporary discourse.

The critiques presented by scholars such as Richard Rorty, Charles Taylor, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Linda Martín Alcoff, Helen Pluckrose, James A. Lindsay, Miranda Fricker, Roger Scruton, Steven Pinker, Elizabeth Anderson, Martha Nussbaum, John Gray, Amartya Sen, Jonathan Rauch, and Jürgen Habermas offer valuable insights into the potential pitfalls and limitations of critical truth. These critiques range from concerns about relativism, skepticism, and the abandonment of objective truth to discussions on essentialism, universalism, and the dangers

of political instrumentalization. They also highlight the importance of empirical grounding, the need to avoid utopianism, and the potential for critical theories to exhibit religious-like characteristics.

Engaging with these diverse scholarly voices enables a deeper understanding of the challenges surrounding critical theories and their implications for the pursuit of truth in contemporary discourse. The synthesis of these critiques emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between critical inquiry and open dialogue, while safeguarding intellectual diversity and avoiding the suppression of dissenting voices. Furthermore, the reinstatement of liberal values, including the principles of free thought, open inquiry, and the continuous testing of ideas, emerges as a crucial factor in navigating the complexities of truth determination.

Ultimately, the exploration and synthesis of critiques surrounding critical truth call for a vigilant and discerning approach to the ideologies and theories that shape our understanding of society. By critically examining the strengths and limitations of these perspectives, we can strive for a more robust and inclusive intellectual landscape that values rigorous inquiry, respects diverse viewpoints, and upholds the principles of truth-seeking in the pursuit of a just and equitable society.

2.4 CONCLUSION

The exploration of planning paradigms and their evolution in the context of urban planning offers valuable insights into the field's dynamics, aligning closely with the research objectives outlined for the thesis. These objectives are multifaceted, encompassing the understanding of the current planning paradigm's essence, identification of the factors that drive and hinder

paradigm shifts, and determination of the prevailing paradigm of truth within the discipline. To comprehend these objectives fully, it's crucial to navigate through the intricate landscape of planning theory and its relationship with the broader philosophies of truth and discourse.

First and foremost, gaining a comprehensive understanding of the current planning paradigm's essence is pivotal. Planning, as a discipline, has traversed a remarkable journey over time. Initially, it was regarded as an art closely intertwined with architectural design, with its primary focus on aesthetics and physical aspects. However, as societal complexities burgeoned and urban challenges evolved, planning had to adapt. It transitioned into a more systematic and scientific approach, epitomized by the Rational Planning Model (RPM). This shift marked a significant transformation in the planning paradigm. The RPM brought with it a structured framework, emphasizing problem-solving and rational decision-making. This paradigm shift, like many others, was a response to the challenges and shortcomings of its predecessor.

Paradigm shifts in planning are intrinsically tied to the intellectual environment and the prevailing views on truth and discourse. The traditional liberal paradigm, influenced by philosophers such as Descartes, Locke, and Mill, champions open discourse and intellectual criticism as cornerstones of progress. Within this paradigm, rigorous examination of existing norms and models is encouraged. It creates a fertile ground for potential paradigm shifts by fostering the questioning of established practices and assumptions. However, it's imperative to acknowledge that not all stakeholders within the planning profession readily embrace this open discourse. Some individuals and groups may resist such shifts, often due to vested interests or deeply ingrained practices, posing formidable barriers to intellectual evolution.

Conversely, the critical social theoretical paradigm, shaped by diverse intellectual movements including postmodernism, feminism, postcolonial theory, and critical race theory, challenges the liberal conception of a single, objective truth. This paradigm redefines our understanding of truth, highlighting its relativity and socially constructed nature. In doing so, it paves the way for more inclusive planning frameworks that prioritize social justice and amplify the voices of marginalized communities. This paradigm shift is catalyzed by the recognition that a singular, objective truth often reflects and perpetuates dominant power structures, excluding alternative perspectives and voices.

Yet, embracing the critical social theoretical paradigm isn't without its complexities and challenges. Overemphasizing this paradigm could inadvertently stifle discourse within the planning profession. Contentious issues surrounding free speech and differing views on the role of power dynamics in discourse come into play. An excessive focus on this paradigm could lead to potential pitfalls such as political instrumentalization, epistemic closure, and a lack of empirical grounding. These challenges underscore the importance of finding a delicate balance between recognizing the socially constructed nature of truth and maintaining a robust intellectual environment that encourages productive dialogue.

In essence, both the liberal and critical paradigms offer valuable insights into the complexities of paradigm shifts in the planning profession. They underscore the critical importance of maintaining a balanced intellectual environment that promotes open dialogue, encourages critical examination, and respects the cultural contexts within which planning decisions are made. Amidst the tensions between these paradigms, the primary focus should remain on

fostering the evolution of the planning profession to align with societal changes and promote equity and social progress.

An integral component of the research objectives involves determining the prevailing paradigm of truth within the academic discipline of urban planning considering this is where a lot of knowledge construction occurs. These ideological frames are not mere intellectual exercises; they fundamentally shape the assumptions, methodologies, and values that underpin the academic planning profession. They serve as frameworks through which scholars and researchers pursue truth and construct knowledge. Understanding these paradigms is instrumental in recognizing the factors that drive and hinder paradigm shifts in urban planning.

In summary, the discussion on planning paradigms and their intricate relationship with the prevailing views on truth and discourse not only offers valuable insights into the evolution of the planning field but also aligns seamlessly with the research objectives. It underscores the importance of navigating the multifaceted landscape of planning theory and philosophy to comprehend the current planning paradigm, identify the drivers and resistors of paradigm shifts, and determine the prevailing paradigm of truth in urban planning. In essence, it emphasizes the critical role of a balanced intellectual environment, open dialogue, and respect for cultural contexts in navigating paradigm shifts and fostering the growth of the planning profession in line with societal changes and equity goals.

This thesis will focus on the following questions that arise out of the literature;

- The current planning paradigm's essence: Whether we are operating within an unrecognized new planning paradigm, a continuation of previous paradigms, or a combination of both.

- Recognizing the factors that drive and hinder paradigm shifts is essential. These shifts, beneficial due to their corrective nature, prompt the question: what circumstances lead to a paradigm shift in the field of planning, and what factors resist such a potential shift? Paradigm shifts are often shaped by the intellectual environment and the prevailing views on truth and discourse. The traditional liberal paradigm, founded on the philosophies of Descartes, Locke, and Mill, promotes open discourse and intellectual criticism. In doing so, it invites rigorous interrogation of existing norms and models, fostering the possibility of paradigm shifts. However, those who oppose such open discourse pose potential barriers to these shifts.

  Conversely, the critical social theoretical paradigm, influenced by diverse perspectives like postmodernists, feminists, postcolonial theorists, and critical race theorists, disputes the liberal conception of a single, objective truth. Highlighting the relativity and socially constructed nature of truth, this paradigm paves the way for more inclusive frameworks that cater to social justice and amplify marginalized voices, thus catalyzing paradigm shifts.

  Yet, a shift towards the critical social theoretical paradigm comes with its own challenges, including the potential stifling of discourse due to differing views on free speech. Overemphasis on this paradigm, as section 2.3.3 notes, could lead to political

instrumentalization, epistemic closure, and a lack of empirical grounding, further

constraining discourse and productive conversation.

In essence, both the liberal and critical paradigms provide valuable insights into the

complexities of paradigm shifts in the planning profession. These insights illustrate that

a balanced intellectual environment—promoting open dialogue, critical examination,

and respect for cultural contexts—is crucial for these shifts. Amidst the tensions

between these paradigms, the focus should remain on fostering the evolution of the

profession to align with societal changes and promote equity and social progress.

- Determining the prevailing paradigm of truth: These paradigms embody the

  predominant assumptions, methodologies, and values within a specific discipline or field

  of study. They establish a framework that scholars and researchers employ in their

  pursuit of truth and knowledge construction.

The research questions detailed in section 1.2 form the foundational basis for this study.

Building upon these foundational questions, specific inquiries for the interviewees were

formulated, as detailed in the questionnaire in section 3.1.2.2. These inquiries align with and

expand upon the themes drawn from the literature as indicated above. The formulation and

development of these questions were influenced by both the initial research questions from

section 1.2 and a comprehensive review of the relevant literature.

3   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Creswell recommends a selection of research approaches based on three criteria which are the philosophical worldview, research design and research methods (Creswell, 2014):

3.1.1   Philosophical Worldview

The philosophical worldview used to shape the approach to research for this study is a Pragmatic one. The Pragmatic worldview allows researchers to emphasize the research problem and use all approaches to understand the problem (Creswell, 2014). Although pragmatism is the current dominant paradigm for mixed methods research, it can be used for social research in general, as Morgan points out "pragmatism can serve as a philosophical program for social research, regardless of whether that research uses qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods" (Morgan, 2014).

According to Peirce in his pragmatic maxim: "Consider the practical effects of the objects of your conception. Then, your conception of those effects is the whole of your conception of the object" (Peirce, 1878). This maxim makes it possible to clarify the meaning of concepts and the hypotheses they contain through viewing knowledge, language, concepts, meaning, belief, and science in terms of their practical uses and successes (Legg & Hookway, 2021).

Pragmatist inquiry is seen "as a natural part of life aimed at improving our condition by adaptation accommodations in the world" (Cronen, 2001). This means a proper inquiry is an examination of some aspect of reality with a view to creating knowledge for altering this aspect of reality (Goldkuhl, 2012). Methodological pragmatism in particular is concerned with how knowledge is created (Goldkuhl, 2012), which is the focus of this thesis in regard to paradigms

and knowledge problems within the field of planning.

3.1.2   Research Design and Methods

Since this research is exploratory in nature, a qualitative research approach that utilizes key

informant interviews and a general inductive approach for analysis was selected for this study.

This thesis bases its theory creation from a review of the existing literature to "identify certain

issues in a field" (Creswell, 2014). The literature review creates a narrative based on qualitative

secondary research data which also acts as an anchor for interpretation of the primary data

collected. This step is important to contrast primary and secondary data, and to identify any

additional themes that may arise. As Creswell puts it "the researcher may incorporate the

related literature in the final section, where it is used to compare and contrast with the results

(or themes or categories) to emerge from the study", which is appropriate for a "theory

oriented qualitative study", that uses the literature inductively, as the primary data is to be

collected through qualitative methods i.e. interviews, using a "general inductive approach for

analysis of qualitative evaluation data" (Creswell, 2014; Thomas, 2006).

The interviews are with professors within planning departments in universities. They are at a

vantage point to give unique insight into ideological trends within planning departments, and

they also would be able to comment on how ideological trends within planning departments

affect planning outcomes and the socio-political fabric of the communities we plan.

The data collected from these interviews is interpreted using a general inductive approach put

forward by David R. Thomas (Thomas, 2006). He created this approach to:

1. "Condense extensive and varied raw text data into a brief, summary format.

2. To establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data and to ensure that these links are both transparent (able to be demonstrated to others) and defensible (justifiable given the objectives of the research); and

3. To develop a model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes that are evident in text data" (Thomas, 2006)

The primary purpose of this inductive approach is to allow research findings to emerge from the significant themes within the raw data (data collected through open ended questions during interviews), absent the restraints imposed by structured methodologies, as opposed to a deductive approach where key themes may lay obscured or hidden (Thomas, 2006).

AI models, specifically CHAT GPT-3.5 & 4, were employed to assist in editing and in identifying additional trends within the interviewee data that might have been overlooked in my initial analysis. Leveraging these AI tools helped mitigate my personal biases, as they introduced an added layer of interpretation. Subsequently, I closely reviewed the AI's insights to ensure the validity of the connections being drawn.

I was able to interview at least one planning academic from each of the institutions I was targeting, totaling at 12 interviews conducted between the period of August to October 2020, 12 meeting the target sample size of 12-15 interviews. Regrettably, one participant withdrew from participation, resulting in 11 remaining interviews, which is a limitation of the study.

It was challenging to set up interviews due to increased challenges the professors faced due to the Covid-19 pandemic and all the changes this would entail, from creating online content as courses went online at the beginning of the term, to an increase in childcare challenges as daycares would not accept children without Covid-19 testing if the child showed any possible symptoms, a significant challenge during flu season which disproportionately affected professors who were women. Remarkably, a large portion of the professors I contacted responded to my request for an interview and they were willing to fit the interview into their exceedingly busy schedules. Several times interviews had to be rescheduled but these were just postponed by a week or two. Some professors who were contacted did not respond and others fully turned down the request for an interview due to having incredibly busy schedules.

On average the interviews were an hour in length, and an attempt was made to get as diverse a set of planner perspectives as possible, this included approaching planning academics for interviews, whose specialties were planning theory, urban design, rural development, geography, and environmental studies and design. Most interviews were conducted over video conferencing software (Zoom, Skype, and Microsoft Teams), while two were over the phone.

3.1.2.1   Procedures for the one-on-one interviews

Planning academics were recruited online through university directories accessible through the institution's own website (using publicly available information). They were contacted individually and directly, as such no mass emails were sent out for recruitment.

The institutions chosen are institutions within Ontario that offer accredited planning programs. A list of the institutions chosen are outlined in section 1.4. For the number of interviews

required, Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (Guest et al., 2006) propose that saturation often occurs around 12-15 participants in homogeneous groups. Saturation here means the point at which very little is learnt though subsequent interviews. To add to this rationale, Crouch & McKenzie (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006) propose that less than 20 participants in a qualitative study helps a researcher build and maintain a close relationship and hence improve the open and frank exchange of information. For these reasons, the sample size of 12-15 has been chosen. Planning academics were interviewed with a set of prepared questions, and the duration of the interview was expected to take no longer than an hour.

These questions form the first-hand qualitative data collection aspect of the thesis. The questions are designed to collect data on Planner perspectives regarding our current paradigm, truth-making in the field, and what they think possible solutions to any issues identified may be. These planner perspectives are interpreted using Thomas's general inductive approach to qualitative data. Significant themes arising from the qualitative data collected from interviews is contrasted with data collected within the literature review.

Secondary use of information for research purposes: Qualitative secondary data collected within an extensive literature review is used for narrative/theory construction and informs the research questions. Significant themes arising from the qualitative data collected from interviews is contrasted with data collected within the literature review.

3.1.2.2   Questionnaire

The questionnaire which was used to interview planning academics in one-on-one interviews contained the following questions:

1. Considering the field of planning has been through paradigm shifts in the past, how would you describe our present paradigm? What according to you are the identifiers or characteristics of our present paradigm?

2. Since paradigm shifts are in part significant ideological shifts, do you think ideological bias and conformity may play a role in extending a current paradigm, thus resisting a paradigm shift?

3. What according to you are some drivers and resisters of paradigm shifts? What do you think are the required conditions for a paradigm shift to occur or what are some conditions that may increase the chance of a paradigm shift happening?

4. In my research I identify liberal science as the best system to attain truth, it is a system that recognises that your own bias might be wrong and submitting it to public criticism from people who believe that confronting different views is the best way to test ideas. In this perspective truth emerges from ideological conflict as opposed to conformity. We attempt to do this by using tools like peer review, but when fields become ideologically homogeneous "liberal science' breaks down as the person who does the study and those who peer review may share the same ideological bias leading to a weakened ability in the field to tell truth from falsehood, hence I make the case for viewpoint diversity to address this issue. What are your thoughts on this, how would you define truth and what does viewpoint diversity mean to you?

3.1.2.3   Risks and Safeguards

Due to the nature of the research, there are social risks or harms present for the interviewees (e.g., loss of status, loss of privacy, loss of reputation, loss of control of information about self).

The views held by interviewees may be unpopular, and as a result they may be stigmatized by their colleagues if the content of their views become public.

The safeguards taken to protect the identity of the interviewees from social harm are to de-identify the data collected to protect the confidentiality of the interviewees, to use safe data storage practices and to use a data management plan. The data collected from the interviews are stored on my personal portable hard drive, and the folder within which the data is contained is encrypted to protect privacy and confidentiality. The data is backed up on my computer in the case of data loss from the aforementioned source. This folder is encrypted as well. The data has been de-identified and the data will be retained for 1 year after last use at a minimum to retain data as long as necessary before and after publication of research results.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 INTERVIEW FINDINGS

In this section, we will delve into the interview findings, which have been organized according to the specific questions posed during the interview process. These questions were carefully formulated based on the key themes and insights derived from the comprehensive literature review conducted prior to the interviews. By structuring the presentation of findings chronologically, we aim to provide a clear and logical flow to the analysis of the interview data.

However, it is important to note that the number of questions asked during the interviews was reduced in this section. This decision was made due to the controversial nature of some of the topics discussed and for the sake of brevity. By focusing on the most relevant and impactful questions, we can ensure a focused and meaningful analysis of the interviewees' perspectives.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that to preserve the confidentiality and anonymity of the individuals involved, excerpts from the interviews have been rephrased or simulated using AI (ChatGPT) technology. This approach ensures that the identities of the interviewees are safeguarded while still allowing for the inclusion of valuable insights and perspectives from the discussions. The use of AI-generated responses enables us to present a representative summary of the interviewees' views without compromising their privacy. Ai was further used to ascertain converging themes and the number of responses supporting each convergence identified. This was done to reduce the influence of researcher bias in this step of the process.

Additionally, it is important to highlight that due to space constraints and the need for conciseness, only responses directly addressing the posed questions will be included in the presentation of findings. These selected excerpts will focus on capturing the core essence of the interviewees' perspectives and will be carefully chosen to provide a well-rounded and comprehensive understanding of the research subject.

By adopting this structured approach, we aim to present the interview findings in a manner that ensures coherence and clarity. This allows readers to follow the progression of the research and gain valuable insights from the diverse perspectives shared by the interviewees. The inclusion of direct responses to the questions offers a more nuanced understanding of the topic, illuminating the interviewees' thoughts and experiences within the context of the study.

Overall, the combination of carefully formulated interview questions, AI-generated rephrasing, and the selection of relevant excerpts will contribute to a robust and comprehensive analysis of the interview findings. It will provide valuable insights that align with the research objectives and shed light on the nuances and complexities of the current paradigm in academic planning.

4.1.1 Question 1.) The Current Paradigm

Considering the field of planning has been through paradigm shifts in the past, how would you describe our present paradigm? What according to you are the identifiers or characteristics of our present paradigm?

Table 4-1 Planner Academics' responses on the nature of the present paradigm

Possible Paradigm	Social Justice	Participatory Planning	State Intervention/Anti-capitalism/regulation	Concern with Climate and Environment
Number of Respondents	8(73%)	4(36%)	4(36%)	2(18%)

Dominant theme: **<u>Social Justice</u>** is likely to be a dominant theme in the current paradigm.

Simulated excerpts from Interviews – These are <u>Not</u> Quotations

Person 1: *We are still utilizing a participatory planning paradigm that dates back to the 1960s and 1970s. However, the current dominant field in planning theory is communicative planning, which is rooted in that paradigm shift. While planners should be able to facilitate public participation and incorporate the resulting insights into their practices, we may be approaching the breaking point of this approach. Instead, planning should be viewed in the context of larger societal institutions, such as political economy and identity politics. The latter is currently playing a significant role in planning, and it is unclear how it will be integrated - whether through participatory, political, or economic channels. It is certain, though, that identity politics will have a significant impact on planning. For example, planning tends to favor certain groups, including minorities, at the expense of others. Planning also tries to be neutral in terms of race and ethnicity, but this approach ignores the disparate effects that planning has on different groups, particularly in light of recent social movements such as Black Lives Matter.*

Person 2: *Mixed-use, mixed-income, greenfield suburban development, and intensification being good are current orthodoxies. Modernist to postmodern planning principles was the last big convulsive shift.*

Person 3: *People, mostly in academia, say the dominant planning paradigm is centred on a critique of capitalism, capital accumulation, and trade. In my faculty, planning is framed in terms of justice.*

Person 4: *Planning used to have a strong paradigm of state intervention to do what the market cannot, or to solve problems the market isn't excellent at. I think that's still true in some parts, but it's highly fragmented and there's no single paradigm. I think dominating voices vary. I think one big debate or division is what the role of planners should be, like should they be facilitators on the ground putting their ear to the rail and just making decisions based on that or should there be a kind of role for expertise and not in the Robert Moses sense necessarily, but that of an activist role. Susan Feinstein wrestles with this from a*

progressive angle in her book Just City; quite a few planners feel that your ideas should be fully organic based on what the community wants, she tended, and I tend to agree with this perspective. I think transportation planning is the best-funded and most scientific field, community development is highly organic, and housing sometimes depends on the issue that it is assisting. So, I'd describe Planning to be lacking a single dominant paradigm, but instead the paradigm is fragmented.

Person 5: *I think our current planning paradigm isn't much different from previous ones, and that's reflective of the population. Jane Jacobs was reflective of the population's interests and beliefs at the time, and I think what we're going through now is the same. For example, if you think of bike lanes, while not a planning paradigm, it reflects the population's desires. So, I'm going to say, for me, the key characteristics of any paradigm is reflective of the interests and the desires of the population at any given moment of time.*

Person 6: *We've left the 1960s, in which planners were the ones that knew everything. Planners are now considered a Pathfinder and a Facilitator, how to ensure different voices are captured and how to mesh those voices together in the realities that exist for that particular field. Land use planning dominates planning, especially in Ontario. But I think planning has evolved since the 1980s' cultural turn. Today we're hearing more and more increasingly around social issues regarding equity, diversity inclusion, which weren't on the agenda a few months ago, let alone a few years ago. The Current paradigm is still largely grounded in land use environmental; I think we're also in a regulation-based period. We're beholden to policies we must follow, even if the policy doesn't work for the place we are planning. We have provincial or national strategies and policies, and we're tasked to figure out how to implement them locally.*

Person 7: *The more things change the more they stay the same. Elements of planning that have existed back to the time of Thomas Adams are still relevant in practice today. Regarding the current paradigm, we speak of public engagement, climate change from an environment perspective, and increasingly we're aware of unconscious bias and being socially aware around issues like Black Lives Matters and in the Canadian context particular issues surrounding indigenous communities. We have failed as a country regarding indigenous communities and their needs and interests are important and prevalent issues for us to tackle.*

Person 8: *The paradigm in urban planning is shifting from focusing on growth at any cost to creating resilient communities by mitigating negative impacts caused by climate change and adapting to the changing reality. There is still a reliance on the paradigm of rational planning, but it will be complemented by other factors. As we experience climate crises, pandemics, economic restructuring, and demographic changes, some communities will thrive while others decline, leading to a shift from growth management to planning for decline or no growth. Equity is also becoming a greater concern as differential impacts of*

these trends are observed in society. The vulnerability of society to these large-scale trends is being realized.

Person 9: *We are facing multiple crises with varying timescales, including COVID, political change, inequality, and sustainability. This summer, inequality around racism in particular, has also come to the fore. Whether these challenges are seeping into a potential paradigm shift in planning remains unclear. While there have been shifts in planning theory, public participation, and sustainability goals, the impact on development has been limited in comparison to stronger political and economic forces, such as neoliberalism. Despite the push by planners in academia for more inclusive and equitable planning, society's direction has not reflected these values. Therefore, while there have been changes in planning thinking and practices, the outcomes may still be superficial.*

Person 10: *Different paradigms exist within the planning profession and academia, with individuals from diverse backgrounds bringing their own perspectives. While there may not be an overarching paradigm that applies to the entire discipline, individuals may have their own smaller guiding principles. It can be challenging to label every colleague's work in terms of what guides them.*

Person 11: *The current paradigm is one that focuses on thinking in systems with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion.*

The perspectives provided by the different individuals offer insights into various categories that are prominent in the current planning paradigm:

Social Justice

Most of the respondents, namely Persons 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 11, underline the pivotal role of social justice in contemporary planning. The concern for social justice primarily revolves around equity, diversity, and inclusion. Persons 1, 4, 6, 7, and 11 are particularly vocal about the influence of recent social movements, like Black Lives Matter, and the urgency of incorporating diverse voices, including those of indigenous communities, into the planning process. Person 4 additionally emphasizes the necessity of the planner's role in achieving justice. Yet, Persons 1

and 9 express reservations about the potential discriminatory outcomes of planning and signal the complex task of successfully integrating issues of social justice, especially in relation to identity politics.

Participatory Planning

Many respondents, specifically Persons 1, 4, 5, and 6, highlight the transformation of the planner's role from a dominant figure to a facilitator or pathfinder. This shift is firmly grounded in the participatory paradigm that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, which Person 5 suggests is reflective of the changing desires of the population. However, while public participation is valued, Person 1 airs concerns about reaching the limits of this approach. Conversely, Person 4, in agreement with Susan Fainstein's approach, advocates for planners to play a more proactive role, one that doesn't merely facilitate but also initiates change.

Concern with Climate and Environment

Persons 6, 7, 8, and 9 share concerns about the impact of climate and environmental issues on planning. Person 6 emphasizes the environmental focus in contemporary land-use planning, while Persons 7 and 8 highlight the need for planning to adapt to climate change. Person 9 underscores the significant challenges posed by climate crises and the need for planning to shift from growth management to planning for decline or no growth.

State Intervention/Anti-capitalism/Regulation

The perspectives on state intervention and regulation are diverse among respondents. Person 4 notes that while planning formerly held a strong paradigm of state intervention to counteract

market failures, this paradigm is now fragmented with no single dominant paradigm. Person 3

points out the prevalent critique of capitalism in academic planning, and Persons 6 and 9

highlight the challenge of adhering to regulatory policies that might not always be efficient.

Further, Person 9 critiques the superficial impact of changes in planning theory and practice in

the face of stronger political and economic forces, such as neoliberalism.

Conclusion

Upon analyzing the responses, a compelling consensus emerges around the pre-eminence of

social justice in contemporary academic planning theory. While there are subtle variations in its

operationalization, the essence of social justice as a guiding principle stands prominently

recognized by all individuals. The degree of agreement underscores its role as the most

dominant paradigm, illustrating a considerable shift towards an inclusive and equitable

approach in planning practices.

As for participatory planning, although valued for its role in ensuring inclusivity, there is an

interesting array of opinions concerning its practical application, reflecting the evolving nature

of engagement in planning practice.

On the other hand, perspectives regarding environmental considerations and state intervention

present a wide range of views, reflecting the multifaceted and complex nature of these aspects

within planning. Environmental responsibility and the degree of state intervention required in

managing these concerns vary significantly among individuals, highlighting the diverse

challenges that planners must navigate.

In sum, the academic discipline of planning, in its quest to balance the myriad demands of society, exhibits a unified front in its commitment to social justice. However, the approaches to participatory planning, environmental stewardship, and regulatory intervention still offer room for a diversity of strategies and perspectives.

4.1.2 Question 2.) Ideological Bias

Since paradigm shifts are in-part significant ideological shifts, do you think ideological bias and conformity may play a role in extending a current paradigm, thus resisting a paradigm shift?

Table 4-2 Planner Academics' responses on whether ideological bias plays a role in extending the current paradigm

Does Ideological bias play a role in extending paradigms?	Yes	Uncertain	No
Number of Respondents	5(46%)	4(36%)	1(9%)

Dominant theme: **Ideological bias** may play a role in extending a paradigm.

Simulated excerpts from Interviews – These are <u>Not</u> Quotations
Person 1: *Yes, big time. The academic system reinforces groupthink because of the political correctness that is inherent in universities. There are things that can be said and things that cannot be said in a university, and there are areas that are difficult to discuss. Planners generally deny that corruption exists in their discipline. The existence of epistemic communities, which are groups of people that pursue a similar research endeavor, is another factor that reinforces groupthink. It is very important to be able to function within an epistemic community because people within the community are the ones who referee each other's writings and accept papers. The academic system is inherently path dependent or conservative because one always has to operate on the basis of what existed before. There should be a journal for each discipline that is essentially devoted to new ideas, but it does not exist.*

Person 2: *Ideological bias and conformity do not play a major role in extending the current paradigm.*

Person 3: *I am not certain about conformity in planning, as there are many factors at play. One key factor is reflecting on past urban renewal moments and atrocities, as well as interpreting and reinterpreting them. Additionally, the power dynamic has shifted, and there are fewer all-powerful bureaucrats like Robert Moses today. Most planners now work in public service, and there is less opportunity for any one individual or group to have too much influence. When it comes to sub-disciplinary mores, there may be some conformity within each subfield, but it is not necessarily a single force that planners conform to. For example, social planners tend to be less connotative and more community-oriented, while transportation planners approach things differently. However, the field of planning is still relatively young, and there is a growing fragmentation and specialization that may lead to different perspectives and emphases. Overall, I think there are multiple sources of conformity in planning, but it is a complex issue that requires further consideration.*

Person 4: *I believe that paradigms in planning do not simply end and start anew, but rather there is a period of overlap or "bleeding" between them. Additionally, each subsequent paradigm is heavily influenced by the ideologies and thoughts that came before it. Therefore, I view planning as an evolving, transformative process that reflects the perpetual changes and dynamism of society. Taking a transformative perspective allows for a more nuanced understanding of planning as an ever evolving and complex field.*

Person 5: *Yeah, absolutely. I believe that in order for a paradigm to be sustained, there needs to be a group of people advocating for it. However, it is important to question whose voices are being included and excluded in that group. When we examine past planning paradigms, it is clear that certain voices have been missing, such as those of indigenous peoples or marginalized groups. Biases can be present in both the creation and maintenance of paradigms, even if they are unintentional. For example, when looking at the professional bodies advocating for a certain paradigm, it is likely that they are not gender, age, geographically, or ethnically balanced. This is not to say that these biases are ill-willed, but rather a reality of decision-making processes. In my experience, it is easier to relate to people with similar cultural backgrounds, which can result in a lack of diversity in professional groups or academic settings. However, it is important to recognize the potential biases that can arise from these similarities. 25 years ago, the number of diverse voices in professional or governmental decision-making roles was likely even lower. Overall, biases are inherent in decision-making processes and it is important to actively seek out diverse voices to ensure a more balanced representation of perspectives.*

Person 6: *That's an interesting question. It seems that we devote a lot of attention in this country to what happens in the US, and the ideological perspectives that prevail there.*

This can also have global implications, as we see movements shifting to the right in certain countries, perhaps even moving to the right of center. Nevertheless, there is a pushback against this trend, such as with the Black Lives Matter movement and our concern for indigenous communities, and it is creating momentum to address issues like climate change. However, there are also those who deny these truths and hinder our ability to take action. It reminds me of the anecdote about the frog in boiling water, where if you put a frog in boiling water it will try to jump out, but if you put a frog in water and gradually turn up the heat, it will not notice the change and eventually boil. I worry that as a species, we may be falling into that same trap of not noticing the changing times.

Person 7: *Of course, it does. One's personal biases and training shape how they view and analyze the world, which can influence their ideology. Therefore, ideology can have a significant impact. For instance, if someone challenges the IPCC data on climate change, it poses a problem since it's based on thousands of peer-reviewed studies and rigorous quality controls.*

Person 8: *I believe that my answers may not be entirely clear because I am struggling to define what characteristics make up a paradigm in planning. However, certain sub-areas in planning have experienced paradigm shifts, such as the shift from mid-century modernist ideas to post-modernist ideas, with Jane Jacobs as an inflection point. In urban design, there is a strong consensus on what constitutes good urban form, including medium densities, mixed land use, and street orientation. These normative ideas have shifted over time, but they will probably persist. The idea of equity and social justice has also been a dominant ideology in planning since the 1960s, but there has been limited progress in achieving social equality in society.*
Academics often approach these issues through a lens of critical theory or post-modernism, which informs how they see these issues. However, there is a shift in demand for a more critical theorist and cognitive approach, and there are strong critiques of planning as an activity in the academy. There is a tension between planning as an activity involved in development processes and city government and the limits that those governments face, especially in a neoliberal political culture.
There is also a divide within the planning community, with some viewing planning as a tool for reform that can help address social inequalities, while others view planning as an activity that merely perpetuates capitalist systems. This divide is present in my department, which includes planners, geographers, and critical theorists.

Person 9: *To some extent yes. Often, we unconsciously invest in the current paradigm to keep up with contemporary ways of thinking about societal problems and our role in addressing them. This investment becomes the norm, and we adopt particular approaches such as public engagement and participation, technocratic approaches, or socio-political structures centered planning. These approaches are built into research grants, and we invest in them to stay relevant. Therefore, my answer to the question is yes.*

Person 10: *Okay, so in the previous paradigm of physical planning, some people were resistant to change and believed that it was the right way to go. Even if someone proposed a different idea, they would resist it, claiming that they had been doing it for a long time and it was the correct approach. However, there have been many influential planners and scholars advocating for a shift towards people-centered planning that respects diversity. Despite this, we still see exclusion, racism, and a focus on a centralized planning paradigm that persists. This could be due to ideology, biased datasets, and systemic barriers. These barriers exist in education, profession, hiring practices, and societal biases towards race and differences. Even though we have been pushing for concepts such as multiculturalism, diversity, and universal basic income (UBI), the problem still remains. It's not just about theory, but about practice, which starts from early education. For instance, indigenous planning is critical, but we still have a long way to go in understanding the history, worldview, and knowledge of indigenous people. Moreover, there are only 16 indigenous architects in Canada, and our planning education and training programs do not always represent the diversity of demographics. Therefore, the issue is not only about ideological bias, but also systemic barriers.*

The overarching findings from the ten perspectives suggest that a majority of respondents concur that ideological bias and conformity have a potential role in extending the current paradigm, thus resisting a paradigm shift. These perspectives range from emphasis on the structural factors in academic systems (Person 1), to the importance of diverse representation (Person 5), and the influence of societal ideologies (Person 6).

The general consensus aligns with Person 1's assertion that the academic system inherently fosters groupthink due to political correctness, and such a system can prevent the introduction of new ideas. This idea is echoed by Person 5, who mentions the need to question the diversity of voices being represented in current paradigms. Person 5 further explains how decision-making processes can be biased, and how biases can unintentionally seep into the creation and sustenance of paradigms.

Person 6, extending the discussion to a more societal level, suggests that global ideological trends, often influenced by happenings in the US, have the potential to impact how paradigms shift or sustain. Person 7 concurs that personal biases can significantly influence one's ideology and worldview, impacting their interpretation and acceptance of certain paradigmatic perspectives. Person 9, in a similar vein, posits that unconscious investment in current paradigms can lead to conformity and resistance to paradigm shifts.

However, there are divergences in perspectives on the extent and nature of this ideological bias and conformity, with Person 2 stating that they do not play a major role in paradigm extension. This perspective is partially mirrored by Person 3, who suggests that the dynamics of conformity in planning are complex and multifaceted, resulting from a myriad of sources and not necessarily a single conforming force.

Person 4 brings a more transformative perspective, suggesting that paradigm shifts in planning do not happen abruptly but overlap, indicating a more nuanced understanding of planning as an evolving field. This idea is further explored by Person 8, who, while acknowledging the existence of paradigm shifts in specific sub-areas of planning, struggles with a clear definition of a paradigm.

Finally, Person 10 introduces the concept of systemic barriers as a potential factor contributing to the maintenance of a paradigm. This individual recognizes that while ideological biases do play a role, systemic barriers such as exclusion, racism, and centralized planning paradigms are also critical.

In summary, while there is a general agreement that ideological bias and conformity play a role in extending a current paradigm, the respondents also draw attention to the structural factors, systemic barriers, and the complexity of paradigmatic shifts. They collectively call for a more nuanced, diverse, and transformative approach towards understanding and addressing these issues.

4.1.3   Question 3.) Drivers and Resisters of Paradigm Shifts

What according to you are some drivers and resisters of paradigm shifts? What do you think are the required conditions for a paradigm shift to occur or what are some conditions that may increase the chance of a paradigm shift happening?

Table 4-3 Planner Academics' responses on drivers of paradigm shifts

Drivers of paradigm shifts	Number of Respondents
Crisis/Catastrophic events	6(55%)
Institutional path dependencies and policies	5(45%)
Societal attitude shifts and changes	4(36%)
Socio-economic factors	4(36%)

Table 4-4 Planner Academics' responses on resisters of paradigm shifts

Resisters of paradigm shifts	Number of Respondents
Institutional path dependencies and policies	5(45%)
Socio-economic factors	4(36%)

Dominant theme: **Crisis/Catastrophic events** and **Institutional path dependencies and policies** are dominant themes regarding drivers and resisters of paradigm shifts.

Simulated excerpts from Interviews – These are <u>Not</u> Quotations

Person 1: *In natural science, paradigms can become ineffective at explaining new information and must be replaced with a more effective paradigm, as Thomas Kuhn wrote about. For example, the belief that the Earth was the center of the universe was replaced by the understanding that the Earth orbits the sun. In contrast, social science paradigms can become exhausted and replaced by more novel and interesting ideas, rather than being rejected for clear-cut reasons. This results in a succession of fashions rather than a succession of paradigm capacities. While this process can result in valuable ideas being left behind, it is a characteristic of the social science "fashion show." Unlike in natural science, old paradigms in social science can simply be bypassed by new ones, without clear-cut reasons for rejection.*

Person 2: *Historical institutionalism created path dependency, which is evident in the development of suburbs. In 1944, the Government of Canada made a policy choice to increase suburban development in planned communities, with a focus on community planning. This led to a range of tools and public subsidies that favored single-family dwellings and suburban development, including money for highway development, sewage treatment plants, and wide roads. Financial systems also provided huge amounts of cash for people who wished to buy single-detached homes. This resulted in a remarkable period in Canadian history, where working-class people could own homes, have cars, and send their children to college. However, this post-war idea of the nuclear family has since shifted, and building suburbs as if it's the 1950s is no longer relevant. Families today have different structures and are unable to afford the expensive homes that are built in suburbs. Despite this, suburbs are still being built as if it's the 1950s, and the proportion of families that are able to live in such homes is small.*

Person 3: *Well, it seems that paradigm shifts occur relatively quickly, often resulting from major catastrophic events and discontinuity. For example, environmental disasters such as the Bumblebee case in the US, the Deepwater Horizon BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the Bhopal chemical disaster, the Chernobyl and Fukushima nuclear disasters, Hurricane Katrina, and Superstorm Sandy have had varying impacts in changing paradigms. Some of these events have led to a paradigm shift in disaster management from a purely engineering paradigm to a post-normal paradigm. This paradigm shift has been influenced by the concept of Black Swan, which has had considerable influence and is increasingly being used in the language.*

Paradigm shifts don't happen overnight, but rather evolve slowly until the paradigm collapses under its logical foundation and assumptions that were never solid in the first place. The triggering factor or event that causes a paradigm shift is unpredictable, and many challenges to existing paradigms don't end up changing anything. However, politicians can play a role in shifting paradigms by using terms and concepts that resonate with the public and creating a policy window for change.

When it comes to planning, the scenario planning that the speaker is interested in is long-term and takes into account complexity and uncertainty to construct plausible futures over a 50- to 40-year timeframe. This type of planning is at odds with the dominant planning practice, which is short-term and predictive. However, the argument is that major shifts

towards sustainability and addressing ecological climate change can only happen over a longer timeframe. The global scenarios group uses explorative scenario development to reflect on current policies and identify necessary changes for the future.

Overall, paradigm shifts are unpredictable and often occur as a result of major catastrophic events and discontinuity. Long-term scenario planning that takes into account complexity and uncertainty can help identify necessary policy changes for sustainability and addressing ecological climate change.

Person 4: *I frequently think about this, and it is a big theme in my book, which is also something that political theorists I follow consider a lot. The question is, what makes an idea gain traction and move forward? Neoliberalism is not very popular, so why is it so dominant? The necessary condition seems to be some form of crisis, usually an economic one, but other types of crises like wars or major depressions can also pave the way for change. However, in my latest book, I discuss other kinds of crises that have led to shifts in perception, like the dissolution of white supremacy in the US during the 1950s and 1960s. These changes were not only due to economic factors, but also to high-profile court cases and civil rights movements.*

Within planning, the period following World War II was a renewal period that changed what urban planning is as a field. However, this renewal period also led to backlash and the destruction of neighborhoods, which fundamentally changed urban planning. I believe that the necessary condition for a new paradigm to emerge is a crisis, but the sufficient condition is a sufficiently organized alternative. Currently, neoliberalism has failed and the economic conditions that support it have also failed. However, there is no sufficiently organized alternative or one in which large enough groups of people and interests are aligned with to replace it with something coherent. This is why I feel like it continues to exist. Planning as an academic and applied field is fragmented ideologically and topically. People are usually limited to strict predefined limits that echo the past.

Person 5: *Perhaps there are a few common responses to that question, one being a significant event that could potentially be disastrous, such as an explosion that necessitates mandatory safety measures. However, more often than not, the catalyst for change is a shift in the population, particularly the younger generation. This can be seen in movements like Black Lives Matter and the push for equitable practices, which are now widely accepted as the norm. Although there may be resistance from those who don't comprehend or support these changes, once a critical threshold is reached, it becomes standard practice.*

Person 6: *Basically, there are several factors that are driving changes in planning paradigms. The environment and concerns for it have shifted how we account for it, integrate it, and change planning processes. This change has been brought about by environmental organizations, legal requirements, and global commitments. Secondly, globalization has influenced planning by prioritizing infrastructure that allows for international connectivity, and it has changed how we plan for things and prioritize different opinions within*

communities. Thirdly, power symmetry is changing the planning paradigm by empowering groups that were previously excluded, such as environmental and farm advocacy groups or newcomer associations. Political will is also a significant factor in facilitating paradigm shifts, as rigid bureaucratic systems and a culture of risk aversion can prevent new paradigms from emerging.

Person 7: *The question of what drives societal change and why different societies value certain things differently is complex. For instance, healthcare became a public good and highly valued commodity in some countries, like the US in the 1960s, whereas in other countries, it remains an impediment. Similarly, attitudes towards issues like gun control and capital punishment vary across societies. Education plays an important role in shaping these attitudes, by providing quality information and promoting critical thinking. However, the concept of truth is subjective and can vary based on people's situations. Nonetheless, there are certain facts that we can rely on. Societal change is a function of ongoing social processes and the educational system, as well as cultural elements, history, points in time, and leadership. Different cultures may value the public interest or libertarianism for various reasons, including cultural norms and values.*

Person 8: *The drivers are factors that enable communities, civilizations, and societies to respond to emerging issues and opportunities. These drivers include technology, resources, social and financial capital, and government policies and programs. Market demand is also a significant driver, but it is important to recognize that there is no such thing as a truly free market, as it is always influenced by government intervention. Resistance to change can come from a small portion of the population who are contrarians and do not want to be told what to do with their lives. Other obstacles to change include resource constraints, unresponsive policies, failed states, political ideologies, religious beliefs, and cultural traditions that may have no basis in fact or rationality. All of these factors can hinder progress and make it difficult to enact meaningful change.*

Person 9: *If there isn't a clear pattern, paradigm shifts can still occur through critical junctures, which may arise from institutional failures, crises, or gradual changes over time. Neoliberalism is an example of a paradigm shift that occurred over 50 years as governments shifted towards market solutions. However, the occurrence of paradigm shifts depends on the larger political and economic shifts within society and can also arise from crises such as police brutality or the pandemic. While social movements and governance play a role in these shifts, it is a complex issue. Currently, there are numerous crises occurring worldwide, including police brutality, COVID, and climate change, and there is potential for paradigm shifts to occur. Canada may also face similar crises, but hopefully, they will not escalate into extreme political crises like those of the United States.*

Person 10: *The drivers of a paradigm shift in planning, as well as in other academic disciplines, often originate from external factors. These factors may come from sustainable*

development goals established by the UN, imperatives like climate change, or the need for more diverse and just communities. Real-world problems and land development also play a significant role in shaping planning paradigms. Although resistors to change are common, it is possible for multiple paradigms to coexist simultaneously, with individuals adopting different perspectives at different stages of their career or as they deal with various issues. The current COVID pandemic has sparked a reconsideration of our current approaches and paradigms in planning, as people question the need for concentrated living and explore different ways of using space. While it may be too early to tell, this could lead to a shift in the way we approach planning in the future.

Person 11: *I believe that systemic obstacles such as racism, discrimination, false beliefs, ideologies, and practices are the root causes of many issues across the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on these issues, including not only health crises but also the virus of racism. Therefore, the current driver is equity issues, which have taken center stage, including health, housing, and indigenous rights. It is crucial to identify whose voices are being silenced or hurt, particularly during the pandemic, where racialized and underserved communities suffer the most. These communities face various challenges related to housing, transportation, and access to quality public spaces, such as Toronto's ravine system. The COVID-19 pandemic has opened up discussions about these issues worldwide, calling for an equity lens to address them. To reduce the impact on marginalized communities, we should invest in their development and mobilize community members to improve their physical, social, and economic opportunities. By focusing on the well-being of these communities, we can make a significant difference.*

The varied perspectives presented to identify drivers, resisters, and necessary conditions for paradigm shifts collectively point towards a convergence on the significance of crises, social and technological change, and shifts in societal norms as key catalysts for such shifts.

Crises

Persons 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, and 11 underscore the major role of crises in instigating paradigm shifts. They assert that these shifts are often precipitated by catastrophic events, economic downturns, or societal shifts such as changes in social movements and prevailing attitudes. Person 1 posits that in natural sciences, paradigms may change when they become ineffective at explaining new information, similar to a kind of crisis. Person 3 explicitly mentions

environmental disasters as change instigators, while Person 4 suggests that economic crises and significant depressions can create conducive conditions for change. Person 5 concurs, proposing that significant, potentially disastrous events, can be a catalyst for change. Person 9 broadens this concept by introducing the idea of 'critical junctures' arising from crises, encompassing societal concerns like police brutality and widespread phenomena like a global pandemic. Person 11 adds to this view by indicating that systemic obstacles like racism and discrimination can create crises that necessitate change.

Societal attitude shifts and changes

Persons 5, 6, 7, and 10 highlight that societal attitude shifts and changes in population dynamics, especially among the younger generation, are potent drivers of paradigm shifts. They emphasize the role of social movements, such as Black Lives Matter, and the acceptance of more equitable practices as prominent catalysts for change.

The impact of technological changes as drivers for paradigm shifts is inferred by Person 8, who lists technology as one of the significant drivers enabling societies to respond to emerging issues and opportunities. They argue that technological advancements can create a new paradigm by introducing novel ways of addressing societal challenges or creating opportunities.

Institutional path dependencies and policies

Persons 2, 4, 6, 9, and 10 discuss the role of institutional path dependencies and policies both in driving and resisting paradigm shifts. They argue that existing systems and structures can either facilitate or hinder change, depending on their compatibility with new paradigms.

Socio-economic factors

Persons 6, 7, 8, and 10 elaborate on the influence of various socio-economic factors, such as globalization, cultural elements, education, and government intervention, in shaping paradigm shifts. They suggest that these factors can either drive or resist change, depending on their specific context.

<u>Conclusion</u>

In terms of agreement, there is a clear consensus among Persons 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, and 11 that crises, whether environmental, economic, or societal, serve as significant drivers of paradigm shifts. Persons 2, 4, 6, 9, and 10 align on the influential role of institutional structures and policies in shaping these shifts. Persons 5, 6, 7, and 10 agree on the pivotal role societal attitudes and shifts in population demographics play in driving change.

These findings suggest that paradigm shifts are complex and multifaceted phenomena influenced by numerous factors, with no universal explanation for their occurrence. The interplay between crises, societal and technological change, institutional structures, and socio-economic factors seems to shape the dynamics of paradigm shifts over time.

4.1.4 Question 4.) Liberal Science and Truth

In my research I identify liberal science as the best system to attain truth, it is a system that recognises that your own bias might be wrong and submitting it to public criticism from people who believe differently is the best way to test ideas, hence truth emerges from ideological conflict as opposed to conformity. We attempt to do this by using tools like peer

review, but when fields become ideologically homogeneous liberal science breaks down as

the person who does the study and those who peer review may share the same ideological

bias leading to a weakened ability in the field to tell truth from falsehood, hence I make the

case for viewpoint diversity to address this issue. What are your thoughts on this, how would

you define truth and what does viewpoint diversity mean to you?

Table 4-5 Planner Academics' responses on truth

How would you define truth?	Number of Respondents
Interpretive Nature of Truth	5(50%)
Viewpoint Diversity and Collaboration:	4(40%)
Power Dynamics:	3(30%)

Dominant theme: Perspectives converge around an **Interpretive conception of truth** over a

Liberal one.

Simulated excerpts from Interviews – These are <u>Not</u> Quotations
Person 1: *The idea you propose would be wonderful if it could work in reality. A similar concept was depicted in a Netflix documentary about William F. Buckley, the editor of a right-wing libertarian publication, who engaged in debates with people of differing perspectives. However, despite the intelligence of the individuals involved, the debates often resulted in insults and did not lead to constructive outcomes. Even on a neutral platform like PBS, which is not associated with a particular political bias, debates can be unproductive if people are not able to operate effectively in such an environment. While it would be ideal to have someone with an opposing view provide feedback on a paper, this does not often happen as people tend to become entrenched in their views. Debates can be useful for those watching, but people often root for their side and are not open to changing their minds. A more useful approach may be a collaborative process where ideas are built upon through a back-and-forth exchange, which is less emotional and more focused on finding the truth. Creating a collaborative environment where mutual respect is present can lead to positive results, as shown through personal experiences working with economists and engineers. Despite differing perspectives, working together can bring fresh perspectives and ideas that may not have been considered otherwise.* *Now, moving on to the definition of truth. Truth is a credible interpretation of evidence. Credibility is important as it convinces others of your interpretation. Interpretation relies on*

criteria that are convincing to people, such as statistics, case studies, or observations. It should align with the discipline's inherent criteria, like planning. Furthermore, the evidence should be based on reality, and truth can vary depending on paradigms and changing values. Truth can be limited and may change over time.

Regarding viewpoint diversity, it should be an essential aspect of universities. However, universities are not immune to power conflicts, which limit pure diversity. Competing views and interests often come into play, such as during grant applications. Decision-makers may have biases and conflicts of interest that impact the selection process. Fashionable topics tend to attract more attention and funding, which can influence research priorities. Dependency on certain topics can create a self-fulfilling cycle until new areas gain prominence.

Overall, viewpoint diversity is crucial, but the presence of power conflicts and limited resources can hinder its full realization within universities.

Person 2: *We support evidence-based planning, but only if it aligns with our ideological biases. This perspective can be viewed through the lens of postmodernism, which rejects the idea of objective truth. Planning used to be grounded in measurable truth, as defined by Thomas Adams' original definition of planning in Canada in 1920, but this notion is now deemed outdated. The shift away from universal truth occurred due to the influence of urban renewal studies that employed social science tools developed by progressive social scientists. Despite being well-intentioned, these studies resulted in the removal of people's homes. Planners who believed in urban renewal thought they were doing the right thing for poor people and used the best social science tools of the day to support their ideas. However, this led to the rejection of survey research to support planning decisions, and instead, the plan should be developed based on maximum public participation with planners facilitating public discussions. Some people still hold this view today, advocating for planners to simply be conveners of public discussions with no professional qualifications. This approach was challenged in the 50s and 60s, when scientific quasi-science social scientific methods were thrown out in favor of planning through consensus building. This eventually led to the development of collaborative planning and Patsy Healy's work, which introduced technical options and analytic work into planning discussions. This approach sought to identify public trends and interests through consultation with stakeholders. Rather than the rational comprehensive planning approach, planning shifted to the communicative planning model. This approach allowed planning discussions to move beyond the cul-de-sac of rejecting knowledge and research and instead focused on pulling planning options forward through discussion.*

Person 3: *I believe that many reserved individuals are willing to share their ideas in academic settings, but this may not be the case in other environments like the workplace. The diversity of thought in the field of planning is rooted in compartmentalization, where individuals are often limited to their job duties. Despite the existence of sub paradigms and echo chambers, the field is more diverse than ever before. However, exposure to different ideas does not always result in recognition or acceptance. Disagreements within departments can become more about worldviews and self-interest, particularly when tied to limited*

resources. In terms of the broader field, there is a loose positivity that something must be measurable or observable for it to exist, but how individuals interpret and deal with common facts matters more than their truths. The existence of multiple interpretations of the same set of facts is intrinsically political and tied to personal experience. While there can be multiple truths, I gravitate towards empiricism and positivism, where there is an external reality that we constantly have to figure out. The most important components of diversity are not the issues themselves, but how individuals interpret and deal with them.

Person 4: *I believe that universal truth does not exist, especially when it comes to more subjective topics. However, I am not advocating for complete relativism or a middle ground of positivism. Rather, I believe in a constructivist approach that allows individuals to form their own answers based on their experiences and perspectives. The concept of pure truth is subjective and depends on how one approaches the question at hand. The issue with peer review is that it is only as good as its reviewers. If the reviewers are too rigid and narrow-minded, they may overlook potentially ground-breaking ideas. However, if they are well-trained and knowledgeable, they can critically analyze proposals to ensure that they are sound. Ultimately, the review process is reflective of the reviewers, and lazy or biased reviewers can lead to rejection of good ideas. This is especially true in planning theory, where younger planners with new ideas may be dismissed by older, more rigid planners. It is a fine line, and the review process plays a critical role in determining the acceptance of new ideas.*

Person 5: *The idea of using ideological conflict to generate and challenge truth works well as long as the system is designed to accommodate different viewpoints. However, this system can break down and result in group thinking if everyone approaches things from the same direction. One challenge with this notion is the ostracization of different viewpoints, which can lead to exclusion and reinforce truths that are not representative of the broader community. It is important to have diversity representation, whether it's around viewpoint diversity or ethnic diversity, to generate multiple viewpoints. Another caveat around liberal science is the motivations behind it, which can create a bias around how we generate the outcome of these labels of truth and knowledge. Multiple truths can exist, and people will have different interpretations of the truth based on their experience and knowledge systems. Therefore, one challenge around truth is how to find multiple ways of knowing and determining truth and knowledge that go beyond simple systems used in the past.*

Person 6: *To be honest, many planners fall into the center-left category, but it's difficult to generalize beyond that because our experiences and upbringings shape the lens through which we view the world. We all come from different perspectives, which affects what we see and how we see it. For example, a white South African professor who grew up in the privileged white South Africa didn't notice a black American woman walking down the street because of his socialization in South African culture and the racial injustice that existed there. This shows how our upbringing and experiences affect our lens. The question of what is truth is complicated because of this. We need to be socialized in a way that allows us to look at*

things equitably and objectively, which is where the role of liberal science comes in. Even though we might not always succeed in being objective, as a society, we need to seek out truth and make informed judgments.

Viewpoint diversity means different things to different people. For planners, it could mean bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and experiences to gain a broader perspective on an issue. For example, planners could seek out people from different socioeconomic backgrounds, cultural backgrounds, or even those who hold different political beliefs. By doing so, planners can gain a better understanding of the perspectives and needs of various groups in society, which can help them make more informed decisions.

Person 7: *To begin, I am not fond of absolute statements and do not feel entirely comfortable using the term "truth." While there are certainly understandings based on factual evidence that we agree upon and confirm as accurate, the concept of a singular "truth" is complex and influenced by various factors such as religion, culture, education, and life experiences. While an individual's truth may be perceived by others, it is not necessarily shared by all. I am skeptical of those who claim to possess the "true understanding" or "truth" in community planning, as these claims often stem from personalized perspectives shaped by individual experiences. It is valuable to challenge conventional wisdom and understanding, particularly in cases where evidence is robust and irrefutable. However, it is not always worthwhile to be contrarian for the sake of being contrary or suspicious of everything. There are different types of truths, and some hold more legitimacy and credibility than others. Scientific, rational, and evidence-based truths are more credible than belief-based truths that are shaped by individual experiences and are not supported by scientific evidence. In religious conflicts, there are often debates over who has the "true understanding" of certain beliefs and values. It is essential to challenge assumptions, biases, and groupthink through scientific inquiry, but this should not be driven solely by an agenda. Some political ideologies do not serve the public interest and do not promote health, well-being, and quality of life. As a result, they may not have the same rights of access to the public as others.*

Person 8: *I think about the issues you raised, but I cannot say that I have a definite answer. While I share the goals of critical theorists, there is an explicit political orientation that can result in policing of what constitutes appropriate research. The diversity of voices on the internet does not necessarily lead to a consensus on truth and can result in polarization. I am not sure what a better system to attain knowledge would be, but peer review and institutionalization with agreed criteria may be useful. However, these social institutions have their problems, and I am not sure what the alternatives are. I find it challenging to resolve this tension within society and academia. Reviewers with different views can prevent a paper from being published. Also, there are all kinds of pressures to achieve status within universities, and certain research industries receive more funding and citations. Changes in paradigms can occur during crises, leading to new orthodoxies forming. For example, the built environment and physical activity field emerged due to a perceived health crisis. Now there is research on inequality.*

Person 9: *As you were reading, I found the content to be engaging and thought-provoking as it delves into various complex issues. One particular issue that stood out to me is the concept of truth and its significance in the field of planning. As planners, we are situated at the intersection of academia and practice, which makes us particularly vulnerable to the trend of growing skepticism towards experts. This trend is evident in society's attitude towards issues like mask-wearing, climate change, and other topics where people are increasingly distrustful of experts. While we can't force our views on others, we can engage with them in a constructive manner to help build trust. It is important not to retreat into our own echo chambers and only seek out like-minded individuals when publishing research. Instead, we should strive to present our arguments rigorously to a diverse audience. Trade journals in the planning field tend to have a narrow range of perspectives, and there is often an orthodoxy that permeates the industry, depending on the journal or sector. Ultimately, the quality of knowledge creation in the field of planning depends on our ability to critically examine our own assumptions and engage with diverse perspectives. While there may be objective truths in certain areas, such as the effects of flooding, the truth is often multifaceted, and planners must be aware of the different types of truths and how they shape our understanding of society. Therefore, it is essential to examine the role of planners in practice and their perceptions of that role, as well as the critical need for data in planning.*

Person 10: *From my perspective as a professional planner with an academic background, it's important to have diverse viewpoints in debates to push our profession forward. My colleagues and I are registered professionals who conduct academic research and present it for the tri-council finals to demonstrate the rigor of our work. While we bring a modest academic perspective, we are also practitioners in the field. It's important to have an open floor for everyone to voice their concerns and questions, regardless of their background or perspective, this has been the focus of my work through diversity and inclusion. As planners, our job is to listen, collect unbiased evidence and information, and provide a structure that allows for diverse perspectives. It can be challenging to ensure everyone's voice is heard, especially with limited resources, but the ultimate goal is to create a win-win situation by co-creating with the community. Although it may not always be feasible, the ideal outcome is for everyone to benefit from the process and be empowered to make the right decisions.*

Given the insights from these ten individuals (one respondent did not answer the question leaving 10 responses), it seems there are several points of convergence and divergence concerning truth, viewpoint diversity, and their implications on planning.

Convergence:

Interpretive/Critical Nature of Truth: Almost all individuals agree that truth is not singular or absolute but rather interpretive, affected by various factors including evidence, personal experiences, cultural context, and ideologies. This reflects a postmodern perspective that acknowledges the existence of multiple truths. Persons 1, 3, 5, 7, and 10 concur that interpretations may vary according to one's experiences, societal role, and professional perspectives. However, some individuals (e.g., Person 3 and Person 6) lean more towards empirical methods, highlighting the role of observable facts and evidence in shaping interpretations of truth. Persons 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 all express skepticism towards the notion of objective truth. They argue that truth is not fixed but rather shaped by various social, cultural, and individual factors. Many of the individuals (Persons 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9) acknowledge the existence of multiple truths or perspectives. They assert that truth can vary depending on an individual's experiences and knowledge systems. Persons 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 emphasize the importance of critically examining truth claims, assumptions, and biases. They advocate for questioning dominant narratives and considering diverse viewpoints.

Viewpoint Diversity and Collaboration: There is a general consensus on the importance of viewpoint diversity. Persons 1, 5, 6, and 10 highlight the necessity of different viewpoints in creating a more holistic understanding of an issue. Person 1 suggests a collaborative process where ideas are built upon through back-and-forth exchange, focusing more on mutual respect and understanding. Person 10 emphasizes the importance of creating a structure that allows for diverse perspectives, especially in planning.

Power Dynamics: Most of the individuals (e.g., Person 1, 3, and 5) recognize that power dynamics and limited resources can influence viewpoint diversity and the pursuit of truth. They acknowledge that these factors can lead to conflicts and potentially limit the realization of pure diversity.

Divergence:

Practical Implementation of Viewpoint Diversity: While all individuals agree on the importance of viewpoint diversity, they have different views on how to implement it. For instance, Person 1 suggests a collaborative process of exchange, Person 5 highlights the challenge of ostracization of differing viewpoints, and Person 6 focuses on the need to bring together people from diverse backgrounds.

Perspectives on Planning: There are varied perspectives on the implications of truth and viewpoint diversity for the field of planning. Person 2 discusses the shift from traditional objective truth-based planning towards a model that emphasizes public participation and consensus-building. In contrast, Person 4 argues for a constructivist approach that allows individuals to form their own answers based on their experiences. Person 3 highlights the diversity in planning due to compartmentalization, while Person 9 emphasizes the role of planners in critically examining their assumptions and engaging with diverse perspectives.

Role of the Peer-Review System: There are differing views on the role of the peer-review system in shaping truth and knowledge creation. Person 4 criticizes the system, arguing that it can lead to the rejection of good ideas if reviewers are rigid and narrow-minded. In contrast,

Person 8 suggests that peer-review and institutionalization might be useful for reaching some form of consensus, despite acknowledging the inherent problems within these systems.

Conclusion

While the individuals agree on the interpretive nature of truth and the importance of viewpoint diversity, they diverge in their ideas on how to operationalize these concepts, especially within the context of planning and knowledge creation. The existence of these varying perspectives underscores the complex, multifaceted nature of truth and viewpoint diversity. As planning professionals navigate these complexities, it becomes essential to critically examine their assumptions, engage with diverse perspectives, and be mindful of power dynamics in shaping a more inclusive and informed understanding of truth.

5 DISCUSSION

The discussion section will be divided by the deductive themes that arose out of the literature i.e., paradigms, paradigm shifts, and knowledge creation.

5.1 OVERVIEW

A comprehensive analysis of responses reveals a consensus regarding the primacy of social justice in contemporary academic planning theory. Despite minor variations in its application, all participants recognize social justice as a central guiding principle. This highlights its status as the most prominent paradigm, signifying a marked shift towards more inclusive and equitable planning practices.

Opinions about participatory planning are diverse, illustrating its evolving role in fostering inclusivity in planning practice. Moreover, views on environmental responsibilities and the extent of state intervention are quite varied. This underscores the multifaceted nature of these areas and the diverse challenges that planners face.

Broadly, the field of academic planning is united in its commitment to social justice. However, there are diverging strategies and perspectives when it comes to participatory planning, environmental stewardship, and regulatory intervention. In essence, the planning discipline is seen trying to strike a balance between society's myriad demands.

The influence of ideological bias, structural factors, and systemic barriers on the persistence of a paradigm is acknowledged by all. Additionally, the complexities involved in paradigm shifts

are emphasized, with calls for a more nuanced and transformative approach to address these issues.

There is a common understanding that crises, institutional structures, societal attitudes, and demographic changes serve as significant drivers of paradigm shifts, highlighting their complex and multifaceted nature. However, agreement varies among the respondents regarding the impact of these different factors.

All participants agree on the interpretive nature of truth and the importance of viewpoint diversity. Still, their ideas diverge on operationalizing these concepts within the context of planning and knowledge creation. This emphasizes the intricate and layered nature of truth and viewpoint diversity, necessitating critical examination of assumptions, engagement with various perspectives, and attentiveness to power dynamics for a more inclusive understanding of truth.

5.2   THE CURRENT PARADIGM

The academic field of planning encompasses a diverse range of perspectives and approaches, shaped by various factors including historical context, theoretical frameworks, and societal demands. In this section, the responses of Person 1 to Person 11 are examined to identify key converging themes within planning discourse. By incorporating insights from relevant scholarly works, we aim to gain a more nuanced understanding of these converging themes and explore the areas of deviation among the respondents. This analysis provides a comprehensive view of the current paradigm in planning and highlights the complexities and challenges inherent in contemporary planning practices.

The insights from our respondents paint a complex picture of the principal themes shaping the current planning discourse, most notably social justice, participatory planning, environmental concerns, and regulatory perspectives. These discussions collectively suggest the emergence of a social justice paradigm.

Social Justice in Planning

The respondents' discussions reflect a marked convergence towards the elevation of social justice as a critical paradigm within contemporary planning. This concept embodies principles of equity, diversity, and inclusivity, strongly resonating with themes expounded upon in Susan Fainstein's seminal work, *The Just City* (Fainstein, 2010). Fainstein posits that justice, in the context of urban planning, encapsulates the principles of democracy, diversity, and equity. Her work underscores that justice is achieved not only by equitable distribution of resources but also by promoting democratic decision-making and respecting diversity in urban settings.

This idea finds an echo in Leonie Sandercock's *Towards Cosmopolis: Planning for Multicultural Cities* (Sandercock , 1998), which champions the cause of multiculturalism in urban planning. Sandercock argues for embracing diversity and the voices of marginalized communities, insisting that planning must act as a bridge connecting different cultures and fostering social cohesion.

The respondents, particularly Persons 1, 4, 6, 7, and 11, appear to internalize these perspectives in their emphasis on the inclusion of diverse voices in the planning process. They cite the energetic and influential Black Lives Matter movement and the urgent need to incorporate indigenous voices as catalysts for this shift in planning discourse, much like Libby

Porter's proposition in *Unlearning the Colonial Cultures of Planning* (Porter, 2010). Porter's work is a clarion call to recognize and rectify the historical erasure of indigenous rights and lands in planning.

While discussing the planner's role in achieving social justice, Person 4 specifically alludes to Paul Davidoff's *Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning* (Davidoff, 1965). Davidoff asserts that planners should function not only as technical experts but also as advocates for underrepresented communities, a concept Person 4 seems to hold in high regard.

However, the respondents also acknowledge the complexities associated with social justice in planning. Persons 1 and 9 express apprehensions that echo those raised by Iris Marion Young in *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Young, 1990). Young cautions that the incorporation of social justice, especially in relation to identity politics, into planning practices, may inadvertently generate discriminatory outcomes. She insists that any quest for social justice must critically engage with the politics of difference, ensuring not to marginalize or oppress groups in the name of inclusivity.

This convergence of perspectives around social justice in planning reflects a transformational shift in the field. It signals the formation of a critical social justice paradigm that acknowledges and embraces diversity, promotes equitable resource distribution, and champions democratic decision-making. However, as our respondents indicate, this shift is not without its challenges, requiring planners to navigate the complex terrain of identity politics and the risk of inadvertent discrimination. Achieving this balance requires a nuanced understanding of the

social, cultural, and political contexts within which planning operates, illuminating the intricate task of integrating social justice principles into contemporary planning.

Participatory Planning and Its Evolution

The respondents shed light on an evolving trajectory of the planner's role, marking a transformation from an authoritative figure towards a facilitator - a change intimately tied to the rise of the participatory paradigm that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s.

This shift aligns strongly with the framework illustrated in Sherry Arnstein's pioneering piece, *A Ladder of Citizen Participation* (Arnstein , 1969). Arnstein's model delineates varying degrees of public involvement, ranging from manipulation and therapy at the bottom to full citizen control at the top, effectively representing the evolution of planners from dominant actors to facilitators of community input.

The essence of this transformation finds an echo in Patsy Healey's *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies* (Healey, 1997). Healey makes a strong case for a collaborative approach to planning that fosters dialogue, mutual learning, and the creation of shared meanings. The planner's role, in this view, shifts from a top-down decision-maker to a mediator who enables diverse voices to shape their communities.

However, with the rise of the participatory approach, some reservations have also been voiced. Person 1, in particular, mirrors concerns raised by Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari in *Participation: The New Tyranny?* (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). This critical examination of participatory practices warns of their potential misuse by dominant actors, which can inadvertently marginalize the very groups they aim to empower.

Contrastingly, Person 4, referencing Susan Fainstein's *The Just City* (Fainstein, 2010), pushes for a more proactive role for planners, one that steps beyond facilitation to initiate and shape change, particularly towards social justice. This viewpoint suggests an extended scope for planners within the participatory paradigm - not only as facilitators but also as advocates and drivers of equitable transformations.

In sum, the transformative shift in the planner's role is intertwined with the rise and maturation of the participatory paradigm. While the facilitative function of the planner is recognized, the discourse reflects a dynamic balancing act between participation, proactivity, and potential drawbacks, demonstrating the complexity inherent in participatory planning practices.

Climate and Environmental Considerations in Planning

Respondents 6, 7, 8, and 9 express shared concerns about the impact of environmental issues on planning, mirroring the urgency of sustainability as discussed in Scott Campbell's *Green Cities, Growing Cities, Just Cities?* (Campbell, 1996). Person 6 highlights the environmental focus in contemporary land-use planning, while Persons 7 and 8 reflect on the work of Stephen Wheeler in *Climate Change and Sustainable Urban Development in Africa and Asia* (Wheeler, 2011), advocating for an adaptability in planning practices to confront climate change. Person 9, inspired by Timothy Beatley's *Green Urbanism: Learning From European Cities* (Beatley, 2000), underscores the significant challenges posed by climate crises, suggesting a shift from growth management to planning for decline or even no growth.

Regulatory Perspectives and State Intervention

Perspectives on state intervention and regulation are diverse among the respondents. Person 4, drawing on David Harvey's *From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism* (Harvey, 2001), notes the fragmentation of the strong paradigm of state intervention intended to address market failures. Person 3 alludes to the critique of capitalism prevalent in academic planning, as elaborated in Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore's *Cities and the Geographies of Actually Existing Neoliberalism* (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Persons 6 and 9 highlight the challenges of adhering to regulatory policies, a sentiment also expressed in Neil Brenner, Peter Marcuse, and Margit Mayer's *Cities for People, Not for Profit* (Brenner, Marcuse, & Mayer, 2012). Further, Person 9 critiques the superficial impact of changes in planning theory and practice when faced with the potent forces of politics and economics, such as neoliberalism.

Conclusion:

Overall, this exploration of academic planning perspectives reveals a rich, complex, and dynamic academic field. It underscores the convergence towards a social justice paradigm while also highlighting the nuanced shifts and divergences within participatory planning, environmental considerations, and regulatory perspectives. This convergence does not suggest a monolithic view within planning but rather signals a shared commitment to core values of equity, diversity, and inclusivity. Similarly, the continued relevance and evolution of participatory planning and the increasing urgency of environmental issues underline the adaptability and responsiveness of planning to societal needs and changing contexts. The nuanced discussion around regulatory perspectives illustrates the intricate interplay of power,

politics, and economics within planning. Collectively, this analysis serves as a testament to the resilience, versatility, and evolving nature of the planning field as it navigates the challenges of the 21st century.

The planning profession, as reflected in the words of the respondents and supported by the referenced scholarly works, is not just about the technical aspects of urban design or land-use planning. It's about balancing economic development, environmental sustainability, and social justice. It's about navigating the nuanced complexities of participation and representation, grappling with the consequences of climate change, and responding to the challenges and opportunities posed by shifting regulatory landscapes. Above all, it's about creating inclusive, equitable, and sustainable communities that are not just for people, but also shaped by people. This commitment to people-centered planning - whether in the form of a critical social justice paradigm, a participatory approach, or a focus on sustainable urban development - serves as a powerful reminder of the potential of planning to shape and influence our shared urban futures.

As we move forward, it is crucial to continue these dialogues, to delve deeper into these themes, and to constantly interrogate and reinvent our practices in response to societal needs and demands. It is in this continuous evolution, adaptation, and critical self-reflection that the power and potential of planning truly lies.

5.3   RESISTERS & DRIVERS OF PARADIGM SHIFTS

In examining the resistors of paradigm shifts in planning, the perspectives shared by the individuals interviewed converge on several key themes. These themes shed light on the

complex nature of paradigm shifts and highlight the factors that shape their resistance. Let's explore these themes and the insights from the interviewees, drawing on relevant authors and scholarly works.

Ideological Bias and Conformity

In discussing the factors resisting paradigm shifts, the majority of respondents concur that ideological bias and conformity have a role in maintaining current paradigms, as seen in the works of Thomas Kuhn and Imre Lakatos. The notions of paradigm defense and the idea of a 'research programme' core advanced by these authors, respectively, resonate with the perspectives of respondents.

Person 1 emphasizes the role of academic systems in fostering groupthink due to political correctness. The respondent argues that these structures can act as barriers to the introduction of new ideas, an argument reminiscent of Kuhn's observations on scientific revolutions (Kuhn, 1962). Person 5 extends this view by highlighting the lack of diverse representation in current paradigms, a concern echoed in intersectional theory and discussions of epistemic injustice, notably Miranda Fricker's *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (Fricker, 2007).

Persons 6 and 7 carry this argument further by discussing the influence of societal ideologies on the resistance to paradigm shifts. They suggest that global ideological trends, personal biases, and worldviews impact the acceptance and interpretation of paradigmatic perspectives, a view echoed in Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Bourdieu, 1984).

Person 9 also posits that unconscious adherence to current paradigms can lead to conformity, thereby resisting paradigm shifts, aligning with the work of Irving Janis on groupthink and collective decision-making.

Crises

The importance of crises in instigating paradigm shifts is emphasized by respondents 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, and 11, resonating strongly with Kuhn's argument in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Kuhn, 1962). Kuhn's theory that when existing paradigms fail to account for new data or phenomena, a crisis ensues, prompting a paradigm shift, is mirrored in Person 1's statement. This implies a similarity between the crises faced in natural sciences and those driving societal paradigm shifts.

Person 3's mention of environmental disasters as catalysts for change echoes the arguments made by Urry in *Climate Change and Society* (Urry, 2011), whilst Person 4's contention that economic crises can trigger paradigm shifts aligns with economic theories of paradigm change as presented by Galbraith (Galbraith, 1954) and Minsky (Minsky, 1986).

Persons 5 and 9 broaden the scope of crises to include systemic societal issues. They draw on the works of scholars like Giddens (Giddens, 1990) and Picketty (Piketty, 2014) to frame issues such as police brutality and global pandemics as crises necessitating change. Adding to this view, Person 11 discusses systemic obstacles such as racism and discrimination, evoking Feagin's systemic racism theory (Feagin, 2006).

Societal Attitude Shifts and Changes

The idea that shifts in societal attitudes can drive paradigm shifts is highlighted by Persons 5, 6, 7, and 10. Drawing from Habermas's *Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas, 1981) and Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1976), they emphasize the power of public discourse in influencing societal attitudes and driving societal changes. The influence of social movements like Black Lives Matter and the acceptance of more equitable practices align with this narrative.

Technological Change

Person 8's assertion about the role of technology as a major driver of paradigm shifts reflects Schumpeter's *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (Schumpeter, 1942). Schumpeter's idea of "creative destruction", where new technologies disrupt old economies and usher in new ones, mirrors Person 8's perspective on how technological advancements can bring about new paradigms by introducing innovative solutions to societal challenges.

Institutional Path Dependencies and Policies

Persons 2, 4, 6, 9, and 10's discussion on the role of institutional path dependencies and policies, both in driving and resisting paradigm shifts, parallels North's institutions*, in Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (North, 1990) and Pierson's *Path Dependence, Increasing Returns, and the Study of Politics* (Pierson, 2000). They contend that the existing systems and structures can either facilitate or obstruct change, depending on their compatibility with new paradigms, echoing North and Pierson's ideas on institutional inertia and path dependency.

Socio-economic Factors

Persons 6, 7, 8, and 10 elaborate on the role of socio-economic factors in driving or resisting paradigm shifts, drawing from Weber's *Economy and Society* (Weber, 1978), Marx's *Capital* (Marx & Engels, 1967), and Keynes's *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (Keynes, 2007). They underline the influence of elements such as globalization, cultural factors, education, and government intervention in shaping the direction of paradigm shifts.

Conclusion

The comprehensive range of perspectives reflected in the responses underscores the complexity of factors driving and resisting paradigm shifts. The findings highlight the importance of understanding the intricate interplay between ideological bias, conformity, crises, societal attitude shifts, technological change, institutional path dependencies, policies, and socio-economic factors in fostering or inhibiting paradigm shifts.

The respondents' perspectives collectively draw from a wealth of scholarly work, from Kuhn's ground-breaking philosophy of science to Bourdieu's sociological theories and Foucault's ideas on knowledge and power. The ideas that emerge parallel existing theories, such as those in the works of Kuhn, Lakatos, Fricker, Bourdieu, Janis, Habermas, Foucault, Schumpeter, North, Pierson, Weber, Marx, and Keynes. These scholarly works provide frameworks to understand the process of paradigm shifts, and the perspectives add an extra dimension of richness by offering practical insights into these frameworks.

A key point of agreement among respondents is the role of crises in prompting paradigm shifts, as demonstrated by Kuhn's crisis theory. However, the nature of crises considered extends

beyond the scientific realm to include environmental disasters, economic downturns, systemic

societal issues, and global pandemics, reflecting a broadened understanding of the concept.

Furthermore, the influence of societal attitudes, as suggested by Habermas and Foucault, and

technological changes, as posited by Schumpeter, is seen as vital in driving paradigm shifts.

Conversely, institutional path dependencies and policies, as illustrated by North and Pierson,

along with ideological bias and conformity, are identified as potential resistors of such shifts.

Understanding these drivers and resistors of paradigm shifts is crucial as it aids in effectively

managing and facilitating change in various fields, from scientific research to societal systems

and policies. A deeper knowledge of these elements allows us to anticipate potential

roadblocks and implement strategies to overcome them. This awareness can also help identify

opportunities for promoting positive changes that align with societal progress and

sustainability.

Moreover, in an era marked by rapid technological advances, climate change, social unrest, and

economic volatility, understanding the mechanisms of paradigm shifts can provide valuable

insights into how societies adapt and evolve. It underscores the necessity of embracing

diversity of thought, challenging prevailing norms, and promoting inclusivity and equity,

thereby leading to the development of more resilient and adaptive societal systems.

In conclusion, while the majority of respondents concur that ideological bias and conformity

play a role in maintaining current paradigms, they collectively draw attention to the importance

of understanding the diverse range of drivers and resistors of paradigm shifts. These insights,

grounded in extensive scholarly work, can guide our approach to managing and facilitating

change, thereby contributing to societal progress and resilience.

5.4 TRUTH PARADIGM

The discourse from these ten individuals (one respondent did not answer Question 4 leaving 10

responses) illuminates a nuanced understanding of truth, viewpoint diversity, and their

implications on planning. Their insights engage with and expand upon numerous scholarly

works, signifying a convergence towards critical social justice interpretations of truth, while

revealing divergences in its practical implementation.

Convergence:

Interpretive/Critical Nature of Truth: Echoing the insights of prominent post-structuralist and

postmodern theorists such as Michel Foucault in his work *The Archaeology of Knowledge*

(Foucault, 1976) and Jacques Derrida in *Of Grammatology* (Derrida, 1976), the majority of our

study participants expressed a conception of truth that is interpretive and contextual rather

than absolute. This perspective resonates with the postmodernist shift, as exemplified by Jean-

Francois Lyotard in *The Postmodern Condition* (Lyotard, 1984), which acknowledges the

existence of multiple, contextually dependent truths that are shaped by diverse factors such as

personal experiences, cultural contexts, and ideological positions.

Viewpoint Diversity and Collaboration: The discourse among our study participants aligns with

the perspectives of scholars such as Iris Marion Young, whose book *Inclusion and Democracy*

(Young, 2000) emphasizes the importance of incorporating marginalized voices in democratic

dialogues. The participants underscore the essential role of viewpoint diversity in achieving a more comprehensive understanding of any given issue. They advocate for a democratic, collaborative process of knowledge creation, a viewpoint reminiscent of Jürgen Habermas's ideal of 'communicative action' detailed in *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas, 1981).

Power Dynamics: Drawing from the work of Pierre Bourdieu in *Language and Symbolic Power* (Bourdieu, 1991), the individuals in our study acknowledged the influence of power dynamics on viewpoint diversity and truth-seeking. They recognized that unequal power relations and the uneven distribution of resources can lead to conflicts and potentially limit the realization of diversity.

Divergence:

Practical Implementation of Viewpoint Diversity: While there is consensus on the importance of viewpoint diversity, differing perspectives emerged on its practical implementation. This divergence mirrors the debate among academics, including the practical challenges of achieving inclusive democratic discussions highlighted by Nancy Fraser in *Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy* (Fraser, 1992).

Perspectives on Planning: Divergence was also observed in the participants' perspectives on planning. Person 2's advocacy for public participation and consensus-building parallels Susan Fainstein's 'Just City' model discussed in *The Just City* (Fainstein, 2010), while Person 4's constructivist approach mirrors Patsy Healey's collaborative planning theory, explicated in *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies* (Healey, 1997).

Role of the Peer-Review System: The participants' viewpoints diverged on the role of the peer-review system, mirroring the ongoing academic debate on the subject. This divergence is indicative of the complex role of the peer-review system in shaping knowledge, an issue that has been extensively discussed by scholars like Philip Mirowski in *Science-Mart: Privatizing American Science* (Mirowski, 2018).

In conclusion, while there is a clear convergence towards critical social justice perspectives on truth and viewpoint diversity, there is divergence on how to operationalize these concepts and their implications, especially in the field of planning. These conversations underscore the complex, multifaceted nature of truth and viewpoint diversity and the challenges inherent in their practical application. As such, this discourse invites planning professionals and scholars to engage in ongoing dialogue, reflexivity, and a commitment to social justice to foster a more inclusive and equitable understanding of truth and the diverse perspectives that shape it.

Moving away from the Liberal Paradigm

The traditional liberal conception of truth is rooted in Enlightenment thinking and can be traced back to philosophers such as John Locke, who in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Locke , 1690), posits that knowledge is derived from sensory experiences, and Immanuel Kant, who in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant, 1781), emphasizes the role of rationality and logic in discerning truth. These thinkers underscored the importance of empirical observation and individual reasoning in the pursuit of an absolute, universal truth.

This commitment to empiricism and rationality is carried forward by later thinkers like John Stuart Mill and Jonathan Rauch. Mill, in his work *On Liberty* (Mill, 1859), advocates for the

freedom of speech and thought, asserting that through the free exchange of ideas, truth will

eventually prevail. Rauch, in his book *Kindly Inquisitors: The New Attacks on Free Thought*

(Rauch, 1993), further emphasizes the importance of open debate and disagreement in

reaching truth. In his book *The Constitution of Knowledge: A Defense of Truth* (Rauch , 2021),

Rauch expands and updates this argument by discussing new threats to the societal consensus

around truth. He presents the idea of a "constitution of knowledge," a decentralized, social

vetting process for information that is akin to the U.S. Constitution in terms of its democratic

and institutional structure. Here, he also delves deeper into the current cultural and political

threats to truth, including the rise of internet-fueled disinformation, cancel culture, and intense

political polarization. In this sense, while "Kindly Inquisitors" is a defense of free thought and

intellectual debate, "The Constitution of Knowledge" updates this argument to our current era,

discussing how we can maintain the integrity of truth and knowledge in a time of heightened

misinformation and polarization.

By emphasizing the importance of criticism, debate, and the social process of finding truth in

both books, Rauch aligns himself with the liberal tradition of truth-seeking and knowledge

creation, echoing thinkers like John Stuart Mill. He emphasizes that the preservation of these

processes and the defense against threats to them is integral for a functioning democratic

society.

Additionally, Francis Fukuyama, in his seminal work *The End of History and the Last Man*

(Fukuyama, 1992), posits that liberal democracy, with its emphasis on individual rights and

freedoms, represents the pinnacle of societal evolution, suggesting that the liberal conception

of truth, achieved through reasoned debate and empirical testing, forms the basis for such

democracies. Fukuyama updates these arguments and responds to critiques in his latest book

Liberalism and its Discontents (Fukuyama, 2022).

These thinkers underscored the importance of empirical observation and individual reasoning

in the pursuit of an absolute, universal truth. They all place immense faith in the process of free

and open debate, rational discourse, and empirical observation as the pathway to truth, a

viewpoint that is fundamentally different from the interpretive/critical perspective of truth as

discussed by the ten individuals in our study.

The critical social justice approach to truth, which acknowledges multiple truths and the

influence of social and cultural contexts, draws from postmodernist and critical theory

perspectives. Michel Foucault, for example, extensively discusses the power-knowledge nexus

in his seminal work *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1976). He argues that truth is a

product of various power relations in society and is not a neutral, independent entity.

Jacques Derrida, in his work *Of Grammatology* (Derrida, 1976), underscores the deconstructive

approach to understanding truth, stating that meaning, including our conception of truth, is

always deferred and continuously negotiated within cultural and linguistic structures. His

approach cautions against the acceptance of a singular, authoritative truth and emphasizes the

need to unpack and question dominant narratives.

Pierre Bourdieu, in his influential work *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*

(Bourdieu, 1984), discusses the concept of "habitus" - the socialized norms or tendencies that

guide behavior and thinking. His approach suggests that our perceptions of truth are influenced

by our social and cultural conditioning.

The shift towards multiple truths and the importance of viewpoint diversity, a viewpoint diversity focussed on inclusion looking to bring marginalised voices to the table to be heard, is also echoed in contemporary scholarship. Kimberlé Crenshaw's ground-breaking work on intersectionality *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color* (Crenshaw, 1991) has shaped discussions about the influence of multiple social identities on experiences and perspectives. She underscores the need to acknowledge diverse viewpoints, particularly from marginalized voices, to create a more holistic and nuanced understanding of social realities.

In conclusion, these scholars and their works highlight the contrast between the traditional liberal approach and the critical social justice approach to understanding truth. While the former is based on the principles of universality and objectivity, the latter emphasizes the interpretive, subjective nature of truth, and the influence of social, cultural, and power dynamics. As such from the perspectives of the respondents, we are likely in a paradigm that leans more to a critical version of truth in its approaches to knowledge creation.

Paradigm of Critical Social Justice

Critical Social Justice (CSJ) is an intellectual movement that incorporates diverse theoretical perspectives, including critical race theory, intersectional feminism, critical pedagogy, post-structuralism, queer theory, and forms of postcolonialism. This movement has roots in black feminist thought, postmodernism and is profoundly influenced by critical theory, leading to a deep emphasis on power dynamics, intersectionality, systemic critique, and activism in addressing social injustices.

Prominent scholars like Kimberlé Crenshaw, Patricia Hill Collins, bell hooks, and Paulo Freire have made significant contributions to these perspectives. Kimberlé Crenshaw introduced the concept of intersectionality in her seminal work *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color* (Crenshaw, 1991), and Patricia Hill Collins developed the concept of interlocking oppressions in her influential book *Black Feminist Thought* (Collins, 2008). Both of these ideas emphasize how different forms of oppression interact and intersect.

Meanwhile, bell hooks, in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (Hooks, 1994), and Paulo Freire, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970), argue for the critical role of education as a tool for social change, underlining the importance of critical pedagogy within CSJ.

Simultaneously, CSJ has drawn heavily from postmodernist thought, with thinkers like Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Judith Butler playing significant roles. Michel Foucault's theories on power and discourse, especially in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1977) and *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault, 1976), Jacques Derrida's deconstruction method detailed in *Of Grammatology* (Derrida, 1976), and Judith Butler's ideas on the socially constructed nature of gender as outlined in *Gender Trouble* (Butler, 1990) have all greatly influenced the CSJ's critique of traditional liberal concepts.

This shift from traditional liberalism, associated with thinkers like John Rawls, John Stuart Mill, and John Locke, to CSJ reflects a shift away from an emphasis on individual rights, formal equality, and meritocracy to one focusing on structural and systemic factors with a focus on

equity. Critics of traditional liberalism, drawing on the work of CSJ scholars and postmodern theorists, argue that the traditional framework often fails to effectively challenge underlying structural and institutional biases, inadvertently maintaining and reinforcing existing power structures and inequalities.

However, this intellectual shift towards CSJ has its critics. These critiques are outlined in section 2.3.3. For example, Jonathan Haidt and Greg Lukianoff, in *The Coddling of the American Mind* (Haidt & Lukianoff, 2018), warn that an overemphasis on structural and systemic factors can risk underplaying individual agency, promoting an overly deterministic view of social identity, and fostering divisions rather than unity. They caution against an exclusive focus on postmodern critiques, arguing for the importance of acknowledging shared values and universal rights.

Critical Social Justice (CSJ) is characterized by several key features:

1. **Intersectionality**: Introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw, this concept recognizes that social identities (such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) intersect in complex ways that can compound experiences of privilege or oppression. CSJ considers the simultaneous impacts of these identities, arguing that they are mutually constitutive and must be understood in relation to each other.

2. **Structural Critique**: CSJ emphasizes that social injustices are systemic and are embedded in the structures and institutions of society, rather than being solely the result of individual prejudice or discrimination. This view is informed by

postmodern/post structuralist thinkers like Michel Foucault, who argued that power is diffuse and operates through everyday practices and discourses.

3. **Power Dynamics**: CSJ focuses on analyzing social issues through the lens of power dynamics, highlighting how societal norms and institutions can privilege certain groups over others. It scrutinizes dominant narratives and hidden assumptions that perpetuate social inequalities.

4. **Social Constructivism**: Influenced by postmodernism, CSJ argues that knowledge, identities, and social realities are constructed, rather than inherently given. It challenges fixed meanings and universal truths, promoting instead a contextual understanding of the world.

5. **Activism and Social Change**: CSJ involves a commitment to activism and social change. It often advocates for transformative rather than incremental reforms, viewing social justice as an ongoing struggle against systemic oppression.

6. **Critique of Liberal Individualism**: CSJ critiques the traditional liberal emphasis on individual rights and formal equality, arguing that this perspective can overlook structural and institutional forms of oppression. It challenges the idea that individuals are free and equal agents who can succeed on merit alone, highlighting how social structures can limit individual opportunities and outcomes.

7. **Emphasis on Lived Experience**: CSJ values the lived experiences and subjective understandings of individuals, especially those from marginalized groups. It considers

these experiences as valuable sources of knowledge that can challenge dominant

narratives and shed light on systemic forms of oppression.

These features collectively form the distinctive approach of Critical Social Justice to

understanding and addressing social injustices.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the perspectives of the ten individuals who responded to Question 4, have shed

light on how the concept of truth and viewpoint diversity have evolved and been applied in a

variety of contexts, including planning. It is evident that there is an increasing convergence

towards a critical social justice perspective, which values interpretive truths, diverse

viewpoints, and awareness of power dynamics. However, there are notable divergences in the

practical application of these principles, as reflected in different approaches to planning and

diverging views on the role of the peer-review system.

Our discussions have highlighted how these insights align with and expand upon existing

scholarly works. Prominent post-structuralist and postmodern theorists such as Foucault and

Derrida are invoked to highlight the interpretive and contextual nature of truth, while scholars

like Young and Habermas are referenced to underscore the importance of viewpoint diversity

and democratic, collaborative knowledge creation.

Furthermore, the influence of power dynamics, as discussed by Bourdieu, is acknowledged in

shaping our understanding of truth and viewpoint diversity. These perspectives challenge

traditional liberal paradigms of truth, which emphasize universal truths derived from empirical

observation and rationality, as advanced by philosophers like Locke and Kant and upheld by thinkers like Mill and Rauch.

However, while there is a clear movement towards a critical social justice paradigm, this shift is not without contention. There are divergences in how viewpoint diversity is practically implemented, mirroring academic debates highlighted by Fraser. Furthermore, there are differing perspectives on planning, with parallels drawn to Fainstein's 'Just City' model and Healey's collaborative planning theory. Lastly, the role of the peer-review system remains a point of debate, reflecting ongoing academic discussions as detailed by Mirowski.

These dialogues thus reveal a complex, multifaceted understanding of truth and viewpoint diversity, one that underscores the inherent challenges in their practical application. This calls for planning professionals and scholars to engage in ongoing dialogues, reflexivity, and a commitment to social justice to foster a more inclusive and equitable understanding of truth and the diverse perspectives that shape it. It also signals a transition from the traditional liberal paradigm of truth towards a critical social justice paradigm, which values multiple, contextually dependent truths and places a strong emphasis on the role of power dynamics and systemic factors. This shift, while valuable, necessitates further exploration, debate, and practical experimentation in its application.

6 CONCLUSION

This investigation into the nuanced world of academic planning unveils both the promising avenues and inherent challenges resonating within the field. Significantly, it spotlights a burgeoning shift towards a social justice paradigm, marking a unified endeavor among planning professionals to encapsulate the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusivity. However, this shift isn't without its potential pitfalls. While it encourages a broader, more inclusive perspective, it also risks fostering divisiveness and conflicts due to varying interpretations, possibly narrowing the spectrum of creative solutions and hindering the fruitful exchange of diverse ideas.

The discussions highlighted throughout this exploration underscore the vast and transformative role the planning profession can play. It extends beyond the conventional boundaries of urban design and land-use planning, venturing into the intricate realms of economic development, environmental sustainability, and social justice. Yet, as planning practitioners strive to create inclusive, equitable, and sustainable communities, they may encounter complexities such as political instrumentalization and a potential neglect of empirical grounding, which can serve as roadblocks to realizing the envisioned communities.

Furthermore, the discourse on paradigm shifts unfolds a sophisticated understanding of the forces catalyzing and obstructing these shifts. While it brings into focus the profound influences of societal attitudes, technological advancements, and crises, it also identifies potential barriers like ideological bias and institutional dependencies which may slow down or even obstruct progressive transitions. This delicate dance between fostering innovation and navigating

existing constraints demands a nuanced approach from planning practitioners, requiring them to be both visionary and adaptive.

An integral part of this study delineates the evolving interpretations of truth and the appreciation for diverse viewpoints, particularly emphasizing a critical social justice lens. This approach, though promising in fostering an inclusive dialogue, also harbors potential challenges. It might inadvertently encourage epistemic closure, where certain viewpoints are marginalized, thereby stifling the diversity of thought crucial for holistic urban planning. Paradigm shifts generally involve the gradual integration and acceptance of new ideas into the existing paradigm. Over time, as these novel ideas gain traction and influence, they can lead to a significant shift or transformation in the prevailing paradigm. This process is generally facilitated by an open and receptive environment that encourages diverse or heterodox views, fostering the evolution and eventual change in the dominant paradigm. In this complex landscape, planning practitioners find themselves at a crossroads, needing to balance the adoption of new, inclusive paradigms while mitigating the risks of polarization and conflict that could emerge from these shifts.

Moreover, the study calls attention to a noticeable migration from traditional liberal paradigms to a critical social justice perspective. This paradigm values a multiplicity of context-dependent truths and recognizes the pervasive role of power dynamics and systemic factors in shaping urban landscapes. Nevertheless, this shift is not without its troubles. It beckons a careful consideration of potential drawbacks, many of which are discussed in section 5.4.

It is important to note that the conclusions drawn within this thesis should be approached with a measure of caution due to several prominent limitations in its methodology. While the inductive approach allows for a nuanced exploration grounded in real-world insights, it also harbours the risk of extrapolating broader trends from a relatively narrow pool of opinions. The confines of this study, shaped by logistical and financial constraints, have primarily focused on the insights of planning professors within institutions located in Ontario. Although necessary for the structure of the current research, this focus hints at the expansive potential for future research that embraces a broader spectrum of perspectives, including those of students, administrative staff, and professionals operating in both public and private sectors. Such an expanded approach would not only offer a more nuanced view of the trends shaping academic planning but also provide a more rigorous examination of the claims articulated in this thesis, ultimately enhancing the strength and reliability of the findings presented.

Furthermore, a broader geographical scope and a more extensive pool of expert interviews could significantly bolster the robustness of future studies, offering a more well-rounded and substantiated insight into the evolving landscape of academic planning. Recognizing the preliminary nature of this exploration, it holds an inherent call to action for a deeper, more extensive inquiry that embraces a broader spectrum of data sources, geographical boundaries, and expert opinions.

As scholars and professionals navigate forward, this thesis serves as a clarion call, urging the community to approach these nascent findings with a critical yet open lens. The road ahead beckons a collaborative effort, fostering a rich, multidimensional dialogue that is inclusive and reflective of the multifaceted realities that shape urban development and planning. In doing so,

it aims to cultivate a scholarly landscape that is not only receptive to evolving paradigms but is also grounded in robust empirical evidence, steering towards a future that is adaptive, sustainable, and inclusive, with a fortified commitment to nurturing social justice, equity, and diversity in urban landscapes globally.

In conclusion, this exploration acts as a magnifying glass over the resilient, evolving nature of academic planning, revealing both its potential and the hurdles that lie ahead. As we move forward, planning professionals and scholars are called upon to engage deeply with these complex discourses, critically evaluating their practices while fostering social justice, inclusivity, and diversity. This engagement must not only champion the positives but also actively address the negatives, fostering a practice that is truly reflective and adaptive to the multifaceted realities of contemporary urban development, thereby ensuring a future that is not only sustainable and inclusive but also grounded, realistic, and prepared to navigate the complexities of a changing world.

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