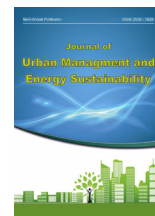


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Conceptualizing of power in urban planning theories

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ABSTRACT

In the current literature of social and political theories, power is regarded as one of the most controversial dynamics and a unique feature of social systems. Throughout the urban planning context, power is depicted as the interrelationship between urban planning policies and the accumulation as well as circulation of capital. The importance of this process comes from the distribution of capital in support of social justice, while power is a critical factor that influences planners' decisions in the way of applying urban resources. As a result of power relations which reproduced along with each planning decision making, democratic and rational decisions may be restricted in many cases, making it difficult to alter or modify these frameworks. Therefore, it is imperative to understand the impact of different power types as a main source of power relations, to comprehend urban planning decision-making thoroughly. This article presents fundamental research using a descriptive-explanatory methodology with qualitative content analysis that is mapped chronologically to provide a comprehensive analysis of the types of power that influence urban planning. To accomplish this goal, the article presents different types of power definitions and explanations. Following that, a complete classification of powers will be interpreted, and seven types of power will be examined at various levels of urban society. Furthermore, the last part analyzes how these seven types are embodied and conceptualized in the evolution of contemporary urban planning theories.

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INTRODUCTION

According to social scientists, power has a crucial and highly contested role to play (Westin, 2022; Clegg and Haugaard, 2009). From a normative perspective, there is controversy over how power is defined, studied, and used. The first step to discussing power is to define it in terms of social systems and related theories. In social science, a social system can be defined as a group of people in a community who are bound by standard norms to act together. Societal sets establish patterns of resource dominance and allocation. This process results in components and individuals interacting and reciprocating (Lukes, 2005; Mohammadian and Sandil, 2020). According to Vale (2014), among the three characteristics of social systems, the structures of dominance including the flow of power, institutional resources, and patterns of authority in social systems, are directly related to power.

The theorizing of the contested power concept began in ancient times. In contemporary times, various philosophers such as Gaventa (1982), Mann (1986), Clegg (1989), and Giddens (1984) have expressed diverse opinions about the definition of the concept of power and have explained multiple forms of it. One sentence that summarizes everything about power is that: power is the ability to influence outcomes (Morris, 1987), or in other words, it can exist as the capacity needed to mobilize and equip the resources to achieve a definite goal. Therefore, one can obtain these resources and power in his possession and use them to mobilize and equip resources in a specific manner. Thus, in the conceptual framework of power, a large part of the resources is at the disposal of actors and agents who act to their self-interest and benefit. That is to say; through the dominant power, the main actors have controlled social system capacities in line with their personal goals (Parsons, 1963). It is nevertheless important to note that Michel Foucault's theory of power represents a pivotal moment in modern understandings of power. As opposed to traditional views in which pow-

er is centralized and rises from the top down, Foucault believed that power rises from the bottom up and is present wherever dominance is concentrated (Moghadam and Rafieian, 2019). A dominant practical definition of power has been provided by Avelino (2017); in this regard, she argues that power is the capacity to influence the process of events' occurrence, including their results.

As a result of multidimensional definitions, power has been perceived in various ways, contributing to its incoherence and ambiguity, particularly when coupled with contradictory and paradoxical applications (see Clegg & Haugaard, 2009). Additionally, there needs to be an integrated conceptualization of power relations across the various streams of definitions of power. The question of power relations is one of the most contentious topics in discussions of power. First, power relations are introduced as processes; among them, power has the ability and capacity to manage and mobilize resources and people that can be used as a dominating potential to the same extent (exercising power over them). This defined power can be distinguished into two categories with different functions. Moreover, when debates revolve around power that is considered a relationship and capacity, by taking a flexible approach, it can be viewed both as an asset and an application, as well as a phenomenon produced in interactions. The socialization process creates power to through the acceptance of certain behaviors and understandings by actors. However, power entails getting others to act in ways they would not normally do (Westin, 2022). In other words, the required capacity to mobilize and equip resources can include an action (power to) that inherently includes definite levels of control beyond these resources (power over) (Hayward & Lukes, 2008). As a result, the point at which this type is considered will depend on the research topic's epistemological capacity. Accordingly, power can be regarded as originating from the relationship between people and

their surroundings, which can be both tangible (material) and intangible (ideal). Alternatively, this view asserts that power plays a significant role in society and influences its structural characteristics. As Stone states, the concerns of the power struggle are not only the control, domination, and regulation of social systems but also the acquisition of social capacities for action, which can be called power (Stone, 1998).

Based on above, this article examines how power is conceptualized in various urban planning theories considering the multiple dimensions and types of power definitions; in defining identity and structuring residents' lives, it is imperative to fully understand power as a controller transcending the form and function of public spaces. As Lefebvre argues, space, especially the space of the modern city, which is rational and functional concerning planning, is a value production. Therefore, according to this opinion, the urban planning process is influenced by dominant values, ideals and priorities. Therefore, power relations should not only be added to and constructed within the conceptual framework of planning (Forester, 1989; Healy, 1997; Friedman, 1998) but also considered in a given context, place, time and scale according to the issues. As John Forester states about the importance of this issue in planning, if planners understand how power relations work with the structure of planning processes, they can improve the quality of their analyses and be more successful in empowering citizens in society. (Forester, 2009) The central questions revolve around the identification of effective power types within various theories of urban planning and the exploration of their mechanisms of action. Specifically, we seek to understand how different power types manifest and interact within these diverse theoretical frameworks. The primary objective of this article is to delineate the types of effective power present in contemporary urban planning theories. These power types are grounded in three fundamental categories: material, institutional, and discourse. Additionally, we introduce sup-

plementary types that enrich our understanding of power dynamics. Furthermore, our analysis aims to achieve the following:

1- Interplay of Power Types:

- By examining how different power types intersect, we gain insights into their combined influence. Understanding their interrelationships is crucial for effective urban planning.
- We explore how material power, institutional power, and discourse power interact, shaping decision-making processes and policy outcomes.

2- Balancing Perspectives:

- Our investigation delves into both positive and negative aspects of each power type. Recognizing their potential benefits and drawbacks allows for a nuanced understanding.
- We acknowledge that power operates in a tight, reciprocal relationship—where one type's strength may complement or counter-balance another.

Finally, the framework presented in the discussion and results section of the article will reflect the outcomes of the stages involved in identifying and analyzing these types of power. This framework stands as the primary innovation of this paper and contributes significantly to our knowledge of the subject matter. In summary, this paper contributes to a deeper comprehension of the intricate dynamics between power types in urban planning theories. To create a foundation for this understanding, this paper will attempt to conceptualize the seven defined types in contemporary urban planning theories. Nevertheless, first, it must be recognized that the concept of power, regardless of its definition, form, or context, is structured by types. These types will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Types of Power

The concept of power, like many other social phenomena, has different types that will be associated with different layers of society. However, power relations are generally limited to a po-

sition of authority based on institutional, legal, and organizational positions. The institutional type is the most fundamental part of applying power. This type, however, is the only one that will be presented in one of society's layers and exist in combination with other types through a comprehensive perspective, such as the one presented in this article, which suggests that power will manifest itself within relationships.

As a general rule, power has been considered a unified structure and, ultimately, a division between government and capital. According to Steven Lukes (2005), who is directly influenced by Robert Dahl (1957), there will be three types of power: the first type, material power, is possessed and applied by an individual or a group. It is, therefore, highly actor-oriented at this point. In the second type, institutional power, the inclusion of legal and institutional tendencies will be considered. Finally, another aspect of power will show itself in instructing collective regulations. Non-decision-making, so in this state, is using power to eliminate, filter or change what has been identified and what has been ignored in political processes (see Bachrach & Baratz, 1962; Haugaard, 2002). As part of this second type, actors still use structures to exercise their power. These two types assume that power is primarily used and distributed to facilitate decision-making processes, thus leading to conflict and opposition. While Lukes (2005) has also identified these two types of power, in which a much more behavioral perspective (or actor-oriented) is prominent. As a result of his investigations, it has been concluded that the third type has been identified. Power in the third type is called discursive power, and it will be more scattered and presented everywhere. In this case, power takes its legitimacy from normative assumptions (Lukes, 2005). This type is precisely about what is right, wrong, clear, necessary, or acceptable according to social norms determined by ideology (Figure 1).

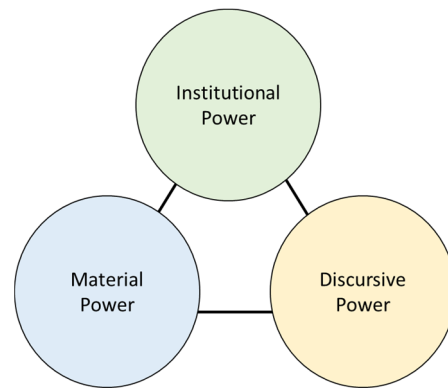


Figure 1: Three main types of power

1. Material Power (MP)

Material power is defined as a capital-orientation relation of power, as the distribution of a specific source such as energy or financial capital. In this type of power, certain actors take actions and measures that would not be possible for others (see Ahlborg & Nightingale, 2018; Boonstra, 2016; Chaigneau et al., 2019). In other words, material power signifies the flow of structures and interests that exist exclusively for specific individuals within a society. Therefore, this type will give these actors a special privilege, and directly impact the material life of ordinary people.

On the one hand, in this type of power, having a certain amount of each material resource is subject to a degree of interest directly related to developing and producing services and facilities for various members of society. Therefore, these assets and their benefits have created a competitive advantage and an opportunity for owners to promote their profits through construction and more production. Consequently, this asset will bring public benefits for them. Nevertheless, on the other hand, in this power, dominance and having an excellent source of capital can be considered a factor in strengthening the monopoly of that source. According to the definition of material power, access to specific resources only for specific actors creates the necessary opportunity and capacity for the exploitation of resource owners only at the expense of the rest

of society, ultimately resulting in inequality, imbalance, and a lack of flexibility. In this regard, the presence of power in a situation where risks are unevenly distributed for various groups will lead to the inadequacy of resources necessary to create economic justice and security.

2. Institutional Power (IP)

Institutional forms of power will emerge in control mechanisms according to what actors have the discretion to do and act. This type of power will lead to the realization of expected results in the behavior of a system and the distribution of rights, benefits and privileges. Institutional forms of power are expressed in formal decision-making environments as part of the governance and management process, and is embodied in procedures, rules and regulations, sanctions, policies, work manuals and programs (Daw et al, 2016). The main issue in these forms is control and supervision and their purpose is to determine and adjust resource instructions as well as compile guidelines for decision-making paths (Avelino, 2017; Lukes, 2005).

This type of power's supervisory and control role is one of the most critical challenges and potential downsides. By creating top-down management systems based on bias, concentration, and lack of dispersion, a kind of totalitarian power will be crystallized by the accumulation of different rents. Naturally, this feature adversely affects accessing resources and information within this rigid structure. Moreover, participation by actors in other fields will face significant obstacles beyond the field of management. One of the most critical negative consequences is access to inaccurate information based on distorted communication and analysis. Misinformation like this underpins the moral and political evaluation of actions and measures. These results are the basis for facing threats, especially the systematic definition of political, rational and social communication (Forester, 2009). Misinformation can also lead to a lack of proper participation by individuals and severe damage to the public trust ratio. The

moral consequences of this will bring far more fatal blows to the body of non-democratic systems (see Stein & Harper, 2012). Alternatively, positive results would be likely in contrast if this power was distributed and arranged in a balanced and equal manner within a network rather than centralized. These consequences will be created, such as the presence of various actors and the diversity of ideas and decisions. This crucial issue will lead to a multiplicity of attitudes in policymaking and management of knowledge and information for all. In this case, the legal system's structure will be a barrier to creating rent.

3. Discursive Power (DP)

This type of power manifests in values, norms, and, in general, society's sense of itself. As such, discourse's power influences how systematically people's various needs at all levels (comprehensive and limited) can be recognized. According to Bourdieu's definition of hegemony, such power is determined by how dominant ideas about a particular phenomenon are framed (see Navarrete & Pelling, 2015). For example, the fact that people various values aspects differently will be embodied in the intangible (or hidden) part of power (Wieland et al., 2016). Furthermore, this characteristic emphasizes the importance of the subjectivity debate in this type of power. It refers to the effects of power on the mental meanings and interpretations of individuals, in the construction of which values will play a fundamental role.

Considering contextualism is the key to this type. The values emanating from the core of society will be rooted in its culture and customs and show a high degree of adaptability. Alignment in line with this power will make people's acceptance of various policies and decisions more realistic and believable. In addition, it will bring any action and measure closer to practice. In addition to all the advantages of contextualism, there are challenges, such as impenetrability and immeasurable changes over extended periods, even in the most optimistic state. These

changes will be in the fundamental dimensions of the society's culture (based on its unique characteristics). It will demonstrate some degree of adaptability and flexibility to confront both contemporary and modern phenomena as well as short- and long-term changes with criticism or even crisis.

Power and urban Planning

Planning theories with the process and product-oriented approaches and foresight features have provided a proper context for shaping and fostering the territorial texture at various scales. Regardless of their various definitions, these theories have always been influenced by power orientations during their formation periods (see Allmendinger, 2009; Friedmann, 1998; Taylor, 1998). In planning, these orientations usually result in a particular approach and content. Various individuals and scholars have divided the historical periods of planning theory based on the specific feature of those periods (see Fainstein, 2005; Hudson et al., 1979; Sweeney, 2005; Taylor, 1998). The primary planning theories were product-oriented, and "planning devoted itself to producing the desired object" (Fainstein, 2005). It should have paid more specific attention to its preparation and formation process. The beginning of process orientations in planning can be observed in the early twentieth century when some attention was attracted towards the process of approaching planning (see Fainstein, 2005). In the following, four of their most crucial planning approach are discussed to examine the impact of power and its type on desired planning based on paradigmatic urban planning categories (Mashhadi Moghadam and Rafieian, 2019, Alikaei and Amin Zadeh Gohar Rizi, 2019). The planning approach are discussed chronologically, and they cover the entire planning period to date.

1. Rational Comprehensive Planning

Rational comprehensive planning can be proposed as the starting point of other planning theories (1920- 1960). In this period, a significant historical event, World War II (1939-1945),

played a significant role in forming this kind of planning (both at the national and urban levels); The outbreak of war and its aftermath, economic crises and the destructions as well as devastations of cities paved the way for the presence of governments under the pretext of controlling and organizing affairs (Esmailpour et al., 2021). Consequently, governments have become more involved in society than in the past. This form of government, with the aim of further intervening in affairs, "adopts a new political agenda based on the expansion and increase of governmental responsibilities" (Taylor, 1998), known as the "welfare state".

As mentioned, this planning is known as rational planning due to applied rationality in this theory. A scientific approach to rationality disregards individual and social preferences, norms, and beliefs, favoring logic and wisdom (Faludi, 1973; Friedmann, 1987). In this approach, due to the focus on uncompromising instrumentation and technocracy, other abstract and non-scientific knowledge (such as personal knowledge, social or human values, social and cultural structure and ideas and norms) was declared as rejected, and only knowledge separate from any value is justified.

This means that material power and the impact of society's values and the normative system will not play a role in the rational decision-making process and the evaluation of the policies adopted in this type of planning. Therefore, this type of planning theory shows the negative manifestations of institutional power.

Planners, in this theory, are considered to be a combination of experts and technicians, and they consider themselves more rational than others. Accordingly, the planner analyzes the conditions, explains the process and specifies the obstacles to achieving the goals. Then, by comparing the solutions, selecting and implementing the appropriate solution can evaluate its achievements (see Frank, 2006; Taylor, 1998). Therefore, the main task of urban planners is to produce a "blueprint plan" without popular par-

ticipation and in a bottom-up approach. It was in line with the primary orientation of the political and institutional power of the government and the main goal to enrich institutional needs. In addition, such a blueprint plan should contain as clear, well-defined, determining details as possible. Therefore, it can be acknowledged that the impact of this view on urban planning was a kind of physical planning and design of human settlements which urban planners have considered for many years. This view is expected in many parts of the world, especially in developing countries.

2. Systematical Planning

In the 1960s, the advent of systems theory led to urban planning to be able to look at urban issues in a new and stronger theoretical language. Using the mentioned theory in urban planning led to perceiving the “urban” as a system. Therefore, if the urban can be a system, it takes the responsibility of urban planning to control and plan this system (see Chadwick, 1971; McLoughlin, 1969; Taylor, 1998). The scope of system planning was broader than comprehensive planning; therefore, the requirement for more specialized “planners” who are trained in economic and social analysis and understand how cities operate was felt. The mastery of urban models contributed to the arrogance of planners under systematic planning. They believed they could now plan and control whatever happened in the city (see McLoughlin, 1969). This view considers physical criteria and broader social, economic, organizational, and so on by criticizing the traditional approach. Accordingly, urban planning has shifted from more physical activity to a focus on social decision-making processes. In this type of planning, the general direction and goals are determined by institutions utilizing an up-bottom approach. Despite this, there is a significant difference between this theory and the previous approach: a kind of initiator of discourse that occurs in the planning process. However, these system planners had forgotten that “the set of human behaviors is not always reducible in

the format of a simple formula” (Allmendinger, 2009). Moreover, this initiative has a patriarchal shape and form, which is in its infancy. The difference would be apparent when addressing the social and physical needs of people due to the complexities of urban society and the presence of various social factors in direct relation to urban residents (Moss Reimers & Barbuto, 2002).

3. Social Planning

The 1960s can be considered a transition and turning period from technical planning to popular and Participatory planning to address social problems (Fainstein, 2005). This type of planning named ‘Social planning’ is closely related to power relations because it involves the allocation of resources and the distribution of benefits and burdens among different groups in society. Social planners must be aware of the power dynamics that exist within communities and how they can affect the planning process. They must also be sensitive to the needs and concerns of different groups and work to ensure that their voices are heard (Hamilton and Sharma, 1996). During this period, some theories like the ‘advocacy’ theory, the ‘Just City’ Theory, the ‘Right to the City’ theory, etc., were among the essential social planning activities that significantly impacted the planning theories.

Advocacy planning is a theory of urban planning that was formulated in the 1965 by Paul Davidoff. It is a pluralistic and inclusive planning theory where planners seek to represent the interests of various groups within society, particularly those who are not always on equal footing with the rich and powerful. Advocacy planning seeks to shift power relations in favor of marginalized groups by raising awareness, mobilizing support, and influencing decision-makers. The theory departs from the traditional top-down approach to planning, which was characterized by its authoritative and undemocratic methods, where institutions and individuals plan without first consulting the various stakeholders who are involved with the use and development of the land (Davidoff, 1965, 2015). The process of

advocacy planning involves lively political discussion and opposition to public agency which is required for a healthy democracy and a rational decision-making process.

Similar to Advocacy theory, the Just City Theory and the Right to the City are related theories that are concerned with creating socially just and equitable cities. While the Just City Theory is concerned with the power relations that exist within a city and how they affect the distribution of resources and opportunities, the Right to the City emphasizes the need for inclusivity, accessibility, and democracy in urban spaces. Both concepts aim to create cities where all citizens have equal access to resources and opportunities, regardless of their social status or background (Marcuse et al., 2009). The 'Just City' Theory by Susan Fainstein is a framework for social planning that seeks to create a city that is fair, inclusive, and equitable for all its residents. The theory is based on three central principles; equality, democracy, and diversity which emphasize the importance of creating a city where public investment and regulation would produce equitable outcomes rather than support the wealthy (Fainstein, 2000, 2014; Marcuse et al., 2009). The Just City Theory is concerned with the power relations that exist within a city and how they affect the distribution of resources and opportunities; But The theory is not only concerned with the distribution of resources but also with the distribution of power within a city. It aims to create a city where all citizens have equal access to resources and opportunities, regardless of their social status or background (Sharp et al., 2020). The Just City is an important concept in urban planning that puts the planning theorist in the role of advocate -not necessarily the advocate for a particular group, as in Davidoff's concept of advocacy planning- but as the advocate of a program. They believe that progressive social change results only from the exercise of power by those who previously had been excluded from power. Participation is the vehicle through which that power asserts

itself. For them the purpose of their vision is to mobilize a public rather than to prescribe a methodology to those in office. Participation in public decision making is part of the ideal of the just city, both because it is a worthy goal in itself and because benevolent authoritarianism is unlikely (Fainstein, 2000, 2014).

The 'Right to the City' theory, coined by Henri Lefebvre, challenges the traditional top-down approach to urban planning, which is often driven by capital and political power, and instead emphasizes the importance of participatory and inclusive processes that involve all urban dwellers, regardless of their social status, to participate in shaping the city. It is about the rights of the excluded and marginalized to be part of the production of the city, to have a say in how the city is developed, and to have access to the resources and services that the city provides (Domaradzka, 2018). The right to the city fundamentally challenges existing power relations and the deep roots of the capitalist system that drive urban development and the production of urban space, including social, political, and economic relations (Harvey, 2015). It is not egalitarian or universal, for the world's elite and wealthy already have power over, and access to, the city. Instead, here the right is something owed and demanded by those alienated and marginalized from hierarchical socioeconomic and sociopolitical life (Mousie, 2023). Urban planning and design that is based on the right to the city theory is more democratic, inclusive, and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the urban dwellers. The right to the city is not just a right to access urban resources, but also a right to change the city by changing ourselves, and to exercise collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization.

The vital point in this type of theories is that by creating people-oriented and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the discursive values entered into the planning and the orientation of investments to help people becomes the goal of this type of planning (Loghman et al., 2019). So-

cial planning, which emerges as a staunch critic of rational planning, tries to change the up-bottom and stern look of government and management to bottom-up approaches. Furthermore, in the debate for planning, both popular discourse and material and capital influences are present. Here, for the first time, popular values and opinions from one point and material orientations from the other became important. Therefore, new concepts such as community-based and empowerment of people entered into planning theories (Friedmann, 1998). In the role of negotiator and facilitator, the planner tries to communicate with upstream levels to produce the expected outputs in the form of specific designs.

4. Transactive Planning

Transactive planning is an effort to bridge the gap between the planner's technical knowledge and the community's local knowledge that originated with Jürgen Habermas writing in 1981 on the theory of communicative action based on communicative rationality (Huxley and Yiftachel, 2000; Purcell, 2009; Healey, 2006). This type of rationality is based on human communication and dialogue between planners and the people affected by planning (Kinyashi, 2006). In this process, Habermas identified "power" as a factor that distorts communicative actions and proposed the norms for an ideal speech situation that is free of distortion and characterized by openness and the absence of oppression (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger, 1998; Adams, 2006); so, based on Foucault's conception of power, Habermas' view on power neutralization does not adequately consider the practical context of power relations and pays insufficient attention to the political and power-laden interests of various stakeholders involved in the planning process (Forester, 2001, 1999b, 1989b; Throgmorton, 1996, cited in Tiesdell and Adams, 2004). So, in an alternative sense, two concepts were developed: "power over" and "power to": The authority that individuals, bodies or organizations retain to perform specific duties constitutes "power over" whilst the "power to"

covers the resource base of organizations (human resources, finances, and equipment); the action of agents has the transformative capacity and power has a duality of structure thus all forms of dependence offer some resources whereby those who are subordinate can influence the activities of those who are in a superior position (Giddens, 1984; Healey, 2007; Njoh, 2007; Bryson and Crosby, 2006). The intersection implies that communicative turn should take place in a world where power is shared equally among all stakeholders. This means that planning policy processes should be carried out in a context where all actors are neutralized by power-sharing.

Friedmann (1973) identifies the process of power-sharing as transactive planning where the planner contributes to concepts, theories, analyses, new perspectives, and systematic procedures, while the client contributes to in-depth knowledge of the context (local knowledge), realistic alternatives, norms, priorities, objective, feasibility assessment, and operational details. The recognition here is that whilst all stakeholders should be engaged in the transactive planning process, local communities are of primary importance as a source of emotive or experiential knowledge, and are the owners of the planning problem. Nevertheless, they often lack power (authoritative, allocative or discursive legitimacy) and require an appropriate structure empowering them to participate (Taufiq et al., 2021). Therefore, the contemporary understanding suggests that communicative action need not avoid power but accept and handle power to benefit the planning purpose. This involves mobilizing power to create a network and benefitting from those networks to generate new ideas and empowering communities to own both problems and solutions.

In that sense, theories such as 'communicative theory', 'argumentative theory', 'collaborative theory' and 'deliberative theory' can empower the community to change or shape their outcome (see Forester, 1987a, 1987b, 1989,

1993; Healey, 1992, 1996, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 1999; Innes, 1995, 1998; Innes & Booher, 1999, 2000a, 2000b). All these theories draw heavily upon Habermas's idea that democracy should revolve around transformation rather than the simple aggregation of preferences and identify transactive planning as "A collective decision making with the participation of all those who will be affected by the decision or their representatives [and] decision making by arguments offered by and to participants who are committed to the values of rationality and impartiality" (Yang, 2022). Nevertheless, here it is also worth mentioning the danger in the ambush, which Forester (1987b) names as misinformation, which can be present in all planning done with people. This type of planning may lead to the dissemination of misinformation that can lead to decisions that favor a more robust body (both institutionally and materially). This negative potential is expected the planners to be able to neutralize in the process of preparing a plan in favor of people to prevent the formation of the negative manifestation of power.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A deeper understanding of how power is conceptualized in urban planning theories is provided in this article. A conceptual framework based on applying various types of power is necessary to achieve this goal. This article presents fundamental research using a descriptive-explanatory methodology with qualitative content analysis that is mapped chronologically. The descriptive- explanatory method is a research methodology that is used to study a particular phenomenon (Imbeau et al., 2021); to survey concepts and theories related to power relations in urban planning descriptive research method was used. This method aims to systematically and accurately describe a situation, phenomenon, or concept and can answer questions such as what, where, when, and how, but not why. It is an appropriate choice when the research aim is to identify characteristics, frequencies,

trends, and categories by answering questions such as what, where, when, and how but not why (Siedlecki, 2020). The explanatory research method, on the other hand, was used to explain why power relations are necessary to be applied in urban planning. This method is used to investigate how or why a phenomenon takes place. In this case, the researcher is trying to identify the causes and effects of whatever phenomenon is being studied. Therefore, while there is often data available about the topic, this type of research can investigate particular causal relationships interested in has not been robustly studied (Baskerville and Pries-Heje, 2010). Regarding the research methodology, data were collected through qualitative content analysis of library resources and scientific articles related to the subject (nouri and alikaei, 2022) and then use chronological method to examine how these characteristics have changed over time (Hamilton and Krus, 2018).

Accordingly, seven types of power will be inferred and analyzed at the outset based on the sources mentioned. This presentation is one of the article's highlights and innovations. Following that, a refinement of the types presented in the evolution process of contemporary urban planning theories is made. As a result, a conceptual model for incorporating power types into these theories is developed.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

In the realm of urban planning, understanding the dynamics of power has always played a crucial role. The complex nature of power dynamics is emphasized by the interdependence and reciprocal impact of power dimensions. This phenomenon is not confined to the field of urban planning but extends to larger social systems as well. The interconnectedness of power dimensions stands as a fundamental attribute of these systems, highlighting the intricate and interconnected nature of power relations. As previously stated, power has been predominantly seen as a hierarchical and instrumental tool wielded

by a single authority in a top-down fashion. However, contemporary planning theories have embraced a more progressive outlook, aiming to distribute power among diverse stakeholders by emphasizing a process rooted in communicative rationality. This perspective acknowledges the interconnected nature of power and recognizes how its various dimensions mutually influence each other. Furthermore, power has been a fundamental element within the framework of social exchange theory, which is highly applicable to organizational contexts. Within social exchange, the individuals or groups involved, referred to as actors, can encompass both individual persons and collective entities such as teams or organizations. This underscores the interconnectedness of power dimensions within social systems (Barlow and Tietze, 2001; Baldwin, 2009). Drawing from an extensive literature review and an exploration of power dynamics in urban planning, it becomes evident that power dimensions, like other characteristics of social systems, are interdependent and mutually influential. In addition to the three main types of power previously discussed, this interconnectedness further underscores the intricate nature of power relations within urban planning and broader societal contexts.

Overlapping dimensions of three main types of power -Material Power (MP); Institutional Power (IP); and Discursive Power (DP)- create different types of power that can manifest positively or negatively within society, depending on the context in which they are manifested: Material-Institutional Power (MIP); Material-Discursive Power (MDP); Institutional-Discursive Power (IDP) and Material-Institutional-Discursive Power (MIDP). These four types of power will extend beyond the main types and will be introduced and discussed exclusively in the rest of the article as research findings (Figure 2). These additional types of power play a crucial role in the evolution and transformation of urban planning theories, constituting one of the most significant concepts in the procedural

framework of these theories. For further clarification, each of these four added types of power can be described as follows:

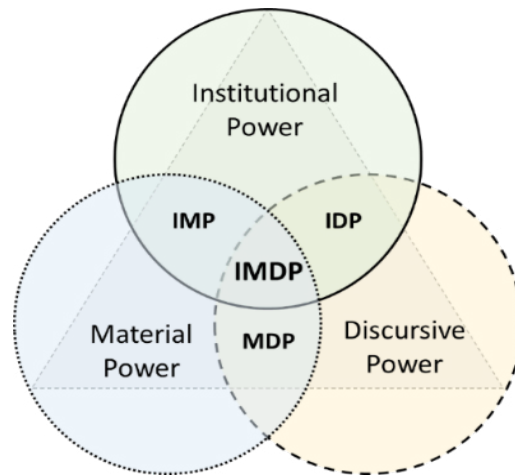


Figure 2: Four types of power based on three main types of power

1- Material-Discursive Power (MDP): This will be established by combining resources, capital, and their owners in the core of society; in other words, it will contemplate the distribution and dispersion of capital among different strata of society (Dusdal & JwPowell, 2021). The “material” aspect refers to the tangible resources, such as land, buildings, infrastructure, and other physical elements of the urban environment. These resources are often controlled by those with economic power, and their distribution and use can significantly impact the structure and function of urban spaces (Orlikowski & Scott, 2015). The “discursive” aspect refers to the ways in which language, communication, and shared understandings shape our perception of the urban environment. This includes the narratives, ideologies, and discourses that influence how urban spaces are designed, used, and experienced (Holford, 2020). As a result of this combination, the spheres of authority and capacities of various strata will be determined by whether these resources are present, which is proposed as a critical element in the definition of social structure. Material resources and their distribution in a society are considered a

form of wealth accumulation in their most basic form. It will be associated with significant results, such as facilitating access to resources and using them for development and innovation at the service level. Therefore, it is desirable to increase the capacity and ability to deal with all types of crises and changes to ensure a proper and balanced distribution of these resources and material capital whilst also promoting the welfare conditions of society.

In contrast, the disproportionate capital distribution among various strata will create class differences or gaps. These gaps undermine the quality of service delivery and welfare and produce negative social results in segregation, social exclusion, and inevitable inequality among the various social strata. Moreover, the imbalance of power and conflict will also negatively impact the ratio of public consensus by creating competition and militancy among the capitalist strata.

In the context of urban planning, MDP is particularly relevant as it acknowledges the entangled nature of tacit knowledge in regards to individuals or groups who possess and act it out. Under such conditions, these technologies act as enhancers of tacit knowledge creation and re-constructions within the groups or individuals in question. For example, in the field of housing research, the critical potential of MDP enables researchers to investigate emerging issues of power and resistance (Shirazi, 2023). It allows us to recognize the importance of categories as temporary 'snapshots' or states of affairs. Thus, MDP in urban planning underscores the importance of both material resources and discursive practices in shaping urban spaces. It provides a nuanced understanding of the power dynamics at play in urban planning, highlighting the complex interplay between material resources and discursive practices. Thus, Material-Discursive Power can be seen in social planning theory that was rooted in the knowledge of local people, often known as "informal" planning. The critical point in this type of planning theory is that by creating people-oriented organizations and

non-governmental associations, they opened the door to discursive values in planning and the direction of investments for helping people is among the goals of this type of planning.

2- Institutional - Discursive Power (IDP): In urban planning it refers to the interplay between institutional structures and discourses in shaping urban environments. In this kind of power organizations and discourses become a management and governmental approach. The "institutional" aspect refers to the formal and informal rules, norms, and procedures that govern how decisions are made and implemented in the urban planning process (Todes, 2011; Schmidt, 2010). These institutions can include government bodies, planning agencies, laws, regulations, and policies. The "discursive" aspect refers to the ways in which language, communication, and shared understandings shape our perception of the urban environment (De Frantz, 2013; Kim, 2012). This includes the narratives, ideologies, and discourses that influence how urban spaces are designed, used, and experienced. For this type of power to thrive, it is crucial to understand the situation and put it into practice. The discourse and values manage the institution it receives from society, as well as the support, belief, and trust it gains from the people (as the representative of these types of discourse). On the one hand, the institutional-discursive power, by taking advantage of the prevailing discourse of society and applying recognizable dialogues, constitutes its primary source of power (see Forester, 1982, 1987a; Healey, 1992, 1996). Conversely, since institutional biases and orientations align with society's discourse, this power increases people's abilities and fosters trust between them. In its positive aspect, this kind of power can be known as similar to the concept of the "public sphere", which Habermas (1991) theorizes. Habermas's theory of communicative action emphasizes that actors in society seek to achieve shared understanding about actions through contentious debate, agreement, and cooperation (Habermas,

1991). This kind of action is where Habermas puts forward the rationality of communication and dialogue. However, Habermas emphasizes the distortion of the truth (Habermas, 1992), and at this moment, the undesirable aspects of discursive-institutional power become apparent.

Thus the institutional- discursive power, in the words of Habermas (1992), distorts the truth or, in the words of Forester (1982), transmits misinformation to the members of a society, creating a kind of “hegemony” in that society. On the negative aspect of this type of power, institutions make their approach to social relations highly pervasive that it can become “the only accepted mentality” for individuals in society. Those who are dominated and accept this attitude as part of a “natural order” and take it for granted without any reason, can be mentioned as the owners of this power. By this kind of narrative, although power has overcome from the up (institution) to the bottom (discourse), it considers the various levels of society as a way of following its values and norms. At the same time, they do not remember or feel that the leading institution has manipulated this discourse.

In the context of urban planning, IDP is particularly relevant as it acknowledges the role of both institutions and discourses in shaping urban spaces. For instance, policy-making institutions with a bottom-up approach play a role in systematic planning, which views the city as a system. This approach is determinant for the overall path and goals of planning. However, its main difference from the previous approach is in proposing the people’s needs and basically the social dimensions along with the physical goals, which is the initiator of the presence of discourse in the planning process. Based on above, the effect of Institutional-Discursive Power, of its positive type, can be observed, at least in system planning theory; in Systematical Planning that has wider dimensions than comprehensive one, the “city” is looked like a system. In this type of planning, there is a role

of policy-making institutions with a bottom-up approach. This approach is determinant for the overall path and goals of planning. However, its main difference from the previous approach is in proposing the people’s needs and basically the social dimensions along with the physical goals, which is the initiator of the presence of discourse in the planning process.

3 - Institutional - Material Power (IMP): This kind of power refers to the interplay between material resources and institutional structures in shaping urban spheres. The “material” aspect refers to the tangible resources, such as land, buildings, infrastructure, and other physical elements of the urban environment. These resources are often controlled by those with economic power, and their distribution and use can significantly impact the structure and function of urban spaces (Kim, 2012). The “institutional” aspect refers to the formal and informal rules, norms, and procedures that govern how decisions are made and implemented in the urban planning process. These institutions can include government bodies, planning agencies, laws, regulations, and policies (Pavon et al, 2024). It has always been discussed from the political economics point of view and in some noticeable perspectives such as Marx (1867), Lefebvre (1976), Harvey (1985) and Foucault (1977); because the dominant power in the society usually uses the economic leverage of capital as well as the legal tools of management for its controlling character and shape the social intentions (Huchzermeyer, 2018).

One of the essential aspects of Institutional-Material power is that if there is a legal framework and the implementation of restrictive capital laws, it leads to the systematic distribution of capital at the societal level. In a way, everyone benefits from the advantages of capital. Positively, capital tends to move in the direction of institutional objectives. Essentially, it is an institution that determines how to take capital within the confines of established laws and regulations.

Other features of Institutional-Material power are institutional management by planning the housing and public facilities, transportation, communications, land use and the like, which will create a kind of spatial framework to realize the profitability goals of capital (see Harvey, 1985; Zieleniec, 2007). With the allocations made, investments can be pursued through institutions, thus enabling investors to avoid direct engagement with the society. The upcoming arrangement will benefit both investors and management institutions. Therefore, a kind of political-economic rent is formed. The use and protection of institutions and capital is often presented as a matter of public interest and centered on the personal interests of the holder (Muchadenyika & Williams, 2017). In this form of Institutional-Material power, laws and policies are arranged in line with capital and management, and in one sentence, the survival of capitalism is fulfilled (see Lefebvre, 1976). In the context of urban planning, IMP is particularly relevant as it acknowledges the role of both material resources and institutional structures in shaping urban spaces. For instance, the dominant power in society usually uses the economic leverage of capital as well as the legal tools of management for its controlling character and shape the social intentions. As mentioned above, the effect of Institutional-Discursive Power, can be observed in rational comprehensive planning theory; Moreover, if there is a legal framework and the implementation of restrictive capital laws, it leads to the systematic distribution of capital at the societal level. In a way, everyone benefits from the advantages of capital. Positively, capital tends to move in the direction of institutional objectives. Essentially, it is an institution that determines how to take capital within the confines of established laws and regulations.

4 - Institutional - Material - Discursive Power (IMDP): This kind of power in urban planning is a comprehensive concept that encompasses all three main bases of power formation:

material resources, discursive practices, and institutional structures. It may be considered the most significant as the only type of power that encompasses all three main bases of power formation. The “material” aspect refers to the tangible resources, such as land, buildings, infrastructure, and other physical elements of the urban environment. These resources are often controlled by those with economic power, and their distribution and use can significantly impact the structure and function of urban spaces (Kim, 2014). The “discursive” aspect refers to the ways in which language, communication, and shared understandings shape our perception of the urban environment. This includes the narratives, ideologies, and discourses that influence how urban spaces are designed, used, and experienced (DeFrantz, 2013). The “institutional” aspect refers to the formal and informal rules, norms, and procedures that govern how decisions are made and implemented in the urban planning process. These institutions can include government bodies, planning agencies, laws, regulations, and policies (Kim, 2014). In examining this power in one aspect, it is similar to the point Friedmann (2011) says, in the book “Insurgencies” should be regarded as: A power that enables individuals in society to do what they are interested in and flourishes popular talent and capital by universal laws (Holford, 2020). Through the interaction of conflicting interests and forces, this positive aspect of power builds a whole society and can ultimately lead to real emancipation.

Nevertheless, the other aspect of Institutional-Material-Discursive power is closer to the statements of Michel Foucault. Foucault believes this type of power can produce something accurate and the knowledge gained from it depend on this production process (Foucault, 1977). This dependence is formed in society, and the members will obey it without being aware. Power and capital regulate, monitor, and manipulate economic, political, and social performances by establishing discourse. As a result of this

process, society is ultimately transformed into a culture that leads to “everyday life” appearing and becoming the norm. Therefore, this type of power trains human beings (through the educational system such as schools and universities, and so on) to be capable, healthy, and intelligent, to behave and act by the prevailing disciplines. Foucault uses the term “docile bodies” for this issue (Foucault, 1980). The individuals of society are thus reduced to a mere gear in the capitalist processes and are forced to do precisely as the investors and developers desire. A considerable point is that the people think that they want to have this kind of discourse themselves. Since Transactive Planning emphasizes that actors seek a common understanding to conceive actions through contentious debates, agreements, and cooperation, Transactive Planning is the same orientation towards Institutional-Material-Discursive Power. In the context of urban planning, IMDP is particularly relevant as it acknowledges the role of both material resources, discursive practices, and institutional structures

in shaping urban spaces. For instance, the dominant power in society usually uses the economic leverage of capital as well as the legal tools of management for its controlling character and shape the social intentions.

Moreover, if there is a legal framework and the implementation of restrictive capital laws, it leads to the systematic distribution of capital at the societal level. In a way, everyone benefits from the advantages of capital. Positively, capital tends to move in the direction of institutional objectives. Essentially, it is an institution that determines how to take capital within the confines of established laws and regulations.

In summary, based on the explored theoretical foundations and the introduction of four additional types of power, beyond the three main types, the presence of each of these seven types can be observed in urban planning theories (figure 3). the positive and negative aspects of these seven types power and the different relations between these types and urban planning theories have been specified in table 1:

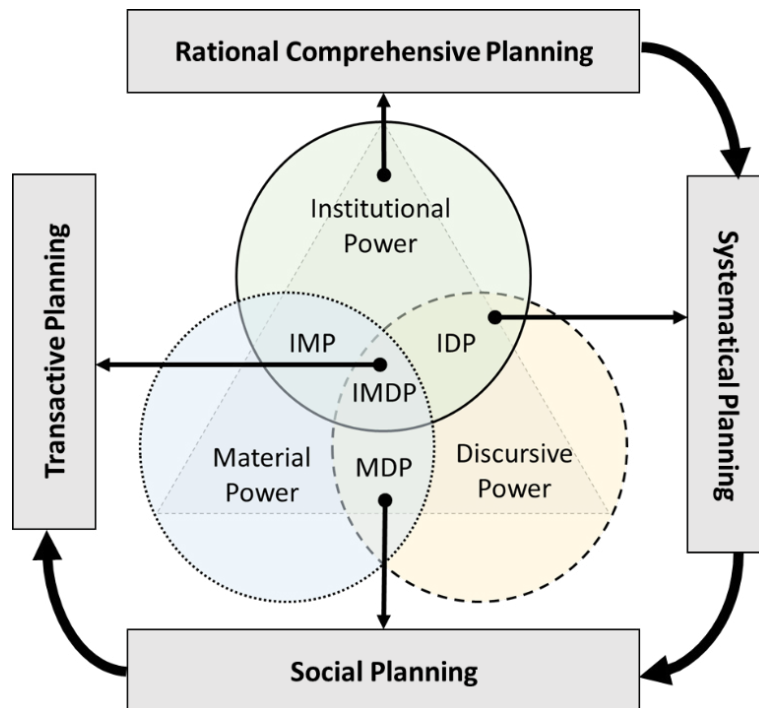


Figure 3: conceptualizing the Power in Urban Planning Theories

Table 1: Characteristics of the Seven Types of Power in relation to Urban planning theories

Planning Theory	Planner	Role of People	Type of Power	Definition	Positive Aspect	Negative Aspect
Rational Comprehensive Planning 1920-1960	All-Knowing	no role	Material Power (MP)	Having a specific source that contains specific interests for the owners	Constructing and converting personal interests into public benefits	Centralism and exclusivism
			Institutional Power (IP)	Attending at governance and management procedures and formal spaces of community leadership	Distributing network power, empowering people and the existence of various actors and numerous ideas	One-sidedness and the lack of dissemination, resulting in centralism, rent, and bottom-up orientation
			Institutional-Material Power (IMP)	Simultaneous combination of capital and management institution together	Systematization of capital distribution and the existence of specific legal frameworks for this purpose	The risk of forming a kind of political-economic rent
Systematic Planning 1960-1970	All-Knowing Technocrat	For People	Institutional-Discursive Power (IDP)	The presence of organizations and discourses together and creating a managerial and governmental approach	Using the common discourse of the society and popular dialogues in order to promoting the sense of trust among the people of the society	The risk of the existence and promotion of misinformation and the formation of power from the up (institution) to the bottom (discourse)
Social Planning 1960-1980	Lawyer - Mediator	With People	Material- Discursive Power (MDP)	How to distribute and disseminate capital among various strata of the people	Facilitating access to various resources and progress in public service delivering	Community demarcation, segregation, competition, conflict and militancy
Social Planning 1960-1980	Mediator and Facilitator	With People	Discursive Power (DP)	Hidden in the values, norms and ideological layer of society	Contextualism and improving the believability of society	Slow changes, very little impermeability and flexibility
Transactive planning 1980 -...						
Transactive planning 1980 -...	Facilitator and Negotiator	With People, for People	Institutional-Material-Discursive Power (IMDP)	The final combination of the three types of power with empowering and limiting aspects that will make capital managed and will flourish among various layers of society.	Flourishing popular and capital talents within specific legal frameworks	Intensification of dependence on management institutions and mutual bottom-up power of capital owners and legal institutions on various layers of the people, which will increase the ratio of centralism.

CONCLUSION AND RESULTS

The epistemological understanding of power in urban planning theories posits that power is not an isolated concept, but rather intricately intertwined with multiple facets of urban planning. This implies that power in urban planning is not an isolated notion but rather intricately connected to multiple facets of the field. Additionally, power has played a pivotal role in social exchange theory, which is especially applicable to organizational contexts. This concept extends beyond the mere act of decision-making. It encompasses not only who makes the decisions but also the processes through which these decisions are made. The decision-making process in urban planning involves various stakeholders, including government bodies, planning agencies, developers, and community members. The power dynamics among these stakeholders can significantly influence the outcomes of the planning process.

Who benefits from the decisions and who bears the costs are also critical aspects of power in urban planning. Decisions made in urban planning can have wide-ranging impacts, affecting everything from land use and infrastructure development to housing and transportation. These decisions can create winners and losers, with some groups benefiting more than others.

Understanding these dynamics is crucial for creating more equitable and inclusive cities. By acknowledging and addressing power imbalances in the planning process, urban planners can work towards outcomes that distribute benefits more evenly and minimize adverse impacts on disadvantaged groups.

This paper addresses the issue that various perceptions of power may lead to ambiguity and incoherence in this concept. Previously, in significant studies, similar investigations of the typology of various urban planning theories in relation to power have been conducted (See [Yiftachel, 1989](#); [Ejlali, 2009](#); [Mashhadi moghadam & rafieian, 2019](#); [Wassenhoven, 2022](#)). But the importance and innovation of this paper is

not only in the typology of types of power, but also in their conceptualization in contemporary theories of urban planning. As a result, this study provides a comprehensive understanding as well as its effectiveness of power in urban planning. One of the main challenges in this issue is the topic of power relations and how to define them, which divided the types of power relations into two general states of “power over” and “power to”. We have also found that the main issue is that power has been used mainly in the theoretical literature in the sense of social control. In contrast “conceptualizing power” has often been overlooked. For this purpose, it is necessary to know the types of power. So, seven types of power can be achieved by combining three main dimensions of institutions, material relations and discourse ([Figure 3](#)):

- **Institutional Power (IP):** Institutional forms will show their power in control methods in line with what the actors, by their discretion, can do and act about them. Institutional forms of power are expressed in formal decision-making spaces and are related to governance and management procedures. In Rational Comprehensive Planning negative manifestations of institutional power (IP) can be seen.
- **Material Power (MP):** It is defined as material power relations, as the distribution of a specific source such as energy or financial capital. This type of power also manifests its indicators in rational comprehensive planning.
- **Discursive Power (DP):** This type of power is present in values, norms and a general statement in the ordinary sense of society. In other words, the power in line with discourse to systematically influence how to recognize people's various needs will imply at all levels (broad and limited). The significance of this power in the social theories of planning, and particularly in the transactive planning theory is evident.
- **Institutional-Material Power (IMP):** It is one of the most common forms of power, especially in the modern era, where capital and management go hand in hand and take over the affairs.

- Institutional-Discourse Power (IDP): It is a type of power in which organizations and discourses become a managerial and governmental approach. In this type of power, achieving an understanding becomes the reason for the survival of that power. Therefore, the effect of institutional-discursive power (of a positive type) can be observed, at least in systematic planning theory.
- Material- Discursive Power (MDP): It will be formed in the combination of resources and capitals and their owners and the heart of society. In other words, it will consider the distribution and dissemination method of capital and material power among different strata of society. Thus, the positive manifestation of material-discursive power can be found in social planning, at least in its theoretical dimension (although this did not happen at the time of its implementation).
- Institutional - Material - Discursive Power (IMDP): Positively speaking, it is a power that enables everyone to do what they are passionate about. Despite its drawbacks, it can produce the truth, and the person and the knowledge it makes are inextricably linked to that production. Therefore, the institutional - discursive power can be seen in transactive planning theory.

Therefore, as stated, there has always been a kind of power in the context of planning theories that have led to the formation of their main intellectual core subsequent results. Therefore, proper planning can only be achieved by knowing the power structure and its negative and positive orientations. Thus, for more effectiveness of planning in society, more attention should be paid to the relationship between power and planning, and this issue should also be understood and explained better. According to the conceptualization of power in this paper, every planning process, decision-making, and action is influenced by power relations, and it is at the center of every planning discussion. As a result, planners can improve their analysis and

strategies to empower people and their social action if they understand power relations. In conclusion, this paper has explored various aspects of power in urban planning theories. As a potential avenue for future research, several topics have been suggested: The role of power in sustainable urban planning, power and participation in urban Planning, power imbalances in urban planning, the impact of power structures on urban inequality, power and policy in urban planning, conceptualizing power in digital urban planning, power dynamics in urban resilience planning, and intersectionality and power in urban planning. These are merely suggestions and starting points. Each topic could be further refined based on specific interests and the existing literature in the field. Continued exploration of these themes will undoubtedly contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of power dynamics in urban planning.

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