



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION FRAMEWORK OF
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR URBAN PLANNERS IN
MALAYSIA.***

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FRSB 2014 6



**DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION FRAMEWORK OF
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR URBAN PLANNERS IN
MALAYSIA**

By

ASHIRU BELLO

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra
Malaysia, In Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor
of Philosophy**

June, 2014



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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION FRAMEWORK OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR URBAN PLANNERS IN MALAYSIA

By

ASHIRU BELLO

June, 2014

Chair: Kamariah binti Dola, PhD

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The increasing interest in public participation can be viewed either as a failure of democracy or a complement to democracy. Inadequacy of policies relating to public participation has been identified as one of the explanations for the failure of projects and programmes relating to public participation. Pattern of professional practice (professionals being at the fore-front in designing specific operational policies) is seldom documented. The rapid transitional nature of Malaysia's development in which several development projects (such as the different components of the new nation's capital project as well as those of the Iskandar conurbation cluster and the Klang river restoration project) requiring comprehensive planning input are springing up, makes it an ideal case for examining planners' pattern of public participation evaluation and integrating it to the design of future projects. This study therefore aims at developing an evaluation framework of public participation for urban planners in Malaysia. Adapting the Laurian and Shaw approach (in studying the American planners' professional practice), the pattern of public participation evaluation is examined among Malaysian planners with the help of Malaysian Institute of Planners (MIP). Components of evaluation such as its focus and motivation, projects' characteristics as well as the engagement techniques are subsequently weighed numerically to form the basis for developing the P-SOP framework for linking planners' evaluation experiences to subsequent operational policies. This entails the scripting of defined combination syntax in PHP to be run from a locally hosted web server. The source of the script is then exported (from the client's HTML view) to a spread sheet environment through a flexible procedure that will guide subsequent operational policies in the design of participatory processes. It has been found that, planners in Malaysia do not perceive the role of the public in planning process to be mere information exchange, nor are they comfortable with the highest rungs of full project control. Although the planners were of the view that focus group discussion is the most influential method in promoting success of participatory process, the participatory processes utilizing workshops as an engagement technique, were found to produce more successful results. The P-SOP

framework that will be developed will serve as a flexible guide for subsequent design of participatory processes particularly in the choice of engagement techniques to be utilised in a particular project.



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MEMBANGUNKAN RANGKA KERJA PENILAIAN PENYERTAAN AWAM UNTUK PERANCANGAN BANDAR

Oleh

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Peningkatan minat dalam proses penyertaan awam pula boleh dilihat dari segi kegagalan sistem demokrasi ataupun sebagai pelengkap kepada sistem demokrasi.

Ketidakcekapan polisi sediada dilihat sebagai salah satu sebab mengapa projek dan usaha untuk penyertaan awam (public participation) ini gagal. Polar amalan profesional (profesional yang berada di baris hadapan sebagai pembuat polisi) adalah jarang dicatatkan. Pembangunan fizikal Malaysia dilihat sebagai sebuah negara peralihan agak pesat. Ini terbukti dalam beberapa projek pembangunan yang sedang naik di Malaysia. Hakikatnya projek-projek ini memerlukan input perancangan komprehensif dengan itu menjadikan Malaysia sebagai satu kes yang sesuai untuk memeriksa corak perancang penilaian penyertaan awam dan mengintegrasikannya dalam projek-projek seterusnya. Projek-projek ini termasuk komponen-komponen yang berbeza dalam projek baru nasional dan juga dari kluster bandar gabungan Iskandar dan projek pemulihan Sungai Klang. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk membangunkan satu rangka kerja integrasi untuk perancang bandar dalam polar penyertaan awam di dalam polisi perancangan bandar. Dengan mengadaptasikan pendekatan teknik Laurian and Shaw (kajian mengenai amalan profesional perancang bandar di Amerika Syarikat), corak penilaian penyertaan awam telah digunakan di kalangan perancang bandar di Malaysia dengan bantuan Institut Perancang Malaysia atau Malaysian Institute of Planners (MIP). Komponen penilaian seperti halatuju dan dorongan, ciri-ciri projek dan juga teknik penglibatan dinilai mengikut sukatan numerikal supaya dapat memberikan asas bagi membangunkan rangka kerja P-SOP untuk menghubungkan pengalaman penilaian perancang bandar terhadap operasi polisi yang berkaitan. Ia akan melibatkan dokumentasi definisi syntax PHP untuk membolehkan ianya digunakan di dalam laman sesawang tempatan (aplikasi laman sesawang). Sumber dokumentasi ini akan dieksport (dari paparan HTML pengguna) ke dalam bentuk “spread sheet” melalui prosedur fleksibel yang dapat membantu operasi polisi bagi mereka bentuk proses

penglibatan tersebut. Kajian ini mendapati bahawa perancang bandar di Malaysia tidak melihat peranan orang ramai di dalam proses perancangan untuk pertukaran maklumat semata-mata, dan mereka tidak berasa selesa dengan penguasaan penuh oleh pihak atasan ke atas projek. Walaupun teknik perbincangan kumpulan fokus dilihat sebagai teknik yang paling berkesan di kalangan perancang bandar bagi menentukan kejayaan proses penyertaan awam, namun penggunaan cara bengkel sebagai teknik penglibatan dilihat dapat menghasilkan lebih banyak projek yang berjaya. Rangka kerja P-SOP yang telah direka bentuk ini akan mampu menjadi garis panduan yang fleksibel bagi proses penglibatan yang seterusnya terutama dalam pemilihan teknik penggunaan untuk sesuatu projek.



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Ashiru Bello (2014)

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 3rd June 2014 to conduct the final examination of Ashiru Bello on his thesis entitled “Developing an Evaluation Framework of Public Participation for Urban Planners in Malaysia” in accordance with the Universities and University College Act 1971 and the constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The committee recommends that the student be awarded Doctor of Philosophy.

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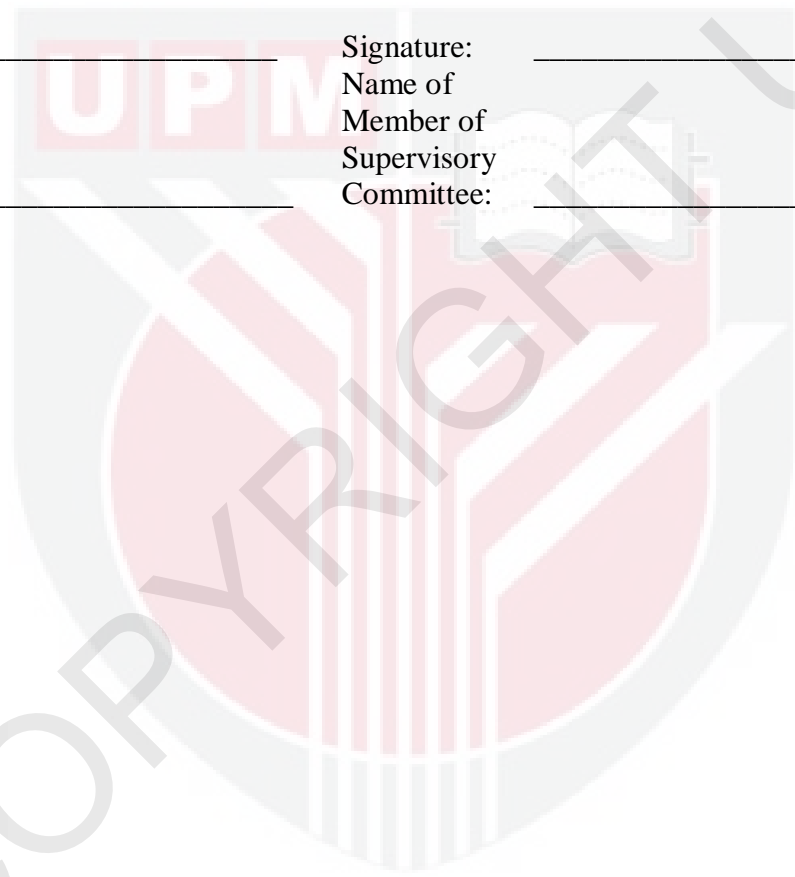


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACF	Advocacy Coalition Framework
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AICP	American Institute of Certified Planners
APA	American Planning Association
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BERR	Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform
CCP	Citizen Charter Programme
CGI	Common Category Interface
CLG	Communities and Local Government
CSV	Comma Separated Value
DBKL	Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (Kuala Lumpur City Hall)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIPP	European Institute for Public Participation
EU	European Union
FDTCP	Federal Department of Town and Country Planning
GIS	Geographic Information System
GWS	Google Web Server
HTML	HyperText Markup Language
HTTP	HyperText Transfer Protocol
IAP2	International Association of Public Participation
IIS	Internet Information Server (now Internet Information Services)
KLSP	Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan
KonSULT	Knowledge base on Sustainable Urban Land use and Transport
LAA	Learning and Action Alliance
LMDC	Lower Manhattan Development Corporation
MIP	Malaysian Institute of Planners
MPSJ	Majlis Perbadanan Subang Jaya (Subang Jaya Local Planning Authority)
MYOBY	Mind Your Own Backyard
MySQL	My Structured Query Language
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIMBY	Not In My Backyard
NITP	Nigerian Institute of Town Planners
PHP	Previously, Personal Home Pages (now just a recursive acronym)
PHP: Hypertext Processor)	
POLIS	Participatory Online Interactive System
POWER	Public Officers Working to Eliminate Red tape
PPGIS	Public Participation GIS
PPJ	Perbadanan Putrajaya (Putrajaya Corporation)
P-SOP	Practice to Subsequent Operational Policies
Req	Requirement
SPSS	Previously, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (now a recursive acronym SPSS)
TDR	Transferrable Development Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations

US United States
WCSC World Class Sustainable City Conference
Z-WAMP Zero install-WAMP (Windows, Apache, MySQL, PHP/Perl)



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Public participation is a subject of interest to scholars from different backgrounds: from planners, architects, urban designers, environmentalists, economists, geographers to social theorists and a host of other professionals. It is indeed interdisciplinary. Public participation has been defined as “Allowing people to influence the outcome of plans and working processes” (Mouratiadou and Moran 2007: 67). The people in this context are often referred to as “stakeholders”. It is also defined by Laurian and Shaw (2008: 294) as “Mode of relationship between the state and civil society that involves the public in decision making” or “Mechanisms intentionally instituted by government to involve the lay public, or their representatives, in administrative decision making”. Historically, it is a transition from initiating and executing programmes/projects through executive orders, purely expert judgments to a situation where the “public” are expected to make inputs in the design and implementation of programmes that will likely affect them or be affected by them (Koch 2013, Smith 2003).

Public participation is an important process in spatial planning. In most cases the participation level varies from informing the public to the level of full control of the planning process to the citizens (Arnstein 1969; Smith 2003 and Mouratiadou and Moran 2007). Several of these participation levels can occur within one programme or project. The levels of participation which may occur will be defined by the planners, and needs therefore to be defined individually for each planning process.

According to the UN-Habitat (2004), the purpose of public participation is to encourage citizens to be more engaged in the decision-making processes that have an impact on their local community; advance citizens’ understanding of how government works and confers upon them the capacity to access governmental decision-making processes, and provides the ‘public’ with the opportunity to influence and participate in development programmes and projects.

As citizen’s democratic ideals and expectations shifted towards inclusive and deliberate involvement in local governance, it is clear that planning practice increasingly focused on public participation (Laurian and Shaw 2008). Challenges of public participation will hardly be revealed for improved practice if planners and elected officials find it more rewarding to launch new programmes than evaluate past activities. Various attempts have therefore been made to evaluate public participation in a number of programmes and projects globally (Pinios river basin Greece (Mouratiadou and Moran 2007); Victoria parks, Australia (Brown and Weber 2011); Canela, Brazil (Bugs et al 2010); Haihe, china (Jingling et al 2010); Kerala, India (Madhava et al 2008); Zimbabwe (Kujinga 2004); Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia etc (Perkins 2011))

1.2 Research problem

Whether we see the rising interest in public participation as a failure of democracy or a compliment, it will be difficult to entirely dissociate the negative public reactions that are often visible in response to a variety of physical development efforts from poor citizen commitment/involvement. Examples of these reactions in Malaysia include the Kelana Jaya park project, the Bakum dam project in Sarawak and Penang hill project (Ainul Jaria, 2011). Elsewhere, the Austell intermodal facility in Georgia (Faga, 2006) and the 1979 Bakalori dam project in Nigeria (Bello 2006) are some examples. Thus, a likelihood that better public acceptance could be achieved on physical development efforts where the citizens are engaged in planning and execution of programmes and projects, received a somewhat unanimous agreement among different scholars. As such therefore, several attempts to explore the various approaches through which the public could be effectively engaged in order to promote sustainability and legitimacy in physical development efforts were made by a variety of researchers (Arnstein 1969, Houghton 1988, Healey 1992, Rowe and Frewer 2000, Dola and Mijan 2006, Burton 2009 and Ainul Jaria 2011, to mention but a few).

Several reasons could be responsible for failure of programmes as it relates to poor participation. They include hesitation by initiating authorities (Arnstein 1969); culture of the participants (Garcia-Zamor 1985); emphasis on quantity rather than quality (Brody 2003 and Burton 2009); prioritizing technological layer over social considerations (Madhava et al. 2008 and Healy 2009); place based nature of public participation and poor phenomenal understanding (Healey 1992 and Healy 2009); participants' capacity (Dola and Mijan 2006) and policy limitations (Aribigbola 2008 and Aitken 2010). Where policies on urban development contained inadequate and unclear provisions on public participation, stakeholders in the process can hardly appreciate their rights as well as obligations. Planning relies largely on participatory and deliberative processes to restore trust in the profession (Laurian, 2009). If in practice it does not matter to planners (who are advocates and often facilitators of the process) whether a participatory exercise is successful or not (for example by not evaluating it) then it is not surprising to find issues regarding public participation marginally treated in urban planning policies. Laurian and Shaw (2008) undertook a study of planners' professional practice of public participation evaluation among American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) members. However, a medium through which such a contextual pattern can be integrated into planning policies for subsequent interventions has not been documented. The fact that there is no one size fit all approach to citizen engagement, means that knowledge of professional practice of public participation in a given context may not suffice different application areas or socio-spatial contexts. This study therefore, sets to develop a framework for improving public participation through integrating planners' pattern of evaluation in urban planning policies.

Additionally, the study will enable identification and filling of potential gaps between the evaluation criteria promoted by planning theory and those used (in the study context) in practice. This kind of study also has the potential to examine factors that promote evaluation through a proposal of evaluation methodologies that

are based on practical and perhaps tested methodologies rather than purely theoretical. Informed evaluation on the other hand promotes effective participation.

One may argue that public participation though a famous phenomenon may not be (presumably) an issue that received significant practice in particularly developing countries and therefore a more important thing could have been to look at its practice in planning. However, as highlighted earlier, current global literature has actually provided a lot on the practice of public participation (except that new methodologies are still being developed in determining stakeholders and organizing the task) in a planning process. Some of the methodologies include Public Participation GIS (Bugs et al, 2010; Brown and Weber 2011), Fuzzy cognitive mapping (Mouratiadou and Moran 2007), Web 2.0 and Mashups (Goldberg 2010), Citizens' Participatory Online Interactive Systems (POLIS) (Williams, 2010), 3D architectural models (Yunos et al, 2012) etc. An inventory on the practice of planners in evaluating public participation (How frequently, when why and how?) will equally feature the reasons for instance why evaluating the process does not seem to be important to planners because of its immaturity in a particular spatial context. This inevitably unleashes the state of public participation and as such addresses the expressed worry.

1.3 Scope and limitations of the study

This thesis is focused on examining the pattern of practice of public participation evaluation among urban planners in Malaysia with a view to integrate the evaluation experiences into subsequent design of participatory processes. The study is limited in the following ways:

The description of how planners evaluate public participation (ranging from views on the composition of participants to focus and motivation of evaluations) reflects the position of Malaysian planners and in particular those who participated in the survey. The context specific nature of public participation does not in the first place allow for generalization across other differing socio-cultural contexts. The discussions on the usefulness of public input in planning decision making, experiences in participatory processes elsewhere and the numerous methodologies for evaluation is therefore meant to provide a theoretical basis for undertaking the study and also aid subsequent discussions on the emerging pattern among the responding planners.

The data input for the P-SOP framework and the results therein also reflects the position of the responding planners in Malaysia. However, the flexibility of the framework (as it will be shown in the sixth chapter) means that it can be replicated elsewhere with a provision for addition of contextually relevant components and subcomponents as well as subtraction of the same to fit in a particular social context. For instance, irrelevant participatory devices can be removed from the scripts or added depending on what prevails in the area in question.

1.4 Thesis layout

The thesis layout comprised of three principal elements. The first is research agenda which provides a description of the problem under study. This is followed by potential contribution of the study to the body of knowledge. Lastly, an overview is provided on the thesis organizational structure.

1.4.1 The Research Agenda

A review of literature on scholarly explanations for failure of programmes and projects in relation to poor citizen engagement revealed that not only are policies for public participation inadequate and non-operational, but planners (as principal stakeholders in formulating policies for public participation in planning projects) seldom prioritise the evaluation of public participation. Where they do, there is still a dichotomy between the pattern of the practice and subsequent policy interventions. This is in addition to the continuum identified by Lees-Marshment (2012) in the relationship between public input and policy makers. The examination of planners' evaluation practice conducted by Laurian and Shaw (2008) is in addition to being contextual (responding to the nature of public participation), in need of a deliberate operational medium for integrating it with subsequent operational policy formulations. The research agenda for this thesis is therefore a step further towards developing an operational framework for integrating planners' experiences in public participation evaluation into future design of participatory devices for urban planning projects.

Based on the literature review, the following research gaps have been identified:

1. Prior works of Carp (2004) described the pertinent position of urban planners in shaping public participation; Laurian and Shaw (2008) provided a descriptive account of the practice of public participation evaluation among AICP members; while Kotus (2013) examined how local efforts in participatory planning translates into cities' position on the public participation ladder. However, in addition to the context dependent nature of public participation, the global south perspective of such evaluations has not yet been documented.

2. A generic attempt has been made by numerous scholars (Rowe and Frewer (2000 and 2005), Healy (2009) and Bugs et al (2010)) linking epistemological issues as well as selection of contextually appropriate parameters for evaluation with successful evaluation of participatory processes, a systematic medium through which such evaluation patterns can be utilised in subsequent designs of participatory procedures has not been proposed.

Based on these identified gaps, the following research questions have been presented.

1.5 Research questions:

The main research question for this study is how can public participation be improved by integrating planners' pattern of evaluation in subsequent design of participatory devices? The sub research questions (on the basis of identified constructs) are summarised in table 1.1 below:

Table 1.1 Sub research questions, strategies of inquiry and expected knowledge contribution

Research Sub-questions (Sub-RQ)	Strategy of Inquiry	Expected Output	Expected Knowledge Contribution
<p>Sub RQ 1: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN URBAN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT?</p> <p>RO 1: To review the relevance of Public Participation in Urban Planning and development</p>	Literature Survey	<p><u>Output 1:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Typology of public participation and its popular methods/techniques -Benefits of public participation and its contemporary challenges 	<p><u>Knowledge 1:</u></p> <p>Theory on project/participant's specific participation methods</p>
<p>Sub RQ 2: HOW DO PLANNERS EVALUATE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN MALAYSIA?</p> <p>RO 2: To document how urban planners currently evaluate public participation in Malaysia</p>	Literature and field survey	<p><u>Output 2:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Criteria for evaluating public participation -Pattern of practice of public participation evaluation among planners (in practice) 	<p><u>Knowledge 2:</u></p> <p>Linking practice to theory in terms of theoretical evaluation criteria and those used by planners in practice (Malaysia)</p>
<p>WHAT IS THE POSITION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN CURRENT URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES?</p>	Literature/urban planning Policies' review	Existing policies on public participation	Current policies' position on public participation

Sub RQ 3: HOW CAN PLANNERS PATTERN OF EVALUATION BE INTEGRATED INTO SUBSEQUENT DESIGN OF PARTICIPATORY DEVICES?	Data analyses	Output 3:	Knowledge 3:
RO 3: To recommend how planners' pattern of evaluation can be integrated in urban development policies for improving public participation		Recommendations on principal drivers for public participation to be integrated into the design of future participatory devices from planner's practical experiences	Recommendations on principal drivers for public participation to be integrated in subsequent specific operational policies from planner's practical experiences
RQ = Research Question RO = Research Objective			

Aim of the study:

The study is aimed at developing an evaluation framework of public participation for urban planners in Malaysia.

Objectives:

- *To understand the relevance of public participation in urban planning and development and identify appropriate indices for evaluation
- *To examine the practice of public participation evaluation among urban planners in Malaysia
- *To develop a framework for integrating planners' pattern of public participation evaluation into subsequent designs of participatory devices using server-side scripting (PHP) and a zero-install web server (Z-WAMP).

Figure 1.1 Research Aim and objectives

1.6 Expected knowledge contribution

This thesis builds upon the proposition that any evaluation effort previously carried out, serve as a guide to the subsequent ones. This is however, only the case if motivation exists for imbibing the evaluation culture particularly among professionals.

From the perspective of planners' perception of public participation, the study will add to contemporary debates on the benefits of public participation through identification of the contextual and perceived need for public participation and definition of participants. What constitutes the term "public" as it relates to public participation is still a subject of epistemological disagreement between contemporary scholars (Healy 2009). Similar contextual ambiguities are also true regarding the

motive of public participation particularly in urban and regional planning (Dola 2006, Potter 2012).

The study will also contribute to the public participation and planning theory in terms of exploring the relationship between theory and practice in evaluation of public participation particularly among urban planning professionals. It will equally serve as a catalyst for planners to imbibe the culture of looking back at projects to ascertain successes and failures of participatory processes and foster proactivity towards deliberate ex-ante evaluation designs.

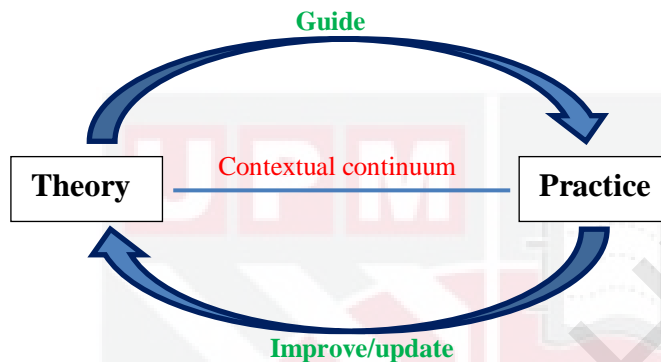


Figure 1.2 A circular relationships between theory and practice

Furthermore, contributions were made in the recommendation on principal drivers for public participation to be integrated in the design of future operational policies regarding public participation from planners' practical experiences in past evaluations. The framework which is intended to be developed at the end of the study will serve as a flexible decision making guide for the formulation of operational policy directions for public participation in urban and regional planning as well as in subsequent evaluations and project designs as they relate to monitoring of participatory processes.

Finally, knowledge of the contextual workability of certain participatory mechanisms will help in improving current public participation processes. For example, in 2009, the Federal Department for Town and Country Planning (FDTCP) Malaysia introduced a theoretical guide for conducting charrettes and village appraisals alongside focus group discussions as potentially efficient mechanisms for citizen engagement (FDTCP 2009). The extent to which these techniques/mechanisms have been so far used by planners in public participation as well as their contribution to success of planning programmes and projects will also be revealed by the findings of the study. This will be quite beneficial in designing future guides.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

The thesis structure is summarised in figure 1.5 below:

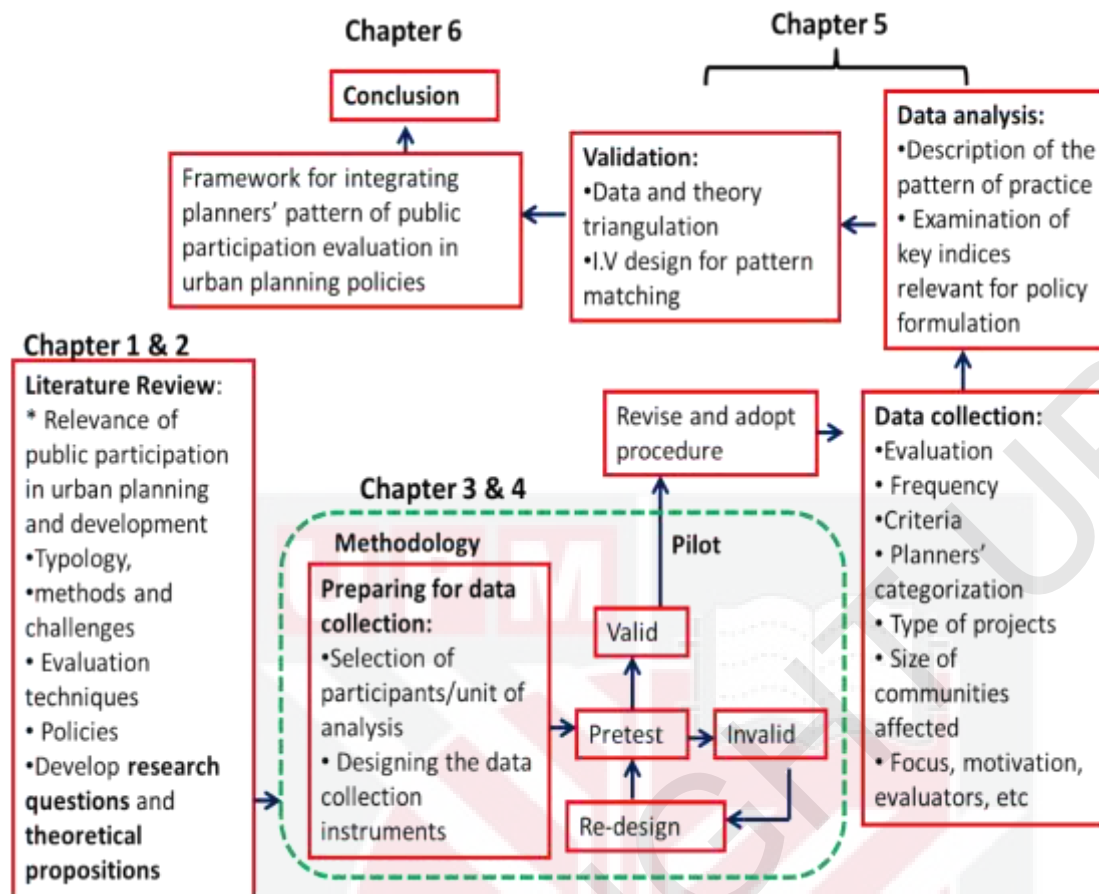


Figure 1.3 Thesis structure

Chapter 1 contained the background and introduction to the thesis. It is informed by literature review (chapter 2) and also followed by chapter 2 in structural flow. Chapter 3 and 4 are the description of methodology and pre-test respectively. Chapter 5 consist of Malaysian planners' pattern of public participation evaluation. In chapter 5, the general perception about public participation ranging from composition of participants, stage of planning at which participation is seen to be paramount, to opinions on current situation in Malaysia's public participation are examined. Subsequently, pattern of evaluation was also examined across planners with some experience in the evaluation. Analysis and validation of study findings is also contained in the 5th chapter. Chapter 6 contained the framework through which evaluation experience of planners can be utilized to guide subsequent projects. The project's summary and conclusion are contained in the 7th chapter.

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