Urban Commons and Social Sustainability:
An Exploratory Study of Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken.

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Abstract

Although debate on commons has been going on for the last five decades, it is only in the last two decades that attention has been focussed on new commons. Even then, urban commons though acknowledged as part of new commons, has attracted little attention among researchers of commons. This study therefore sought to explore the nature and management of urban commons and how they (urban commons) contribute to social sustainability in the neighbourhood. This study has taken a qualitative approach and deployed a case study method with a focus on Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken as cases. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirteen participants drawn from diverse stakeholders representing different interest groups. The study found out that the two phenomena (Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken) display some of the factors that affect the management or governance of urban commons more than traditional commons namely, indirect value, contested resources, mobility and cross-sector collaboration. In addition, by virtue of creating networks of different user groups, they create bridging social capital which contributes to social sustainability in the city.

Key Words

Urban commons, Social capital, Social sustainability, Stapelbadden, Stapelbaddsparken
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List of Acronyms and Figures

ABF - Workers' Education Association
CPR - Common Pool Resources
CSO - Civil Society Organisation
IASC - International Association for the Study of Commons
IASCP - International Association for the Study of Common Property
MIT - Massachusetts Institute of Technology
NGO - Non-Governmental Organisations
STPLN - Stapelbadds Association
TOC - Tragedy of the Commons

Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework for Social Sustainability (Cuthill, 2009)

Table 1. Different types of economic goods (Ostrom and Hess, 2007 cited in Parker and Johansson (2011))
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The contents of this document are solely the views of the author who takes full responsibility for any errors of commission or omission.
Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter gives a brief introduction to the study. It does this by first giving a short background to the study of the commons. This is followed by problem discussion in which the challenges of collective management of the commons are explored in light of current literary discourse. This discourse is juxtaposed with the debate on the commons with a particular interest in urban commons. The purpose puts the study into context and raises questions that form the basis of the investigation. Finally, delimitation closes the chapter.

1.1 Background

In recent years, research on equitable and sustainable management of common pool resources (CPR) or commons has grown tremendously (Mcshane, 2010; Parker & Johansson, 2011). A number of factors can be attributed to this phenomenon. One, the general consensus on the inability of either the state or the market to effectively and satisfactorily manage such resources has focused attention to alternative communal-level arrangements (Ostrom, 1990; cited in Macshane, 2010). Two, the limiting of future social and economic policy options by privatisation of public infrastructure (Bollier, 2003 cited in Macshane, 2010). Three, rapid development in collaborative production of software over the internet which has resulted in such user-generated resources like Wikipedia demonstrating a new and potentially powerful way of organizing (Hess & Ostrom, 2007; cited in Parker and Johansson, 2011). Four, commons have proved to be so powerful sites of cooperation as to attract the attention of political theorists who emphasise the significant contribution made by intermediate institutions to pluralism and civic engagement (Palumbo & Scott, 2005; cited in Mcshane, 2010).

Traditionally, the study of commons has been centred on management of natural resource commons such as "agriculture, fisheries, forests, grazing lands, wildlife, land tenure and use, water and irrigation systems, and village organization." (Hess, 2008; p 2). However, a conceptual distinction was developed in the 1990s during the early stages of the International Association for the Study of Common Property (IASC - now the International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC)) between "old" and "new" commons (Mcshane, 2010; Hess, 2008). There was a new dimension to the study of the commons which attributed the ongoing study of commons to natural resource commons and labelled them as "old" or traditional while also recognising emerging human-made and technologically driven commons which have been viewed as "new" commons (Hess, 2008). A number of studies have focussed on such non-traditional commons and one area of focus has been urban commons. Although urban commons falls under what has been categorised by Hess (2008) as "new commons", not much attention has been given to this area. Hess (2008) has noted that new commons have become so powerful that they have inspired the rise of the "Commons Movement" which aims to mobilise global citizens to develop new forms of self-governance, collaboration and collective action.

Urban commons has largely been a consequence of urban regeneration programmes following industrial revolution that have resulted in a vast number of CPRs including roads, parking places, public parks and other leisure areas, waste disposal facilities among others (Bravo & de Moor, 2008). Moreover, the fact that the local government owns and exercises a lot of influence over these resources raises a technical challenge with regard to definition of these resources as commons. Consequently, these commonly used resources may not be "pure commons" on a strict sense of the term. This situation calls for new forms of managing such resources and the model that
has been adopted of late indicates strong inter-sectoral collaborative management in which the local government that owns these resources works closely with user groups, Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and the private sector to achieve equitable and satisfactory governance.

Growing attention on rapid urban development has deepened the concern for concerted effort to attain sustainability. This concern has led to the search for viable models of urban sustainability. Consequently, urban commons has come under focus with new forms being proposed for managing these resources in order to ensure sustainability in urban areas. One area of focus that has elicited interest is the sectoral dynamics especially the relationship between the civil society and the state. (Macshane, 2010).

For a long time commons theorists have held that human action is detrimental to commonly owned and or used resources (Pretty, 2003). The thinking has been that individuals will attempt to free - ride by both overusing and under investing in the common resource in the community. Whereas this action (free - riding) may be apparently rational, it is rather ironical that the same individuals who use the common resource in such a manner do not have the vision to reflect upon the consequences of their actions for the future generations. This grave situation has led to environmental damage caused by destruction of natural resources like forests and the consequences have been drastic climatic changes that have threatened livelihoods of a great constituency of humanity. The gravity of this phenomenon has been captured in Hardin's classical tale "Tragedy of the Commons"(TOC) published in 1968 in which he strongly argues against what he terms a "pasture free for all". In his argument, Hardin proposes tough measures to guard against what he terms "free-riding" whose consequence is "tragedy". The ultimate and most significant outcome of Hardin's classical tale has been the proposal that for common resources to be protected there is need to either exercise strong central government control over them or complete privatisation.

Whereas the context of the tragedy in Hardin's metaphorical tale is a traditional natural resource setting in a rural area, it cannot be denied that several resources are commonly owned and or used by urban communities (Foster, 2009). These resources could be natural phenomena such as lakes, parks, forests, gardens or human - made resources such as streets, parks, roads, among others. Sustainability of an urban community is greatly influenced by the way these shared resources are used and managed.

Urban sustainability depends on diverse interdependent factors including social, economic and ecological. These three factors are interdependent and therefore play a key role in balancing the socio - ecological system in the city. Social factors refer to those things that make human beings meet their social needs for instance, trust, good neighbourliness, security among others. Economic factors refer to those things that make people meet financial or material needs such as job opportunities, entrepreneurship. Similarly, ecological factors are concerned with environmental sustainability for instance, green spaces, gardens, parks among others.

The common resources that urban residents share provide a number of benefits to the community for instance positive environmental effects such as reduction in pollution leading to better health. Since these resources are used in common by urban communities, they are considered as "urban commons" (Foster, 2011).

"Commons", according to the Digital Library of the Commons (DLC), refers to shared resources in which each stakeholder has an equal interest. These commons have two main characteristics: they are rivalrous which means one person's use depletes the resource therefore depriving others of the enjoyment of the resource. The other characteristic is that they are non-excludable which means
that they cannot be divided into parts and therefore are open to all. This therefore calls for collective use and management of such resources in order to minimise the risk of emerging conflict among users.

Collective action has continued to grow in recent years with regard to management of common resources. Urban residents have been known to take charge of their common resources in order to protect them from destruction and ensure their sustainability. These common resources provide several benefits to the community. For instance, they provide space for community gatherings, meetings, picnics and cultural events.

Of interest in this study therefore, is the nature of and how urban commons are managed by the residents of the city. In addition, the role of these urban commons in building social sustainability in the city forms a critical perspective of the study especially given that these resources have traditionally been known to bring diverse people together.

1.2 Problem Discussion

The debate on commons has been raging since Hardin published his classical work "Tragedy of the Commons" in 1968. Commons has since been understood to mean any natural or manmade resource that is owned and or used in common (shared) within a community. These could be streets, parks, water resources, urban gardens among others. Although Hardin (1968) predicted that uncontrolled access and use of common resources would ultimately lead to their depletion or what he terms "tragedy", Ostrom(2000) has demonstrated that users of commons are capable of organising themselves and collectively managing such resources in a sustainable manner therefore avoiding the tragedy predicted by Hardin.

In what she terms "the zero contribution thesis", Ostrom(2000, p4) disputes the accuracy of the strongly held standard theory of collective action which claims that "without selective benefits no one in a large group will act to achieve their common or group interest.” In her view, it is very possible to overcome the temptation to free-ride and therefore act in the best interest of the community without being egoist or selfish. She has provided two empirical studies to back up her arguments that dispute the standard collective action theory.

In one study, Ostrom(2000) cites Loveman (1998) who found out that despite the brutal military dictatorships in Latin America, brave human rights defenders defied the odds, stood up to the dictators and formed human rights organisations without having their own interest but that of the vulnerable groups. These brave individuals did not act in their own interests but still mobilised collective action against autocratic military regimes thereby putting their lives at risk in order to save others. This outcome contradicts the standard theory of collective action in that the actors (human rights defenders) formed the organisations not because of their own individual selective or selfish interest but out of their conviction for the ideals of humanity.

Another evidence provided by Ostrom(2000) is a study by Kaboolian and Nelson (1998) who reported that organisations of Concord that brought together diverse groups with fundamentally opposing views such as Colombia Interfaith Centers and Common Ground for life and Choice were not only formed but managed to achieve successful outcomes. How these groups managed competing interests of their members is a case study in managing diversity in the governance of common regimes such as in collective action.
On the other hand, Ostrom(2000) has noted that several empirical studies have shown that collective action has both succeeded and failed in different circumstances and this underlies her argument that one narrow theory of collective action is inadequate to solve this problem of governance hence the proposal to have a new broad family of theories that is flexible enough to accommodate the complexity of socio-ecological systems and diverse human characters.

The failure of the theory to explain the contradictions in the motivations of actors with regard to collective action is both interesting and intriguing. In a world in which phenomena have continued to take on different shapes with every turn of time, and with the rapid change in technology, the world has become ever more complex and uncertainty has made institutional arrangements fluid. Ostrom (2000) therefore challenges the weaknesses of modern public policy that fails to take into account the complexity of the modern social system when designing policies that create rules that are found to be out of touch with reality. A better option would therefore be to engage all stakeholders in creating institutional rules that govern common resources. This would ensure active participation of citizens in governance of common resources and therefore reduce the cost of monitoring compliance with the rules while at the same time ensuring sustainability. In addition, such an approach has the potential to not only strengthen democratic ideals but also contribute to strong norms of trust and reciprocity in the community.

Despite the ongoing research on commons, there is little research that has been done on the urban commons particularly with regard to collective action. Foster (2011) has noted that urban commons is an emerging area of study. In her study on urban commons and collective action, she has demonstrated that urban residents are capable of organising themselves to collectively manage common resources in their communities where the government provides an enabling environment through incentives. Through collaboration or partnership with the government and the private sector, it is therefore possible for urban residents to collectively manage common resources in their community. Such collaboration and collective action result in democratic participation that creates a sense of ownership necessary for sustainability. In addition, active participation of diverse stakeholders enhances citizenship besides building social networks among the residents of the city. These networks in turn create social capital that ensures social sustainability in the city.

It is for this reason that this study has been conducted in the hope that the findings will contribute to advancement of knowledge that will be useful in enhancing understanding of collective management of urban commons and how this could contribute to building social sustainability in the city.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this exploratory study was therefore to find out and describe how urban residents come together to collectively manage their common resources and how this could contribute to social sustainability in the city. In order to do this a case study of both Stapelbadden and Stapelbaddsparken was conducted. The two phenomena are outstanding features located in the Vastra Hamnen(Western Harbour) district of Malmö city.

The study therefore sought to answer the following two questions:

1. How are urban commons in the Vastra Hamnen area managed?

2. How do these urban commons contribute to the city’s social sustainability?
1.4 Delimitation

Whereas the research on commons is wide and varied with a multi-disciplinary approach, it is not possible to cover all the areas of this field of research in such a short essay. In addition, there are many commons and even more keep on emerging with growth in the field. Since time and resources cannot allow a wider coverage of this interesting topic, I have narrowed down my focus to urban commons and used two cases to help in the analysis of this phenomenon. These two cases may not be representative of the wider phenomenon of commons and in particular urban commons since every city is unique in its own right and the socio-ecological structures may not be exactly identical across various cities. The findings of this study are therefore a reflection of the local context in which the study has been conducted.

1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis is organised into six chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and provides background to the study. In addition, problem discussion is covered here as well as the purpose of the study. In chapter two, theoretical framework is discussed by illustrating some of the key theoretical concepts such as commons, urban commons, social capital and social sustainability. This chapter aims to provide a grounding on which the study is to be based and therefore forms a framework for analysis of the cases studied. In chapter three, methodology and methods are presented in order to demonstrate the research approach, choice of subject, choice of method and how the study was conducted. Chapter four presents the results of the study and analysis of the data collected during the course of the study. Discussion on the results follows in chapter five and chapter six concludes the study.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I discuss the key concepts that constitute theoretical perspectives that underpin analytical relations in this study. These include: urban commons, social sustainability and social capital. I argue that these three concepts are interdependent in the sense that there is a strong linkage among them. The clarification of these key concepts is therefore vital for a better understanding of the gist of this study since the core variables are urban commons and social sustainability. In this chapter therefore, a brief discussion is presented on these concepts based on previous studies and literature that has been used in this study. This however, does not represent a complete review of the study on these broad concepts.

2.1 concept 1: Urban Commons

2.1.1 Problems and Solutions

Urban commons cannot be discussed in isolation without putting them in the context of the broader commons discourse. This discourse is characterised by a distinction between traditional and new commons. Urban commons falls under the latter category.
2.1.1.1 Traditional Commons

Urban commons are considered to be part of the new commons identified by Hess (2008). The new commons differ from traditional commons in some aspects. Generally, traditional commons have had two main characteristics: they are subtractable (rivalrous) and non-excludable. This means that one person’s use depletes the resource from another's while the resource is itself difficult to divide into neat parcels. Therefore traditional studies of commons have taken the dimension of common pool resources (CPR). The following table by Ostrom and Hess (2007) illustrates the difference between CPRs and other economic goods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low Subtractability</th>
<th>High Subtractability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to exclude</td>
<td>Public good</td>
<td>Common - pool resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to exclude</td>
<td>Club good</td>
<td>Private good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Different types of economic goods; (Ostrom and Hess, 2007; cited in Parker and Johansson (2011))

Since the traditional commons possess characteristics that range between pure public good and common-pool resource, they pose a great dilemma when it comes to their governance. The challenge lies in how to come up with rules to regulate the use of the resource, how to enforce these rules and how to monitor the implementation. The cost of doing so poses a big challenge as well.

In order to deal with this challenge, Ostrom (1999) has proposed a design criteria that can guide the governance of such resources especially for self-organised groups. The criteria have eight principles:

1. Clearly defined boundaries (effective exclusion of external unentitled parties);
2. Rules regarding the appropriation and provision of common resources are adapted to local conditions;
3. Collective - choice arrangements allow most resource appropriators to participate in the decision-making processes;
4. Effective monitoring by monitors who are part of or accountable to the appropriators;
5. There is a scale of graduated sanctions for resource appropriators who violate community rules;
6. Mechanisms of conflict resolution are cheap and of easy access;
7. The self - determination of the community is recognized by higher - level authorities;
8. In case of larger common - pool resources: organization in the form of multiple layers of nested enterprises, with small local common-pool resources at the base level.

Source: (Ostrom,1999) cited in (Parker & Johansson, 2011; p.4)
Following the release of the design principles, there have been several studies that have addressed the issue of applicability of the principles and it has been generally acknowledged that these broad principles need to be adapted to specific contexts in order to be relevant to particular resources being considered.

2.1.1.2 Urban Commons

In order to understand the challenges of managing urban commons it is prudent to first try and understand what urban commons really means. I have therefore tried in this study to narrow down the scope of what I consider urban commons in the context of my research. This study as I have mentioned under introduction agrees with Foster (2011) that urban commons are resources that are used in common by urban residents. However, that the concept of commons is contested is clearly demonstrated by Harvey (2011) who disputes Ostrom's (2000) finding on the generalisability of extensive empirical study of the collective management regimes. Harvey (ibid) has argued that many researchers have misinterpreted Hardin's metaphorical work, "Tragedy of the Commons." It also emerges from the ongoing debate on commons that new and diverse perspectives keep emerging in this evolving field of study. As a result, Harvey (ibid) posits that what is considered a commons in one context may turn out to be a private property in another and vice versa. It is because of this reason that the context should be taken into consideration when talking about any phenomenon as being a commons. And it is for this reason that I limit the definition of urban commons as used in this study in order to avoid any ambiguity or contradiction with other studies that may have been done in different contexts.

Given the contradictions and ambiguity surrounding the debate on commons and in order to put the research into focus, I have taken into consideration what is generally considered and accepted by the stakeholders as commons in defining the type of resource to use as a commons. This is necessary in order to avoid any further contradiction or the need to conduct lengthy empirical studies to prove that a phenomenon is a commons. That would be out of the scope of this study. A commons has therefore been taken to be a resource that is already being used in common by relevant actors and that there is a clear evidence of some element of participatory or collective management of the resource. The scope should also be city - wide or small scale.

Following from the above discussion, I therefore take a quick look at some aspects of urban commons as portrayed in various literatures. Parker & Johansson (2011) have identified four distinguishing factors that affect management/governance of urban commons. These include; indirect value, contested resources, mobility and cross-sector collaboration.

Indirect Value

Urban commons such as parks, community gardens or good public schools tend to have indirect value in that although they may not be directly linked to livelihoods of the residents of the neighbourhood in which they are located; research has demonstrated that they contribute to value addition in the neighbourhood. This is evident for instance, where the value of property rises as a result of the commons in the neighbourhood. The major challenge with this scenario is the fact that the stakeholders such as the users of commons in the neighbourhood may not take an active part in the management of the resource and this creates a loophole through which the resource risks being degraded. This points to collective action problem since collaborative management of the resource becomes difficult due to the high cost of monitoring the use of the resource.
It is also important to point out that in some cases, stakeholders are likely to perceive the resource as a source of pride and therefore take part in its management as a civic virtue. In this way, collaborative management becomes a rallying call to take active part in the creation of citizenship. In this way, the cost of monitoring the rules of engagement with the resources are significantly reduced as the citizens take "ownership" of the process of maintaining the resource in collaboration with the local government (Eizenberg, 2012).

Another instance is the attraction that common resource creates in the neighbourhood. As Foster (2006) has noted, community gardens not only create bonding social capital but also bridging social capital by linking different groups of users from various parts of the city. In this way, the resource has a value addition effect to the neighbourhood that makes it attractive to live in. Furthermore, the resource is also likely to attract tourists from far and wide and this can also increase the value of the neighbourhood through increased publicity.

**Contested Resources**

Urban commons are sometimes contested since various stakeholders take divergent views on how the resource should be managed. For instance, the public may have a different opinion from that of the local government on the way a commons resource should be viewed or managed. The fact that some commons such as community gardens are located in abandoned old industrial lots largely harbours a potential source of conflict between the city residents and the local government. The latter may view the lots as vacant and potential source of revenue through privatisation while the former may resist this move by arguing that the lots are communal property. This has been clearly demonstrated in the empirical evidence about the community gardens in New York City (Eizenberg, 2012).

Another challenge with these resources as in the case of community gardens is the fact that they are located in property that the community does not own. In most cases, the land is owned by the local government and this creates uncertainty regarding the sustainability of the resource. Therefore, it becomes difficult to mobilise long term investment in the resource.

However, the uncertainty could also be a major rallying call for the public to act collectively to protect the resource. In this way, several self-organising groups or Civil Society Organisations are likely to come up to protect the resource from destruction or privatisation as in the case of New York City community gardens (Eizenberg, 2012).

**Mobility**

Urban residents are very mobile. Therefore, organising people to act collectively in management of a common resource poses a great challenge. The cost of such mobilisation is potentially high enough to discourage collaborative management of shared resources. In addition, this high mobility makes it difficult to build (bonding) social capital in an urban set up (Parker and Johansson, 2011). This scenario therefore contributes to lack of motivation for long term interest in the management of the commons.

On the other hand, this mobility could prove to be a potential catalyst for building of (bridging) social capital since the high mobility makes people from different parts of the city interact and
therefore increase the likelihood of forming networks of various user groups for collaborative management of the resource.

**Cross-sector collaboration**

Urban commons have shown a great potential to nurture cross-sector collaboration in their governance (Foster, 2011). Foster has noted that in a situation where there is regulatory slippage, i.e. when the local government control of a commons weakens to the extent that the resource suffers from the tragedy that Hardin talked about, a third force naturally emerges through collective action in which citizens form user groups with the aim of collaboratively managing a commons as long as the local authority provides an enabling environment to do so.

Whereas this cross-sector collaboration is vital and significantly lowers the cost of monitoring the usage of the common resource, it is important to take into account Ostrom's (2000) caution against overbearing by the government authority over the common resource as this will most likely crowd out citizenship. A balancing act is therefore necessary in order to reduce chances of regulatory slippage while at the same time providing an enabling environment that can support effective and sustainable governance of the common resource.

Having discussed the above four factors that affect management/governance of urban commons as identified by Parker and Johansson, (2011), I now turn to urban space as commons.

**2.1.1.3 Urban Space as Commons**

Within an urban set up, space is a vital resource that is keenly watched by various stakeholders. Given that the city may not have limitless space for expansion, there is need to plan appropriate ways of utilising the limited space available for the mutual benefit of all inhabitants and stakeholders. This calls for clear distinction between open access and common property. The significance of open access spaces such as market places, parks, streets, oceans cannot be overlooked. Such spaces should be accessible to the public in order to ensure equity and justice in the community. Trying to control access by cordoning off or privatising such resources can only lead to discrimination and social exclusion which can easily lead to disaffection and social unrest. The sustainability of any common resource lies so much on how effectively it is managed. It has been pointed out by Foster (2011) and Ostrom(1990) that groups have risen above individual interests to overcome free riding by collectively managing common resources. This voluntary public participation in the management of such resources has proved to be an effective and efficient way to deal with the challenges of managing such resources. Therefore this study mainly focuses on urban spaces that are considered as common resources and which are being managed collectively in one way or another. One example of how urban space has been commonly managed is reflected in the phenomenon of community gardens.
2.1.1.4 Community Gardens

A community garden is a green space that is managed and may be developed by a neighbourhood community and in which urban agricultural activities take place (Holland, 2004). Holland further notes that although the community may not necessarily need to own the space, there is still need for some security of tenure to ensure sustainability. These have been shown to be an excellent example of how urban residents can mobilise collective action to manage urban spaces. Usually developed in empty, old or abandoned industrial areas, such gardens not only serve as places for community interaction but also facilitate production of local food and prevention of crime (Foster, 2006).

In addition, community gardens, improve the value and status of neighbourhoods by providing infrastructure for community interaction such as sitting areas, playgrounds, summerhouses, water fountains which accommodate social and cultural events as well as informal interactions (Foster, 2006). By actively and collaboratively reclaiming vacant lands and creating community gardens, residents develop social networks that further create social capital that enable them to work together towards common neighbourhood goals (Foster, 2006). Moreover, a survey carried out in two cities in the US found out that;

*Not only do the gardens provide opportunities to build "bonding social" capital, to connect with other residents in the neighbourhood, but the survey also found that they provide opportunities to build "bridging" social capital, serving as a vehicle to connect residents of different neighbourhoods.* (Foster, 2006, p.542)

Therefore, community gardens provide social infrastructure that facilitates social integration of intergenerational and interclass residents within a neighbourhood leading to social sustainability. As a lived space, they emphasise "diversity, celebration, aesthetic expressions, attachment and belonging, and connection to collective and individual history. (Eizenberg, 2011a; pp 773). Furthermore, these gardens provide unique opportunities for production of knowledge through interaction as well as sharing of skills among diverse groups of users. They also provide free venues for cultural and social events such as sports, workshops, community meetings, picnics among others.

Given that community gardens are an example of a contested urban commons, there remains a challenge with regard to their sustainability. This is due to the fact that ownership of such resources does not lie with the community and this creates some sense of uncertainty regarding the future of the commons. Therefore the social capital, social cohesion and social sustainability that result from the use of these resources may not be sustainable in the long term.

My interest in this study has been in the area of urban commons and social sustainability. I have explored the case of Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken in order to understand how Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken is perceived by various stakeholders. As an urban commons, does it fit the definition of an open access or common property? How is Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken managed? By exploring the views of the users and the leaders associated with the resource, I have tried to reflect on what they think about this phenomenon and the effects it has on the community in which it is located. The nature and management of both Stapelbadden and Stapelbaddsparken are a major interest in this study because, the two phenomena share a lot in common and their origin and context define major transformation that has been witnessed in the Western Harbour district of Malmö city, a neighbourhood that has grown to be an embodiment of urban sustainability that has attracted many curious urban studies scholars and
tourists from different parts the world. In addition, the history of Malmö city cannot be complete without the mention of Stapelbadden and Stapelbaddsparken since the two features are strategically located on a former ship yard that defined the ship building industry which made Malmö the global ship building capital. The collapse of the ship building industry marked a major turning point for the city as over 7000 people lost their jobs and the economy was greatly destroyed. (Malmö city website).

2.2 Concept 2. Social Sustainability

The concept of sustainable development has been a major discourse in international spheres since the 1960s (Cuthill, 2009). Whereas major international conferences have been held ostensibly to arrive at a clear definition of sustainable development and map out strategies to achieve the same, this has not been an easy task. However, a major breakthrough came with the publication of the World Commission on Environment and Development report also known as the Brundtland Report: Our Common Future in 1987 which came up with a widely accepted definition: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs". This definition has given the concept of sustainable development a new perspective. This perspective lays emphasis on human "needs" and "capabilities". In addition, it brings to focus the other dimension of sustainable development, the "social" which had been forgotten in earlier discourses. Therefore, the concept of sustainable development has been widely accepted to encompass three pillars namely, social, economic and environmental sustainability. These three must be taken as interdependent and holistic. It therefore follows that any development that does not take this into account is unlikely to achieve the vision enshrined in the Brundtland Report above. But how is this possible?

Cuthill (2010, p.363) in agreement with Partridge (2005) argues for a strong "practice" perspective in the discussion on "social sustainability" which would be derived from community research. From this perspective, a number of concepts can be derived including but not limited to the following:

- Social justice
- Social/community well being
- Human scale development
- Engaged governance
- Social infrastructure
- Community and/or human - scale development
- Community capacity building and
- Human and social capital.

While it is widely acknowledged that social values embedded in society and driven by sociality are a major prerequisite for sustainability in any development agenda, this has been empirically demonstrated in a number of cases which have shown that community capacity building results in social justice and social capital, both key ingredients in sustainable development. The following conceptual framework (Figure 1) developed by Cuthill succinctly elaborates how social sustainability links with both environmental and economic dimensions of sustainable development.
As can be seen from the above conceptual framework for social sustainability developed by Cuthill, the three pillars of sustainable development namely: social, economic and environmental, are mutually interdependent. Just like economic development that is not environmentally sustainable does not do justice to humanity, in the same breadth environmental development that is not economically sustainable does not do justice to the human race. It therefore follows that the whole purpose of sustainable development revolves around meeting human needs and this is represented by the "social pillar" in the broad framework of sustainability as can be seen in fig.1 above. Therefore, failure to recognise this interdependence and embeddedness of the three pillars can only undermine the very efforts that are being put into development work thereby prejudicing sustainability of the same. This point has been given further credence by Sen and Anand (2000, p.14) in their observation that "The vision of environment and natural resources as a means of achieving a higher income growth level was adopted for years while poverty has been analysed as one of the main causes of environmental degradation within least developing countries". This illustrates the importance of human needs in the fight against poverty.

Bramley and Power (2009) also argue that social sustainability is about quality of life. They therefore agree with the definition of social sustainability put forward by Polese and Stren (2000, pps 15 - 16) as follows:

"development (and/or growth) that is compatible with harmonious evolution of civil society, fostering an environment conducive to the compatible cohabitation of culturally and socially diverse groups while at the same time encouraging social integration, with improvements in the quality of life for all segments of the population."

This definition focuses on collective communal processes besides laying emphasis on quality of life. The authors' views are similar to Cuthill's above in that they all bring out the fact that social aspects of development are major determinants of sustainability agenda and this cannot rule out the
crucial aspects of sustainable communities as well as social equity. Furthermore, Bramley and Power (2009) have also cited Yiftachel and Hedhcock (1993, p140) who have defined Urban social sustainability as: "the continuing ability of a city to function as a long-term, viable setting for human interaction, communication and cultural development."

This definition has emphasised the ability of a city to foster human interaction, facilitate communication and promote cultural development. Since a city encompasses diverse people with different cultural backgrounds, it is very vital that mechanisms are put in place to facilitate integration of these diverse groups through robust socio-cultural programmes.

In the case of Stapelbadden therefore, it is important to ask whether it contributes in any way towards a socially sustainable Malmö. Looking at the framework laid out by Cuthil in Fig. 1 and comparing with the arguments of Bramley and Power as well as Yiftachel and Hedhcock, the picture of Stapelbadden should be mapped out and analysed to fully understand the phenomenon.

2.3 Concept 3. Social Capital.

The concepts of social capital, social cohesion and social inclusion are related and overlapping. Although they have a unifying premise embedded in social networks, their definition is still contested. Consequently, there is no common agreement among social scientists and scholars on a universal definition (Bramley and Power, 2009), (Robison et al, 2002 cited in Claridge(2004). But their meaning is context and discipline dependent. Basically, the main idea behind these concepts is that individuals in a society need to work mutually and interact with each other for society to be socially sustained. (Bramley and power, 2009). This social networking creates a conducive environment for people to participate in collective community activities as well as enhance equal access to services and benefits that accrue in the society. In addition, the networks build trust among the people in a community that binds people through mutual norms, values and culture.

Social cohesion has a strong component of social integration that largely depends on trust and participation in community activities that creates a sense of pride and belonging. Social inclusion is closely related to social equity and it involves equal access to resources and power. These concepts therefore link into Cuthill's framework for social sustainability as shown in Figure1.

Social capital is about the value of social networks, bonding similar people and bridging between diverse people, with norms of reciprocity (Dekker and Uslaner 2001; Uslaner 2001 cited in Claridge, 2004). Bonding refers to the internal linkage within a group of people with similar interests such as in association while bridging refers to external linkage between different groups within a community. The essence of social capital is that it creates a strong bond through trust which enables people to support each other within a group or community. The stronger the social networks the greater the support derived from them.

Adler and Kwon (2002, p23) have defined social capital as

"the goodwill available to individuals or groups. Its source lies in the structure and content of the actor's social relations. Its effects flow from the information, influence, and solidarity it makes available to the actor."
The authors have developed a conceptual model of social capital which identifies three key pillars of social capital namely: opportunity, motivation and ability. They have argued that these three are necessary ingredients in the creation and sustenance of social capital.

In addition, individuals and groups tend to benefit from being members of a network since such membership allows them to leverage the resources of their social contacts within the network. This is a clear demonstration of exploiting an opportunity in the social structure. This opportunity presents the social actors with an advantage of goodwill which they can then use as capital to acquire various resources such as information, services and goods that would have otherwise been beyond their reach. Such social networks can be seen in such formations as clubs, self-help groups, civil society organisations among others.

Furthermore, in any social network, it is the trust and norms of reciprocity that bind the actors. Therefore, the motivation of the individual actors in the network is not that of self-seeking geocentricism but mutual reciprocity based on trust such that the members' belief that other members will act in a mutually reciprocal way is the motivation that drives the actors in the network (Adler and Kwon, 2002). This trust takes time to build and once it is achieved, the network gets stronger and the cost of transaction is considerably reduced since members of the network will uphold the norms agreed by everyone. This therefore solves the problem of collective action and binds the group.

On the other hand, ability can be viewed as the competencies and resources available within a social network. Without these, the actors cannot achieve any mutual benefits from being members of the network. Therefore, the ability of the individual members of the network to support each other is a key pillar in the development and substance of social capital.

The debate on social capital has continued to evolve over the last three decades. Some of the leading scholars who have defined this theory include Bourdieu, Coleman and Lin. These scholars have conducted extensive research in this field and have helped shape the theory as we know it today. Generally, two perspectives are discernible in the wider theory of social capital. Lin (2003) for example identifies individual and organisational levels in analysing how social capital works in reality. At the individual level, the theory analyses how individuals access and use resources embedded in social networks to their advantages in for instance getting jobs or business deals. The most important thing in this context is how individuals invest resources in the social network and how they access these resources and use them to generate returns. Flap (1988, 1991, 1994) cited in Lin (2003, p21) has argued that social capital is determined by three factors, one, the number of people in an individual actor's network who are willing and ready to help when called upon to do so. Two, the strength of the relationship indicating readiness to help, and three, the resources that the individual has at their disposal. Therefore, being a member of a social network creates a competitive advantage for someone which lowers transaction cost by leveraging the common pool resources in the network.

A second level is the organisational or group perspective. This particular level explores the elements and processes in the production and maintenance of the group's collective asset (Lin, 2003). Lin has analysed arguments by both Bourdieu and Coleman on the significance of social capital at the structural level where he demonstrates that social capital is not only a collective asset shared by members of a social group but also facilitates some actions of individual actors within a social structure. In addition, social capital must be seen as resources that reside in social relations rather than individuals while access and use of the same reside with actors (Lin, 2003). Therefore,
as Putnam (1993) cited in (Lin, 2003, p.23) notes, the extent of participation of individual members of a community in voluntary organizations is a reflection of the level of social capital in that community since such associations promote and enhance collective norms and trust among members.

In the two cases studied in this research, it is interesting to see how social capital is created and the role played by Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken in this process. In addition, the concepts discussed above (Urban Commons, social sustainability and social capital) have an interesting correlation and this has been a major core of this study. In trying to understand, the nature and factors affecting management of urban commons, a picture emerges of how these urban commons can be a source of citizens’ participation and pride. In addition, effective and participatory management of these resources can turn out to be a major source of social capital which then contribute to social sustainability.

Having looked at the theoretical foundation as laid down in various literatures, I will now turn to methodology and methods in the next chapter. This aims at describing the research design and process including the philosophical approach and methods.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods

In this chapter, I will discuss the details on the design of this research with a view to illustrating the process through which the research was conducted. In order to do this, I will briefly discuss the research approach employed, how the subject of this study was arrived at and the selection of the methods employed in the study.

3.1 Research Approach

The nature of this study involves exploration of the social world of the residents of Malmö City. By trying to understand the social interaction of the individual community members who use the community common resource located at old Kockums shipyard in the Western Harbour district, the study adopts a qualitative approach through case study and semi-structured interviews which is compatible with phenomenological and interpretive research. As Holstein and Gubrium (1995, 2003) cited by Mirka Koro-Ljungberg in James Holstein and Jaber Gubrium (2008, p.430) states, interviews are "reality-constructing and interactional events during which the interviewer and interviewee construct knowledge together." In addition, Koro-Ljungberg has further pointed out that Holstein and Gubrium (2003, p.4) have added their voice to this argument by stating that an interview is "a site of, and occasion for, producing knowledge itself." On the other hand, Andrea Fontana and James Frey (2005) have also been cited by Koro-Ljungberg in Holstein and Gubrium (2008, p.430) proposing that "an interview can be defined as a collaborative, contextual, and active process that involves two or more people" while Miller and Crabtree (2004, p.185) have been reported saying that interviewing is like a "partnership on a conversational research journey."

The outcome of this research is therefore a result of collaborative creation of knowledge between the researcher and the participants. This process is also heavily dependent on cultural and contextual circumstances of the cases which are the main focus of the study. The participants are
therefore active in the creation of the content and their cultural and social circumstances are reflected on the outcome of the study. In addition, the cultural differences between the interviewer and the interviewees though evident has not been a major barrier to the process of knowledge creation. A balance has been struck to bridge any gaps that could create misunderstanding in this process. The interview process has also provided a platform for both the interviewer and the interviewees to create an interpretive space through which greater understanding of other perspectives has been achieved (Borland, 1998) cited by Koro-Ljungberg in Holstein and Gubrium (2008, p.431)

As I have stated before, the study aims at exploring the nature and management of urban commons through the eyes of the residents to understand how they (urban residents) shape their environment, the social relationships they build and the way they manage their common resources. This particular study therefore aimed at understanding the social context of the subjects. This will aim to understand the way the subjects, being human, interpret their environment. Being social beings, humans are best placed to give an interpretation of their understanding of their world from their own perspective in line with social reality. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p27), a phenomenological approach tries to describe social phenomena from the perspective of the actors who are assumed to be better placed to interpret their own experiences and reality. In addition, they argue that a "semi-structured life world interview attempts to understand themes of the lived everyday world from the subjects' own perspective" and this approach is therefore close to the everyday conversation. However, it should be noted that this method is distinct from either everyday conversation or a closed questionnaire.

In deed May(2011) also concurs with this view by noting that the experienced world grants a researcher an opportunity to peek into the inner world experiences of the participants rather than focusing on the external environment. This view echoes the point that the participants are better placed to give meaning to their environment and that it is impossible for a researcher to know the world independently of the view of people being interviewed.

The above context has influenced my choice of case study method for this research. As Yin (2009) argues, case study method is appropriate in a situation where a researcher wants to understand a real - life phenomenon in depth in context. Furthermore, in line with social constructionist world view, data collection was done through in-depth interviews with participants drawn from Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken, Brygerriet and the City of Malmo's Department of Streets and Parks. This was corroborated with information from diverse sources such as websites, previous literature as well as publications by various stakeholders.

### 3.2 Choice of Subject

An understanding of how urban commons are managed and their contribution to social sustainability is crucial and therefore motivates the choice of this subject. Given that research on urban commons is still limited, there is great need to contribute to this budding area of study in order to build a rich repertoire of knowledge that will enhance understanding of urban commons and their contribution to sustainable development.

In choosing this subject therefore, I hope to contribute to a better understanding of urban commons theory especially in relation to social sustainability. Besides, this study has provided me with an opportunity to increase my knowledge in the area of commons.
3.3 Choice of Method

My research involves a study of contextual phenomena, urban commons (Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken). In order to get to the depth of this phenomenon, I have opted to take a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews in line with social constructionist world view. This method is also relevant in case study approach like the one I have undertaken. The method allows for flexibility in data collection since the participants get a chance to openly express their thoughts which can reveal rich details that other methods cannot. In addition, the conversational nature of the semi-structured method allows natural interaction between interviewer and interviewee which is important in creation of social reality (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Yin, 2009; Bryman, 2012).

3.3.1 Case Study Method

According to Yin (2009; p18), "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident." This method is therefore suitable for conducting in depth studies in order to understand real life phenomena in context. In addition, Yin (2009; p18) notes that:

The case study inquiry

- copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result,
- relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result
- benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

From the above definition, it is observable that case study method is applicable in a variety of contexts. Besides qualitative and quantitative studies, case study is also applicable in mixed methods research. Yin (2009) has also noted that in case studies, there can be either a single case or multiple-case studies.

The choice of case study method depends on the type of research question(s) and the data to be collected. In general, the method is recommended in situations where "how" and "why" questions are to be asked as part of the research study. In this way, the method provides a good opportunity to explore or describe a real life phenomenon (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, the choice of a case(s) will depend largely on the accessibility of data sources for instance, interviewees, records, or access to organisations for purposes of observation.

Yin (2009, p27) has identified five components of a case study research design. These include:

1. a study's questions;
2. its propositions, if any;
3. Its unit(s) of analysis;
4. the logic linking the data to the propositions; and
The above components are crucial when designing a case study research since they determine the success or failure of the outcome. In this study therefore, research questions were formulated to guide the study. These followed the criteria recommended for case study research question; "how" and "why". Since the research was explorative in nature, there was no proposition at the beginning of the study. However, a purpose was stated to give the study a focus. The choice of unit of analysis presented a challenge in that the study was basically explorative in nature and the main focus was on Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken which are both an urban commons and managed by civil society organisations. Therefore, the unit of analysis in this case can be said to be spatial (physical phenomena) since the study aims to explore the role of urban commons (Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken) in building social sustainability in the city.

In designing a case study research, Yin (2009; p40) has proposed four criteria that should guide the process. These include:

- Construct validity
- Internal validity
- External validity and
- Reliability.

### 3.3.1.1 Construct Validity

In this study, the purpose was to explore how Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken contributes to social capital in the city of Malmo and how this can lead to social sustainability. In order to ensure construct validity, multiple sources of evidence were employed including in depth interviews with several key informants from diverse spectra of stakeholders, review of previous research on the phenomena covered in this study, internet search on relevant websites including those of the civil society organisations associated with these resources as well as the City of Malmo. In addition, information from subject matter experts from Leadership for Sustainability Master Programme within the department of Urban Studies was used to corroborate the various pieces of evidence gathered during field study. Furthermore, draft report was shared with certain key informants who had requested to have a draft copy in order to corroborate the information attributed to them. This was done to enhance validity of the study.

### 3.3.1.2 Internal Validity

This type of validity is not applicable to descriptive or exploratory case study since it is mostly associated with quantitative studies (Yin, 2009). Consequently, my study did not address this matter.

### 3.3.1.3 External Validity

It is generally accepted that in a single case study, it is often difficult to generalize the outcome (Yin, 2009; Bryman, 2012). Given the fundamental differences in circumstances of each case, it
makes generalization difficult. Yin has proposed that for the outcome of a single case study to be
generalizable, it must rely on analytic generalization which must be hinged on theory. However, he
notes that such a theory must be tested by replicating the findings two or three times to find out if
the results are attained.

In this study therefore, external validity cannot be absolutely ascertained unless the study is
replicated and tested against theory as suggested by Yin. However, care has been taken to ensure
that the study links to theory as much as possible. Towards this end, theory of commons, social
capital and social sustainability have been used to relate the various components and outcome of
the study.

3.3.1.4 Reliability

Reliability is very crucial in any case study since it ensures the study can be replicated and the
same results obtained in future. In order to ensure reliability of the study, I prepared a case study
protocol that outlined the various stages of the research. This protocol forms part of the research
documentation that can be used in future to repeat the same study. In addition, I developed a case
study database containing documentary evidence from various sources consulted including field
notes, research diary, literature studied among others. This database is crucial in providing
guidelines for anyone who might be interested in following the traces of the research.

3.3.1.5 Rationale for the case

There are five rationales for doing single case research (Yin, 2009; pp 47 - 48). These include:

- Critical case
- Extreme/unique case
- Representative/typical case
- Revelatory
- Longitudinal case

Critical case is where the researcher has a well developed theory against which a case is tested to
find out if the theory holds or not (Yin, 2009; Bryman, 2012). Therefore the single case can be used
to confirm, challenge or extend the theory.

I conceived this case study as most likely a critical case. In this way, I hoped to use the case to find
out if the studied phenomena (Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken) agree with theory of
commons/urban commons, social capital, social sustainability.

3.4 Data Collection

Data collection entailed preparation of a case study protocol as part of research design. The
protocol outlined the general procedures to be followed in the process of gathering data for the case
study. These included; introduction to the case study and purpose of protocol, data collection procedures, outline of case study report and case study questions.

During the course of the study, I conducted thirteen semi-structured interviews with both staff and beneficiaries of Stapelbadden as well as a staff of Malmo City’s Department of Streets and Parks. These were:

Stapelbadden Association (STPLN) - 3 Staff member
- 1 user
- 4 interns/users

Brygerriet(Stapelbaddsparken) - 1 Board member
- 3 users

City of Malmö - 1 staff from Department of Streets and Parks who is also the project coordinator responsible for Stapelbadden Project

The interviews were conducted on diverse dates notably April 27; May 1, 19, 21, July 9, 10, 18, 19, 2012;

The following participants were interviewed:

**STPLN**

1. Name: Esther*
   
   Date: 27 April 2012

2. Name: Johnson*
   
   Date: 12 May 2012

3. Name: Maria*
   
   Date: 19 July 2012

4. Name: Samuelson*
   
   Date: 18 July 2012

5. Name: Raed*
   
   Date: 18 July 2012

6. Name: Magarita*
   
   Date: 18 July 2012
7. Name: **Samuelson***
   Date: 18 July 2012

8. Name: **Olof***
   Date: 18 July 2012

**Bryggeriet**

1. Name: **Eriksson***
   Date: 1 May 2012

2. Name: **Nils***
   Date: 1 May 2012

3. Name: **Roy***
   Date: 21 May 2012

**City of Malmö - Department of Streets and Parks**

1. Name: **Paulson***
   Date: 09 July 2012

**NB: * Not their real name**

### 3.4.1 The Interview Process

Since the study was qualitative and interpretative, in depth semi-structured interviews were used to construct the world view of the respondents. This allowed the respondents and the researcher to freely interact in a natural conversational approach. This approach is recommended for case study research (Yin, 2009; Bryman, 2012).

During the interview, I tried to avoid leading questions in order not to influence the response from the respondents. In this way, interviewer bias was minimised. (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009; Bryman, 2012).

In addition, all the interviews except one were audio-recorded in line with best practice in conducting interviews (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009; Bryman, 2012). The interview that was not recorded was due to the request by the respondent to remain anonymous and in order to maintain integrity, I accepted his condition for the interview not to be recorded.

The participants were selected using snowball system (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009; Bryman, 2012). In this process, once a participant had been interviewed, I asked them if they knew any other potential candidate for this study. Through this, I made contacts with suggested individuals and requested them to participate in the study. This method was particularly useful in the context of my
research due to the high level of individualism in the Swedish culture and therefore it would have been difficult to approach people who were unknown to me. The Swedes by their nature don’t take it kindly when strangers approach them and they try as much as possible to stay away from any contacts with strangers.

3.4.2 Ethics
Ethics is a crucial element in any research and case study is no exception. Kvale and Brinkman (2009; p68) have identified four crucial ethical guidelines that need to be observed while conducting interviews: "informed consent, confidentiality, consequences and the role of the researcher."

3.4.2.1 Informed Consent
Informed consent entails providing the potential research participants with the details about the purpose of the research, its overall design and potential risks that they may be exposed to as well as benefits that may be derived from participating in the study. In addition, it involves securing voluntary participation of the interviewees and assuring them of the possibility of withdrawal at any time in the research. (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009)

In this particular study, ethical standards were observed to a high degree. For instance, in order to gain access to the organisations studied as cases, prior request was sent via email and approval gained from the leadership of the organisations. In seeking the consent to participate, I ensured that I provided all the necessary information about the study without compromising the quality.

Another example is the effort I put in securing the consent of the respondents prior to the actual interviews. This was done in two ways. First, prior request was made to the potential respondents and once they agreed to participate in the interview, a formal consent was obtained through signing a consent form before the start of the interview. Care was taken to ensure that all the questions and concerns participants had raised were addressed prior to formalising the consent.

Before the start of each interview, the interviewee was requested to provide consent for audio-recording of the interview session. This was done verbally and once the consent was given, the interviewer went ahead with the recording of the session.

3.4.2.2 Confidentiality
Confidentiality means that private data that can identify participants will not be disclosed. (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009). This also presents a potential dilemma in that there is conflict between what can be attributed to the participants and what can remain anonymous. In some cases, participants may request that their identities should not be disclosed while at times, others may request that they are fully acknowledged. Therefore, the researcher has to strike a balance between these positions and most importantly avoid betraying any promises given in order to gain consent and hence avoid any possible legal consequences that may arise once the research report is published. (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009)
Therefore, in this study, the respondents were assured of confidentiality in case they were worried over their identities being revealed although most of them had no problem with this and in fact gave written consent for their identities to be made public. It is only one participant who requested complete anonymity and in fact would not even agree to have the interview recorded. Since one participant decline to have his identity disclosed, I opted to conceal the identities of all the interviewees in order to maintain uniformity in the study. Consequently, all the interviewees have been given pseudonyms.

3.4.2.3 Consequences
It is good ethical practise for the researcher to fully inform the participants about the consequences of their participation in the research whether these are positive as in the benefits they may accrue or negative as in the risks they may be exposed to as a result of their participation (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009). In order to address this issue, I took necessary precaution to inform the participants about the research I was conducting and made sure that they fully understood the purpose and expected outcome of the research. In addition, participants were given leeway to ask as many questions as they wished regarding the research and its possible consequences should they agree to participate. Consequently, some participants asked that some sensitive matters that had been disclosed should not be made public in the report without their confirmation of the same. In addition, I took extra caution to avoid being drawn into intimate emotional exchange that could distract the flow of the interview therefore remaining focused all through the interview session.

3.4.2.4 Role of the researcher
The role of the researcher is very significant in qualitative research since it is the researcher who acts as an instrument (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009). The researcher is under moral obligation to uphold high integrity in conduct of the study in order to avoid any possible legal consequences. As I conducted this study, I was aware of the expected moral standards and that is the reason why I strived to follow ethical guidelines such as seeking approval from both authorities and individual participants for interview, securing informed consent as well as accepting some of the special conditions set out by some participants.

Furthermore, during literature review, sources consulted have been adequately acknowledged to give credit to the authors and maintain integrity.

In this chapter, I have discussed the research design and process illustrating the details about what was done and how the research was conducted. In the next chapter, I now present the results from the study as well as some brief analysis of the data created in the process.
Chapter 4: Results & Analysis

In this chapter, I present overall findings from the study together with a brief analysis. First a brief background about the cases is provided then interview results follow. These are analysed based on theoretical background that informs the study.

4.1 Brief Presentation of the Cases
Stapelbadden and Stapelbaddsparken: Creative Public Spaces in the heart of Malmö?

4.1.1 Introduction

In the Western Harbour district, a rapidly developing neighbourhood in Malmö city, there is a huge spectacular park of complete concrete sandwiched between modern office and residential apartments. Adjacent to it is an odd underground building that looks derelict with a flat concrete roof. This area used to be a major ship building yard during the height of industrial revolution that shaped the city of Malmö as the world's largest ship building yard. However, due to the collapse of the ship-building industry in Sweden in the 70s, all the previous slipways have been redeveloped into either apartments or office blocks except this particular one. It is here that Stapelbadden Association (STPLN), a local Non-Governmental Organisation that works with youth and marginalised groups has emerged and an alliance of various stakeholders created to make the use of these public spaces democratic and accessible to everyone within the city of Malmö. The construction of a public outdoor skateboard arena on an old shipyard and the creation of a community cultural and innovation hub has completely revolutionised this area in a unique way. The fact that the youth and other marginalised groups are able to access and use these public spaces without having to pay the market rates that would have otherwise excluded them from this area is the departure point for this study. I therefore seek to understand if Stapelbadden can provide an opportunity for community capacity building and therefore lead to building of bridging social capital and how this can complement sustainable development initiatives being undertaken by the local government in this district.

4.1.2 Background

The city of Malmö was in the early 20th century regarded as the world's leading ship building city courtesy of Kockums Industries. Kockums shipyard, located in the Western Harbour district, had a number of slipways where ships were built and where they were launched. However, with the collapse of the ship building industry in the 1970s, these slipways were sold off and developed into alternative uses. But one of the slipways which also housed an underground building with several rooms used for dining and dressing still remains till now. It is in this building and around it that new and innovative activities have sprung up. Two major phenomena are discernible around this area, Stapelbaddsparken which is a large concrete outdoor skateboard park with creative designs and Stapelbadden, "an old industrial building" with "2500 square feet area of possibilities," (www.stpln.se).
Although several activities currently taking place in these places evolved from a common process, it is notable that they are being managed by two distinct organisations. Bryggeriet (an association for local skateboard riders) currently manages skateboard activities in the Stapelbaddsparken. On the other hand, Stapelbadden Association (STPLN) operates Stapelbadden and cultural activities in collaboration with Stapelbaddsparken.

4.1.3 The Development Process

It is interesting trying to understand the activities that take place in this area. It seems most people in the city of Malmö have no clear picture about what exactly takes place here particularly in the Stapelbadden (STPLN). The skateboard park obviously stands out as the main phenomenon that one can see but behind the scenes lie strong sentiments that drive the vision of sustainability. Several stories have been narrated about this place and each one gives an interesting insight into what has been considered a unique phenomenon in the heart of a rapidly developing city neighbourhood.

Bjork (2012) has explained that the development of this feature emerged from a strong vision to try a new way of urban planning that enhances user participation in the design of public spaces. The end goal has been to enhance cross-sector collaboration while at the same time creating opportunities for community empowerment through active stakeholder engagement. This has been seen as a way to promote good governance in the city of Malmö towards realising social sustainability. In order to realise this ambitious project, two project managers were appointed: Ewa Sundstrom representing the City of Malmö and Magnusson representing Bryggeriet.

The vision for a unique arena was created by Magnusson who himself was a skateboard enthusiast and together with the skateboarders proposed a unique outdoor skateboard park that would be Europe's biggest and most spectacular park. They viewed this as a unique opportunity for the city of Malmö to be the major Skateboard city in Europe that would attract skateboarders from all over the world. Besides creating an opportunity for the youth to engage their creativity and interact with each other, the park would also enable the city to promote cultural events and hence create social capital within the city. Due to the nature of the project and the fact that there were different stakeholders drawn from the public, private and the social sectors, there were a lot of challenges in the development of the skateboard park with the City of Malmö taking the viewpoint that this was a construction project and was therefore subject to the normal legal procurement procedures while Brygerriet was of the view that this was a special social project that required special expertise that was not readily available in the local market at that time. Besides, their main argument was also that the participation of the skateboarders in the physical construction was the most important aspect in order to create value otherwise the arena would not live up to the high standards envisioned by the initiators. In the end the opinion of the skateboarders carried the day and much of the skateboard park was built by hand by the skateboarders themselves led by the American-Austrian skate park builder Stefan Hauser. (Goransson, Lieberg & Olsson, 2006; in Bjork, 2012)

Although the skate park is the most conspicuous feature in this area, there is a more interesting but hidden part of the slipway that many people don't seem to notice. Beneath the slipway were large spaces that served as canteen and dressing rooms during Kockums better days. These spaces were empty and in derelict condition with leaking roof. At that time, it was not clear to the stakeholders on what to do with the spaces and one suggestion was that they could be renovated and then put to use by Brygerriet for youth and cultural activities.
In 2005, ABF (the Workers' Educational Association) also became involved in the project. Due to the several stakeholders with interest in the project, an alliance was formed in the spring 2006 that brought together ABF, Brygerriet and Folkbildningsforeningen under the name Association Stapelbadden. Folkbildningsforeningen, a local community development organisation had been working in collaboration with Brygerriet prior to the formation of this alliance. (Bjerke et al., 2007; Norberg Hansen & Lagergren, 2012 cited by Bjork, 2012).

In 2006, a workshop was organised by the stakeholders and as a result, a new group was formed called Stapelbaddens art group. This particular group aimed to provide various urban arts activities in Stapelbadden. The group became active from 2007 and organised several cultural events at the premises for instance, "Full Moon Artie" where anyone could come and show their art, live music with open stage for bands, poets, acrobats. They also established an "Open Stage for Public Art", where armature artists could get a chance to exhibit their work on a monthly basis.

However, working relationship among the various stakeholders in the alliance was not an easy ride. Soon disagreements crept in as there were different views of what Stapelbadden should become. As a result of the disagreements, Folkbildningsforeningen quit the alliance and the Stapelbaddens art group moved their arrangement to other premises. (Bjork, 2012).

Cultural activities in the Stapelbadden continued to thrive, but it also became clear that these could not be compatible organisationally with the skateboard activities. Consequently, divisions arose between the partners which led to separation of the organisations and activities. The association Stapelbadden eventually took control of the activities in the Stapelbadden and became aligned to the Department of Culture within Malmö City while the Streets and parks Department of the Malmö City that had been involved in street art projects took supervisory responsibility over the skateboard park while Brygerriet assumed management of the skate park.

In the early stages of this development, there were close links between Stapelbadden, Stapelbaddsparken and the academia. This link was made through Movium (a cross-disciplinary unit for communicating knowledge on issues related to planning, construction, management and use of public spaces). Another link was developed when Magnusson, one of the managers, took a project management course at Malmö University and used the project as empirical case study. In addition, the K3 department (Art, Culture and Communication) at Malmö University was actively involved in the design of the project. The project has also been used as a case study by various students from both Malmö and Lund Universities. The latest collaboration has been with Medea, a research centre at Malmö University that focuses on collaborative development of new media.

Medea has been driving the design of Fabriken, a kind of "FabLab" (fabrication laboratory) modelled along the MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston) model. MIT describes their model as a creative workshop where "the public has access to sophisticated machines to design and create objects of all kinds." (Bjork, 2012, p.3).

Besides Fabriken, other activities that take place in Stapelbadden include:

Cykelkoket - an open workshop where anyone is free to repair, renovate or build their bicycles at no cost. This aims to encourage the use of bicycles as clean means of transport in Malmö city. Members of the public are offered bicycle parts, tools and mentoring to be able to repair or build their own bicycles. Special classes are also organised for members of the public to increase their skills in bicycle maintenance, repairs and assembly. The group also runs a community outreach programme in various city neighbourhoods that aim to create awareness about the unique...
opportunity presented by Stapelbadden. During these outreach activities, classes on bicycle repairs and maintenance are offered besides providing tools for those who want to repair their bicycles.

**Tantverket** - a venue with a focus on needlework and crafts. It is a space for those who are interested in practical DIY (Do It Yourself) culture. This programme aims at empowering especially women in hand crafts and through the regular working sessions builds a community of enthusiasts who support each other through mentoring.

**HuBn** - a flexible co-working space, including free internet where one only needs to make their tables and chairs at any available space within the space and just start working. It is free office space for personal projects open for anybody whether employed or unemployed, student or retiree. There is no discrimination on any basis whether age, gender, race, social status, religion or whatever.

The rule for using any of these spaces is as simple as "Bring a packet of coffee or tea, milk and a cup. Then it's just to start!" (www.stpln.se). The users share resources and skills. In addition, through the good working relationship with the Department of Culture, financial resources are easily accessible to support projects in this arena.

### 4.2 Themes

#### 4.2.1 Social Capital

**Participatory Community Development**

Community development can be perceived as an expression of citizenship in action. (Lister, 1998). In this regard, individual members of the community find strength in working together with each other to create social networks that give them a voice to exercise their democratic rights in the public sphere. In this sense, citizenship is no longer viewed from a narrow perspective of public institutionalisation but rather an expression of collective achievement of the community. In addition, this perspective views citizenship as identity in which an individual is seen either as 'ingroup' or 'outgroup' in the context of specific issues. (Steyaert and Hjorth, 2006). From the case of Stapelbaddsparken, we can see that the skateboarders have pushed for their rights to be recognised and to have their freedom to express themselves through participation in democratic processes within the city. This has enabled them to engage the local authorities in the city to have a say in the management of public spaces in the Western Harbour district. Through their association, Bryggeriet, they have formed a formidable network that gives them a strong voice to bargain for their rights and freedom to express their citizenship and democratic rights with regard to the management of the skate park. The following excerpt from the interview with Esther illustrates this point.

**Excerpt 1.**

> Ah...So, they thought that ... and at the same time they were uhm contacted by skateboard riders, local skateboarders here in Malmö that wanted to have this concrete park here. And they thought that this might be a good idea to sort of connect, so... and why am telling you this is because it is interesting for the
process for because what they did was that instead of just ok so we build a skateboard park.

And the skateboarders themselves proposed uhm... a designer and they made the design together with this guy and they flew expert skateboarders from all over the world more or less, to help build it, and they, and they ... it was done in a very controversial way you might say coz everything there, all the round forms and shapes is hand made by the people...

And uh... which is eh... when you are a city or an official organisation, there are certain rules to follow on how you can get to hire people and how to hire other organisations to do these things but they worked directly with the skateboarders and it was possible for them to do that. (Esther, 2012: Interview Transcript)

From the above excerpt, we can see that the City authorities have actively engaged the youth who were the skateboarders and major stakeholders in the design of the public park that has been created in this area. The fact that the skateboarders are able to use their collective bargaining power to negotiate with and convince the City authorities to bend their strict regulations regarding construction and design of public space in order to accommodate the views of the skateboarders is itself a reflection of how participatory community development and collective action can be applied in the management of urban commons to enhance citizenship. This participatory process gives the youth a chance to claim their rightful place in the public space and therefore exercise their freedom as equal citizens. In addition, the fact that the public space in question is located in a high end neighbourhood where the price of land is beyond the reach of the majority of the residents of the city of Malmo, less so the youth, gaining not only access but equal rights to participate in its design is in itself a reflection of how participatory community development and collective action can be applied in the management of urban commons to enhance citizenship. This participatory process gives the youth a chance to claim their rightful place in the public space and therefore exercise their freedom as equal citizens. In addition, the fact that the public space in question is located in a high end neighbourhood where the price of land is beyond the reach of the majority of the residents of the city of Malmo, less so the youth, gaining not only access but equal rights to participate in its design is in itself a reflection of inclusion which Cuthill (2009) has depicted in the social sustainability framework as illustrated in fig 1. Furthermore, social justice and equity are manifested in the way the voices of the youth are heard and acted upon by the City authorities in a way that upholds their rights as citizens. Cuthil (ibid) has argued that this is crucial for attaining social sustainability. This also demonstrates a shift in paradigm from citizenship as a formal status to citizenship as a practice or activity. (Steyaert and Hjorth, 2006).

Furthermore, in line with Cuthill's (2009) framework, we can observe that engaged governance is put into practice in the case. This is notable in the participatory process in which the skateboard park has been developed and the partnership and collaboration between the City authorities and the local skateboarders association - Bryggeriet. As Foster (2006) notes, the skateboard park in the Western Harbour district of Malmö city being a public space, forms part of the social, economic and ecological system of the neighbourhood and therefore cannot be alienated from it in any way. We can also observe this from the following excerpt:

Excerpt 2.

And, when Kockum, which was the great company, when they shut down in the 70s, 3,000 people eh.. lost their job over one night, so Malmö had to, sort of find another.. uh m.. sort of way of getting new jobs here and get the city attractive again. So.. and Vastra Hamnen, this part of the city is
that part of the strategy. Though when they built this housing area here, eh.. it was to sort of reach out to people with good economy and another competence. Eh and when they opened it up for... for.. people in 2001, uh.. there were a lot of art.. like public art, and they worked with the environment very differently from other parts of the city. Uh so a lot of people came there to swim and to barbeque in the summer and just hang out. And there was a lot of young people that came out there and they used the environment differently than what people might have expected from the beginning. Uh, they skateboarded a lot, there was a lot of in lines, uh.. people writing in lines..., and a lot of music playing and stuff like that; and the people that bought the apartments that were fundamental then thought that would be disturbing. Then the City (authorities) made a very important choice that instead of just closing it down and making it a gated community, they opened it up even more. But they sort of steered the swimmers away from near the immediate housing areas and made it attractive to be there but not like in close contact with this.... and skateboard park that is situated next to this place, eh.. was the first part of... of this process you might say coz this whole actually area from storagatan* here from where this house is situated and all the way down to the other street eh.. connected to the skateboard park is called stapelbaddsparken. And it is a public park and the roof here is actually also part of the park. (Esther, 2012: Interview Transcript)

Again we note from the excerpt that despite the initial feeling of discontent among the owners of the new apartments that had been built in Western Harbour (Vastra Hamnen) district regarding the use of the public space in the neighbourhood by the youth especially the skateboarders, the City authorities realised that it would be unwise to turn the newly developed neighbourhood into a gated community. Their reasoning is reflected in the arguments by both Foster (2006) and Cuthill (2009) that urban space should be managed in such a way as to foster social inclusion in order to attain social sustainability in the community. Therefore through public participation in the process of creation of Stapelbaddsparken, sociality has been created in a democratic way that promotes active demonstration of citizenship and this has contributed to building social capital in the community through networking among various user groups of the public space such as skateboarders, community groups, tourists, students among others. The skateboard park has become a public arena where diverse people meet to socialise and this has strengthened community cohesion in the city. In addition, the park has catapulted the city of Malmö into the international limelight as one of the leading global skateboard resorts and consequently drawn thousands of tourists annually. The result is that the City authorities have been able to generate a lot of revenue from tourism activities anchored on this public park. This has also made this neighbourhood and the city of Malmö to be famous and attractive to visit and live in. The following excerpt illustrates this.

Excerpt 3.

_Uh... hm....so ..... and I think they, the City(authorities) said that after one year, it costed of course more to do this but after one year, they made all that_
money back in terms of publicity and and ...uh.. visits and stuff like that. (Esther, 2012: Interview Transcript)

The excerpt clearly demonstrates that public spaces can have multiple effects in a community. Like in the case of Stapelbaddsparken, besides empowering the youth through democratic participation in the creation of public spaces as per their vision and aspirations, it has also restored the fame of the City of Malmö to its previous status as an international city by the collapsed shipbuilding industry being replaced by tourism industry.

Another aspect of the park is that it is an amazing open public space as noted by Roy (2012: Interview transcript). Roy notes that the park provides a great opportunity for socialising among friends. However, for a foreigner who is not a Swede, it can be challenging trying to make friends with the Swedes and therefore, his attempt to make friends through hanging out at the park have not born any fruits in terms of making new friends. His observation affirms the fact that such a park though has the capacity to build bridging social capital, it may be challenging to socialise with strangers due to cultural differences. Roy has also confirmed that the park attracts people from diverse areas of the city as well as other parts of the world. He notes that the park has given Malmo a global identity:

Excerpt 4.

..my initial interest came from a friend of mine who had heard about this skateboard park from Hungary and told me he had to come and visit Malmö. By then, I was living in the UK, in London, the capital of the world culturally in every level and he never came to visit but he said am moving to a small shitty Swedish town that no one fucking knows about and he goes like, I wanna go and visit. And I said why? And he said, ok, skateboarding is really amazing in Malmö! And again, in that same summer, I bumped into some German guy in a pub and we got to take some drinks together and I asked him, What's your favourite city? The guy.... and you know you expect some answers like Paris, Stockholm, the big cities... and he said Malmö and I was... what the fuck! And he said it's because of the skateboard. (Roy 2012: Interview transcript)

This excerpt shows how famous the city of Malmo has become as a result of the skate park located in the Vastra Hamnen neighbourhood. The park has the capacity to attract skateboard enthusiasts from far away countries and this makes it a unique global phenomenon. Through this attraction, networking among various groups of skateboarders is facilitated and this creates bridging social capital.

Johnson (2012:interview transcript) has also pointed out that he has benefitted from the use of Stapelbadden since he has been able to make important contacts that have enabled him to carry out his projects. Through the associates and networks created at Stapelbadden, the users benefit from mentoring skills, resources that are shared, contacts that are created and opportunities to do own projects. For example, Johnson points out that he has learnt how to use laser cutter to create designs. In addition, he has been able to learn basic book keeping and entrepreneurship. Although his initial interest was on information technology, he has acquired more skills and even started his own enterprise from Stapelbadden.
Furthermore, a link can be established across the three pillars of sustainable development as portrayed in Cuthill's (2009) social sustainability framework namely social, economic and environmental sustainability. As is evident in the case of stapelbaddsparken, sociality has been created through participatory and democratic design and management of public space which has not only led to environmental protection through planned management of the resource but also economic gains through promotion of tourism that has generated revenue for the local economy. In addition, the fact that users are able to do creative projects and even initiate income generating activities through their participation in the space at Stapelbadden is an indication of the potential of the urban commons to provide social and economic sustainability to the residents of the city.

4.2.2 Social Sustainability

Social sustainability entails social and cultural diversity that enhances integration of diverse groups of people (Polese and Stren, 2000). This integration also nurtures development of civil society besides promoting high quality of life. From the study, it is observable that the cases studied show these characteristics. Not only does Stapelbadden/Stapelbaddsparken provide avenues for social and cultural interaction, but also opportunities for learning skills such as technological skills in information technology, bicycle repairs, and handcraft.

Paulson (2012: interview transcript) has also noted that the idea behind building the skate park in Vastra Hamnen is "all about social sustainability". This is because, the skate park has attracted a lot of young people from all parts of the city as well as other parts of the country and overseas thereby putting Malmo City in the global map as a major skating arena. In addition, the process of involving the youth in management of the park makes them take responsibility and ownership of this important urban space thereby reducing chances of destruction or vandalism.

Paulson (2012: interview transcript) also points out that "Stapelbaddsparken is not just a park, we call it an activity area. There are opportunities for other activities.." and some of the activities being carried out here include, cultural events, music festivals, rock climbing, educational activities, community gardening among others. Therefore these different activities are suitable for all groups of people in the city who frequent the park for leisure and recreation. This also nurtures social integration within the city which builds not only bonding social capital among groups of friends but also links diverse groups from different parts of the city and beyond leading to bridging social capital.

This point has also been pointed out by Roy in this excerpt:

Excerpt 5.

Yes, definitely. First of all it gives inclusivity in an exclusive area. I think that's an amazing thing! You will never see this anywhere in the world. I don't know where you are from but just imagine in a city, there's a skatepark right in the middle of the city, it's pretty unique. Uh, that's one thing. Second, you know Malmo is going through a transformation, uh.. it used to be an industrial city and it is now turning into a knowledge city and various people are coming and going. So in order to attract young people and talent and companies as well, and the youngsters will live in the city and the City realised that ok, so skateboarding is the in thing, ok. Each generation is
different and they interpret their culture by their... and today it's skateboarding. (Roy 2012: Interview transcript)

Roy also says that as a public space, the park facilitates intergenerational interaction and especially the nature of the skating sport allows individual players to enjoy the game without the restriction of other games like soccer that requires team work.

Excerpt 6.

And I see that as an activity park, it gives sustainability options because people can hum.. exercise which is one thing, but I think the other important factor is that the City listened to the skateboarders. It is kind of built across generational communication channel. And lastly, I think is the nature of the sport - it is so individual that people from the age of 5 to 55 can do it together. And it is quite nice to see that everybody can skateboard 5 year old and 55 year old together in one urban area. You couldn't do that by playing football. Because if you are picking a team, you're not gonna pick a 55 year old oh fuck off, a 5 year old! You gonna pick something strong if you wanna win the game! (Roy 2012: Interview transcript)

It also emerges that although the two cases; Stapelbadden and Stapelbaddsparken are from a common process, they are under different management systems. The former is managed by STPLN, a local CSO and is under the Department of Culture within the Municipal Council of Malmo. On the other hand, the latter is managed by Bryggeriet, a local association of skate board riders and is under the Department of Streets and Parks within the Municipal Council of Malmo. What is interesting is the fact that the two phenomena demonstrate characteristics of collective action within an urban set up. Besides being collectively managed by the community through support of the local government, we see a case of cross-sector collaboration at play where the civil society works in collaboration with the public sector to manage urban commons.

Paulson) also notes that the cultural Department of Malmo City usually has an elaborate annual programme for different activities that take place at the park and these are usually run by different NGOs these include dance, music, cultural extravaganza. Therefore the coordinator employed by the Cultural Department coordinates activities at the Stapelbadden and in collaboration with Bryggeriet plans activities at the skate park.

Furthermore, the park hosts annual skate board competitions that brings participants from all over Europe and America. Through these competitions, the park attracts diverse groups of spectators and players therefore contributing to building of networks and hence bridging social capital. The park also contributes to tourism promotion.

Another unique instance that demonstrates inter - sector collaboration is seen in the arrangement where the City of Malmo has signed a contract with Bryggeriet for the maintenance of the skate park Paulson (2012: interview transcript). This is quite different from the usual norm where the Department of Streets and Parks usually signs a contract with private contractors for the maintenance of physical infrastructure in the city.
The construction of the skate park at Stapelbaddsparken has aroused interest in skating in Malmo. As a result, a lot of young people have embraced the sport while more adults are warming up to it. In addition, other parks have been constructed in other parts of the city to cater for city residents who are far from the city centre. The Stapelbadden project has also been a big learning experience for the City of Malmö such that the lessons learnt have been replicated in developing some other projects in the city Paulson (2012: interview transcript). The participatory process and collaborative management of community projects has therefore born fruits for the city that has also contributed to social sustainability as per Cuthill’s (2009) framework. In addition, the cost of managing such common projects has significantly reduced due to engaged governance since the community has taken an active role in managing the resources.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter, a brief discussion follows based on the theoretical expositions as per the literature and empirical material encountered in the course of the study. The aim is to try and compare what the theory says and the actual evidence from the field and draw a link that can either provide theoretical support or alternative evidence to the literature. In addition, the methodological approach will be discussed in relation to the original research purpose, question and outcome.

In this exploratory study, the aim has been twofold: to find out how the urban commons in Vastra Hammen (Western Harbour) neighbourhood, and specifically Stapelbadden and Stapelbaddsparken, are being managed; and how they contribute to social sustainability of the city of Malmo. The study I have conducted is qualitative in nature and therefore an interpretative approach has been adopted in which a case study method using in-depth semi-structured interviews was deployed. The cases adopted for the purpose of this study are Stapelbadden and Stapelbaddsparken. The two cases have been selected since they represent critical cases that are of great significance to the sustainability of the city of Malmo.

In the study, the findings have demonstrated that the two cases bear characteristics of commons in that they are open to everyone and therefore, nobody can impose restrictions on anyone with regard to access and use of the resources. In addition, the resources have proved to be a part of new commons (Hess, 2008) since they are human-made. Since they are located in the heart of a city and are shared by the residents of the city, they also qualify to be labelled urban commons (Foster, 2011).

It is also notable from the empirical material gathered from the field that the two phenomena provide venues for cultural and creative activities including sports, music extravaganza, skate board competitions, educational activities and community gardening. In addition, members of the public get a chance to acquire basic skills in diverse technical areas such as information technology, bicycle repairs, hand crafts among others. Through these various activities, users get to meet and interact with each other and informal networks are formed through which social and moral support is provided as well as mentoring. Therefore, the users of the commons not only build social networks but also gain vital skills.

It also emerged from the study that the users of Stapelbaddsparken have created rules that govern the use of these common resources. These rules have been developed in a participatory way and this makes their compliance less problematic. For instance the rules for the usage of the
Stapelbaddsparken are displayed on a board (Picture 4; appendix). These rules have been made by the members of the Brygerriet Association who are responsible for the management of the skate park and all users of the park are expected to follow the community rules. Furthermore, this reflects Ostrom’s (1999) design principles since the resources users are themselves involved in democratic processes of managing the resources, creating community rules and monitoring the implementation of the rules while at the same time receiving recognition from the local government authorities (Malmo City) who provide an enabling environment for the community to freely manage the common resources. Again we see that this confirms Foster’s (2011) argument that collective action regimes in the management of urban commons rely on the goodwill and support of the local government where it plays an enabling role. This collaborative management also supports the findings of Eizenberg (2012) besides fitting into Cuthill's (2009) sustainability framework where engaged governance features prominently.

Given that the space in the Stapelbadden area is contested, it is still considered a work in progress since the stakeholders are still experimenting with different ideas on how to effectively utilise the space. Consequently, different projects are being piloted on a small scale. Some of these include, community gardening, community library, rock climbing, art exhibition, hand crafts, hacker space, fablab, among others. As a contested resource therefore, the future of the resource is still unclear and this makes its sustainability difficult.

The study has also shown that the common resources have contributed to increase in the value of the neighbourhood. This is demonstrated in the way the resources have attracted a lot of people from different parts of the city and even other countries. This has made the neighbourhood a tourist attraction thereby increasing its value. In addition, the Western Harbour has been put on the global map because of the skate park located at Stapelbaddsparken. Again this observation agrees with the finding by Eizenberg (2012) and Foster (2006)

The smooth working relationship between the local government and the Civil Society in the management of these resources is a testimony of the significance of cross - sector collaboration that has also been noted by both Eizenberg (2012) and Foster (2011). In this study we see the Department of Streets and Parks of Malmo city collaborating with Brygerriet, a CSO in the management of the skate park while the Department of Culture collaborates with STPLN, another CSO, in the management of Stapelbadden. Another interesting collaboration is seen between STPLN and the academia through Medea and Movium. Similarly, the private sector has been brought into the scene in the initial stages of the development of the project which again contributes to the cross - sector collaboration. Although, there had been some challenges at the beginning due to disagreements among the various stakeholders regarding the management of Stapelbadden and what direction it should take, this has in no way destroyed the original vision of the project. This should be viewed in light of the challenges of managing coalitions of different competing interests which is part of collective action problem. Therefore, given that the parties have been able to overcome these collective action problems and managed to continue to implement the project is a manifestation of maturity in the organisation.

High mobility among the users of the common resources in this study is another observation that has been made. For instance, the users of the skate park are varied and come from diverse places such as different neighbourhoods within the city, surrounding cities and even other countries. In addition, international students who study at Malmo University have been part of the user community. Furthermore, annual international skateboard competitions held at the venue is another point in case as far as high user mobility is concerned. Similarly, Stapelbadden experiences high
user mobility. For instance, the rate of usage tends to be higher during the winter and autumn seasons when people prefer to remain indoors. On the other hand, Stapelbaddsparken experiences higher usage during winter when most people prefer to stay outdoors. This phenomenon increases the possibility of network creation which creates bridging social capital as a result of different groups from diverse backgrounds who meet, socialise and integrate. This integration contributes to social sustainability within the city.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Despite the highly developed theory and empirical studies on traditional commons like fisheries, forestry and water resources, not much has been done on new commons such as urban commons. In this study I set out to explore the nature of urban commons and how they contribute to urban social sustainability. My study took a qualitative approach and employed in depth semi-structured interviews in a case study of two phenomena: Stapelbadden and Stapelbaddsparken.

The findings have shown that urban commons share some characteristics with traditional commons such as being rivalrous and non-excludable. However, not all urban commons possess these characteristics since there are some instances where certain urban commons can deliberately be made exclusive by the appropriators such as in gated communities. However, four distinctive factors have been particularly linked to the challenges of managing urban commons more than traditional commons. These include: indirect value, contested resources, mobility and cross-sector collaboration. These factors have been identified in the two phenomena studied in this research.

Furthermore, the two phenomena have proved that they have the potential to build not only bonding but also bridging social capital through social integration of diverse groups of people in the city of Malmö. This has enhanced social sustainability of the city.

Therefore, my thesis asserts that urban commons are a significant part and parcel of the city that is instrumental in building networks within the city, creating social capital that leads to social sustainability of the city. In addition, they enhance citizenship through collective action and collaborative resource management.

While my research may not have covered in detail how collaborative management and inter-sector collaboration works out in complex and uncertain situations such as the phenomena studied, nevertheless, the findings are a pointer to how such participatory processes can be applicable in policy on urban governance in order to ensure social sustainability. However, more research is required to further explore this subject in order to increase understanding on urban commons and sustainability.
Appendices

Picture 1: Main entrance at Stapelbadden Association (STPLN)

Picture 2: Children learning hand craft at the front of STPLN as their parents watch.
Picture 3: Community garden on the roof top of STPLN.

Picture 4: Stapelbaddsparken. Concrete Skate Park and community rules.

Picture 5: Stapelbadden: Cykelkoket. Users working on their bicycles.
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