



-Urban Agriculture in Romania-

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An investigation into the reasons for failure of
urban gardens, and the impacts of gardens on
resident's '*sense of place*', in Dorohoi city



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-Urban Agriculture in Romania-

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'Fiecare petic de pământ își are istoria lui, dar trebuie să tragi bine cu urechea ca s-o auzi și trebuie un dram de iubire ca s-o înțelegi.' (Nicolae Iorga, istoric, politician, critic literar, poet și dramaturg)

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'Every piece of land has its own history, but you have to open well your ear to hear it and need a touch of love to understand it'. (Nicolae Iorga, Romanian historian, politician, literary critic, poet and playwright).

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ABSTRACT

Urban Agriculture plays a different role in the food system in comparison to rural agriculture; it is 'integrated into the local urban economic and ecological system' (Mougeot, 2000.). In some cases, it represents a source of income or a beginning of sociological relations between groups of citizenry, through dynamic and physical participation in the garden. In other cases, urban agriculture may originate from the rural agricultural habits. With these inherited habits, urban farmers beautify the existing environment through their practices, and with these practices they inspire others to take action to maintain their own 'green corners'. As such, in the area proposed for investigation, Dorohoi – Romania, urban agriculture was practiced before the city structure and continued through the communities of rural people that moved into the urban center. They developed gardens in the green spaces of the city as a traditional habit inherited from the rural life. However, in the period 2004-2008 most of the gardens were destroyed without specific grounds. To find answers to garden's failure, four research questions are addressed.

- (1) What role did urban gardens play in place shaping and what are residents' motivations to shape the place?*
- (2) How is the sense of place of residents of Dorohoi city constructed through the use of urban gardens? How do residents express the four dimensions of sense of place: place attachment, place identity, place dependence, and place satisfaction?*
- (3) What are the social, health, and economic impacts of urban gardens?*
- (4) What do residents of Dorohoi city perceive as possible factors\reasons that contributed to gardens failure?*

The study makes use of the concepts of place shaping and sense of place used to explore the relations between residents and gardens in urban public spaces. Forty-two participants living in Dorohoi, a Northeast city of Romania, responded to a research questionnaire asking about their practices and perceptions of urban gardens, the reasons for the failure of urban gardens, and how these made an impact on respondents' sense of place.

The methodological approach is based on a qualitative research, with interviews and direct observations that took place in Dorohoi city. It reveals some of the practices (referring to traditional ways of cultivating the land: manual labor, low inputs, organic seed material and the like) and motivations (such as contact with natural settings, fresh food at hand, the beauty of place) for place shaping. Respondents' sense of place unveils different levels of attachment, identity, dependence and satisfaction toward the city (the place) and the gardens. The study also reveals that lack of monitoring and evaluation by municipality leader and officials, poor management of gardens, local rules and policies on urban gardens, as well factors such as complaints and unsightliness of place were identified as the reasons for the failure of the gardens in the city.

Key words: urban agriculture, place-shaping, sense of place, gardens failure.

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Cover image sources

Romanian map: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Romania_map_blank.png
Gardens in summer time: By Ciprian Alupoaie, Dorohoi – Romania, August 2015

PART I. ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1

Introduction

The research is divided into three main parts.

PART I. ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY – contains three chapters. It begins with an introductory chapter, which offers insight into the problem statement, research hypotheses and the significance of the study. It continues with the conceptual framework chapter, which explains the concepts of place shaping, sense of place followed by research questions. Then the research methodology chapter describes the methods employed for the data analysis of this research.

PART II. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS – this part contains four chapters. *Gardeners as city shapers* chapter presents some practices of urban gardens as well respondents' perception on the utilization of the gardens on urban public spaces. The chapter on the sense of place analyses participants' levels of place attachment, place identity, place dependence and place satisfaction. Then follows the chapter that describes the impacts of urban gardens on the sense of place. The reasons for failure chapter offers an insight into the local rules and policies in regard to urban gardens and brings out the most important factors for gardens failure.

PART III. REFLECTION ON THE FINDINGS – contains the summarized answers to the research questions as well important recommendations for future community development.

In the following section, chapter one focuses on the orientation and background of the study. It presents the statement of the project, the objectives of the study, hypothesis, significance of the study, and limitations as well delimitation of the study.

1.2 Problem statement

In the region under study, Dorohoi city, most of the urban gardens failed and others struggle to survive through the active maintenance by residents, through flower and other ornamental tree species plantation.

Urban agriculture in Dorohoi city experienced a period of decline in the last decade. City gardens were converted into public green spaces, with some remnants here and there in the form of flower gardens or in some hidden places with several layers of vegetables. It has been controversial because since that change happened, urban agricultural practices started to grow and slowly develop in other parts of the country. At first glance, it may seem like with the growth of the city, younger generation tend to loose interest in the land and cultivation of food. When food is available now as ready to prepare or ready to eat, they tend to forget the simple acts of farming and the benefits of it. This initial perception fails to take into account other factors that may also influence the restrictions of the gardens. It may also seem like policy officials do not comprehend the importance of urban public spaces for residents as well as the visibility of food in such spaces. As such, short-term municipality's political interests can limit the actions of the citizens and inhibit the achievement of long-term improvement of their projects.

Although the role of the gardens in the city changed, this reality has scarcely been reflected in social theories and other local urban studies. Due to this fact, it is difficult to ascertain from the beginning, the reasons behind the closure of the gardens and the reasons for the remaining ones. And because the lack of information about the city farmers, the need for research is essential in this context. In this sense, city farmers are interviewed to provide answers to the question of what they perceive to be the factors\reasons that conducted to the gardens failure. Once we understand the past and interviewees' perceptions, we'll begin to see the answers to the research problem. On the other hand, by analyzing their answers, we can analyze the impact of gardens on their sense of place. The concept of *sense of place* rises as the central framework in this paper. The concept serves to capture and perceive the notion of place through some emotions and feelings of the people who exist in the specific place (Horlings, 2015).

The purpose of this study is to extend our understanding of the reasons for urban gardens failure. It is necessary to let the local authorities know that urban agriculture is growing as an important aspect of the living environment of the citizens and not as an aspect that must be restricted. Also, it is important to trigger the interest of those who love gardening but also of other institutions to take initiatives of this kind. With these objectives set, the purpose is to gain more insight in the problems and the causes that led to garden's closure\failure. In this regard, the case of urban gardens in the city of Dorohoi is taken as a pillar into the residents' relations with urban public spaces.

1.2.1 Origins of Urban Agriculture in the area of study

Urban agriculture is present also in Romania but at a smaller scale than in the rest of the world. Starting with the housewives that are cultivating parsley in potted pots and used in their soups, up to the gardens with fruits and vegetables on the buildings and even flowers. Even though the concept of urban agriculture is new in this part of Europe, city residents seem to have quickly caught the idea of sustainable agriculture in cities. In other words, the gardens gave a new use to the urban public spaces that were not well maintained (such as those from the backyard of the apartment houses) by the public workers. Also, some advantages have arisen, as for example cooling the buildings during the summer and reducing the heat losses during the winter. The gardens were beneficial to the environment, enrich green areas, minimize pollution and combat harmful effects of unpleasant heat (Diaconescu, 2011).

The interview started with the question 'What do you know about Urban Agriculture?' to find out how familiar this trend is among Dorohoi city dwellers. Even though all research participants owned a garden, only two respondents were familiar with the term and they were young teachers. In addition, this led to the conclusion that residents older than 35-years-old do not have any knowledge about the urban gardens trend, even though gardens have a long history in the city. Instead, the younger generation is much more familiar with current trends, because there is an increasing desire for them to know where their food comes from and how it is grown.

The idea of having a 'green corner' nearby the place people live dates back to the beginning of the first people's settlements. Gardens have a history that is embedded in the old practices of agriculture, most are traditional practices since the settlement of villages, as the findings of the research reveal.

'Agricultural practices started during a period when lords and rulers made settlements in these places. The practices began around the first houses they have built and continued after the occurrence of the 80's apartments blocks. More young people living at home with their parents received new homes, but mostly the apartments were assigned through requests. Thus, younger generation accustomed to farm began slowly to take over the green spaces around the blocks and continued with the practices of gardening.'

'Everywhere! Agriculture was practiced throughout the whole city. And people coming from the countryside continued with the land cultivation. And at that time, with communist rules you were determined to grow food on every piece of land.'

'With the city becoming our new habitat we took with us our traditional ways of living, as well as those of land cultivation.'

Newspapers dating back to communist times attest what participants have confirmed about the beginnings of agriculture in the city. Old photos prove the existence of the gardens since those times (see Picture 2) and newspapers testimonies attest the act of farming for many years, until their closure around 2007.



Picture 2,
Practices of urban
gardens since
1981 (Source:
Clopotul, 1981)

The nature of the documents that attest the presence of gardens in the city includes news from a municipal newspaper, called 'Clopotul', which offered information at the county and national level (see Picture 3). At that time the communist leader, Nicolae Ceausescu, was concerned with the agricultural production of the whole country. He even ordered that *'for more production, we need to produce more in every village or town of the country'* (Clopotul, 1981).



Picture 3,
Article in a
newspaper that
attests the gardens
in the city since
1981 with title –
‘The tribune of the
household leader’
(Source: Clopotul,
1981)

‘Because it was allowed’ during and after the communist regime, the act of gardening continued to be practiced. Even more people from the nearby villages moved to the city due to the local industries that offered them jobs and a place to live. They were inspired by the neighbors and took the advantage and started to grow their own food among the rest of the city gardeners. And because most of

the new residents were born in the countryside, the gardens in the city fit perfectly with their rural habits.

Although the idea of guerilla gardening (the act focused on planting various forms of vegetation within urban spaces without permission) does not fit in the case of Dorohoi urban gardens, the start was similar, with individuals cleaning the plots and cultivating them with vegetables and herbs. This sort of action was associated with practices of rural areas and seen as a useful urban path, which *'interweaves rural practices with urban practices'*.

On the other hand, some respondents said that after the closure of the big factories, the city faced high levels of unemployment, which forced many people to adopt new strategies for survival, including spending more time to cultivate their own food. Others say that many gardens created in the 1980's were formed as a reaction to high food prices and poor urban conditions.

Either way, Romanian peasants moved to town and being detached from their land were forced to find an alternative to country lifestyle. In this way more people joined and worked the plots of land, which surrounded their apartment blocks until the time the plots had to be destroyed. Reasons and factors that contributed to garden's destruction will be presented and discussed later, in a separate chapter of the research.

1.2.2 Case description

The study was undertaken in Dorohoi region, a city situated on the North side of Romania. A Romanian town on the border between Moldavia and Bucovina is a city in Botosani county, Romania, on the right bank of the river Jijia. Dorohoi is a small city with a number of 31,093 inhabitants (according to Wikipedia.org, 2015).

In the beginning, Dorohoi city had the appearance of a village and the main occupation of people was farming. 'Many of them (towns people) actually led a rural life, cultivating land and raising cattle as those of villages' (Giurescu, 1943). As the city started to develop, slowly it entered into a modernization phase. Domestic animals and big households were replaced by apartment buildings, as places to live for people employed near the new factories. The gardens were also replaced in many parts of the city to make room for concrete streets and boulevards, but they did not disappear entirely. It was a continuous process of farming, only adapted to the new façade of the city. Old documents, such as Clopotul newspapers, attest the existence of urban gardens in the municipality of Dorohoi since the time of the communistic governance (around 1980's). The nature of these documents offered information at the county and national level. At that time the communist leader, Nicolae Ceausescu, was concerned with the agricultural production of the whole country, and he ordered that there should be *'no wasted meter of land, all must be cultivated'* (Clopotul, 1981). Since then, the new tenants of the apartment blocks, among house owners, claimed a piece of land around the place they were living. Almost every tenant could grow his own edible greens. These little individual projects were active and residents were working consciously taking care of their gardens and in the same time of

the public spaces. For them, the plots were a source of food and a source of physical activity, and often a place of meeting and socializing.

The launch of the city's economy started in the decades 8 and 9 of the last century, imposed between two big and important units – the manufacture of glass and porcelain - both with the aim of processing the quartz sand's unique qualities, from a nearby city, Miorcani. The performances were visible not only in increasing the number of employees, but also in the product quality, an interest for countries on several continents. An exhibition of porcelain became a Dorohoiian card of the city and a performance record.

Especially spectacular was their bankruptcy, canceling the only sources of the existence of the inhabitants, seriously affecting their dignity and pride.

Thousands of people lost their jobs when the big manufacturers in town closed. The halls and wards former of the Cars and Heavy Equipment Enterprise (IMUG) Dorohoi were demolished piece by piece for scrap. With the demolition, Dorohoi industry was buried forever. In about 20 years, every factory that fed the city closed: the heavy machinery enterprise (IMUG), Glass & Porcelain factory, cheese factory, wood processing, the brick factory, the bread factory as well the carpet workshops.

Around 70% of the workforce from Dorohoi was dependent on this industry. Now, there are only three guards who keep an eye on the remnants. Only some manufacturers of garments, shoes, and silk are left in Dorohoi after the disappearance of the glass and IMUG enterprises (Otilia, 2013). The unemployment rate registered in 2009 reached 80-85%. And it is estimated that over 50% of the population live below the country's poverty line after the loss of the big industry (Center of Hope GLIA, 2013). Here, in the study area, we talk less about the obesity, malnutrition or other food related problems, but rather about the economy, which do not extend too many opportunities to the citizens. The social services programs can serve the unemployed people for a limited amount of time, but they do not provide enough support, and that might be a reason why the ratio of migration increases every single day.

The availability of resources and income has triggered city dwellers to rely to a greater extent on the local food. In this sense, after the closure of the big industry, among the existing gardens, new ones started to flourish around the apartment buildings, on urban public spaces.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions consist of four key constituents to be explored: *place shaping, sense of place, impacts of the gardens and perceptions of the gardens failure.*

- *What role did urban gardens play in place shaping and what are residents' motivations to shape the place?*
- *How is the sense of place of residents of Dorohoi city constructed through the use of urban gardens?*

- *How do residents perceive and express the four dimensions of sense of place: place attachment, place identity, place dependence, and place satisfaction?*
- *What are the social, health and economic impacts of urban gardens?*
- *What do residents of Dorohoi city perceive as possible factors\reasons that contributed to gardens failure?*

1.4 Objectives of the study

According to the research questions, the general objectives of the study are the following:

- ❖ To determine and understand residents motivations for place shaping;
- ❖ To understand resident's perceptions of, emotional attachment to and the significance of urban gardens and how these contribute to residents sense of place;
- ❖ To understand the social, health and economic impacts of urban gardens;
- ❖ To determine the reasons for failure of the gardens in urban public spaces in Dorohoi city;
- ❖ To provide recommendations for the future of urban gardening as a method for community development within Dorohoi city.

1.5 Research hypotheses

It is hypothesized that sense of place concept reveals the reasons why people shape and make use of urban public places. It captures missing feelings, emotions and finds or redefines identities (Convery et al., 2012).

Besides, lack of municipal involvement, lack of training of project members, lack of funds, lack of monitoring and evaluation and interpersonal skills causes failure in urban garden projects. Likewise, social, health and economic impacts determine city dwellers to start to be active and take the initiative to cultivate their edible greens for physical activity, for mental health, for fresh and cheap food and for new friends or acquaintances.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The information garnered in this study has two limitations. One limitation is that more females than males participated in the consultations during the field study. In this respect, there is little empirical evidence that sense of place could be significantly linked to gender. The second limitation refers to the research, that aims to specifically focus on the failure aspects of the city gardens and does not intend to canvass the various other services that urban agriculture provides, such as environmental, sustainability, food security or neighborhood beautification.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study identifies reasons for the failure of urban garden projects in the area so that the citizens and other urban project members become aware of what will negatively impact the progress of the projects regarding the urban green spaces. Thousands of garden plots were established in the area under study. Some are still operating and others have collapsed. For this reason, the study intends to improve the management of community projects by taking into account the urban dwellers view so that created projects are sustainable. Also, the study tries to raise attention on the necessity of urban gardens for residents by giving voice to their satisfactions and dissatisfactions. It addresses some recommendations to municipality officials responsible for community development to develop new guidelines on the management of community development projects.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

The study was conducted at Wageningen University, The Netherlands with the focus on the region of a city in the North region of Romania, Dorohoi. Only the fieldwork, which consisted of interviews, garden observations, and archive reviews, was conducted in the city of Dorohoi. Participants that were included in the study were gardeners and owners of urban garden projects, civic members, councilors responsible for the area under investigation and municipality officials responsible for the development of green public spaces in the area. The study includes only information from respondents in this area and from the literature search.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the plan and an overview of how the research was directed. To understand the setting of this study and the people involved was necessary to understand the problems in the city that led to gardens appearance as well to gardens disappearance.

Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework

2.1 Introduction

A set of theory statements, helpful in guiding the research, is presented further in this section. The statements center around the framework concepts of place, place shaping and sense of place that have distinct interpretations in various theories. Highlighting all these concepts is primordial in the identification of linkages between places and people with particular behaviors such as city farmers.

2.2 Understanding of urban space

A descriptive approach of the place (place-perspective) is significant for this study to discover and understand urban space and its boundaries in relation to urban gardens.

Urban places of our times are filled with solid concrete and skyscrapers leaving less space for natural and green areas. The only green is 'usually narrow parks and esthetically-oriented lawn surfaces surrounded by human constructions' (Adamic, 2012). For this reason 'some urban dwellers are desperately attempting to reclaim a connection with the land' by seeking to emphasize the meaning of the places they live in (Adamic, 2012). Because urban dwellers are feeling a disconnection with the natural environment, they claim a particular place to belong to some groups and not to others, establishing a kind of difference between groups. Rose (1995) calls this 'the process of claiming places'. People started to take initiatives and claim space in the urban public spaces and use them for recreational activity or as a way of survival. It creates an intimate relation between city dwellers and nature and 'this intimate contact with and control over nature is one-way urban residents create a sense of place for themselves' (Francis, 1989). People know how to act in their own environment; they feel more secure on their land and start to build up personal relationships within and with the place (Hunziger et al., 2007). Public spaces represent an important part in the successful cities. They guide citizens to form a sense of community and help to form an identity. 'Public spaces facilitate social capital, economic development, and culture' (Un-Habitat, 2012). Every neighborhood and every community have public spaces such as sidewalks, alleys, or backyards. These spaces could be covered with concrete

and sometimes art monuments or statues for the beauty of the place but most often these spaces are green, covered with grass and trees.

In fact, a public space represents a meeting point of the interests of diverse groups of people (Francis, 1989). These diverse groups can be categorized into three types of public involved in the public landscape: (1) the professionals (those who develop and make plans and policies); (2) the interested public (people who perceive the plans and have a role in shaping the public spaces) and (3) general people – they are not involved in the plans and policies (Francis, 1989). From this perspective, an analysis of the public or the *users* of the spaces will be helpful in generating information about the interactions that people have with space.

From a sociological perspective Harvey (1994) in his work *Space and Place*, argues that space and time are considered not as homogenous but heterogeneous. People recognize the value of their place if the place is considered appealing and has something to offer. In every area, urban or rural, the place has something to offer to make people interested in settling down in that place of space. And to delimit these areas people start to draw boundaries. Drawing boundaries is a technique used by geographers to identify and describe a place, a way to differentiate a region from another perspective (starting from the bedrock and the type of soil to culture) (Cresswell, 2004).

For Cresswell (2004) in the *Genealogy of Place*, the word place has many differences: it could be viewed as an object for research geographers and at the same time a way of looking; looking, observing the world is like an act to define what already exists to see and know the world. In his view the *sense of place theory* is considered as a way to look at the world; 'Place as a way of being; Place as a largely common sense idea; Place as a home, an intimate place of rest, home is where you can be yourself, a field of care, a center of meaning' (Cresswell, 2004).

As place represents the central word in people's everyday life, the understanding of it must be explored in the ways people relate their experiences to the place; 'the more profoundly inside a place a person feels, the stronger will be his or her identity with that place' (Seamon, 2008). 'Place is something created by people'... and only their own experiences can give a starting point in understanding the sense of a place (Rose, 1995).

In the process of understanding the place and its connections, the research makes use of Halfacree's (2006) threefold understanding of rural space. According to Halfacree (2006), the rural space comprises three aspects of place such as *rural localities, the formal representation of the rural and the everyday lives of the rural*. The concept is introduced to emphasize aspects of the rural (such as the gardens) in urban space. Based on Halfacree framework, the research applies the urban space perspectives to frame the urban space. In this case, the threefold understanding of urban space comprises three aspects of place: *urban locality, the formal representation of the urban and lives of the urban* (see Figure 1).

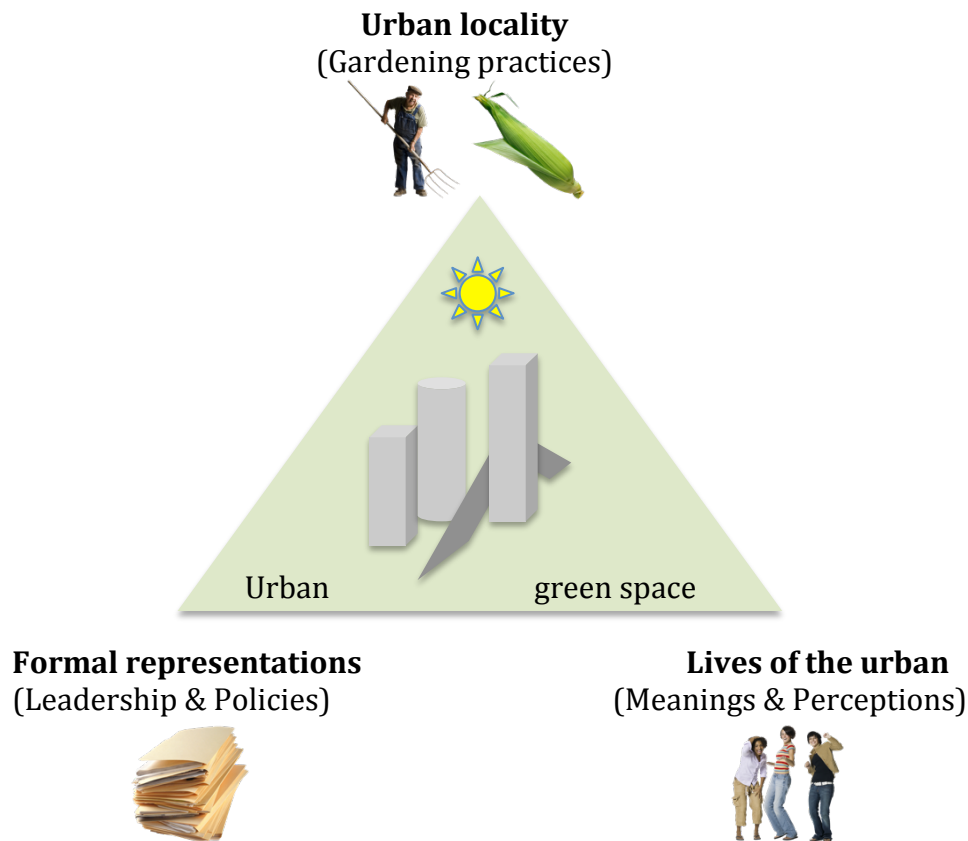


Figure 1. Urban space triangle | threefold understanding (based on Halfacree, 2006)

Thus, Urban Space represents a place-based characteristic that illustrates ‘the degree to which the lives of a spatial concentration of people are organized around nonagricultural activities’ (Weeks, 2010). In fact, what urban green space does in the new framework is to involve a set of citizens’ actions and practices of agriculture at social, political, and economic levels into:

Urban localities – represented by the local practices of urban agriculture, related to the production, procurement and consumption of food. This first aspect of the urban space triangle encompasses the practices of agriculture that helped to shape the city green space through citizens’ initiatives and participation. This aspect will be elaborated further in Chapter 4.

Everyday lives of the urban – incorporating ‘individual and social elements in their cognitive interpretation and negotiation’ (Halfacree, 2006); it evolves as a cultural mindset – a process of meaning and perception, which will represent a dimension of sense of place later on in Chapters 5.

Formal representation of the urban – represented by the city governance and leadership implications in the urban agriculture practices; how the

local institutions and leadership (with rules and policies) frame the urban space is detailed in Chapter 7.

All these three aspects aim to articulate how the local urban space is used and defined. Urban spaces are characterized by the kinds of infrastructure they provide to their residents; it is a function of self-sufficiency. On the other side, in the non-urban space people have to grow their own food, have their own supply of water, energy and deal with their own waste. The urban place-based transforms the natural environment into a built environment (Weeks, 2010).

The research will focus further on the three aspects of the Urban Space – framework: localities, representations, and lives of the urban, each analyzed in a different chapter. The existing aspects elaborate and interpret the answers of the respondents regarding activities and interaction with urban space, urban gardens in place, through feelings and emotions, and gardens' failure through norms and regulations at the local level.

2.3 A place constructing approach (Place-shaping)

This approach makes reference to people's practices in an exploration between place context and the human behavior. It is used to generate an empirical focus on the ways in which people interact with various living environments over time 'to create a particular construction of physical activity in their lives' (Caroll, 2008). This aspect takes into consideration the construction of the gardens and the meaning people give to a particular space, and emphasizes people's ways to interact with the gardens (Haan, 2005).

In this study, place-shaping refers to the role of the citizens in framing their living environment. The process of place-shaping (Walle, 2010) involves different factors and processes related to the daily functioning of citizens' life that may contribute to the creation of the gardens. And the shaping of a place occurs through a deliberate and conscious series of acts.

The term place-shaping covers a wide range of local activities that affect the well-being of the local community. It has different meanings in different places and at different levels, starting from community needs and demands to local politics and leadership (Lyons, 2007).

In this research, it is seen as a process of regeneration of the urban place, with the help of the citizens. A central feature of place-shaping is reflected in determining personal identity; 'it is about a vision for the locality that is distinctive in creating a sense of local identity...it is about creating places that are attractive, vibrant, prosperous, safe and friendly, places for people to be proud to call them home' (Walle, 2010). A place shaping approach 'provides a more in-depth insight into what people appreciate, feel responsible for, and are willing to commit to in the context of their own place' (Horlings, 2015).

In addition, the social constructionist approach or place-shaping brings structure and value to a place. If we think this from the place perspective, we can

understand that places are socially constructed, dynamic and continually changing. The process of place-shaping differs from place to place and people are or try to familiarize with them, as part of everyday habits and structures. For the present, a structure might be different than that for the future, and everything is prone to changes. And people, through their repetition of practices make structures. Places are not 'finished', they are in a continuous development, they are always 'becoming' (Massey, 2004). Through the so-called process of 'becoming' people form communities, and communities give birth to a culture. The culture helps to shape a place through values created by the communities living in the specific place. The values encompass peoples' motivations, passions, and intentions that they form continuously through interactions with other people. Values appear as motivational structures in the process of place-shaping, and express what people see of primordial importance in their lives (Horlings, 2015) and their living environment.

Place-shaping is widely understood to describe the ways local people use their creativity, power, and relations to create places that have positive influences over their work, over their lives or health. People shape places to feel much closer to each other and safe within the communities they live; in this way places become attractive and prosperous. People's creativity and the desire to live better, bring them closer to nature, such as the case of urban gardens that make people responsible for their initiatives, and slowly leaving behind the anonymity of the cities.

'Place-shaping can thus be considered as a way to build the capacities of people to reflect on, and to renegotiate the conditions for their engagement in places. This means that the analysis of place-shaping processes starts with what people actually like to do in places, on different scales' (Horlings, 2014), and with the available resources of the specific place, and continues with the motivations that keep them focused on what they like to practice.

After looking into the place-shaping processes, the study will show how the place-shaping contributed to the creation of participants' local identity and how the place was shaped to the construction of city gardens. Later, in the conclusions, some notes will highlight possible problems of processes of place-shaping and recommendations are meant to help future acts of shaping a place.

2.4 A community attachment to place (Sense of Place)

A community attachment to place is often settled through the 'existential insideness – a situation of deep, unself-conscious immersion in place and the experiences most people know when they are at home in their own community and region' (Seamon, 2008). The attachment to place taps 'into ordinary people's lay narratives' (Halfacree, 2006), and their different types of connections with a place to understand how attachments develop. The place itself is not sufficient and cannot work without the presence of people who explore a range of factors (such as good job opportunities, nearby facilities, natural settings and so on) to

make their living conditions more pleasant. The factors explored help people to define the distinctiveness of places (Convery, 2012). But not only, the factors explored are used to emphasize the ways in which people use and understand their place (Horlings, 2015; Convery, 2012). 'Places to which we are most attached are those where we have had a wide variety of experiences' (Jogerson et al., 2001). People's experiences are individual. They experience through social, cultural, economic ways by interacting with other people. In this sense, we can say that experiences are not only individual; they are formed and shaped through the lens of other's experiences. Such feelings are not individual but social. Some of those feelings focus on domestic places such as a home, a room, or a garden that can cause a feeling of safety, relaxation or refuge (Rose, 1995).

There are different fields of study, which have analyzed the attachment concept from different perspectives. We can encounter various definitions in domains like anthropology, geography, landscape and architecture, environmental psychology and sociology. The concept is analyzed further from these perspectives, but the predominant field is the sociological one. This concept touches many central themes in the social sciences such as cognition, identity, conflict, collective action, and politics (Cheng et al., 2003).

From an anthropological view, E. Cross (2011) in his paper, '*What is Sense of Place?*' emphasizes the sense of place described by Setha Low, as a 'place attachment, which relates to a symbolic relationship formed by people giving a culturally shared emotional\affective meaning to a particular space of a piece of land that provides the basis for the individual's and group's understanding of and relation to the environment'. It is more than emotion and knowledge, including cultural beliefs and practices that link people to a place (Cross, 2011). The environmental psychologist, Fritz Steele, describes the sense of place as someone's experiences in a particular setting. And in geography, the term *topophilia*, describes a specific relation that people develop for a certain place or the love of place (From Greek topos=place and philia=love of).

From a sociological view, various authors have discussed and developed different statements. To paraphrase Cresswell (2004), 'what makes a place to be called a place? What does the corner of a child's room shares with an urban garden or a country?' His answer is taking into consideration Tuan's perspective that we discover a place through places, through human perceptions and experiences. A place can be a corner of a room or even the entire earth. Only the human race makes a place a dwelling, spiritual, philosophical that unites the natural with the human world. The essence is that 'to be human is to be in place' as a way to make people humans. It is all about intending – 'we cannot be conscious without being conscious of something'. 'Consciousness constructs a relation between the self and the world. The only way humans can be humans is to be in place. Place determines our experience' (Cresswell, 2004.Ch.2). All over the world, people build new places and communities at their own will to live differently or to live better and in the search for an authentic sense of place. An example of these places: communes, urban gardens, and urban neighborhoods. These places represent a 'locus of collective memory – a site

where identity is created through the construction of memories of linking a group of people in the past' Cresswell, 2004.Ch.3). Nations invest in monuments, architecture to fill the place with meaning and nowadays they start to put more emphasis on the natural and green side of a place.

Distinct components from the literature were assigned to the sense of place concept such as place attachment, place identity, place dependence or place satisfaction. 'These components include material aspects, symbolic meanings and social relations' (Horlings, 2015). The sense of place is defined as a feeling of belonging interacting with specific settings that make a place as home. It includes experiences of a place, the importance of place to people, and what makes cities meaningful through their perspectives. It has close connections with communities, individual memory, and distinct senses (Relph, 1976; Vanclay, 2008, Horlings, 2015).

For a thorough understanding of the *sense of place* concept, Jorgensen and Stedman (2006) introduced a model in which they present a multidimensional idea of the sense of place. In their model the sense of place consists of three components: (1) *place attachment*, (2) *place dependence* and (3) *place identity* that are organized within a general frame 'of attitude structure that incorporate cognitive, affective and conative responses to spatial settings' (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2006).

(1). The element of *place attachment*, widely used as a synonym for the sense of place (Soini et al., 2011), is constructed from the feelings people have for a place (Horlings, 2014), that may arise from history and family, from the destruction of a community or even destruction of land, 'ownership or inheritance' (Altman & Low, 1992; Soini et al., 2011).

(2). The second element, *place dependence*, refers to the 'behavioral exclusivity' of the place in relation to place alternatives (Horlings, 2014). This element focuses on more functional and rational aspects of people. The importance of place dependency relies on the quality of specific places compared with the relative quality of alternative places (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2006). The quality of a specific place is a result of the interaction between people with that place, which enables a specific feeling, activity or attitude towards the place. Thus, the specific setting influences place dependency.

Place dependence is another established dimension of sense of place on the individual level. It is a 'functional connection based specifically on the individual physical connection to a setting' (Raymond, Brown, & Weber, 2010) that indicates 'how well a setting serves an intended use by the individual over a range of alternatives' (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001). Individuals depend on specific places for certain desired activities and experiences and are less willing to use another place if their desires are fulfilled' (Williams & Roggenbuck, 1989). Place physical and functional qualities influence the degree of dependency on and attachment to place as a platform for activities and social interaction (Ujang, 2010).

(3). The third element, *place identity*, related to those beliefs and perceptions that people have about the relationships between self and place context (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2006). It consists of peoples' 'knowledge and feelings developed through everyday experiences' (Gieseeking et. al., 2014) that form in relation to living environments. Place and identity are two inextricable aspects connected with each other. Special bonds formed between place and identity can influence social formations, cultural practices, and collective actions. Thus, people form an identity in interplay with others (see section 5.1). People's identity can be described 'as the distinguishing character or personality of an individual' (Hauge, 2007). 'When place attachment grows, people start to identify themselves with the places, both in a larger scale (nationality, city, etc.) and in smaller scale (neighborhood, homes or rooms)' (Giuliani, 2003). In smaller scale it may be seen, for instance, in the efforts of some participants to establish roots in their new homes through garden creation or with the planting of particular trees and flower species (Mitchell, 2004). According to Breakwell's (1986, 1992, 1993) research, there are four principles of people's identity related to places: *self-esteem*, *self-efficacy*, *distinctiveness*, and *continuity*, which will be described in more detail in section 5.2 of Chapter 5.

(4). To complete the components of the sense of place framework, Soini; Vaarala & Pouta, (2011) introduce a fourth element named (4) *place satisfaction*. It is viewed as the 'utilitarian value of a place to meet certain basic needs' starting from the sociological characteristics to physical ones (Soini et al., 2011).

2.5 Place – Place-Shaping – Sense of place

The relation between Place, Place-shaping and Sense of Place is important within this research.

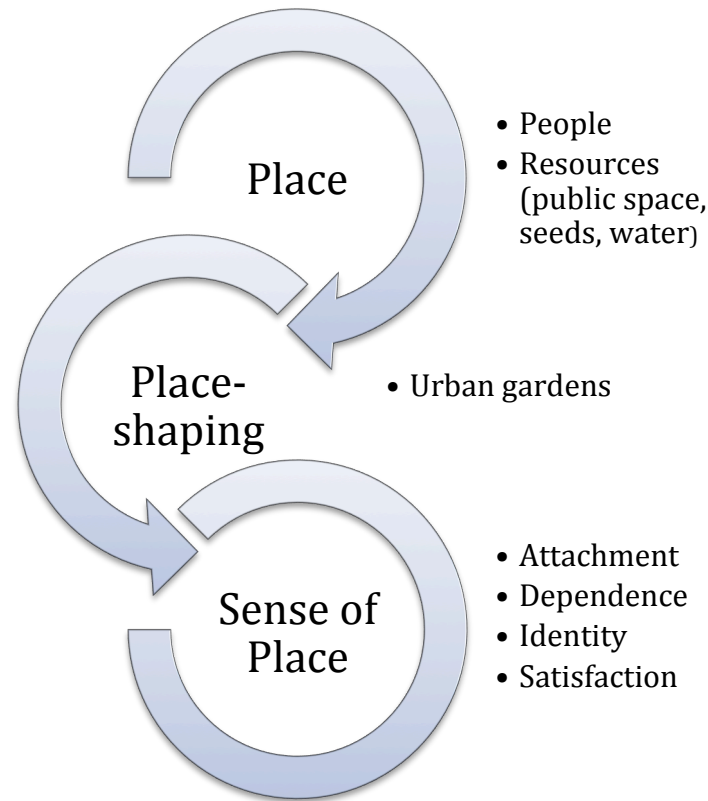


Figure 2. The relation place – place-shaping – sense of place

Figure (2) shows the connectedness of the three different concepts that frame the research. Based on the literature, the Figure (2) shows a hypothetical relation, which will be enhanced with the analyzed data in chapter 4. It does not take other factors that could possibly influence the concepts into consideration because these are not vital to this research. The direction of the arrows shows the hypothetical relation between the concepts. Certain places enable useful resources and people are free to exploit them. These places are supposed to influence the way people use the resources available (such as green public spaces, water, seeds, etc.); then the use of resources has influence on the way places are shaped (the case of urban gardens) and the way places are shaped result in different elements of sense of place (such as attachment, dependence, identity, and satisfaction).

Within this study the challenge is to understand how people feel about a certain place (as the green public spaces in the city), their interaction within the place, to understand why they feel this way and how this was changed through community engagement practices (urban gardens) and also to understand the reasons behind gardens failure. Because the elements of sense of place are the foundation of the data analysis, it is important to understand why people feel at home in specific places, and how these feelings enhance individual sentiments of attachments. In this sense, the use of the sense of place concept is necessary because is about the cognition and behavior, emotions, knowledge, and beliefs, all-important in describing and understanding the motives and practices of urban gardens in Dorohoi city. It rises as central in the conceptual framework of

this study because it combines four dimensions: place attachment, place identity, place dependence, and place satisfaction that will help to capture and perceive notions of place through some emotions and feelings of the people who live in a specific place (Horlings, 2014). The multidimensionality of the concept can help to explain the relationships between people and the socio-physical environment (place), by making use of the two broad differences of the concept of sense of place: *genius loci* – the factors that characterize a specific place and the ways in which people experience, use and understand place (Convery et. al., 2012).

2.6 Conclusion

The literature review chapter presented a review of the existing scholarship or available body of knowledge that help the researcher to see how other scholars have investigated the research problem (Mouton, 2001). The purpose of this chapter was to present the findings of a review of the literature on concepts focusing more on the understanding and discovering peoples' interactions, experiences, feelings and attachments to specific places and also to provide a lens to look at the data. This was achieved through the desk study of a wide range of academic books, journals, articles, and the Internet.

The chapter describes the theoretical framework with the following important aspects: place, place-shaping, and sense of place. Given the provided information from different scholars, it is clear that necessary steps need to be followed to plan and execute a research.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research method followed during the study. It included aspects such as the respondents' recruitment and demographics, research methodology, and data analysis.

3.2 Qualitative analysis

The garden's failure investigation includes a qualitative analysis that seeks to find answers to the problem statement, and collects evidence from the 'perspective of the local population it involves' (Mack et. al., 2005). A qualitative research relates to 'understanding of some aspect of social life' which generates 'words, rather than numbers' (Patton, 2002) for the analysis. This kind of methodology has the meaning to understand 'people's beliefs, perspective and experiences' (Patton, 2002) with their urban living environment to examine the reasons behind the garden's closure. And an important aspect here is the use of the open-ended questions in the interviews, which have the potential to evoke 'meaningful, unanticipated, rich and explanatory in nature answers' (Mack et. al., 2005).

A qualitative method gives a start for research in the region of Dorohoi city. It is a start in trying to understand the feelings, values, and perceptions that underlie and influence citizens' behavior in regard to the new trend of urban farming, and also for studying emotions and attitudes on societal, urban living, and public issues. For this study, the method is basically used to find answers to the questions 'why? and what?', revealing individual experiences and/or behaviors. It helps to generate conclusions and hypotheses that can be used further for a more detailed or quantitative analysis.

The qualitative component of the research includes document reviews, random observations and semi-structured interviews with different categories of citizens (owners of the past gardens, tenants of the flats, parents, and youth, schools, municipality officials, etc.).

3.3 Methods

Prior and during the fieldwork phase, some research methods were conducted to construct a theoretical framework and to gain an insight of the area of research. The majority of the research information concerning the past gardens and people's movement was achieved from historical literature and old documents (such as journals, local newspaper articles, and other research papers), while data concerning the closure of the gardens were extrapolated from the individual interviews that I conducted randomly in every neighborhood of the city.

3.3.1 Literature review

A literature study was used as a method of this research to construct the theoretical framework. The focus in the literature was on the aspect of place, place-shaping as well on the sense of place concept to provide:

- 1) A theoretical foundation of sense of place and operationalization of the four elements: attachment, identity, dependence and satisfaction, and
- 2) A theoretical background for the description of the area of study – Dorohoi city – and its characteristics.

For the empirical data, I conducted an Internet search to identify the gardens that no longer exists. I used many key works such as '*unsuccessful urban gardens, closed community\urban gardens, reasons for failure, obstacles, local policies, the impact of the local governance, factors of failure, etc.*'. This method proved to be ineffective since many of the web links were disabled or information was not available on this matter. To make the search more effective, during the research planning I decided to include on the field work agenda a visit to the local library, to the local archive and local municipality to ask specific questions whether there are other sources of information on this matter. The second method proved to be more successful, and the data collected were included in Chapter 4, Presentations of results.

3.3.2 Expert interviews

During the fieldwork phase I conducted several interviews with officials from the local Municipality of Dorohoi city to collect information or possible answers to one of the questions of this study;

What do residents of Dorohoi city perceive as possible factors\reasons that contributed to gardens failure?

Expert interviews can offer knowledge and advice on a certain subject, the experiential knowledge of an expert who has been working on the specific subject for a period of time (Bryman, 2008). The reason I choose to conduct expert interviews was to obtain more information on the subject regarding the city garden plots that cannot be found in the literature.

The first expert interview was conducted with three officials from the Urban Planning service. They provided me with some information about the rules and regulations regarding the urban public spaces without specific answers to the research question addressing the problem of the garden's failure. Secondly, I interviewed two members of the Green Spaces services from where I obtained information regarding the norms and regulations of urban green spaces at local and national level. A list with the name of the experts interviewed, and the specific questions can be found in Annex 4.

3.3.3 Field observations

The field observation phase of this research included simple observations, a sort of '*looking around*' in real life (Mould, 2003) to acknowledge concrete points in space and time. It allows to focus on specific areas of interests (in this case – the gardens in the city) and to discover what is interesting and elementary in the lives of research participants in relation to those specific areas. I, the researcher, made use of my senses to examine the physical spaces where the gardens were active and look further at the naturally occurring situations. During this phase additional pictures and field notes were taken. I must add here that participant observations were limited due to the winter season, when nature and even the people are in a 'dormant phase', with no activities to participate in.

There was no structure for this part of the research. I did a walk every day in different areas of the city to observe the spaces around the apartment blocks, where remnants from the gardens were still visible. There were unstructured observations for about 30-60 minutes. The observations helped in distinguishing those gardens that are still active from those that were destroyed.

3.3.4 Semi-structured interviews

A qualitative research differs from a quantitative one through the words that are emphasized during the interviews, with '*inductivist, constructionist or interpretivist*' character (Bryman, 2008). For this reason the qualitative interview is considered to be the most important tool in a qualitative research as Ruby and Ruby (2005) in (Myers; Newman, 2006) associate the qualitative interview with night goggles: 'they allow you to see what is not ordinarily on view'.

A record form statement was implemented to introduce myself as a researcher to participants, and also to assure them that their information is treated with respect and confidentiality (see Annex 1A, 1B). A signed form of consent, between the researcher and participants, was not necessary in this case. After the presentation of the ethical considerations, the researcher came to a mutually agreement with every participant. Every participant has given his or her oral consent to the recording in first place. The ethics permitted the right to participate or not in the project as well the confidentiality of each participant. Then followed a demographic sheet (see Annex 2A, 2B) used as an introductory part in the interviews. At the end in Annex 3A and respective Annex 3B a set of

open questions can be observed. Open questions were prepared for the interview to encourage people to construct their stories and thus actively constructing knowledge (Myers; Newman, 2006). There are four broad sets of questions:

- (1) Demographic information
- (2) Place shaping (gardens profile)
- (3) Sense of place
- (4) Possible factors\reasons to garden's failure

To collect data on the sense of place, of people living in Dorohoi city, individually and face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted. The interviews lasted between 15 and 45 minutes, depending on how much details respondents were willing to provide. Recordings were made with a personal mobile device, each participant being asked the permission of the recording.

During the interviews, I asked respondents specific questions to understand different aspects of the sense of place. To follow a semi-structure way I made use of an interview questionnaire to cover all the aspects (see Annex 3) but the exact follow-up on the questions differed with each interviewer. The aspects of place alternate the literature review with the answers from the interviews.

The liberal use of verbatim quotes from the gardeners was introduced for two reasons. First, using the participants' own words gives a voice to individuals and allow them to express, in their own words, their own views and feelings relating to their experience, and second to permit a more profound understanding of specific constructs.

3.4 Respondent's recruitment

The starting point of the interviews was achieved with two residents of the apartment block I live in. They were both gardeners and owned a few individual plots in the back of the apartment building at the time when the gardens were active. They also know the neighborhood well and asked some other gardeners they knew to participate in my research.

After the initial contact and first interviews, I made use of the *snowball purpose sampling* to gather more people for the research. Snowball sampling is used to find 'hidden population', that is not easily accessible to researchers (Mack et. al., 2005). In this sense, I asked the first residents to identify other subjects, who in turn provided the name of the others. The new participants offered the possibility for other names to enter into the network. Thus, the technique helped in generating more participants in the research, and increasing the data with each participant. When asked, almost every respondent named a friend or a neighbor that owned a garden or a few rows of parsley in the garden.

Next to the snowball technique an *observation* phase followed. By walking and visiting various neighborhoods, new participants were asked to participate in

my research. Moreover, direct observations were important to find active gardens or some remnants of the gardens in the city.

Recruitment of participants was conducted door-to-door in apartment buildings, where the city farmers live, the municipality building, and green space's building. The buildings were selected after thorough observations, where green spaces were large in size and remnants of the gardens were still visible (e.g. fruit trees, fences, plants, etc.). Participants who agreed to take part in the interview, were informed that they could decline to answer the questions.

What I did see and anticipated is that usually people living on the ground floor have been the initial owners and then some other neighbors could have a few rows of land among the initial owner. After knocking on every door, in the identified spots, not all the residents were willing to participate and were excluded from the sample. Not all the residents encountered were gardeners of the city, and they were also excluded from the sample.

The sampling methods I used, led to a process of inclusion and omission.

Residents who did not have or owned a garden and who did not visit the garden spaces during the time the gardens were active, could not be sampled through the snowball technique. This means I selectively chose my participants, who lead to a potential bias; several residents of the city could not be included in the questionnaire because they declined the interview. However, this research is not about discovering how many people have a sense of place, but on how this is constructed and related to the experienced practices of residents and gardens' failure investigation. The bias is minimized due to the fact that this research contributed to the knowledge by involving only participants who are and were active members of the gardens. This sample of people was the most likely to complete the research questionnaire.

3.4.1 Selected respondents

In a qualitative research, the number of participants is not necessarily fixed. The questionnaire may 'continue until no new ideas or concepts emerge, a situation known as *saturation*' (AFMC Primer on Population Health, 2007; Mason 2010). Morse's (1995) observed that 'saturation is the key to excellent qualitative work', but at the same time noted that 'there are no published guidelines or tests of adequacy for estimating the sample size required to reach saturation'. In this sense, Bertaux (1981) assumes that fifteen participants are the smallest acceptable sample size in qualitative research. Creswell (1998) has a different range; he recommended twenty to thirty participants for a grounded theory study with the goal of achieving theoretical saturation. Glaser & Strauss (1967) defined the saturation as the point at which 'no additional data are being found whereby the (researcher) can develop properties of the category... as he sees similar instances over and over again, the researcher becomes empirically confident that a category is saturated'. Moreover the *redundancy* of data 'occurs when researchers sense they have seen or heard something so repeatedly that they can anticipate it' (Given, 2008).

This research has interviewed a number of total 42 gardeners, which comply with what theories suggests. The total number of participants was considered

enough for the field research time and for the time allocated to this research. At this point, the respondents reported no new answers and no new information seemed to be forthcoming in the interviews. The answers to the research questions began to repeat and collecting more data was considered by the researcher to have no further interpretive value.

Due to the fact that respondents were owners and members responsible for the urban gardens' development, enough information was collected in this regard. Information collected is reliable because it was obtained from people who are and were responsible for day-to-day running and progress of the garden plots.

3.4.2 Demographic info of selected respondents

To make sure that the researcher had obtained a balanced sample, questions about gender, age, employment status, and residence time in the city were asked during the interviews.

In total, I have conducted interviews with forty-two residents of Dorohoi city. Participant characteristics (see Table 1) reveal that from the total respondents, 60% are predominantly female and only 40% male. The research did not focus on a specific age group, but the results show that the age varies between 25 and 70 years old, with only 10% youth participation. This indicated that youth was not involved in the gardening practices as much as residents between 51-64 of age. Hence, the younger generation is not interested in the agricultural practices and looks for other types of relations and entertainment.

The residence time in the city started from 25 to 57 years. Only 18 people were born in the city, 18 people moved to the area more than 30 years ago and 6 of them moved to the city less than 30 years. Residents moved to the city in times when big factories were opened in the city. For a good job and new apartment, residents migrated from the villages or cities nearby to start a better life. Most of the participants had to take their families with them; others formed a family in the city, but all in one city's population increased.

The employment level shows a small percent (33%); indicating that only 14 (33%) participants of the total have a job and 28 (67%) are retired.

Furthermore, the high levels of employment accentuated the low levels of education; which offered instead good incomes to city dwellers. The level of education among interviewees is medium (9-12 classes). Respondents were well educated with the majority having a bachelor's degree or higher.

Table 1. Demographic info of selected respondents

| Participant characteristics | | Nr. of participants | (%) |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-----|
| Gender | Male | 17 | 40% |
| | Female | 25 | 60% |
| Age | 0-35 yrs. | 4 | 10% |
| | 36-50 yrs. | 8 | 19% |
| | 51-64 yrs. | 21 | 50% |
| | Over 65 yrs. | 9 | 21% |
| Residence time | Born in the study area | 18 | 43% |
| | Moved to area more than 30 years ago | 18 | 43% |
| | Moved to area less than 30 years ago | 6 | 14% |
| Employment status | Employed | 14 | 33% |
| | Retired | 28 | 67% |
| Education level | Primary education (0-8 classes) | 9 | 21% |
| | High school (9-12 classes) | 30 | 71% |
| | Higher education (University) | 3 | 7% |
| Total participants | | 42 | |

3.5 Analysis

Within qualitative research, the analysis of the data collected requires time and structure. 'Interpretation is a complex and dynamic craft, with as much creative artistry as technical exactitude, and it requires an abundance of patient plodding, fortitude, and discipline. There are many changing rhythms; multiple steps, moments of jubilation, revelation, and exasperation' (Benjamin & Miller, 1999).

After conducting a number of 42 interviews, I started to transcribe them verbatim. I tried to group corresponding statements together per each set of questions: demographic information, place-shaping, factors\reasons of garden's failure and sense of place. Important statements of the respondents were highlighted and included in each group. The process continued along the study period, new information obtained being documented.

The whole process of the analysis worked well during this research. For the future research, I would organize and conduct the process in a more structured way due to the fact that this research helped to improve my research abilities. First, I will concentrate on a good research plan and then I will set specific deadlines for each chapter\section, to be completed. This will also help me with the analysis of the data because it is important to concentrate and work from the start on individual chapters or sections in a research, and not combining everything from the beginning. Moreover, I believe that the time allocated to this research was a bit longer than I expected because I have spent more time on some chapters and less on the others. And for the future research, a time balance will be important.

3.6 Conclusion

The chapter indicated the plan of the study and the methodology used and also how data was collected and analyzed during the project. It also indicated the total number of participants in the study as well their demographic information. The qualitative method used in this research provides the opportunity to explore how respondents talked about attachment in more depth first by giving voice to their feelings (as in quotations), and second by examining the factors that appeared to promote or inhibit the development of their attachment.

PART II. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Chapter 4

Gardeners as city shapers



Picture 1, Garden in Dorohoi city, (Source: <https://www.google.ro/maps/>, October 2012)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to answer the following research question:

- *What role did urban gardens play in place shaping and what are residents' motivations to shape the place?*

The chapter presents the results obtained from the analysis of the data collected through interviews conducted during the field study in the city of Dorohoi, Romania. The information is presented through the use of tables, pictures and figures. Quotes are used to illustrate the information retrieved from respondents.

4.2 Practices & Perceptions

This section contains aspects of garden construction and the meanings people give to a particular space. It emphasizes people's way to personalize and interact with urban public spaces. Hence, it reflects the direct experience of the city gardeners.

4.2.1 Motivations (reasons for gardening)

During the research planning, a set of questions was formulated to understand what were the motivations that triggered citizens to create a garden, and change the urban public spaces at their own will. In this sense, respondents were asked to provide honest motivations and to recall old memories. The questions were formulated as follows.

What were the drivers for start?

- *What were your motivations to start cultivating the land in the green public space around your apartment block or house?*
- *Were you influenced by the others or by a specific reason?*

Various answers were reported, and the reasons why residents started to be involved in gardening are manifold: starting from the desire to grow at least part of their own food (preferably biological), the desire to be in contact with nature, to eat natural, to the beautification of the place they live (see Table 2). Each motivation works best in relation to participants needs, preferences or experiences. Each participant had learned the knowledge of gardening from his or her parents. It is the case of people with an agricultural background, even though professional or not, as one respondent said '*ask me everything about agriculture and I will tell you, I grew up with it*'. For respondents that were originated from the rural areas, cultivating food is more than a relic of the past: '*what is that: urban agriculture? It is false. I do not call it agriculture.*'

Relying on the data collected, the findings reveal ten categories of urban gardens, each with particular motivations in land cultivation as presented in Table 2. It is important to note here that each respondent mentioned more than one motivation, which indicates that several needs triggered the start of gardening practices.

Table 2. Key categories and resident's motivations for becoming a gardener

| Categories | Motivations |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Restorative\Tonic | Contact with nature Freedom Fresh air Oxygen |
| 2. Healthy lifestyle | Fresh food Clean food Clean work Eat natural Biological food |
| 3. Grow your own food (GYOF) | Own produce Own work Cheap source of food |
| 4. Closeness of food | Fresh produce at hand Near dwelling garden |
| 5. Aesthetics | Beautiful sight Beautification of green spaces |
| 6. Necessity | Personal needs Helpful for family nutrition Some benefits |
| 7. Rural habit | Tradition Way of life Continuity in land cultivation Persistence of native habits |
| 8. Pleasure of gardening | Self satisfaction Passion |
| 9. Hygiene | Tidy place Cleanness of green spaces |
| 10. Occupation | |

Furthermore in Figure 2, the frequency of responses is analyzed. The frequency of responses varies, and the top 5 categories encountered are: *grow your own*, *healthy lifestyle*, *hygiene*, *rural habit* and *necessity*. The other categories of motivations were mentioned as important for the respondents, but not such frequent in the analysis.

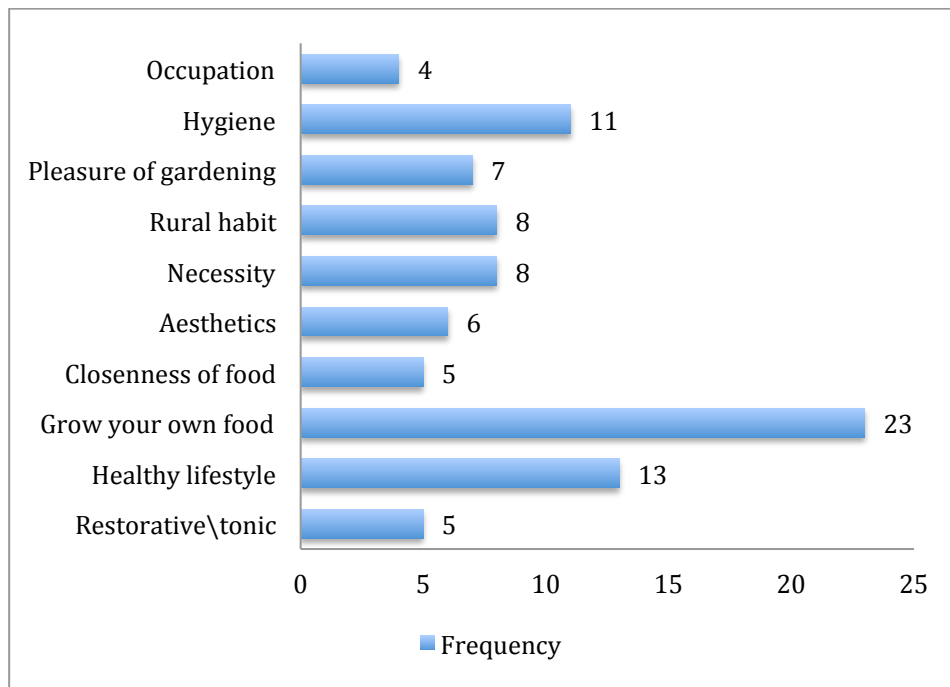


Figure 2. Categories of motivations for gardening; response frequency (N=42 gardeners)

The desire to Grow Your Own food is the predominant category (23 respondents). First, because the food grown in home gardens is perceived as a cheap source of food:

'...Lack of money, lack of food, for parsley, for a fresh vegetable, for a tomato...I didn't take a penny from my pocket to buy a leaf of parsley, but with our own produce, that penny remained in my pocket and bought something else with it.'

And second, *'after your own work and efforts you harvest your own produce'*, which contributes to the satisfaction of gardening. Moreover, respondents do not like the idea of the current trend 'food miles' which makes the food unwanted by many of them: *'Why to buy vegetables from the supermarkets that are imported from other countries, when you can grow your own?'*

In addition, a motivation leads to another motivation as it is expressed by the second category in the top 5, the Healthy Lifestyle (with 13 respondents). Many of the gardeners spoke of the gardens as a source of food that is fresh and organic. For some, the small plots of land provided alternatives to the goods bought from the supermarkets. They say that the vegetables from the supermarket do not compare in taste, quality or freshness with those from a private garden. Hence, they mentioned that having a garden:

'... Allows you to harvest what is ripe and ready, and do not have to worry about going to the supermarket and buying it'.

Another important aspect mentioned as motivation is the Hygiene, with 11 respondents, due to the resident's preferences to have a tidy place to live.

Other different motivations followed as the rural habit, which is considered as a way of life intertwined with participant's new urban practices:

'Coming from the countryside, we were used to have our space with edible greens on hand. From such a space we could obtain the necessary food for a living. In need for that space, we started to clear the land surrounding our dwelling and beautify it by planting flowers, trees and vegetable beds'.

'We started to cultivate the space in town because we are accustomed to taking care of plants since we were kids, and then there was the desire to have our own vegetables'.

'The land feeds us, it doesn't matter if it's a small plot in the back of your apartment building or a large scale farm outside the city, it was meant for cultivation. And for us, as peasants, land represents the major source of life'.

'... The peasant is not made to live in an apartment building. I think we are made to live close to the ground, and not upstairs in large cities surrounded by people without names and physiognomy, swallowed by the crowd. So I explain that when people do not have a village, they invent it'.

As a habit of rural life, each gardener expressed having a sort of prior experience with gardening. Some spoke of being involved in gardening activities at an early age by family members or other close relatives and some identified themselves as having rural farm experience. This was specifically important for those that lived in the countryside.

For some, gardening is a form of contemplation, away from the daily job to the slow process of planting, growing, nurturing and harvesting. For others, is a process where the care of the garden and the plants are central. And patience, surrender, and stability are important, in contrast to a tumultuous life in the city (Müller, 2011).

4.2.3 Time spent gardening

Regarding the time spent in the garden, a specific question was: *How much time did you spend working in the garden?* Each respondent was asked to estimate an average number of hours per day spent in the garden.

The findings show that there was a clear relation between age and the amount of time spent in the garden (see Table 3). On average, every group of age and of gender spent 2 to 4 hours working each day in his or her garden.

From the total of 42 participants, only a few of them reported extended exposure to nature (more than 5 hours) and this was registered in the case of adults between 51-65 of age. Adults over 51 spent proportionately more hours in contact with their gardens. This group (with 50%) included more early-retired people because of illness or disability and they were typically spending

more hours per day gardening. Others mentioned that sometimes when in need they were active the whole day in their gardens. The data also show that the group of participants over 65 of age spent usually 2 to 4 hours gardening due to the desire to be more in contact with natural settings. Moreover, the data show that during the spring or autumn gardeners were working together to clean the gardens and the spaces around their gardens. Most participants being retired have shown more interest in gardening activities. They were spending lots of time from early spring until the first frost in those gardens. Gardeners spent less time on their plots or they did not go to the garden when the rain sets in. Also, the time spent in the gardens was dependent on the work for the day, the size of the plots, and gardener's involvement in other activities aside gardening.

Table 3. Time spent by being active in the garden (expressed in hours\day)

| Nr. of hours spent working in the gardens by different age groups | | | | | Gender | |
|---|--|---------|----------|---------|----------|----------|
| Time gardening (hours) | People within an age group who garden for a specified time | | | | | |
| | 0 - 35 | 36 - 50 | 51 - 65 | >65 | Male | Female |
| <=1 hour | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 2 - 4 hours | 3 | 6 | 13 | 9 | 10 | 22 |
| >= 5 hours | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 1 |
| Total participants | 4 (10%) | 8 (19%) | 21 (50%) | 9 (21%) | 17 (40%) | 25 (60%) |

As the findings reveal in Table 3, there are differences between group ages. It appears that residents spend time with gardens activities more than one hour per day, which indicates that they allocated enough time to be in contact with nature. It is evidenced that the number of women that are active is double than that of males, indicating a close interest in gardening. Usually, women spend more time with the household activities or take care of the children; they are more preoccupied with the health of the entire family, leading to the motivation of gardening. The procurement and preparation of food are in their hands, which explain the difference between men and women in working hours in the garden.

4.2.4 Practices

Respondents were asked to mark activities from their gardens by answering to the following question: *'Which practical, recreational and domestic activities did you carry out in your garden?'*

Findings reveal that urban gardens in their original and their most common form were small parcels of land cultivated in the back public spaces of apartment buildings. Individuals living in those apartment blocks used the spaces to cultivate vegetables, herbs, fruit trees, flowers, and occasional raise chickens or pigs. They started with traditional raised gardens rows, of about 20-

25 cm, a bit higher than the walkways. Wide range rows were constructed in a similar way, to maintain an order.

The working platform of every gardener involved few practices: preparing the soil, digging, sowing, watering, planting, harvesting, weeding, all those common practices of agriculture and the cultivation of land.

Hence, from the data collected, I observed that there was a tendency among residents to grow the foods that are culturally familiar. In addition, most of the gardens were using the spaces for the cultivations of various sorts of vegetables: tomatoes, onions, carrots, cucumbers, eggplants, garlic, peppers, parsley, etc.

The seed needs were different for urban farmers. Gardeners needed small amounts, most of the time gathered from the countryside, from their ancestors, due to religious and personal beliefs. The seeds of their ancestors were considered to be 'clean': free of chemicals, more nutritious and with no genetic modifications. For respondents, the gardens between apartments blocks gave them the possibility to continue a tradition learned before moving to town (for those from the countryside). Each gardener knows more about the crop varieties, harvest time, and harvest amounts from their own garden plot than anyone else, and can adapt recordkeeping strategies to their own needs. The quantity of food produced per individual depended on resident's organizational and field decisions: how much space, what type of cultivar, and the amount of work necessary.

There was no management of the community garden projects as respondents indicate. The gardens did not have a project manager; individuals were taking care, managing their private spaces.

When asked if there were any subsidies or any other support from the municipality in the help of their gardens, respondents answered that they were not subsidized. In addition, not even a single garden obtained financial assistance from officials or other organizations.

In short the main characteristics of the garden activities are presented below.

Characteristics of the garden activities in the city of Dorohoi:

| |
|--|
| Small-variable scale |
| Self sufficiency-surplus |
| Mainly manual work |
| Local inputs (seeds, manure, compost, water, etc.) |
| Labor intensive |
| No artificial fertilizers |
| Low costs |
| No subsidies |

4.2.5 Gardens and vegetation observed

During the field observation phase, pictures were made in the interest of having a clear image of the remaining gardens in the city and the specific places where they are situated. The location of the gardens was identified as being in the back of the apartment buildings, not in front, so the image of the buildings and their aesthetics was not spoiled.

I easily found some gardens that remained over time in each district. Besides some metal fences demarcating individual gardens of few building lots, other gardens were visible from the outside. The gardens are not visible from the street; they were placed between or in the back of apartment buildings. In between I could see planted various species of fruit trees that are still visible as a shape of the past traditions, flowers that were protected by plastic bottles during the winter time as well some vines and vegetable beds prepared for the next season (see Picture 4, a and b).



(a)



(b)

Picture 4,
Gardens and
vegetation
observed: (a)
fruit trees,
flowers
protected by
plastic bottles
during the
winter season;
(b) vines and
vegetable
beds prepared
for the next
season
(Source: photo
by the author,
February)

Garden space is still used as an extension of the apartment buildings as evidenced in the pictures below as:

- **Storage** (from cellars built on land gardens to store objects that are no longer used in the home or found on the street or on vacant land between the blocks);



Picture 5,
Storage of
objects near
an apartment
building
(Source: photo
by the author,
February
2015)

- **Space arranged for animals** (from dogs and cats to chickens and pigs);



Picture 6,
Chickens in
the city
(Source:
Photo by
author,
February
2015)

- **As an extension** of the apartment building with additional illegal constructions;



Picture 7,
City garden
with
additional
construction
(Source:
photo by the
author,
February
2015)

- **Spaces for receiving visitors** (equipped with benches, tables and other furniture items etc.)



Picture 8,
City garden
equipped
with
benches and
other items
(Source:
photo by the
author,
February
2015)

Another important discovery during the observations was that food is also growing in the backyard of the main hospital in the city. But those vegetables and fruits are grown and processed into food for the patients. The food is not used as a form of therapy or any other purposes, as one of the caretakers of the garden reported. In addition, it is mainly used to cut the costs of food procured from other sources.

The amounts of gardens observed that are still active is low, but the amount of green vegetation increased and varies considerably. As an estimation, from the total of the gardens that existed before the destruction, there are about a quarter of the gardens still active in the city. Most of the active gardens were transformed into flower gardens, for the aesthetics of the place. Also, the amount of vegetation and trees grew considerably after the removal of the past gardens. New ornamental trees and plants surrounded apartment buildings, but some old fruit trees belonging to the gardens were left undisturbed, as being part of the landscape. To mention here that shrubs, plants, and trees were present since the beginning of the place, and at the time of the building construction, many of them were removed, and what is left it can be seen here and there.

4.3 Conclusion

Gardening has remained an important activity of gardens, even though is practiced in the city. As such, gardeners played an important role in shaping the place they live leading to the addition of systems gardens, crop varieties, fruit trees, herbs. Growing their own vegetables required time and planning as well commitment to the work needed. These activities led to a revitalization and activation of neighborhoods, after the apartment construction.

Chapter 5

Sense of Place



Picture 9. 'Boulevard of Victory' – main street in Dorohoi city, with few inhabitants returning home from work; on the left side of the picture we have the Municipal Hospital building, on the right side of the picture we can observe some fenced apartment buildings where there is still present a private urban garden. (Source: <https://www.google.ro/maps/>, October 2012)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the analysis of the findings with regard to the second research question on respondent's sense of place:

- *How is the sense of place of residents of Dorohoi city constructed through the use of urban gardens?*
 - *How do residents perceive and express the four dimensions of sense of place: place attachment, place identity, place dependence, and place satisfaction?*

The chapter aims to express the experiences most residents have when they are at home in their own community and region and their different types of connections with these places. A sub-question was necessary to measure the four dimensions of sense of place, *place attachment, place dependence, place identity and place satisfaction*, which are also discussed in this chapter. As the sense of place is a subjective perception of people about their environment and their conscious feeling about places, this chapter introduces descriptive and emotional aspects of the respondents' experiences towards their environment.

5.2 Place attachment

After a thorough analysis of the data, the findings revealed how the place attachment is formed in the case of the local residents of Dorohoi city. As illustrated in Figure 3, the process of attachment begins with residents' settlement in the city. The process continues with the existent meaningful environmental settings (the city, the neighborhood or the garden), which enable activities, experiences and memories that are formed over time in the place. And the variety of experiences and situations that happen in place helps to strengthen attachment, as place attachment is the bonding that occurs between participants and their meaningful environmental settings.

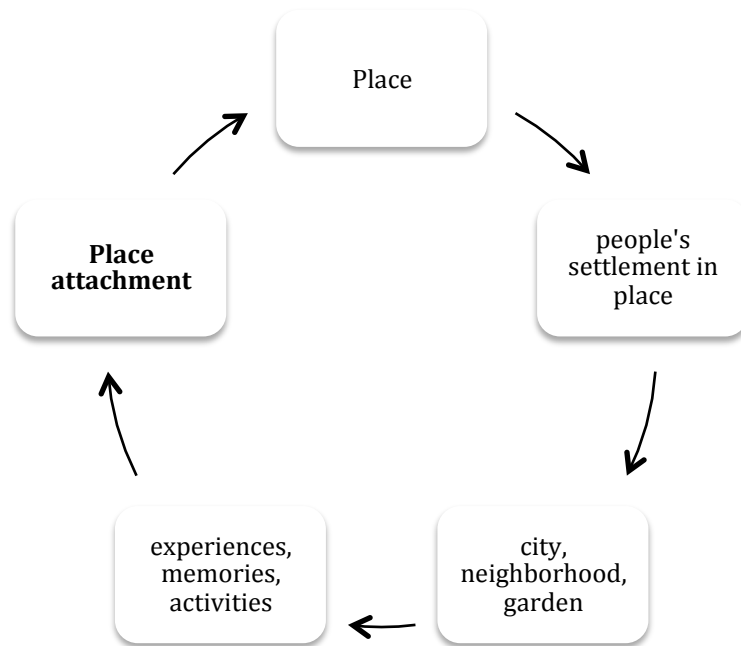


Figure 3. The process of place attachment among residents of Dorohoi city

The results show that the levels of attachments vary and are dependent on two specific drivers that triggered participants' attachment. The two essential drivers, which appear to influence respondents' levels of attachment, are represented by the peoples' *individual* characteristics and *place* characteristics. These factors are integrated and intertwined and both influence place attachment at the same time. Place attachment is influenced by people's perception of the physical characteristics of the place, the perceived social characteristics of the place and people's individual characteristics, age, length of residence, experiences and memories (as illustrated in figure 4).

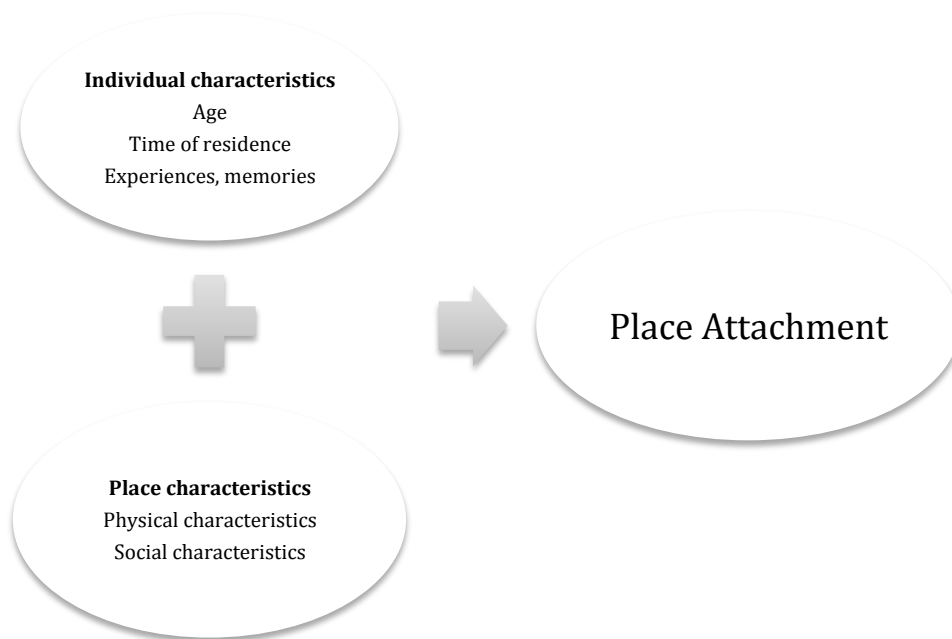


Figure 4. Drivers of place attachment

5.2.1 Individual characteristics

At the individual level, the results of the data analysis underline three characteristics in relation to place attachment: the age, the time of residence and the social memory (see Table 4 and 5). These characteristics affect the degree of attachment. According to the results, the intensity of place attachment can differ depending on the age of participants, the time of residence in the place or a number of contact people have with the place (their social memory). In this sense, I define here the intensity as weak, moderate and strong.

Weak attachment is defined when respondents' say that they are not pleased with the place due to *'the poor standards of living'* and *'the bad quality of people around'*.

'This is not my place, I live here only for the job'

Moderate attachment is defined when respondents' say that they are pleased due to the need or the job, they have good relations with family and neighbors, with no special memories with the place.

'When we were young we were happy and content with everything that place had to offer, but now we are old and alone'

Strong attachment is defined when respondents' say that they are pleased to live in the city due to all facilities nearby, due to special memories with the place and people.

‘This is my birthplace, everything is good, I feel good’

‘I am content to live in this neighborhood; the building was new when we moved here, the green space present around, with the school for our kids nearby’.

‘I’ve spent a lifetime in this place, I cannot move from here now, I have all the facilities at hand, family, friends...it is home’

Table 4. Place attachment in relation with age

| Attachment Age | Nr. of participants (%) | Weak | Moderate | Strong |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 0-35 yrs. | 4 (10%) | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 36-50 yrs. | 8 (19%) | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| 51-65 yrs. | 21 (50%) | 3 | 7 | 11 |
| Over 65 yrs. | 9 (21%) | 0 | 6 | 3 |
| Total of participants | 42 | 6 | 17 | 19 |

Table 5. Place attachment in relation with time of residence in the city

| Attachment Time of residence | Nr. of participants (%) | Weak | Moderate | Strong |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Born in the city | 18 (43%) | 1 | 6 | 11 |
| Moved more than 30 yrs. ago | 18 (43%) | 4 | 6 | 8 |
| Moved less than 30 yrs. ago | 6 (14%) | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Total of participants | 42 | | | |

Age and time of residence in the city have the greatest impacts on place attachment. Residents who were born in the city as well those that have more than 30 years of residence in the city have significantly higher levels of attachment than those with less than 30 years of residence. Those with more years of residence are more likely to be attached as those with less than 30 years residence.

Also, the results show that young citizens (0-35 of age) are less attached to the city or their neighborhood; middle-aged people (36-50 of age) are more attached to their homes, and older people are moderate and strong attached to all scales (see Table 4 and 5). These results are not surprising because ‘the elderly have developed an insideness with the place over time’ and they ‘still reside in the places they were born’ (Charis & Lawrence, 2014; Rowles, 1983). The more time people spend in an area the more attached they become (Charis & Lawrence, 2014).

Social memory

In the investigation of gardens in the urban area of Dorohoi city, the analysis of the data reveal that interviewees store and transmit social memories and knowledge through different forms of interactions such as gardens' meetings, oral communications, events and other practices. Participants' memories are an integrated part of the social attachment, a product of their embedding in social structures as family, friends, schools, jobs etc. (Lewicka, 2008; Paez, Besabe, & Gonzalez, 1997; Halbwachs, 1925).

Attachment to places derive from participants' composite memories and experiences – a game of football played in the back of apartment buildings, a gossip at the local bakery, an afternoon spent with friends or neighbors on the benches in front of their buildings. Moreover, special social memories are attributed to events among family members as a wedding of a child or the acquisition of an apartment. Other participants recall memories from the gardens, where they spent more time socializing than in the other two specific places (the city and neighborhood). These are all practices that participants witnessed during the interview, as collective memories. Hence, the continuing sense of place is predicated on memories like these, which are laid down over time. Specific places create continuity of social bonds across time by reminding individuals of episodes that occurred in the past (Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

Old time residents display a strong sense of emotional rootedness in their local area. This is predicated on a sense of the historical past and feelings of nostalgia often arising from the experience of a lifetime lived almost exclusively within the locale. The neighborhood's past and, in particular, embedded memories from childhood form an integral part of their interpretive frameworks' and the following quotes give voice to some of these memories:

'... During my childhood, I was happy to eat the fruits of our garden.'

'I remember nice moments when people were helping and supporting each other at land preparation, cleaning, planting flowers and picking fruits from the garden.'

'Events with other tenants did not occur so often, but we were gathering in the garden with members of our family and we spent an anniversary or a Sunday together.'

'It was nice, I went out with the neighbors and look how the onion and parsley grow... we had a bit of grass here and we gathered to play rummy or to drink a beer. It was better. We met every day and sat on the bench we have in front of the building.'

'A happy moment: when the whole family gets together in the garden, with music, with loved ones, what could be nicer? You feel good in your yard, you can run after your dog...'

'There were few events, especially behind our apartment blocks, where we baked eggplants, peppers to preserve them for the winter. We met with more housewives at work in the garden, we were telling stories and jokes. It was some fun time when we gathered together.'

Besides, the following quotes describe respondents' feelings toward their fellow inhabitants:

'I had nice and good neighbors.'

'I am a loved man on this street, all the neighbors who came to me for help were satisfied with my services; all greet me and respect me and I respect them.'

'Contact with neighbors it was good, we met, talked, no parties or large events, only socializing.'

'...We were all young and about the same age when we moved to this apartment building, and we all worked together. Now many are gone out of the country for a better job, and retirees are moving to the countryside. Our relationships were based on true friendship and respect.'

5.2.2 Perceived characteristics of place

Because the attachment is different among people, in the process of discovering resident's attachments, of major importance, was to make a distinction between (physical) and (social) (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001). These are two essential dimensions of place attachment. Physical attachment is the attachment that an individual develops to the physical place such as the attachment to city, neighborhood or urban gardens. Social attachment is the attachment that an individual develops to other people. In this sense, the qualitative data from the research conversational interviews were interpreted to explore how respondents relate to their physical and social environments. These two dimensions are emphasized and elaborated in more detail in the next subsections.

(Physical) attachment

The first dimension of place attachment, the physical attachment, highlights those places that respondents of this research consider of great importance, by emphasizing why they matter in their life. In this regard, in the process of discovering the physical attachment, interviewees were asked to answer the following:

Are you pleased to live in this city? And in this neighborhood? (When you worked in the garden, when you go for a walk when you drive?)

According to the results, the intensity of attachment is expressed again in weak, moderate and strong levels, and each is defined in a separate paragraph. In this way, I have chosen to show the levels of physical attachment in one table. Table number 4 shows the overall levels of participants' attachment to place (as for the city, for the neighborhood and garden).

Table 4. Levels of physical attachment to place (city, neighborhood, garden)

| Level of attachment | Nr. of participants | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Weak attachment | 6 | 14% |
| Moderate attachment | 17 | 40% |
| Strong attachment | 19 | 45% |
| Total of participants | 42 | |

Weak level of physical attachment

The weak level of physical attachment is used when respondents say that are not pleased living and working in the city or neighborhood. It refers to those residents who were not content with the city's standards of living.

A number of 14% respondents showed an overall weak level of physical attachment. These respondents were critical about the physical characteristics of the city and neighborhood and they expressed that they did not feel personally connected to the physical characteristics of the city and neighborhood. Furthermore, they stated not to miss the actual physical place if they would be forced to move out. Next to the physical design of their neighborhoods, many respondents expressed to be dissatisfied with the amount of garbage that is accumulated around their apartment blocks. Hence, the data reveal that those respondents living in rented apartments expressed low feelings of physical attachment at the level of their homes than those who own an apartment. The sentiment of feeling at home in the rented apartments was present, but not a special one.

'I am not satisfied, neither of the district nor the city because its poor standards of living, low level of wages, lack of green spaces and parking.'

'I am not happy, there is no culture nowadays of living together in a block-level, there is still garbage in this neighborhood; there is still work to do with the quality and culture of our city.'

'Not content at all, there is a strict necessity that keeps me here – the job.'

Moderate level of physical attachment

It is referred to as moderate level when residents say that they are pleased and content with the city's standards of living, but not so strongly attached to the specific places as the previous group. In this group, only 40% of participants were registered with moderate physical attachment. This group expressed that they are satisfied and attached to these places due to few facilities that satisfy their needs. Others talked about the city industry that has, in effect, 'disappeared' and produced a change in the type of people in the neighborhood; part of them moved to the countryside, another part moved to another city or country and the young generation took their place. The attachment is not so strong as for the next group because they require different standards for living and their expectancies are not totally fulfilled.

'I was pleased that I lived in this neighborhood. The need brought us here, but I am not so tied to these places. If the opportunity arises we would like to move from here.'

'I am less satisfied, the town's industry disappeared and it hurts to see that instead of progress the city is going down.'

'Eh, less happy, I am happy that I have a place to live.'

Strong level of physical attachment

The findings refer to a strong level of physical attachment when respondents say that they are strongly connected with the city, with their neighborhood, and with their lost garden place. At this level, residents are pleased with the places they live in due to various reasons or factors.

As emerges from Table 4, 45% of respondents show a strong level of attachment at the level of the city as well at the level of their neighborhoods and gardens. This group of participants has positive feelings to all the physical characteristics of the place, be it the city, the neighborhood or the garden. Some of the participants of this group were born in the same place and have lived there until the moment they were interviewed. The high number of years spent in the same place meant that most of the participants had significant familiarity and intimacy with the specific place. Hence, the physical attachment is strong and related to good standards of living and to all facilities present nearby. This group of respondents also mentioned the good and active maintenance of the place, which makes them feel safe in a clean environment.

'We are well located. We have the hospital, the school, the college, the church, the supermarket, the gym, and even the fresh air all nearby. At first, when I came here, I was isolated from the world, but in the meantime, the city developed. I can say we live in a good area with all facilities, we have all we need.'

'I am happy to live in the city and especially in this neighborhood, I would not change this city with the capital for example.'

'Yes, I was born here and I feel good, everything is good.'

(Social) attachment

Besides physical attachment, the social attachment describes respondents' attachment to other social actors of the place. The second dimension of place attachment forms when people's relationships with others are built on individual and common interests.

To discover the levels of social attachment among respondents, the following questions were addressed during the interviews:

Do you remember a moment when you felt happy that you live in this city?
Do you remember a moment when you were pleased\happy to have the garden?
Did you feel involved within your neighborhood by being active in the garden?
Do you remember any community, gardens events to share with your neighbors?

The levels of social attachment are gathered in Table 5, which shows that the percentages differ from one level to another.

Table 5. Levels of social attachment

| Level of attachment | Nr. of participants | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Weak attachment | 6 | 14% |
| Moderate attachment | 24 | 57% |
| Strong attachment | 12 | 29% |
| Total of participants | 42 | |

Weak level of social attachment

The weak level of social attachment is referred to when respondents say they are not connected with other citizens; they form special bonds only with family members. This group represents those residents who were not content with the city's standards of living. Also, this is the case of those people who moved to the city less than 30 years ago. They did not form special bonds with other people or neighbors. A small number of participants (14%) were registered as having a weak attachment to other social actors, due to the short time of residence in the city. Others expressed that they do not share common interests with their neighbors, or the neighbors behave strangely and they keep distance to prevent getting in trouble. Furthermore, they mentioned to have formal and collegial

connections with their coworkers and the rest of the people they know. These are some examples that result in a weak social attachment.

'I did not feel involved in the neighborhood because I have not interacted with neighbors in any way, we only greet each other of respect.'

'We do not have strong links with any neighbor, we communicate with few in exchange for some help in the garden, otherwise no one comes, no one is interested in the maintenance of the place or of the building.'

Moderate level of social attachment

At this level, interviewees have different social relations in the city, in the neighborhood and at the garden place. Meetings with neighbors, colleagues, friends or family members are not so frequent, but they also keep contact through the Internet connection or by phone, when needed.

In some cases, there are friendship relations among children and parents formed close links to keep these relations safe. According to the results of the data, the moderate attachment has the higher percentage between the other two levels of social attachment. Of the total, 57% respondents are pleased with the relationships they have.

'Our relations with other neighbors and work colleagues are good, we understand each others needs and we know how to share the tasks and especially to take care of them.'

'We work with neighbors to maintain the apartment building clean, without big events or other coffee meetings.'

Strong level of social attachment

At this level, 29% of respondents reported feeling strongly connected with other citizens. These strong ties were associated with respondent's length of residence in the city. Participants that are born in the city and those with more than 30 years of residence reported having long and lasting relationships with other fellows. When asked to explain why they felt socially attached, the most common reasons given were to do with connections to family in particular: *'because of my family and because I have always lived here.'* After family, friends' matters were also important. They mentioned having regular contact with different fellow neighbors. Many expressed that if their neighbors had to move out of the city, they could regret this. Others expressed regret after the deceased neighbors or colleagues.

After years of residence in the place, the residential environment was an essential setting in the creation of close-knit bonds. Also, the natural settings offered space for social practices. This happens when respondents share a garden, a park and even a small corner of the local market. These places offer the

daily dose of fresh air but at the same time keep the mind active through the simple act of talking with other peers. Moreover, the results reveal that participants interact with each other in different ways or activities. Here is the case of residents that gather near a farmers' market in town to play chess or cards, even rummy, or to be in touch with their fellows (neighbors, friends or simply acquaintances) as illustrated in Picture 10.



Picture 10. Group of inhabitants socializing: playing chess, playing cards, discussing (Source: <https://www.google.ro/maps/>, October 2012)

One important aspect of the social attachment within the city's neighborhoods was the garden, which many respondents consider as an important place in their social life. This is because the gardens were located between the apartment blocks they are living. It was close to their homes and it was easy to be accessed at any time of the day; but also because the gardens functioned as a meeting place where through interaction, work, and communication they strengthened relations with family members and friends. The public spaces with gardens resulted in special social attachments for most of the respondents. This became clear during the interviews, most of the respondents had a strong bond with the places where gardens were active. In this sense, the attachment levels tended to be higher for those participants who were active for long hours. They reported that the gardens are of a particular importance in their lives.

'The garden was like a part of me...'

'No other place can provide the same opportunities to do what I like, so close to my home.'

'I am attached to the place because of the garden; if I must leave I would have the same feeling.'

'The little space in the garden enabled me to do the activity I like the most. I got more enjoyment out of all the activities in this garden than I would get from doing the same activities in other places.'

Practical activities

Practical activities appear to play an important role in developing social attachments to places. When people share common interests they work together, they celebrate together and help each other in difficult situations. For the participants of this research, most important were the interests of keeping the home-place neat and clean. They mentioned that time is much more precious when they work with someone than alone. For this purpose, they engage in collective activities and share responsibilities. Some examples of how people share these kinds of interests are illustrated in Picture 11. The pictures illustrate some neighbors that are working together for the maintenance of the public spaces around their apartment buildings. Also, pictures (a) and (c) illustrate the spaces where these neighbors had their gardens before they were removed.



(a)



(b)



(c)

Picture 11 (a, b, c), Spring-cleaning (Photos by the author, February 2015)

'Years ago was different, we had gardens here. It was all green and beautiful and people kept the place clean. Years ago you had friends on all the balconies. My mother and others neighbors used to clean the place once a week. As you can see there is plenty of garbage now and there's only a couple of us who clean it now.' (Neighbors from the pictures)

As the results show, one example is the case of parents with children in school within the city. If children are happy and settled in a local school, parents generally develop positive feelings for the area. This can be despite other negative views of the area. The significance of school to respondent's attachment appears to be greater for parents with children than for those who live alone.

'I think I already feel attached because my children grew up in this city. Maybe if they weren't here at school I wouldn't feel as attached as I do. One of the reasons is because the kids made their own friends at school and then you kind of get to know the teachers as well as other parents and so on. I think because of these bonds I feel more strongly connected with the place itself.'

Hence, finding a place where children are happy – or where parents believe children would be happy or do well – was a major factor for parents or potential parents for developing new social links. The same principle applies in the case of jobs, if people are content of the job they have, they generally and unconsciously develop positive feelings to the area. Respondents that are employed mentioned to have meetings with their colleagues and celebrate a birthday, a wedding or even go to church together.

The essential principles that were emphasized through respondents' attachment to their city, their neighborhoods and their gardens, are summarized below.

Enjoyment,
Pleasure,
Interest,
Having a job,
Neighborhood quality.

5.3 Place identity

The second element of the sense of place is place identity. The concept of identity manifests on different levels, two of which are measured in this section, the identity of people and identity of place. 'The places in which people live influence their preferences and affect the kind of environment they may seek out or prefer. However, the converse is also true: place identity is also influenced by people's identities (see Figure 5). People personalize their homes and workplaces with decorations so that their houses and gardens reflect and communicate who they are' (Hauge, 2007; Despres, 1991; Csikszentmihalyi &

Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Nasar & Kang, 1999; Rapoport, 1982). Moreover, the act of growing their own gardens produces symbolic meanings among respondents, as pride, freedom, independence, and strength. Individuals who are attached expressed their unique identifications and they distinguish themselves from the others through these identifications. They also maintain continuity, develop positive self-esteem, and find the living environment functional. Those who are not attached to their living environment are often lacking identifications with the local area, the continuity with the place is not maintained and their self-esteem is neutral and often they find the environment uncomfortable (Twigger-Ross, Uzzel, 1996).

When the places people like support their identity, they become more emotionally attached. And if the same places offer continuity of experience over time they enable people to make a positive evaluation of themselves, thus supporting their self-esteem and identity.

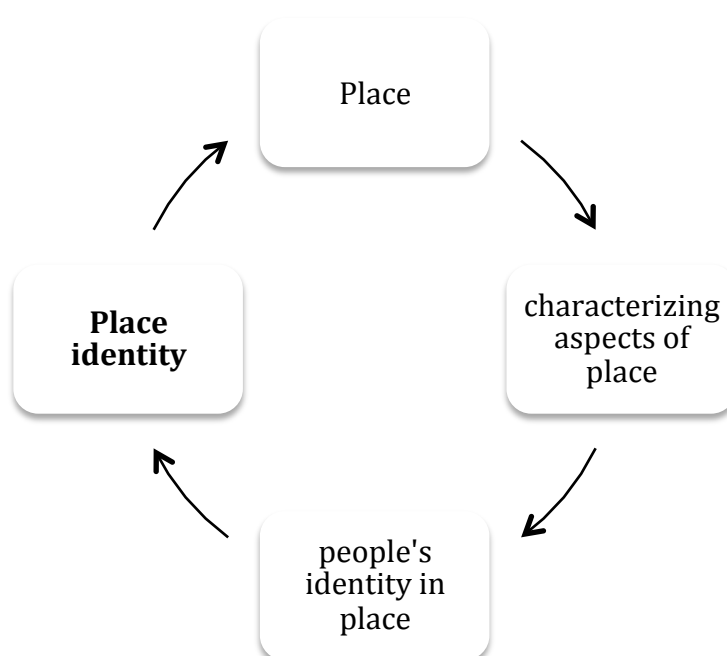


Figure 5. The process of place identity

5.3.1 Characterizing aspects of Dorohoi city

'Aspects of people's identity linked to place can be described as place-identity' (Hauge, 2007). It consists of the special characteristics and meanings of the specific places as perceived by respondents at some point in time. This section discusses how special places of this research contributed to participants' identity and how architecture and the natural environment influence their identities.

Home and living places represent important factors in influencing identity. 'Home and dwelling are important in most people's lives, and consequently, they are significant in influencing identity' (Relph, 1976). Therefore, in the following paragraphs, I mention how special the places are, and what make these places special for the participants of the research.

According to the results, respondents stressed the uniqueness of their favorite places in different ways. When expressing these characteristics, each participant took into consideration only those places that have an important impact in their life. Thus, some participants expressed characteristics for the city and for the gardens, but they did not mention about their neighborhoods; others talk about the city and only the city and others refer strictly to the importance and characteristics of their gardens. As the results show, 57% of the participants of this research do not identify with the place; they do not see the benefits of their home place. They express that they do not see anything special in their city, '*... Dorohoi is an ordinary and small city*' one might say. Others are sad to see their children emigrating: '*after the big factory's closure, our children are leaving elsewhere to look for a job, even in other countries.*' Furthermore, less positive responses were associated with dissatisfaction and negative perceptions in the case of non-attached respondents, as one expresses his dissatisfaction against the municipality.

'For us, there is nothing special about the city; to tell the truth, those responsible from the municipality do not fulfill their duties properly and we need to fix a lot of things behind them. As, for example, one day, a water pipe was broken, and some workers came and replaced it, but at the same time, they destroyed a linden tree. They did not plant it back, but we were not given the opportunity to plant it either.'

From the total number of participants, only 43% identify with the place. In their case, they see important characteristics of their home place. They are more attached to their living place and have a significantly more positive perception of their city in terms of overall quality, prestige, and safety than non-attached ones.

But what makes the specific places (the city, the neighborhood or the garden) special and different from other places?

'Place identity is based on our symbolic dependence on a place to the extent to which it serves a meaning-making function about who we are' (Mikaylov & Perkins, 2013). Thus, the distinctive characteristics of the places in which dwellers-place links were developed show that the place has a unique identity and character to the residents via its beloved symbols. The symbols that characterize the unique aspects of the city, as reported by participants in the research are contained in the figure (6) below.



Figure 6. Place identity: the comb with characterizing aspects of Dorohoi city

(a) Brazi Park Dorohoi (source: <http://aroundguides.com/13713896>)

(b) Garden in the city (source: photo by the author, February, 2015)

(c) Sfantul Nicoale church, built by Stephen III of Moldavia (source: <http://sfnicolaed.iasi.mmb.ro/foto/album/5340-imagini-biserica>);

(d) Mayor of Dorohoi city, Dorin Alexandrescu, (source: <http://www.dorohoi.ro/local-8052-Dorin-Alexandrescu-referitor-la-piscina-Misiune-indeplinita-Dorohoi-ii-se-vor-bucura-dublu-acum---VIDEO.html>)

(e) International Folklor Festival 'Mugurelul' Dorohoi (source: <http://www.gazetab.ro/eveniment-acum-maraton-international-de-muzica-populara-la-dorohoi-festivalul-mugurelul-a-ajuns-la-editia-a-xi-a-foto.html>)

(f) (source: <http://paulgorban.blogspot.nl/2012/02/revista-zonliterara-nr-1-2-ianuarie.html>)

Natural settings

Place identity is linked to meanings and perceptions held by participants in relation to their environment. Natural settings frame the living environment and are linked to participants' identity through 'opportunities for privacy, introspection and self-reflection' (Manzo, 2005) as for many residents of a place, the important aspect of their identity lies in the ties with the natural world' (Alexander, 2008).

The natural settings allow people to visit them on a regular and ongoing basis. Through this process, people interact with each other, and if desired, meaningful place relationships may be built in time. On a long term, the natural experiences comprise a source of identity for residents.

Most of the participants (95%) of the research refer to the natural settings as a special characterizing aspect of their living environment. In this sense, participants see the natural settings, as the presence of parks, the green public spaces in every neighborhood, the multitude of trees in the city, the flowers planted by people in front of their apartment buildings, as well as the little pine forest at the entrance of the city. In the eye of one respondent *'there is a lot of green stuff and clean air; parks and flowers which please the eye'*. Another relate

to the city as a *'natural forest, with trees and green spaces, with flowers planted for every season.'*

Some see the natural settings as a way that provides satisfactory recreational opportunities.

'It is a small town with green spaces and tidy. Children's parks and a myriad of trees make this neighborhood more special, as well as the city. It gives us a way to escape from everyday life and feel closer to nature.'

'Our city has become increasingly more planted, that I may say so because the new governance has focused in the recent years on caring for green spaces and planting trees, which gives the city an aspect of the forest or orchard or city flowers, which makes the city special among the people who live in it.'

'Our green spaces, even if they are few, they are admired by many visitors from the neighboring towns'.

Gardens

Linked to the *natural* character of the city, respondents highlighted the presence of the gardens in the city as another important aspect. Even though there are only a few left, the gardens offer unique aspects through their *'diversity and coloring'*. Diversity is maintained with the type of plants and fruit trees that are grown, and the coloring through the multitude of flowers planted. Through personalization of their gardens, participants make the place to reflect their identity. We take as an example here all the gardens created by participants of this research around their apartment buildings. Most of them expressed that the garden place is a central aspect of their life and that they represent a unique characteristic, especially because they are situated in a city and not in the rural place where the gardens should belong. Even though in some cases, the attachment to the urban living is strong, the gardens give them a sense of nostalgia for the rural place where they were born and raised.

'It is a way to keep a part of the rural life here with us'; '... the gardens... each of them has a unique appearance.'

Even if the gardens deal primarily with production and provision, respondents identify with these places because *'gardens often offer you something in return: a handful of fresh parsley for your soup, some carrots, or even fresh cherries and walnuts for your jam or compote'*. Hence, some expressed that there is something more profound about eating from a source where they worked and cared for days or months. Others express their experiences with the gardens as a progression and ongoing process that contributes to their well-being and to prosperous bonds with neighbors. There are significant emotional responses when respondents interact with gardens. The following quotes reflect participants' feelings.

'When you have a garden, even a small one, you always find something to work on; I prefer to be outside, more close to the land than only between concrete walls.'

'Neither the city, nor the neighborhood does not have anything special, but among other neighbors, I am happy with my garden and I see it as a special asset in town'

'The garden is important for relaxation and fresh air, but more important for fresh food in the kitchen.'

The gardens also frame and shape the living environment of respondents.

'What I see as special at the gardens: the color change; gardens gather dust and have a psychological effect on our behavior; they offer pleasant views when you see a flower bloom or a verdant tree.'

Cultural heritage

Cultural identity is considered another important asset to city's well-being among participants. In a cultural context, identity is 'dependent on the public memory of its social values, beliefs, rituals and institutions and is produced through objects, images, and representations that illustrate its past or present' (Conley, 2005). Historic places also play a role in preserving the continuity of resident's identity (Devine, 1994). In this case, a small number of interviewees mentioned the city's cultural heritage as a distinguished and valuable aspect. They make reference to artifacts that are inherited from past generations.

'We have a beautiful church built by Stephen III of Moldavia, which I consider special and unique in this part of the country, not only in the city'.

Not only the famous church, but also other statues and old buildings are mentioned to have historical and emotional meanings for war veterans and for old residents that participated in their construction and initiation.

Governance

The governance is an important characteristic of a place, in that the people who are in the lead contribute through their decisions to the well-being of the residents. They act through rules and laws in the making of a city. In general, mayors are the head of the governance in a city so what they do and think has an influence over the policies and practices. 'Many mayors have been important for their attitudes towards or relations with their voter groups... Successful mayors have balanced the need to attract new investment and support business expansion with good social and environmental policies; many have made government agencies more responsive and accountable to citizens, with

particular attention to allowing more voice and influence to low-income groups or other groups that generally have little influence' (Satterthwaite, 2009). In this context, the mayor of Dorohoi city has a considerable importance for its residents. Some of the participants expressed their gratitude feelings towards their mayor, which transformed the city during his governance into a more pleasant and tidy place to live. Participants respect him and bless him for all the cleaning and the care of the city.

'The City: first I congratulate the current mayor that changed enormously and invested and made good improvements in the city'.

'It's all beautiful now, the mayor made our city nice and pleasant'.

'The current mayor has done some work, asphalt, made the city beautiful in comparison to previous mayors, did some work, good and beautiful, it cannot please everyone, but we are satisfied'.

City's vitality

Another unique characteristic of the city that respondents stressed during the interviews is the high level of city's *vitality*. Vitality means activity, liveliness, energy and enthusiasm of a place, is a result of intensity and diversity in activity generated by pedestrian movement (Jacobs, 1961; Montgomery, 1998). In this regard, vitality strongly influences the people's perception of shopping streets, of the park and pedestrian streets. 'It brings to life a city's human strength as it respects its complexities: a vibrant downtown, an engaged populace, educational opportunity, economic sustainability, good transport, diversity of the population and opportunity, and a citizenry that embraces its history and culture' (Lees, 2012). Vitality and the perceptual image shape the identity and characters of these places. Responsive places accommodate human activities (Ujang, 2010).

Dorohoi city dwellers are active citizens. There is the desire and attitude to be active in their natural settings. There are various cultural activities and festivals that take place in the city. Many participants reported that they have been exposed to outdoor activities organized every year in their city. Also, through their activities in the garden, or other collective activities, simple walks in the park or to the market, participants create a unique bustle of the city. Moreover, spring-cleaning of public spaces or gardens are times when residents interact with each other in individual or common activities. Summer and autumn also offer time and opportunities for respondents for outdoor activities with their friends, neighbors or family. Even in the wintertime, some of them reported to be active and busy with something. In the eye of the respondents, the outdoor activities were reported to give a natural and authentic, and special aspect to their neighborhoods as well as to the city.

'Because is a small city I prefer to walk a lot because I do not have a car, but mostly because I like to salute and meet other people, or for a small chat during my walk to the market or to work'.

'There are restaurants and shops that are open late and people like to visit them at any hour of the day and night ... people are walking at night and enjoy the weather, children also play outdoor games until sunset, it is lively'.

'During the summer, the heat takes you out of your apartment, we have these benches all covered in vines that make shadow, and we gather almost all the neighbors together, especially in the evening, and talk and tell stories'.

Comfort

Comfort represents an attribute of successful places, which include environmental factors, physical comfort and social and psychological comfort (Carr et al., 1992; Carmona et al., 2003). Comfort can generate good and positive images when perceived by the users (Lynch, 1960). In this case, some respondents mentioned the general cleanliness in the city center or around the places they live and its maintenance that encourages longer place engagement, and the feeling of safety and security.

*'I feel comfortable living here than any other place, a quiet place to live'.
In our place, the crime rate is low, almost absent if I could say so, so I feel safe to sleep with my door unlocked'.*

The above-mentioned characteristics were mentioned by most of the respondents as being most important in making Dorohoi city a unique and special environment to live in.

5.3.2 People's identity in place

Does place has any particular effect on people's identity?

In the theory of identity, Breakwell (1992) states that people learn from their living environment by making use in the same time of their competencies to form a particular identity. The four principles of identity, *self-esteem, self-efficacy, distinctiveness and continuity* (see Figure 7) are elaborated further, according to participants' responses. These principles combine to shape people's identity.

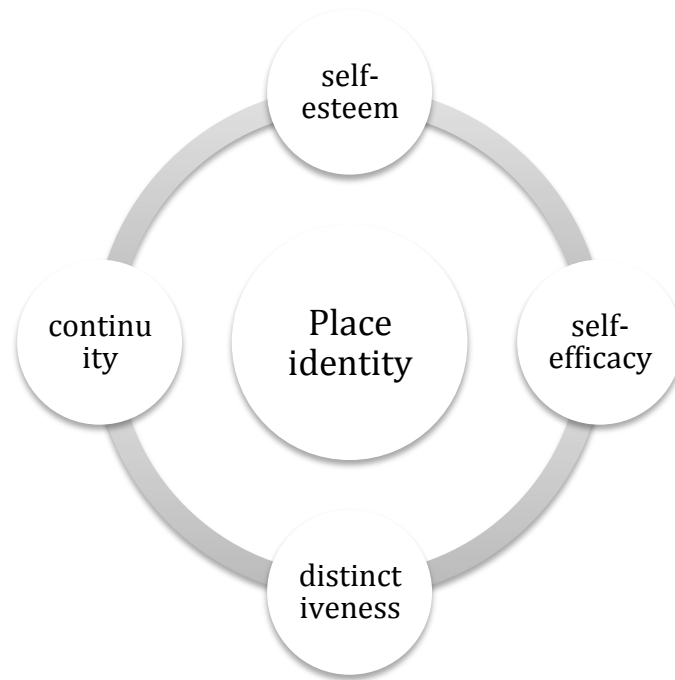


Figure 7. Principles of people's identity in place

Self-esteem - suggests that residents of a place can gain a boost to their self-esteem from the qualities of a specific place and imply a positive self-assessment of individuals (Twigger-Ross, Uzzel, 1996).

Overall, residents attached to the city expressed different ways in which their connection with the local area had a positive impact over their self-esteem. Some people, when explaining why they feel proud of the place they talked about their gardens. The feeling of pride was found to be an important factor in participants' place identity.

'The garden was a pride; neighbors and other passers appreciated my beautiful tomatoes because they lasted until late September or October. A beauty, a pleasure to see the harvest of tomatoes.'

Another respondent expressed how the achievement of his garden plot, 'inherited' from a neighbor who passed away, contributed to their positive attitude towards the urban gardens and self-esteem: *'when I received this small plot of land, I felt happy and privileged, it made me feel proud that I achieved a place among the other city gardeners.'*

Self-efficacy - when the living environment facilitates everyday actions of participants, the feelings of self-efficacy are maintained (Twigger-Ross & Uzzel, 1996). Feelings of self-efficacy were evidenced in the importance of home grown food for participants. Food produced in their own gardens it is a sign of confidence in the capacity to attain daily needs and demands. Most feelings were associated with people's preferences for the traditional and seasonal foods.

'The ground is fertile and fed us every season with the right plants, we grew basically the food that we like to eat.'

'There were various types of vegetables that I loved to cultivate in my small plot of land ... I even had enough to put them in jars and preserve for the winter time.'

Most of the attached participants also made reference to the self-efficacy that their living environment has to offer.

'... Happy because I have everything nearby, the shops and churches and schools, and kindergarten, the hospital and this makes the city special and my neighborhood in particular... That's why I can not move from here.'

Distinctiveness - represents a lifestyle and establishes a specific type of relationship with the living environment that is distinct from the others (Twigger-Ross & Uzzel, 1996).

Respondents use associations with the specific places to distinguish themselves from others and other places through personal distinctiveness and local identification. Participants, who had lived in the city prior to all the city transformation and prior to the working industry closure, expressed a feeling of uniqueness because they had lived in the area for a long period of time and watched it change.

'I have seen this place changing; when I was young this was an empty place and quiet, but now is a bit noisy but alive ... people who moved away for ten years would come back and they would not recognize it.'

Through local identification respondents find themselves, live, experience, interpret, understand and find meaning in the place as Relph (1976) call it the existential insideness – 'a sense of belonging and deep and complete identity with a place'. In relation to the latter aspect, some answers were centered on 'the importance of recognizing people and being recognized themselves' (Twigger-Ross & Uzzel, 1996). Most of the residents that were born in the city identify themselves with the place and see themselves as local people.

'As you know our city is small, and the number of inhabitants almost know each other by sight. When you know faces you salute them and then after some years of residence you start to converse with them ... and step by step you become friends.'

'Knowing people around is also a benefit; I have a nice guy at the market that brings me fresh milk every time I am in need, among other products he is selling. But also at the minimarket from around the corner, the vendor is my neighbor and he announces me every time when they receive new products in store.'

Continuity - highlights types of self-environment relationships that focus on the maintenance and continuity of self.

Participant's identities are rooted in past memories and experiences. For those strongly attached to the city, identity with the place manifested in their desire not to leave the area. For example some respondents who are widowers, they would not live the area because their partners died there. For these participants the local environment represent a place packed with emotional and significant past acts and events.

'I don't want to move away . . . because of my memories, I have spent the time here with my wife... we have all our married life here, our whole relationship was built around this area.' Others consider themselves as too old to move away: *'you see, I am not young to wish to find a better place ... this is it now, I have lived here all my life, and this is my home'.*

5.4 Place dependence (a functional attachment)

Participants were asked to answer several questions, but most significant to detect the reasons that make them dependent on the specific places, was the following: *'why did you choose to live in this city?'* Answers to this question were associated with job opportunities and the birthplace aspect.

'Is the city where I was born and I grew up...'

'We are here because we were born here, our parents lived here'.

'We chose to live in this city because of the job...'

'I work here...'

'Because I was born and raised here, it's home...'

'So was our fate, we found a job, and we liked the location of the apartment and we set in...'

Other expressed the fact that they are living in the city because of their apartment repartition, or the influence of the partner who was living in the place. This group of participants was not so dependent to the place, considering moving in the near future to a better environment: *'...we would like to move in the near future, after we sell the apartment'*. The most important reason for this is the fact that not all the important and necessary facilities are present in the city. Some expressed that it is not a good city to live in because there are few job opportunities: *'the city's industry died long time ago and there are no other possibilities for future generation, thus increasing the unemployment rate'*. Therefore, their children are forced to leave the city in the search for a job.

The statistics regarding the rate of unemployment correspond with the findings of this research (see Table 6). Some respondents mentioned to be unemployed, and if employed it happened to be a part time job or season job outside the city or country. However, for the participants that reached the level of pension the aspect of unemployment was not so significant, but for the rest this was the main concern.

Table 6. Place dependence in relation with employment status

| Dependence Employment status | Nr. of participants (%) | Weak | Moderate | Strong |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Employed | 14 (33%) | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| At pension | 28 (67%) | 3 | 13 | 12 |
| Total of participants | 42 | 6 | 17 | 19 |

In Table 6, the numbers illustrate the level of place dependence in relation to the employment status of the residents. According to data analysis, there are split views among the respondents regarding city's facilities and job opportunities expressed through weak, moderate or strong place dependence. Some find all the utilities that they need, nearby or in the city convenient for their livelihood, others disagree and express their dissatisfaction against the local authorities.

Weak place dependence is used when respondents say that the place does not fulfill their needs; some may procure their food from the countryside resources, others may have a job outside the city or they make use of the facilities of the cities nearby.

Moderate place dependence is referred to when respondents say that the place contributes to their living standards by making use of the utilities the city has to offer, some may have a job in the city, but they do not rely entirely on these aspects.

Strong place dependence is mentioned when respondents say that they are entirely dependent on the facilities offered in the place, be it a job, the hospital, the school or the garden.

The number of the respondents who were employed at the moment of the interview is low (33%) compared with the number of participants that are retired (67%). Levels of moderate and strong dependence to place were higher for those retired. This is due to the age; those at pension are old and content and dependent with place utilities. It is also affected by the time of residence in the city; those at pension were part of the group born in the city.

It was also obvious that the participants registered with a job were younger and some of them with less than 30 years of residence in the place.

The employment status has an influence on respondent's place dependence due to financial investments (jobs) that fulfill their needs. Also, the other aspects of life are improved as the social empowerment.

Other utilities or aspects that respondents cannot substitute and are dependent on, are expressed below:

'...Even if the place do not provides many jobs ... there are supermarkets and markets, where you can shop, several parks, gyms, swimming pool and spaces that develop cultural activities...'

'I am a teacher in a school near the city. At the moment I would not leave this city because I have a stable job.'

'I enjoy living here more than any other neighborhood of this city...I wouldn't substitute any place for the silence of this place'.

'It's not so easy to leave the town for a better-paid job especially when there are children in a family'.

'I am happy with my work here, even my salary increased a bit and there are no other reasons to leave the town.'

'...When the children came we have considered that is a good place to raise them. We do not have plans to move elsewhere, is satisfactory to live in this city, but at retirement we want to go to the countryside on the land of our fathers, to continue with garden and plant cultivation'.

'... I am attached to this place where I work for 21 years, and people here are good people, I had no conflicts, so there are no plans to leave the place'.

'... Where is the nicest place than close to your family? That's fate, the waves of life take you home. There are no plans to leave it, it's too late, I want to die at home'.

Dependence to a place is established when a place provides the resources required for goal attainment, and when the use of those resources is frequent, such as food procured from the gardens. The residents of the city are dependent on natural environments as places to process personal circumstances, think about goals and priorities, and to find solitude and inner peace within their neighborhoods. Most of respondents were highly positive of the functions of the gardens. They valued the place because of the local natural resources that are ideal for establishing a garden: *'the soil is rich and favorable to plants'*. Also, they find the garden a place of refuge, where they can escape and recover from urban-associated mental fatigue. They also mentioned to be a favorable place for personal activities and an important benefit for outdoor recreation. But because the dream with beautiful and thriving gardens in the city was shattered through their destruction, participants place dependence was diminished. And they look forward to find alternatives at the countryside, as many respondents expressed to have gardens in other places.

As place dependence is an attachment based on function, the value of a specific place depends on its ability to satisfy the needs or behavioral goals of an individual or group as compared to other place alternatives.

When comparing the relative quality of Dorohoi city with the alternative cities that are nearby, the relative quality is also low. Dorohoi city is located between two big counties, Botosani and Suceava, situated at a distance of approximately 50 km away. These two counties are far bigger than the Municipality of Dorohoi, which means that Dorohoi has far fewer facilities to offer to its inhabitants. But because the public transport is at hand, the links with the other two are easy to make. Some respondents mentioned to visit these places every now and then for *'shopping in the big supermarkets and malls'* or to meet other relatives and friends.

The lack of jobs, the destruction of gardens and other important facilities in the city of Dorohoi lead to an overall low place dependency among respondents, because many of them were not dependent on the city for meeting their needs.

5.5 Place satisfaction

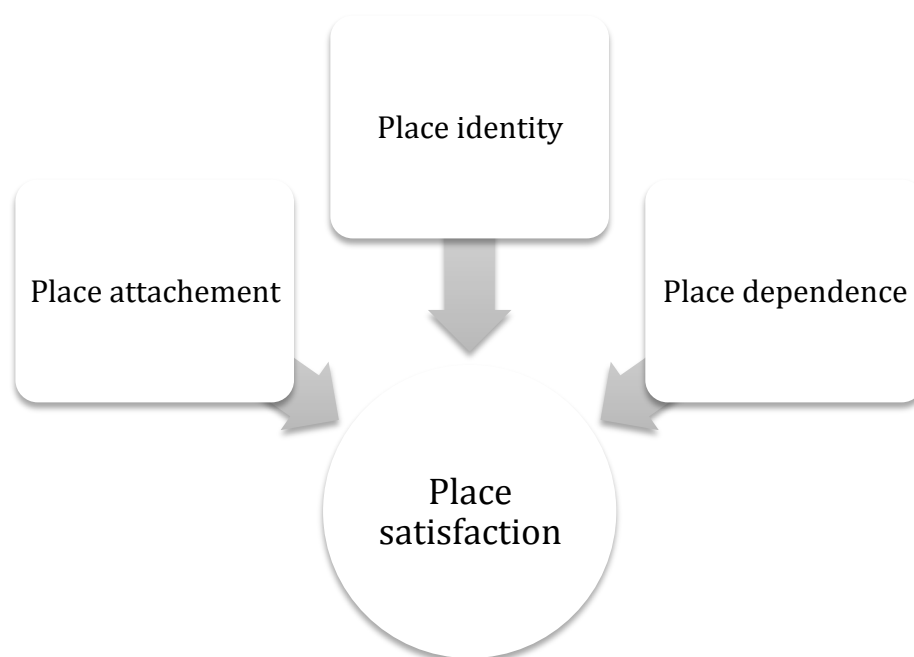


Figure 8. The process of place satisfaction

Place satisfaction was defined as a 'multidimensional summary judgment of the perceived quality of a setting, meeting an individual's needs for the physical characteristics of a place, its services, and social dimensions' (Stedman, 2002; Ramkissoon, Weiler & Smith, 2013). Thus, the previous three aspects of the sense of place as place attachment, place identity, and place dependence are

considered significantly predictive for respondents satisfaction (see Figure 8). First, because place satisfaction is part of the sense of place that comes from within the aspects of attachment, of identity and of dependence. And second, according to results, it encompasses favorable attitudes of these dimensions such as gardens to practice traditional habits, neighbors for social aspects or good living facilities nearby. Place satisfaction depends on these factors like facilities, the natural environment and socio-demographic aspects, which have a major impact on participants' sense of place.

Participants of the research were asked to answer the following questions to measure the level of place satisfaction:

'Are you satisfied to live in this place? Are you satisfied with all the facilities it provides?'

According to results the overall level of place satisfaction reaches a moderate level, with more than half of participants being satisfied to live in the city, despite the lack of some facilities. Place attachment, place identity, and place dependence have different properties, and their effects on place satisfaction are different and sometimes opposing. Even though, in other aspects they feel not so strong attached, dependent or in other cases they do not identify with the place, a moderate level of satisfaction is encountered among half of the respondents. The satisfaction is influenced by people's perceptions over the place, as the place enables resources for their homes and practices. Also the 'good and bad' characteristics of a place influence participants satisfaction; these participants like to live in their city because it offers a range of opportunities for them, as shopping activities and cultural events, and because it is a tolerant place with warm people and always open to changes and challenges. Despite having gone through difficult economic periods, when over half of its inhabitants lost their work place, the city has the strength to evolve and develop over time due to a good governance. The good governance is also a factor contributing to residential satisfaction.

'We are satisfied that we live in this city and district, we are well positioned ... Due to the current mayor, everything changed in the city and we are pleased with his services. As the proverb says: 'thrifty man sanctifies the place', our city was completely transformed'.

Contrary to that, respondents expressed their satisfaction to nature and recreation places, parks and public spaces, low pollution and the tranquility of the place.

'We are fortunate here in town that can we still eat healthy, the pollution level is not so high because we have no industry and the traffic is not so intense ...'

'It is quiet and pleasant to live here. I am happy where I live'.

Other personal factors such as family bonds, relationships and other private social network factors, were also mentioned to be important factors to contribute to overall respondents' satisfaction.

5.6 Conclusion

The public spaces in the city, which were enabled through garden development, had a significant contribution in defining participants' sense of place. Respondents expressed to feel personally connected to these spaces during the interviews. Also, it became clear during the observation phase that many respondents had a special relation with those spaces, through a regular maintenance. Most of the respondents were highly positive of the function of the gardens within the city, respectively within their neighborhoods.

Overall, moderate levels of social and physical attachment were discovered among the residents of Dorohoi city. Thus, respondents had more frequent contact with those people with common backgrounds, interests, cultural or religious affiliations or lifestyles. Others formed strong bonds with the place when their needs, both physical and social, were fulfilled. Also, feelings of self-esteem, self-efficacy, distinctiveness, and continuity were relevant for respondents to establish identity bonds with the place. Moreover, positive emotions to place revealed their satisfaction.

Chapter 6

Social, health, and economic impacts of urban gardens



Picture 12. Urban garden in spring (Photo by the author, February 2015)

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 aims to answer the following research question:

- *What are the impacts of urban gardens on residents' sense of place?*

The chapter discusses the social, health, and economic impacts of urban gardens on the participants' sense of place, as revealed by the data analysis. Although other major impacts are listed in the literature, the scope of this section is limited to the social, health and economic.

Results show that urban gardens, which engaged respondents in environmental stewardship, recreation and ecological skills development in Dorohoi city, were successful in nurturing place meaning. Moreover, in certain cases gardening activities nurtured a sense of place, increased the perceptions of the presence and importance of nature in the local urban setting.

Gardens in the city had impacts over time and influenced respondents' sense of place in different ways, according to individual needs. The benefits grew over time as more participants became familiar with the garden and when they became involved in various activities taking place at the garden place.

6.2 Social impact

The most important aspects of social impact emphasized during the research analysis were related to:

- | Cultural integration in the city and neighborhood
- | Access to land
- | Revival and beautification of public space

According to the results, urban gardens were not only a combination of the city and the countryside, but rather they encompassed the features of both lifestyles. Gardens helped to form emotional relationships between participants and their living environment. The feelings associated with garden places evolved over time to positive and negative, influencing participant's sense of identity. During the identity process, participants have formed a connection with their gardens, which in time developed into a unique history and character of its own. On the other hand, the relation with the place enhanced participants' comfort and happiness. And when residents were contributing to what happens in their living environment, they lived more enjoyable lifestyles and thus enhanced the identification with the place (see Figure 9).

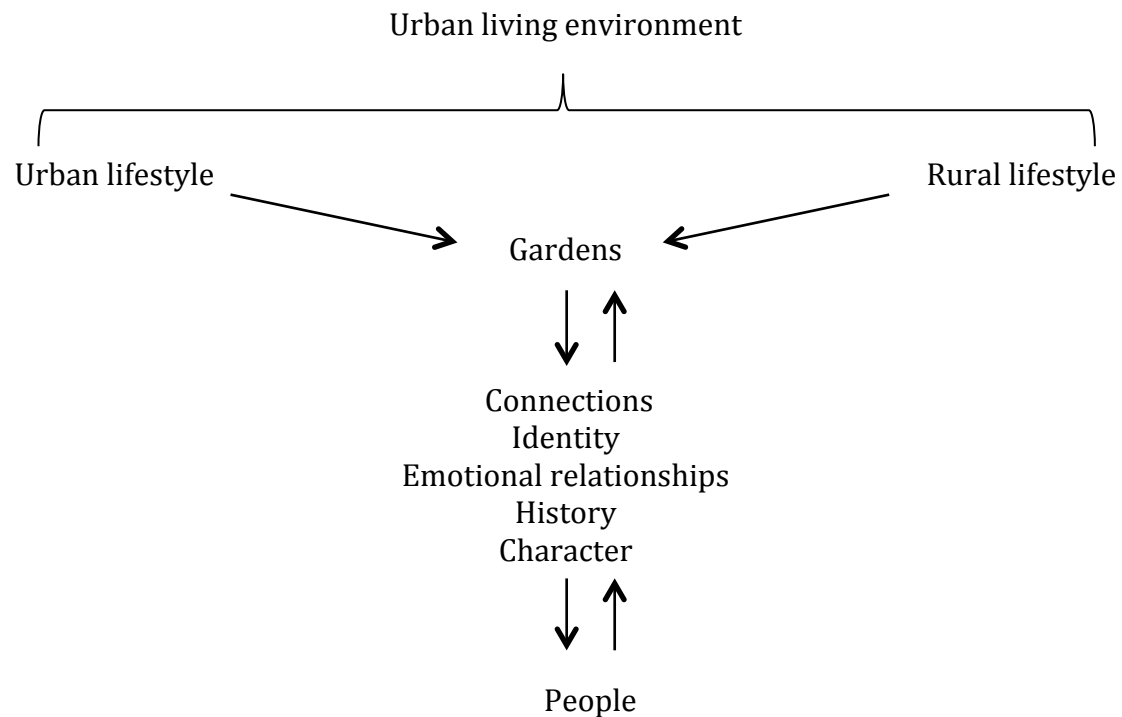


Figure 9. Social impacts of urban gardens

As discussed in previous chapters, participants of this research were active shapers of their environment and their sense of place, which played an important role in preserving socio-cultural elements of the area. The social impacts, in this case, refer to the ways that urban gardens influence and affect the social behavior of the gardeners. As described in this chapter, social impacts incorporate impacts on participants' relationships and interactions with each other and their built environment.

The social behavior in the case of the participants was more inclined towards the maintenance of the place. For this reason, the beautification of the place arises as a consequence of their desire to create nice and clean places to live. Urban gardens are places that help to improve the living conditions, as well the physical aspects of the place. Researchers, Bradley & Galt, (2013) and Ober Allen, Alaimo, Elam, & Perry (2008) talk about the beautification of the neighborhoods through gardening activities, that create more local pride and place attachment. Participants of this research assigned the same attributions to their gardens. Urban gardens, in particular, were cited as clean places where participants felt safe to meet and socialize.

Urban gardening created access to land and offered the opportunity for residents to cultivate and grow their plants. As underpinned by the interviews, the fact that participants had access to the land surrounding their home made them 'feel secure to call it their own' even for a short time, and at the same time developing a sense of pride and ownership.

Sharing not only vegetables and tools, but also ideas, across cultures and other social differences were seen as a particularly potent form of social engagement within the gardens, even though not all the participants reported to have contacts among the gardeners.

Besides the specific benefits of interacting with nature, the gardens served as a background to social life and different therapeutic activities (Adevi & Mårtensson, 2013). In addition to the physical and psychological health benefits outlined below, the urban gardens were seen by participants as a caring place contributing to a greater sense of belonging and a catalyst for friendship formation.

6.3 Health impact

Another important impact of gardening in the city, among participants of this research, is related to health. According to the results, the aspect of health played an important role in triggering participants to start to be active and take the initiative to cultivate their edible greens in the back of their apartment buildings. In this sense, the health sector had a major contribution in the life of the participants in the following aspects:

- | Well-being (physical activity, mental health)
- | Food access and food security
- | Recreational

In the field of health, gardening in the city of Dorohoi, it was well understood to be a multi-faceted resource for physical, mental and social health, and well being of the majority of participants.

Urban gardens were the places where participants were active most of the time. For them, working as a gardener, even a few hours per week, was an essential factor that helped in reducing stress and improving the general well-being. Gardeners said that their gardening helped to keep them physically and mentally active, via interaction with nature and her elements: plants, air, sun – resulting in a more relax and calm people. For some, especially the elderly, the exercise and activity, both physical and mental that the gardens offered were essential, as this was their only source of exercise and movement.

At an individual level, gardeners expressed pride in their garden involvement. Sharing produce they had grown with others was satisfying. The individual sense of pride emerged from the gardening and association with other gardeners, which was often extended to the wider community as well. Gardening was important in encouraging the love for the area, and further the love of the city.

Gardening was a lifetime activity for most of the participants, and the labor of love was an important source of food. Gardening as exercise, has been always a

source of movement. As always the job and the work in their gardens were considered sources of physical activities. 'The simple act of gazing at a plant can lower blood pressure and muscle tension' (Ulrich & Parsons, 1991). That's why participants continue to plant flowers around their buildings, the only allowed plants to be grown on public spaces after the closure of gardens.

Urban gardens have been a successful strategy for improving food access to participants. Also, they represented a way to access fresh produce at hand; and more they covered the daily dose of fresh fruits and vegetables. Researchers show that people who participate or have family members that participate in community gardens are more inclined to consume fruits and vegetables than people without a garden (Alaimo et. al., 2008). Most of the respondents of this research mentioned to consume more fresh vegetables when the gardens were active. The security of food was maintained by making it possible to obtain food they could not otherwise afford or find, especially during bad financial times. Although almost all the foods were available in local shops and farmers market, participants commented that these foods were often too expensive and they were not fresh. The freshness of the produce from the gardens was seen as a benefit for the health of the entire family. And being able to grow and eat culturally appropriate foods was more than a privilege.

Another commonly mentioned benefit of gardens was their contribution to healthy living, in the form of better nutrition. Urban gardening contributed significantly to participants' nutrition through the self-food production and nutritional gains were clearly a great health benefit of urban farming. In this sense, with gardens nearby, poor families gained more control over the quantity, quality, and stability of their diet.

Even more, the act of growing food organically was important. By cultivating the plants themselves, gardeners were thus reducing their exposure to pesticide residues and other chemical compounds, which was a way to protect and improve health. Some respondents reported to prefer the gardens as a provider of fresher food; this is because the food from outside the city loses part of its nutritional value during transit and storage and because it is treated with various chemicals.

Some participants saw gardens in the city as a therapy, as a place in the recovery from urban stress and intense jobs. Besides this, they also seemed to enjoy the rough and the repetitive garden work, such as raking leaves, planting, harvesting and other tasks. Such 'activities are assumed to have a remedial effect (Adevi & Mårtensson, 2013; Ulrich et al., 1991; Lewis, 1996). That is why participants described that they find their garden place full of joy in the sensuous touch of nature. The joy and delight in taking part in the whole process of gardening, from harvest to finally making juice of fruits and vegetables, reflected the participants' mood. They described it as a dialogue between them and nature and at times the experience of nature being a patient receiver while they express their feelings, unconditionally and without judgment.

'The garden in a public space is certainly a physical and visual pleasure, you feel fulfilled when you see the first signs of spring emerging from the

ground and you know it's the fruit of your work. It's a place where everything is neat and arranged'.

'A garden in a public space is a necessity for brain oxygenation, you spend time under natural light, which is essential for our body functioning'.

'It is pleasant and relaxing to have a garden near your house, you feel free amid the trees, it offers you time to reflect and meditate'.

A garden is the result of people's dynamic interaction with green surroundings in the continuous shaping of different rooms and the cultivation of plants. The perspective documented in this study is that this makes a garden into a rich and varied physical and social arena for people to use to their own benefit during times of stress. The participants in garden therapy not only described the garden as a useful environment for stress relief, but also a useful place for trying out new strategies to increase well-being and improve everyday functioning (Adevi & Mårtensson, 2013). Gardens enable people to get some distance from their daily routine, and attract people's attention without being an exhausting practice.

Overall, the gardens were seen as beneficial to the gardeners. These benefits were often expressed as a strong emotional attachment to the gardens themselves.

6.4 Economic impact

The economic side of the gardens had also major impacts as follows:

 | Cheap way to live (survival)
 | Holistic sustenance

The majority of participants revealed that food produced in their gardens saved their money on food expenditures. Since they were able to grow food for free on the urban public spaces, gave gardeners a high return. Savings on food were essential for the reason that the area is characterized by high rates of poverty and less job opportunities.

The gardens were economically advantageous, with relatively small inputs, gardeners made good returns from their plots. They have filled a necessary gap in fresh, cheap and healthy food. For all the participants, saving money was an important incentive to start a garden. However, gardeners were not selling their products to make money or profit, the food produced was only for own consumption and individual savings. It was also not the case of poor dietary habits, as the consumption of the fast foods, because there are not these kinds of stores available in the town yet.

The gardens were the reason of the creation of two job opportunities, as caretakers of the hospital garden, for people on the streets because ‘the work requires lower skill levels, making this an appropriate economic development method for low-income neighborhoods that tend to have lower levels of education and professional training’ (Flisram, 2009).

The gardens brought cheap fresh and seasonal produce to city neighborhoods where often were not available. It improved food access and cost saving in some way.

With the reduction of the budget that was spent on food, gardeners made income available for other necessary expenditures. Lower-income respondents were generally more likely to gain the greatest advantages from urban agriculture.

Urban gardens satisfied participants’ daily food subsistence, lowering everyday spending and strengthening relationships between people, communities and the landscape.

Urban gardening enhances the quality of life by focusing on our universal need for sustenance: fresh air, healthy food, recreation, relaxation, education, a sense of community and a shared responsibility for our environment. These are the roots of security, of empowerment and the community. Likewise, urban agriculture cleans up spaces, educates youth to engage with natural settings, provides employment, gives utility and respect to elders, and produces fresh nutritious food. Because virtually all of the other functions of urban agriculture can be fulfilled through other activities, producing food is perhaps the single most important benefit (Bourque, 2000). It is significant because, in almost every case, it is homegrown, decentralized, and spontaneous, which means it is fulfilling the goals of the gardeners by producing high-quality food for themselves, with little capital investment.

6.5 Perceptions of urban gardens

This section answers the following questions: *How participants perceive the gardens in a public space? Do they think is a good place to start a garden?*

The answers are encompassed in the following table with participants’ perceptions of urban gardens through the use of qualitative research.

Table 6. Participants' perceptions on the use of public spaces for urban gardens

| Right place because | Not the right place because |
|--|--|
| <i>'something nice',</i> <i>'oxygen, fresh air',</i> <i>'an advantage for city residents',</i> <i>'physical and visual pleasure',</i> <i>'a way to keep the spaces well maintained and cleaned',</i> <i>'elderly necessity: oxygen, nutrition, exercise',</i> <i>'good as a hobby',</i> <i>'good for basic human needs',</i> <i>'right place for people who live on concrete',</i> <i>'family and household help',</i> <i>'pleasant and relaxing',</i> <i>'close to your dwelling',</i> <i>'fresh food and clean at hand',</i> <i>'different way of life',</i> <i>'healthy lifestyle'</i> <i>'super and important'.</i> | <i>'ugly',</i> <i>'inadequate',</i> <i>'misery (trash)',</i> <i>'do not agree'.</i> |

Initiating a garden in a public space created an impact on respondents' perceptions. According to the results, 81% (34 out of 42) of respondents think that the gardens are suitable to be in public spaces. They believe that urban public spaces are meant to help and must be available for the use of the residents, as gardens express a way of interacting with those spaces. When public spaces are there for residents, then the right to grow a garden should not be prohibited by law. The gardens are considered 'part of nature' and should be part of residents' lifestyle as other activities. As well, respondents have different perceptions as the right place. In addition, several perceptions about the gardens in a public space are contained in Table 6. The examples in the table show that participants can view their gardens in different ways. Some perceive it as a good for human needs and a source of food and exercise, whereas others see the gardens as a way to interact with nature.

Findings also indicated that gardeners had a strong appreciation for the natural settings. 'Farming cleans and greens the living environment, reducing pollution and disease-causing pathogens and vectors. Household waste is also recycled for agricultural uses, providing additional environmental and human benefits by reducing waste scattered around the urban environment' (Smit et. al., 2001). Overall, most of participants view a garden in the public space beneficial.

However, there are a number of 8 (19%) of the participants that do not agree with the construction of the gardens in the city, and especially on urban green

spaces. They express that gardens are inadequate in the city. Some even mentioned that when there were gardens around their buildings it was not aesthetic and a lot of trash accumulated in the garden from other neighbors who are not well educated. Likewise, these numbers of respondents believe that gardens are not meant for the city, but for the rural life.

6.6 Values of garden

The values and symbols residents assign to gardens are presented in the following Table 7. These values allowed participants to communicate to others their personal values and inner feelings through the creation of the garden.

Participants described how contact with nature during various garden activities contributed to feelings of vitality and increased well-being. They associated the positive outcomes with different activities in the garden and the sensory experiences that came along with these. In particular, they found representations in the nature of their own needs, they 'experienced that nurturance and patience were needed in their own life' (Adevi & Mårtensson, 2013).

Table 7. Classification of gardens values

| Values of city gardens | Definitions |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <i>Aesthetic</i> | Valued because of the attractive scenery, sights, colors, smells or sounds; |
| <i>Naturalistic</i> | Valued because of the pleasure and satisfaction derived from direct contact with nature; |
| <i>Economic</i> | Valued because of economic benefits, cheap food, cheap way of living; |
| <i>Cultural</i> | Valued because of its culture and traditional ways of cultivating, traditional food; |
| <i>Social</i> | Valued because of social contacts it facilitates; |
| <i>Recreational</i> | Valued because of its recreational opportunities. |

Table 7. Illustrates the importance of gardens expressed through values, based on participants' needs:

Aesthetic value - aesthetic preference, involves a range of issues as scenic beauty, degree of cleanliness, and pleasant sounds.

Naturalistic value – the contact with nature was essential in terms of concerns such as emotional, mental, and physical health, as well as the sense of satisfaction with and livability of one's social and physical environment.

Recreational – the simple acts of gardening were reasons to get in contact with nature, and feel free. Participants reported that they spent considerable amount of time in the gardens.

Social value – for the human interactions needs between flat neighbors and other neighborhood members.

Cultural value – participants' were able to continue their habits and grow food that was suitable for their taste and needs.

For every participant, the gardens do have values, not only in terms of the affordances they provide but also because of the way that their own engagement with nature is reflected back to them, whether this is in food produce or physical effort. Ownership of a garden is delineated as a desirable goal, marking a point of identity and personal statement.

6.7 Conclusion

An understanding of residents' perspectives on the impact of urban gardens was required in managing its effects on sense of place. Meanwhile, the analysis of the data revealed important advantages of the use of gardens for participants. Urban gardens were sources for interaction in the social and physical environments and community health, and effective strategies for empowerment, development, and health promotion.

In summary, the impacts of urban gardens were the following:

- Participants were able to grow their own food,
- It was a way to overcome the scarcity of space and to practice gardening, surrounding their apartment building,
- It was a way to provide fresh produce and herb plants,
- The gardens improved the neighborhood appearance,
- Strengthened and sustained connection with the environment,
- Gardening involved three major environmental influences on longevity: diet, physical activity and psychosocial fulfillment,
- Independent source of income,
- Independent resources and inputs (seeds, fences, irrigation),
- A return to rural habit & life

Chapter 7

Reasons for failure



Picture 13. Dorohoi's City Hall (background picture); Representation of factors for gardens closure: fences, trash, other unaesthetic objects (scattered pictures), (pictures by the author, February 2015)

7.1 Introduction

The chapter aims to answer the last research question of this research:

- *What do residents of Dorohoi city perceive as possible factors\reasons that contributed to gardens failure?*

According to data analysis the main issues covered in this chapter are:

- Autocratic leadership;
- The release of new policies regarding the availability of the spaces around the buildings;
- Political visions and interactions on urban food system and farming in the city;
- The space, property of the municipality and illegal use of the space;
- Lack of municipality involvement and support

7.2 Reasons for urban garden's failure

The death of the urban gardens occurred when an unknown number of gardens were destroyed, after years of existence in town (approximately 15-20yrs). For a number of reasons, most of the urban gardens of Dorohoi city have failed. With an advance notice, and under the orders of the City Hall, workers removed all the living plants and food from the gardens, as well the other various objects gathered around them.

The loss of gardens has become an increased topic of discussion and the central topic of the research as most of the participants were affected, and many questions remained unanswered for participants: *Have they been involved in determining how the city should grow? If there was a plan? If so, does that plan recognize that residents needed local accessible open spaces?*

Local authorities did not offer any responses to these questions, and people have resigned in a way. In this sense the most important question of the research arises.

- *What do residents of Dorohoi city perceive as possible factors\reasons that contributed to gardens failure?*

The analysis of the data reveals the principal reason behind gardens closure, as seen by the interviewed gardeners.

'The mayor of that time, this was in 2006-7, ordered that all those gardens, illegal constructions around the apartment buildings to be destroyed and let the urban public spaces to function as green spaces'.

'Political factors have influenced the gardens closure by changing the Mayor; new mayor has not allowed us to take care of public spaces around the blocks'.

'Gardens were not aesthetic in some places and were enclosed with fences which gave an ugly appearance of the blocks. The mayor decided to be allowed to grow green grass and remove all illegal constructions.'

'The gardens were not properly fenced and wild animals or children were destroying our plants and sometimes even stealing. The mayor has eliminated all stables, piggery, and poultry with a bulldozer'.

Besides the participants, some officials from the local municipality were interviewed. They reported that such gardens did not match the urban planning of the city. In the search for an answer, urban planners also blame the municipal mayor of the period 2004 – 2008, mentioning that he did not want the city to become a vegetable garden.

As evidenced by the participants' answers and municipal officials, the real reason for gardens failure was the mayoral autocratic leadership style. However, he could not be contacted during the interviews, but in general his reasons were expressed through the interview with participants. Through the respondents' answers, various reasons were expressed as they were told during the moments of gardens destructions and removal. Some participants considered that the mayoral leadership was dependent on the acquisition of power and the use of his skills; the mayor led by empowering others to accomplish his decisions. His style generated tension, dissatisfaction and even frustration among the residents of the city, after the closure of the gardens.

The results also reveal that the municipal leader had various reasons to act against urban gardens. Participants mentioned that according to his decisions, city residents did not have permission to grow free food on public land and he acted by prohibiting urban farming rather than trying to resolve the problem.

The leadership had social influence, and other officials submitted to his decisions. First, he had the control over the gardens because of his high level of power over physical space and planning, and his superiority as mayor of the city. And second, his ability to generate local policies emerged as an influential factor.

7.2.1 Factors of failure

There are a number of factors that influenced the closure of the gardens, as expressed by the municipal officials that were interviewed. They contend that the lots were never lent or allocated to the neighborhoods residents and the garden construction was considered an illegal action. Another reason is related to the fact that local authorities might not have been consulted about development of gardens and the residents, regardless of their opinion, might have pushed the development through. More than that, the lack of local parks and spaces for children's recreational purpose and the lack of green spaces in

some areas of the city were on the agenda when the gardens were destroyed. However, there are other factors as well, they are described below.

Complaints

Municipality officials and counselors received complaints from residents who don't own a garden that the presence of the rats is disturbing. Rats find shelter under stored building materials set aside for future use in the garden. Another issue has come from those neighbors who did not own a garden and complained about the smell produced in pigs or chicken coops.

The gardens were associated with disorder and misery and not everyone saw the beauty of gardening and food production in urban public spaces, so they complained to the authorities.

Smell

Urban gardens were becoming a source of unpleasant smell, when gardeners fail to maintain compost and the compost turns anaerobic and smelly. But not only this, the smell was caused also by the presence of the animals in some gardens, as pigs, rabbits, and other birds. This is an uncommon occurrence as it caused trouble and uncomfortable smell to neighboring buildings (Smit et. al., 2001b).

'Evidence of the threat to health caused by rearing livestock in the city remains relatively limited. Nevertheless, keeping livestock in the city is criticized as creating health and environmental hazards — making neighborhoods unhealthy' (Smit et. al., 2001b). For this reasons the pigs and poultry coops around the apartment buildings were removed because it is thought they were making the public spaces dirty and smelly.

Place aesthetics

Many gardens were becoming unsightly and messy due to the storage of various objects around them, such as fences the gardeners were made to differentiate and protect their gardens. The appearance of the surrounding spaces is seen as an important aspect of residents' living environment and those gardens with superfluous materials scattered around, were regarded as untidy. As such, materials in storage should be stored safely and in a designated storage area. One official from town planning expressed that the urban public spaces were fenced with barbed wire or iron fences and resident's apartments on the ground floor converted at will. In best cases, the little gardens in the summer they were filled with plants from dwellers apartments, some stray flowers and kitsch decorations. In the worst cases, they were 'equipped' with rocking chairs, tables, grills and laundry stretched wires, as in the countryside.

'At the first observation, says one counselor, I could see that the gardens were isolated from the public space by a metal fence, most often improvised'.

Another counselor made reference to the fact that the city has undergone a bad transformation phase:

'For example, those high hedges, around the blocks that gave you the creeps in the evening when removed, it became brighter'. Then each man was doing whatever he liked around the block, they cultivated layers of onion, vegetables, and they constructed poultry houses and had dogs. At one point, some have even made the basement cellars. I took a hard fight for the abolition of these annexes, because people did not understand what we wanted to do. In fact, they only thought that the municipality comes and spoils everything, but they were not thinking on what we wanted to do'.

They also observed an abusive occupation, personal interests, condominiums of green areas; green areas neglected or become covered by spontaneous vegetation place for storage of waste. In return, they wanted to provide the neighborhoods with parks and playground spaces for children.

Alienation of public open spaces

The officials mentioned that something could go wrong in the near future, as more people will start to access the land and cultivate food. This kind of development was not included in their urban planning agenda and thus they considered that an alienation of urban public spaces occurred with the construction of gardens.

According to participants' responses, urban planners do not seem to understand the advantages of urban gardens and opportunities for the environment and city ecology. When interviewed, representatives argue that it is illegal to cultivate vegetables or fruits in the back or front of your apartment block, on public green spaces. Officials have nothing against those who planted flowers, but do not agree with vegetables or any other varieties of cereals.

All this is history because the municipality's officials have proposed a new urban restructuring plan, with concrete measures for the protection and recovery of the city green spaces, with no plans for urban agriculture. This is considered as an action to one of the most ardent wishes of those who said they were deeply unhappy with the look of their neighborhood green spaces.

7.2.2 Local and national rules and policies

Each city has a different policy environment, and the way the policy develops this, depends on the political will and power of those who govern at the time when the rules are made. It is important to recognize and understand the local and national level policy initiatives and decisions regarding urban green spaces to understand the local rights of citizens. Whatever methodology is used, it is extremely important to study the policy environment thoroughly.

Each community faces a different policy environment, and the way policy is developed, approved and implemented varies between cities and nations. In general terms, policy is made through the creation of political will in both the

decision-making body and the implementing agencies for a particular jurisdiction (Bourque, 2000).

‘Agriculture is generally seen as a strictly rural activity and especially the idea of urban animal husbandry brings the worst connotations into the minds of city and health officials. Agriculture in the city goes against the image of modern civilization and progress. Changing the preconception of the city and national leaders and thus changing the policies of the local government and of national agencies will be of utmost importance to the survival, expansion and institutionalization of local movements’ (Bourque, 2000).

Agriculture is seen as a rural activity in the eyes of the local parties and the idea of animal husbandry in the middle of a city brought bad connotation into the minds of politicians. Agriculture in the city goes against their image of the modern city. And with the help of laws and ordinances regarding environmental protection and the use of public spaces emitted by the Government in 2006 (see details in Annex 5), officials made decisions to get rid of all those illegal gardens and other constructions and to clean the public spaces. The officials complied with the standards and the gardens were destroyed. Additional changes were made in some areas, with mini parks that were replacing the gardens, creating more space for children.

Likewise, the local urban planners that were interviewed tend to believe that the act of growing food on urban green spaces is a messy business. They don’t seem to understand the need of people who grow food in the city and treat residents’ opinions with indifference.

In the past as well in the present, because of a dominant view on urban planning and a lack of access to research data, among other reasons, policy-makers often had a misconceived view of urban gardens as a temporary phenomenon or a remnant from the migration of rural farmers to the city that would fade over time. Urban gardening was seen as incompatible with urban development, a nuisance and risk factor; for that reason, policies on urban gardens were mainly restricted and at best, agriculture was temporarily tolerated as a reserve area for future urban expansion.

7.3 The impact of gardens failure on participants

The authorities shut down a chapter of an active and prosperous life that dates back to the mid -1980s until 2006-7.

The transformation that occurred in the existing areas can also be criticized as happening too quickly and not allowing the participants to adjust to the social change. However, place attachments are profoundly disrupted when environments change rapidly (Obst & Smith 2002). Perhaps if the announcements were introduced gradually, more developments could be built over time as the community is able to adapt to the changing social conditions, and community’s sense of belonging has more time to evolve. Now the communities are demoralized that they had spent years of building a space, ‘a part of their life’ that were destroyed in a few minutes.

The destruction of the gardens had a negative impact on gardeners' mental health through feelings of increased stress and lack of control. Overall, gardeners felt that the gardens and their needs were not appreciated or considered by decision-makers. Gardeners felt that there was a lack of awareness about the gardens, and that this was accompanied by a lack of political will to assist the gardens. The gardeners saw this as reflecting a lack of awareness or appreciation of the gardens more generally. In their minds, this lack of appreciation was also expressed through litter and vandalism.

The current aspects with imported food in the supermarkets upset the local gardeners, who know how a good vegetable taste. With all these norms they must comply with the local rules and find alternatives in procuring fresh and tasty food at local markets, countryside etc.

The change had impacts on and altered the identity of the existing neighborhoods. Whether or not this is a positive move forward for the community and their sense of pride for the suburb in which they live is something that has not been investigated thoroughly. These types of developments also dictate that a higher proportion of people in the future will leave the place for the countryside, where the land offers space for gardens development

'I do not want to come into conflict with officials; it is good as we are, even though we do not agree. They want the city to look one way, and you want to plant a tree. They put flowers, and you want to grow vegetables', one respondent says.

Reports confirm that gardeners during the communist period were forced to take the land and start to cultivate, and now the authorities destroyed this dream: *'we have no power, what they decide we comply'*. Authorities measures are perceived as arbitrary and unfair *'... there were lots of vegetable gardens ... I do not know what mystery has dropped them under pressure to destroy them',* or have a taste of local legend:

'I had a back garden until 10 years now ... a vegetable garden with corn, beans, potatoes, blooming beans, when they came and destroyed everything, my work for years'.

The gardeners also identified a number of issues that they perceived as problems or challenges to be faced. The primary concern raised was that of insecure tenure. All of the gardens were located on sites that were not directly owned by the gardeners, and many gardeners had concerns about whether or not their access to the land would be continued over time. The future of the gardens has become an immediate concern due to the recently initiated redevelopment of the area and the new leadership.

In the process of keeping the gardens there were some barriers that residents encountered. In addition, they couldn't find a way out due to the following constraints:

Lack of legal structure for urban gardens, and lack of officials to support these kinds of actions;
Limited access to new spaces for gardening, the lack of spaces for growing food elsewhere made people to give up and submit to the current rules;
Too little acknowledgement of policy and administration for the efforts of urban gardeners;
Land tenure: people do not own the public spaces and without property rights they risked to lose all the investments.

Most gardeners with whom I have spoken, expressed their regrets after the gardens that flourished without interruption for many years. As far as they seemed convinced that such gardens will start to function as in the beginnings, so mistrustful they see the implementation of a project to give them land in use elsewhere in the city. Besides feeling the lack of consultation and representation before authorities regarding construction of projects in the area, neighborhood residents and blocks administrators seem to be satisfied with local authorities and rehabilitation initiatives, arranging places for parking, playground for children and redevelopment of green spaces.

7.4 Conclusion

The city has lost the 'gardens city status' from the perspective of green vegetation. The death of the gardens has limited the recreational needs of the people. And it has limited the access to homegrown produce. The declining of the gardens was found to be as a result of factors such as an autocratic leadership style, poor enforcement of development controls by the city authorities, uncooperative attitudes of the general public, lack of a comprehensive plan for green spaces, lack of priority to green spaces and conflicting land ownership rights over green spaces (Adjei Mensah, 2014; Oduro-Ofori & Braimah, 2013; Taylor 2010).

PART III. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 8

Reflection on the findings

8.1 Introduction

This chapter elaborates on the conclusions that can be drawn from the research analysis. Further more, it presents some recommendations for future research and for future policies development in regard to urban gardening development.

8.2 Summary & conclusions

This thesis has examined the urban gardens in a Nordic city of Romania and analyzed the impacts they had on residents' sense of place. The objectives of this study were to conceptualize and empirically examine the four dimensions of sense of place among the citizens of Dorohoi, and to find answers to urban gardens failure. The specific questions addressed are the following:

- *What role did urban gardens played in place shaping and what are residents' motivations to shape the place?*
- *How is the sense of place of residents of Dorohoi city constructed through the use of urban gardens?*
 - *How do residents perceive and express the four dimensions of sense of place: place attachment, place identity, place dependence and place satisfaction?*
- *What are the social, economic and health impacts of urban gardens?*
- *What do residents of Dorohoi city perceive as possible factors\reasons that contributed to gardens failure?*

An attempt to answer these questions was made by conducting the field and observational research, by interviewing 42 gardeners of Dorohoi city. The summarized answers per question will be presented further.

- *What role did urban gardens played in place shaping and what are residents' motivations to shape the place?*

The interview results suggest that short yet intensive urban garden practices may significantly increase participants place meanings, their perceptions of the presence and the importance of natural settings in the local living environment. The findings are consistent with the idea that the meanings of place may be influenced through direct involvement and interaction with the place. Natural practices in urban places can become part of a place shaping process through people's participation in the environmental restoration activities (Newman & Jennings, 2008). Various answers were reported regarding residents' motivations to shape their living environment. The reasons participants started to get involved in gardening are manifold: starting from the desire to grow at least part of their own fresh food (preferably biological), the desire to be in contact with nature, to eat natural, to the beautification of the place they live. The research also shows that, to some extent, participants' interventions and interactions with their gardens can help in nurturing the shape of place and change behaviors. Moreover, gardens encouraged respondents to participate in gardening activities so they may contribute to the value of their neighborhoods. With these practices, urban gardens exposed gardeners to their cultural heritage because gardens grow native species using traditional techniques, and often celebrate the harvest in ways similar to their ancestors (Bumbacco, 2013).

- *How is the sense of place of residents of Dorohoi city constructed through the use of urban gardens?*
 - *How do residents perceive and express the four dimensions of sense of place: place attachment, place identity, place dependence and place satisfaction?*

This research analyzed four sense of place components, place attachment, place identity, place dependence and place satisfaction, which revealed a sense of place varying in strength and dimensions.

Overall, the findings indicate that the four dimensions of sense of place represent a valid and reliable measure of urban residents attachments to their natural settings. The analysis revealed a generally moderate level of attachment towards the gardens constructed in urban public spaces. The highest level of attachment was considered as an impact that gardens had on the life of those participants who interacted more years with their living environment. They were triggered by feelings of rural belonging in the construction of their gardens that acted as a bridge between rural and urban. Low levels of attachment were encountered among those participants who owned a garden for a short period,

especially young generation and respondents with a short time of residence in the city. These levels of attachments are dependent on two specific drivers that triggered participants' attachment. The two essential drivers are represented by the peoples' *individual* characteristics (age, time of residence, and social memory of the participants) and *place* characteristics (physical and social).

Participants' place identity made reference to respondents' identity in place and the unique characteristics of the place. Respondents' identity was expressed through the four principles of identity, *self-esteem*, *self-efficacy*, *distinctiveness* and *continuity*. Some characteristics of the city were highlighted as constructing its unique place identity, such as *natural setting*, *gardens*, *governance*, *cultural heritage*, *vitality*, and *comfort*. Respondents stressed these unique characteristics of their favorite places in different ways. They did not make any distinction between the city and the neighborhood, thus some participants expressed characteristics for the city and for the gardens, but they did not mention about their neighborhoods; others talk about the city and only the city and others refer strictly to the importance and characteristics of their gardens.

For the participants, keeping a garden around the house was a symbol of identity. This fits Relph's (1976) conceptualization on the 'Sense of Place', in which, 'to be inside a place is to belong to it and to identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are, the stronger is the identity with the place' (Ghazali, 2013).

The place dependence dimension was influenced by the city's facilities and job opportunities. These aspects made participants to have weak, moderate or strong place dependence. Some find all the utilities that they need, nearby or in the city convenient for their livelihood, others disagree and express their dissatisfaction against the local authorities.

Place satisfaction was expressed by positive and negative feelings over the place. Some participants mentioned positive descriptors of the gardens and place as family, home, food, friends as well as negative descriptors as poverty, lack of jobs, lack of support and trash accumulation on public spaces as indicators for their level of satisfaction.

- *What are the social, economic and health impacts of urban gardens?*

As revealed within the data analysis the major impacts of urban gardens reveal social, health and economic aspects. The gardening impacts came as a response to the entire city challenges as job loss, poverty, health, food security, and waste (Wiskerke, 2014). On the other hand it functioned as a sort of a bridge that helped to close the gaps in food production and consumption. Thus, the inner city gardens can be a significant source of low-cost, nutritious food for residents, threatened by food factors of poverty, inadequate public transit, and high food prices at local supermarkets. Likewise, the presence of gardens resulted in a broad range of positive physical and psychological well-being outcomes for the participants. These included providing opportunities to relax, undertake physical activity, socialize and mix with neighbors, sharing across culturally

different backgrounds. The gardens represented an important source of low-cost fresh produce for a healthy diet.

Urban gardening served to bring participants into closer contact with nature. In their urban natural settings respondents were drawn together, creating friendships. Among the interactions with their peers 'humans have an innate attraction towards nature; there is some evidence that the most satisfying aspects of gardening include the desire to work with the soil, wanting to see the plants grow and being outdoors' (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1990; Gross & Lane, 2007). Urban agriculture provided solutions to some problems at the community level. It has increased food security level, while providing homegrown food; environmental cleanup through the work of gardeners; beautification and recreational activities for young and old. This reinforced the importance of creating and maintaining the gardens to provide the opportunity for residents to connect with the place at a personal level. Developing the attachment in which participants become attached to areas of practice, and thus preserving their cultures (Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

- *What do residents of Dorohoi city perceive as possible factors\reasons that contributed to gardens failure?*

The findings of the research revealed important reasons that hampered community projects in the area under study. Respondents identified as factors and problems that negatively affected the life of urban gardens the negative environmental policies, local laws and rules and the autocratic leadership. All together led to the denial of citizens needs with the feeling that they cannot contribute to the city regulations regarding public spaces near residents living environment.

The municipality counselors cited poor management of gardens and that the gardens do not indicate any progress to the city. Moreover, municipality officials pointed out that the management of the urban gardens was not done by any of the members of the local governance, but only by those residents who owned a garden. Also, poor planning and lack of management of citizens' projects led to gardens failure. The communication between gardeners of the city and municipality officials was absent. Kealy et. al. (2006) indicated that lack of communication of project goals might be a factor which leads to the failure of many projects.

The study demonstrated a strong link between the participants' sense of place and the willingness to contribute to the care of living environment.

The findings indicate that the four dimensions of sense of place attachment comprising of place identity, dependence, identity and attachment are a valid and reliable measure of urban gardeners attachments to their natural resource management region.

8.3 Discussion

This research offered an insight on how urban agriculture evolved in Dorohoi city; from the first appearance of gardens through formal farmers (before the city was built), their continuation and development during the city construction and under the communist regime (1948 – 1989, which was a promoter of urban agricultural production in the whole country as an urgency to produce more food), until gardens closure around the year 2007. 'The growth of urban agriculture since 1989 has been understood as a response to escalating poverty and rising food prices and shortages, often exacerbated by structural adjustment and economic reform' (Gavril, 2006). As such, gardens in the city have a long history; traditional gardens started before the city construction when people lived in villages until the city's laws and policies interrupted the cycle. As the research reveals, urban gardens in Romania, and especially in the area under study, are not a new trend; agriculture is considered a normal act of human behavior for food production. People like to garden because is a traditional habit, a tradition that was never forgotten. Thereby, the research shows how residents, especially the older generation, have spent their free time at their plots near the apartment buildings, cultivating their favorite vegetables, fruits and herbs, which emphasize important connections between gardens and residents rural habits. Furthermore, we understood participants' motivation involved in gardening activities by mobilizing social, cultural, financial and environmental resources. What contributed to gardening success over time was the possibility to farm economically by producing fresh food close to people's dwellings, the health aspects by providing natural food and physical and mental exercise and finally the necessity of social contact by engaging people to work on the same piece of land. In fact, people estimated to spend less money on the food procured from the supermarket because of their personal production.

By interviewing city gardeners allowed me to learn and understand the importance of gardens in the city context. As such, urban agriculture does not always promote better alternatives. Not every citizen, especially the young, is satisfied with the presence of gardens in the city because sometimes it accumulates a lot of garbage or may spoil the city's aesthetics through illegal constructions. And not everyone is willing to participate in actions of farming or cleaning. Also, urban agriculture does not result in better relations between residents of the same neighborhoods, or even the same flats. As the research shows, the aspect of social cohesion was present in a low percentage and even absent in other cases. When people engage in gardening activities, is considered a voluntary act, gardens do not make people leave their homes, on the contrary, people are looking to build gardens.

Moreover, urban agriculture may also positively impact upon the greening and cleaning of the city by turning derelict open spaces into green zones (RUAF, 2015). However, in our case, the use of the gardens did not result in the greening of the city, due to the fact that the city has plenty of green public spaces, parks and even a forest at the main entrance. Indeed, urban agriculture is a microclimate that improved residents' surrounding environment. Through this, they had the potential to make their living area beautiful, comfortable, and

fragrant (Deelstra and Girardet, 2000) and to change the appearance of spaces around the blocks.

Urban agriculture plays an important role in enhancing urban food security since the costs of supplying and distributing food to urban areas based on rural production and imports continue to increase, and do not satisfy the demand, especially of the poorer sectors of the population (RUAF, 2015); but in this case, urban gardens did not solve the food problem either because people have always found alternatives to procure their food (from parents or grandparents at the countryside, from local farmers market and so on), after the closure of the gardens. Indeed, growing your own food saves household expenditures on food as many respondents agreed, but people do not rely on the food procured from the gardens.

However, what urban agriculture provides is expressed through urban gardening activities, in the sense that people were more exposed to natural settings, to fresh food, and to the opportunity to beautify their living places. A garden in the back of an apartment building is more a source of recreation; it is a part of the natural setting, which most often they do not have the opportunity to enjoy in the city. Even more, a garden in the city is a place where people like to spend their free time, because they like to be busy with 'something'. The garden in the urban context, as an aspect of the physical environment provides a safe ground or place that prevents people to disappear into anonymity of the city.

Dorohoi city is in a continuous transformation and development. It continues to increase in size and space and attract more rural people to live in due to the many opportunities that they offer: jobs, education, interaction and other facilities. But they do not cover the rural life and the benefits of it. The countryside offers a different perspective of life: close to nature, contacts with the animals raised on the farm, self-food production etc. Urban agriculture in turn provides access to aspects of rural life on a smaller scale. It arises as a necessity in the urban sprawl. Gardens in the city do not represent only a potential to feed the citizens with small gardens, but also a fact that people learn how to be active; they become much closer to the nature and of its benefits. At the same time simple acts of gardening help gather communities and social groups with same interests by motivating citizens to participate further into individual or community projects (Kearney, 2009).

Urban agriculture in Dorohoi city was committed to reflect residents' traditional habits and to address other urban problems (such as poverty, physical and mental recreation, the need for a beautiful and clean living environment).

We have also seen that many urban gardens have failed because they were designed and executed in isolation from overall urban planning. As evidenced, urban policies of the country give little attention to urban agriculture and tend to prohibit or severely restrict it, as was the case in the present study. Agriculture is usually not considered within urban land use and development plans. 'Policy makers tend to view green public spaces more as a luxury good than as a basic necessity, and appear to overlook the potentially important effects of green space on health, well-being, and safety' (Groenewegen et. al.,

2006). For the urban gardening development it is important that these aspects become implemented in urban planning and design.

However, after becoming a member of the European Union in 2007, new opportunities emerged for residents of Romania to explore and learn from other state members in terms of urban agriculture. Since then, small steps were taken and agricultural practices started to re-emerge in a few cities with the help of European partners. Social groups and individuals start initiatives to conserve the spaces with their common practices in multiple city regions. These kind of initiatives gained ground and popularity throughout the years and nowadays they represent cultures, communities or other interests. In other European countries, urban agriculture is included in the urban planning agenda, to ensure environmental sustainability for social cohesion or food security. For other European countries urban agriculture is a trend that tends to move towards a more holistic approach and reintegration of people in place. The products from the gardens have a big impact on personal health, economic, physical and mental. The 'good food' that is produced in the gardens (organic, free of pests and diseases, free of chemicals) connects the consumer directly with the farm lifestyle (RUAF, 2015). In Romania, urban agriculture started as an action to promote cultural traditions, and to restore the gardens that were active in some places of the cities, as part of European programs in transition. With these initiatives, there is hope that urban gardens will start to rise again in the city of Dorohoi and the concept will be put on the urban planners agenda.

8.4 Recommendations

An important motivation for this research was that confirming the importance of urban gardens for participants that live in the city might inspire interest and commitment to urban gardens to the actual municipal leaders.

It is evident from the investigation above that specific focus has not been placed on this matter in the area of study. Thus, the recommendations that follow have been formulated to translate findings into guidelines for local urban planning and design.

Municipality officials should start with the right questions: *what can urban agriculture do for my city and how important is for the residents?*

Recognizing and legalizing urban gardening, as a legitimate urban land use, is another crucial step. Providing urban farmers with more secure access to land, as well as to services and capital are also important in this respect (Dubbeling & Santandreu, 2003).

An integrated planning model, which would enforce community's strategy, is another approach that could be adopted by municipal officials to enhance and maintain a sense of place and community urban gardens. Thus, it is suggested that urban planners should take a more active role in engaging themselves with community groups. This may produce a variety

of advantages such as building a better relationship between both planners and residents of the community. More specifically, an increased amount of value should be placed on social and urban planning.

Due to the 'multi-dimensional nature of urban agriculture, policy development and action planning' (Veenhuizen, 2006) on urban agriculture should involve various sectors and disciplines: agriculture, health, waste department, community development, parks and nature management, among others.

Moreover, urban farmers have to be involved in the planning process. An important aspect of strategic urban planning relates to the participation of the urban residents in the analysis of the situation and in action planning and implementation agenda. Such consultative processes will make the outcomes of urban policy development and action planning more easily accepted and sustainable.

Local authorities must adopt policies to facilitate redevelopment of the vacant plots. They should compile an inventory list of vacant lots, public lands, and agencies that assist in the conversion of these lots into community gardens or individual plots. The scope should be food production mainly for use by the members of the plots or by the institutions involved.

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Annex 1. Record form for interview

1A. English version

I, Anamaria Alupoaie am a Master student at the University of Wageningen in Netherland, under the supervision of Professor L.G. Horlings, department of Organic Agriculture. Since 28 of October 2014, I am engaged in a research study entitled: *'An investigation into the reasons for failure of urban gardens and their impacts on resident's sense of place in Dorohoi city'*

The objectives of this study are to determine the reasons for failure of urban gardens in Dorohoi city; to understand resident's perceptions of, emotional attachment to and the use of public and private green space and how these spaces contribute to one's identity and sense of belonging in the city; to understand the significance of gardens in urban green spaces for sense of place and to provide recommendations for further development and implementations.

Information gathered from the respondents in the questionnaire will be treated with high anonymity and confidentiality. The questions will be addressed in the presence of the researcher, face to face. Interviewees will be treated with respect and dignity and have the right to choose whether to participate or not in the study.

Signature: Alupoaie A.

1B. Romanian version

Eu, Anamaria Alupoaie sunt studentă la Universitatea din Wageningen din Olanda, sub supravegherea profesorului L.G. Horlings, Departamentul de Agricultură Ecologică. Din 28 octombrie 2014, sunt angajată într-un studiu de cercetare intitulat: *'Un studiu despre motivele care au condus la eșecul gradinilor urbane și impactul acestora asupra sentimentului de asezare al rezidenților din orașul Dorohoi'*

Obiectivele acestui studiu sunt de a determina motivele pentru eșecul gradinilor urbane în orașul Dorohoi; pentru a înțelege percepțiile rezidenților de, atașamentul emoțional la și utilizarea spațiului verde public și privat și modul în care aceste spații contribuie la identitatea și sentimentul de apartenență la oraș; pentru a înțelege semnificația grădinilor în spațiile verzi urbane și de a oferi în continuare recomandări pentru dezvoltare și implementare.

Informațiile colectate de la respondenți în chestionar vor fi tratate cu mare anonimat și confidențialitate. Întrebările vor fi abordate în prezența cercetătorului, față în față. Intervievații vor fi tratați cu respect și demnitate și au dreptul de a alege să participe sau nu la sondaj.

Annex 2. Demographic information

2A. English version

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age: 0 – 35 years ☐
 36 – 50 years ☐
 51 – 65 years ☐
 Above 65 years ☐

Position in the family:
Father ☐ Mother ☐ Other ☐

Level of the education:

Number of members in a family:

Marital status:

Employment status:

For how long were you residing in this neighborhood? (Years):

Note: you will remain anonymous in the study and in the thesis.

2B. Romanian version

Informații demografice

Sex: Masculin ☐ Feminin ☐

Vârsta: 0 - 35 ani ☐
 36-50 ani ☐
 51 - 65 ani ☐
 Peste 65 de ani ☐

Poziția în familie:
Părinte ☐ Mama ☐ Altele ☐

Nivelul de educație:

Numărul de membri în familie:

Starea civilă:

Anajat:

De cât timp locuiți în acest cartier? (ani):

Notă: veți rămâne anonim în studiu și în teză.

Annex 3. Questionnaire

3A. Questionnaire in English

City gardens profile

1. What do you know about urban agriculture?
 - *Do you know remember why and when did it started in this city?*
 - *And what was the purpose of it?*
 2. What were the drivers for start?
 - *What were your motivations to start cultivating the land in the green public space around your apartment block or house?*
 - *Were you influenced by the others or by a specific reason?*
 - *What was the procedure to access the plot of land? Did you encounter any difficulties?*
 3. For how long was your garden active?
 - *How often were you active in the garden?*
 - *What kind of practical, recreational or domestic activities did you carry out in the garden?*
 - *What kind of plants have you cultivated?*
 - *Do you keep some memories with the garden, such as pictures, a sketch or could you make a drawing?*
 - *What were the necessary costs to maintain the plot?*
 - *Did you receive some subsidies or any other support from the municipality?*
- **What do residents of Dorohoi city perceive as possible factors\reasons that contributed to gardens failure?**
- *What were in your opinion the main factors that contributed to the closure of the gardens?*
 - *How does it affect you?*
 - *And where do you purchase your edible greens now?*

Sense of Place

- ***What are the impacts of urban gardens on residents' sense of place?***
- **How people perceive the gardens in urban public spaces?**
 - How do you perceive the garden in a public space?
 - *Do you believe it is the right place for a garden?*
 - What importance, significance do you attribute to the garden?
 - *How did it contributed to your personal economy, health etc.?*
 - How would you describe your connection with the garden?

- *How important is gardening for you compared with other urban activities?*
- What do you know about the local policies and regulations in terms of urban public spaces?
 - *Are you aware of the citizen's rights for control and use?*
 - *What kind of value do you attribute to those spaces?*
- **What are -according to residents- important values attributed to gardens?**
 - *What kind of value had the garden for your personal life?*
(Please express this value in one sentence or one characteristic word.)
 - *Why are these aspects important for you?*
 - *Why do you think is important to have a garden in the city?*
 - *And how do you appreciate it compared to a garden in rural areas?*
 - *Do you consider that there are any differences? How would you compare it in a few words?*
- **How do people encounter and express place attachment, place identity place dependence and place satisfaction?**
 - (a). What is the place attachment of the residents?
 - *Are you pleased to live in this city? And in this neighborhood? (I mean when you worked in the garden, when you go for a walk, when you drive etc.)*
 - *Do you remember a moment when you felt happy that you live in this city? Is this related to the garden?*
 - *Did you feel involved within your neighborhood by being active in the garden?*
 - *Did you make any contact with people involved in the gardens? And how would you describe the relation with the other members of the plots? (If applicable).*
 - *Do you remember any community, gardens events to share with your neighbors?*
 - (b). What is the place identity according to residents?
 - *What makes the city special in your opinion?*
 - *What makes your neighborhood unique? Is this related to the gardens?*
 - *What makes a city garden special in your perspective?*
 - (c). What is the place dependence of the residents?
 - *Why did you choose to live in this city?*
 - *What does it mean to live in this city, respectively in this neighborhood? (Think about all your daily activities like work, shopping, gardening, recreation, sport etc.)*
 - *Is this the right place to do all the above activities in your opinion?*
 - *What is your employment status?*

- *Do you have a job? If not, why not?*
 - *And what kind of job?*
 - *Would you be interested to leave the city for a better job?*
 - *Do you have any other plans to leave the neighborhood or the city? If yes, why and what for?*
 - *If the possibility to reconnect with the garden will appear but in other part of the city would you be interested?*
 - *If the possibility to reconnect with the garden will appear in other location would you be interested to move your residence?*
 - *Or would you be interested to participate in voluntary activities of maintenance of public spaces?*
- (d). How is place satisfaction perceived by residents?
- *Are you pleased to live in this city? If yes, why yes? And if not, why not?*
 - *How satisfactory are you about your current employment status?*
 - *How satisfactory do you see a garden in the city?*
 - *What do you particularly enjoyed about your garden and gardening in the city?*
 - *How the presence of a garden contributed to the perceived quality of your life and your neighborhood?*
 - *How does public spaces affect your experiences and satisfaction of living in the city?*
 - *How satisfied are you with the maintenance of the green spaces in your neighborhood after the gardens closure?*

3B. Questionnaire in Romanian

City gardens profile

1. Ce știți despre agricultura urbană?
 - *Vă amintiți cumva de ce și când a început în acest oraș?*
 - *Și care a fost scopul ei?*
2. Care au fost motivele pentru început?
 - *Care au fost motivațiile pentru a începe cultivarea în spațiul public verde din jurul blocului sau casei?*
 - *Ați fost influențat de ceilalți gradinari sau de către un motiv anume?*
 - *Care a fost procedura pentru a accesa terenul? Ați întâmpinat dificultăți?*
3. Pentru cât timp a fost gardina activă?
 - *Cât de des vă petreceați timpul în grădină?*
 - *Ce fel de activități practice, de agrement sau interne ați practicat în grădină?*
 - *Ce fel de plante ați cultivat?*
 - *Mai păstrați cumva amintiri cu grădina, cum ar fi poze, schițe sau ați putea desena grădina?*
 - *Care au fost costurile necesare pentru întreținerea grădinii?*
 - *Ați primit subvenții sau orice alt sprijin din partea primăriei?*

- **What do residents of Dorohoi city perceive as possible factors\reasons that contributed to gardens failure?**
 - *Care au fost în opinia dumneavoastră principalii factori care au contribuit la închiderea grădini?*
 - *Cum vă afectează?*
 - *De unde vă procurați verdețta comestibilă acum?*

Sense of Place

- **What are the impacts of urban gardens on residents' sense of place?**
 - **How people perceive the gardens in urban public spaces?**
 - Cum percepeți grădina într-un spațiu public?
 - *Credeți că este locul potrivit pentru o grădină?*
 - Ce importanță, semnificație atribuiți grădinii?
 - *Cum a contribuit la economie, sănătate etc.?*
 - Cum ați descrie legătură cu grădina?
 - *Cât de important este grădinăritul pentru dumneavoastră în comparație cu alte activități urbane?*
 - Ce știi despre politicile și reglementările locale în ceea ce privește spațiile publice urbane?
 - *Sunteți conștient\ă de drepturile cetățeanului de control și de a folosi?*
 - *Ce valoare atribuiți acelor spații?*
 - **What are -according to residents- important values attributed to gardens?**
 - *Ce fel de valoare a avut grădina pentru viața dumneavoastră personală?*
(Vă rugăm să exprimați această valoare într-o singură propoziție sau un cuvânt caracteristic.)
 - *De ce sunt aceste aspecte importante pentru dumneavoastră?*
 - *De ce credeți că este important să avem o grădină în oraș?*
 - *Și cum apreciați grădina la oras în comparație cu o grădină în zonele rurale?*
 - *Considerați că există diferențe? Cum ați compara în câteva cuvinte?*
 - **How do people encounter and express place attachment, place identity place dependence and place satisfaction?**
- (a). What is the place attachment of the residents?
 - *Sunteți mulțumit că locuiți în acest oraș? Și în acest cartier? (Adică atunci când ați lucrat în grădină, atunci când te duci la o plimbare, atunci când conduci, etc.?)*

- *Vă amintiți un moment în care v-ați simțit fericit că locuiți în acest oraș?*
- *Vă amintiți un moment în care ați fost încântat\ fericit că aveți grădină?*
- *V-ați simțit implicat în cartierul dumneavoastră fiind activ în grădină?*
- *Ați avut contact cu persoanele implicate în alte grădini? Și cum ați descrie relația cu ceilalți membri ai parcelelor? Dacă nu, de ce nu?*
- *Vă amintiți un eveniment în grădină în care să participați împreună cu ceilalți membri, vecinii de grădină?*

(b). What is the place identity according to residents?

- *Ce credeți că face special orașul, în opinia dumneavoastră?*
- *Ce credeți că face unic cartierul în care locuiți? Are vreo legătură cu grădina?*
- *Ce face special o grădină la oras, în perspectiva dumneavoastră?*

(c). What is the place dependence of the residents?

- *De ce ați ales să trăiți în acest oraș?*
- *Ce înseamnă să trăiești în acest oraș, respectiv în acest cartier? (Gândiți-vă la toate activitățile de zi cu zi, cum ar fi locul de muncă, cumpărături, grădinărit, recreere, sport, etc.)*
- *Este locul potrivit pentru a face toate activitățile de mai sus, în opinia dumneavoastră?*
- *Care este starea ta de angajare?*
 - *Aveți un loc de muncă? Dacă nu, de ce nu?*
 - *Și ce fel de loc de muncă?*
- *Ați fi interesat\ă să părăsiți orașul pentru un loc de muncă mai bun? Dacă da, de ce da? Și dacă nu, de ce nu?*
- *Aveți alte planuri de a părăsi cartierul sau orasul? Dacă da, de ce și pentru ce anume?*
- *În cazul în care ar apărea posibilitatea de a restabili legătura cu grădina, dar în altă parte a orașului, ați fi interesat\ă?*
- *În cazul în care ar apărea posibilitatea de a restabili legătura cu grădina în altă locație, ați fi interesat să vă mutați domiciliul?*
- *Sau ați fi interesat\ă să participați la activitățile de voluntariat ale întreținerii spațiilor publice?*

(d). How is place satisfaction perceived by residents?

- *Sunteți mulțumit\ă că trăiți în acest oraș? Dacă da, de ce da? Și dacă nu, de ce nu?*
- *Cât de satisfăcătoare\e sunteți cu starea de muncă actuală?*
- *Cât de satisfăcătoare vedeți o grădină în oraș?*
- *Ce v-a plăcut în special grădina dumneavoastră și la grădinăritul în oraș?*
- *Cum credeți că a contribuit prezența unei grădini la calitatea vieții dumneavoastră și a cartierului în care locuiți?*
- *Cum credeți că afectează spațiile publice experiențele dumneavoastră și satisfacția de a trăi în oraș?*
- *Cât de mulțumit\ă sunteți de întreținerea spațiilor verzi din cartierul dumneavoastră, după închiderea grădini?*

Annex 4. Local rules and policies on green spaces

Emergency Ordinance elaborated in 22 December 2005, nr. 195 - regarding environmental protection emitted by the Government. The Ordinance was available for use from 26 January 2006. According to this Ordinance officials must comply with the European standards regarding the green spaces:

'Local government authorities are required to provide a surface plot of land of green space of at least 20 square meters / inhabitant, until 31 December 2010, and not less than 26 square meters / inhabitant, until 31 December 2013'.

According to the Section II: Obligations of Citizens' Associations and the owners / tenants, art. 2, paragraph 1, letter from the ordinance:

'i) Associations of owners / tenants are obliged to dismantle fences improvised on the streets, around the houses, do not cultivate vegetables on green spaces, and restore the affected public green areas'.

Another law followed in 2007, the Law on the regulation and management of green spaces in urban area, republished in the Official Gazette no. 764 of 10.11.2009 that states the following:

Art. 1: *'The law regulates the management of green spaces in urban area, to ensure the quality of the environment and the health of the population.'*

Art. 2: *'The State recognizes the right of every individual to a healthy environment, free access to green spaces for recreation public property, the right to contribute to landscaping, to create alignments of trees and shrubs, in compliance with legal provisions'* (Details: <http://legeaz.net/text-integral/legea-24-2007-actualizata-si-republicata-legea-spatiilor-verzi>).

Art. 3: In the present law green public spaces consist of the following types of land within the city limits:

- a) Public green spaces with unlimited access: parks, gardens, and squares, strips planted;*
- b) Specialized public green spaces (...)*
- c) Green spaces for recreation: recreation, poly recreational and sports complexes;*
- d) Green areas to protect lakes and streams;*
- e) Protection lanes from technical infrastructure;*
- f) Recreational forests.*

Art. 4: In the present law a garden is seen as *'land planted with flowers, trees and ornamental shrubs that is used for leisure and recreation and open to the public'.*

Art. 5: For the protection and preservation of green spaces, residents must:

- a) not throw any waste on the territory of green spaces;*
- b) comply with fire safety rules for green spaces;*
- c) not produce unauthorized cutting of trees and shrubs or injury, damage to the floral and grass, molehills destruction of natural nests of birds and animal shelters, construction and installation of utility and ornamental existing green spaces;*
- d) not construct permanent or temporary buildings inventoried areas as green spaces.*

Art. 9:

- (2) The constructions of any kind, other than those specified, are prohibited.*
- (3) Transplanting trees and shrubs will be made only with the local government and local environmental authorities.*
- (4) Unauthorized constructions in green areas are demolished and the land will be brought to the initial state, the total expenditure for carrying out such works being born by the building owner.*

Art. 23: *(2) The contraventions and penalties shall be made by authorized personnel of the National Environmental Guard, the persons appointed for that purpose by the central public authority for environmental protection and the mayors or their authorized persons.*

Art. 25: *By decision of the Government, local and county councils can be set and other facts that constitute breaches of green spaces.*

Then in 2002, a new decision was made (OG nr. 21, 2002): *Decision on the obligations of public institutions, economic operators and citizens from Dorohoi for good management of the town*

According to this decision, the local Council decided that:

'Providing and maintaining cleanliness in the city, its good management and hygiene compliance, is a fundamental obligation of local authorities, public institutions, economic and other legal entities and citizens'.

According to the purposes of this Ordinance citizens are responsible of maintaining and cleaning the homes they own or rent, household annexes, the courts and their enclosures.

- (1) The associations of owners / tenants, owners of individual households and people living in buildings with two or more apartments, have the following obligations on the maintenance and preservation of cleanliness of buildings, housing, household annexes, enclosures, fences their arteries circulation, public places and maintaining city aesthetics.*

This decision was made available by the government, and then every city complied with the norms and regulations. In addition in 2006-7 the Local Council and Mayor made the decision available for the city of Dorohoi. In this case there were some modifications as follows: *Chapter III, Arrangements regarding the rights to farm and raise animals in the city.*

Article 19: (1) In contravention and is punishable:

- a) Livestock and poultry farm near buildings with several apartments or in improvised shelters around apartment blocks and neighboring households;*
- b) (2) Failure to art. 19, paragraph 1, shall be punished by a fine contravention of between 500 lei to 700 lei.*

According to chapter 5, regulations regarding the administration of green spaces, conservation and environmental protection:

Art. 22, it is considered a contravention

- j) vegetables cultivation on public spaces;*
- k) fencing the green spaces without authorization;*
- r) execution of civil works - household affecting green spaces without the specialized services of the Municipality of Dorohoi and without prepayment of the consideration to the rehabilitation of the green;*

Reference links related to local urban green laws and policies:

Law 24\2007. Green spaces law

<http://legeaz.net/text-integral/legea-24-2007-actualizata-si-republicata-legea-spatiilor-verzi>

OUG 195\2005 on environmental protection

http://www.jandarmeriasibiu.ro/Legislatie/OUG%20nr_%20195%20din%2022_12_2005%20privind%20protectia%20mediului.pdf

Under law 215 – (Public administration act) and issued by the Local Council:

http://www.primariadorohoi.ro/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=123:hcl-mai-2009-privind-buna-gospodarire-a-localitatii&catid=39:consultare-publica-proiecte-hcl&Itemid=81

Annex 5. Local Officials interviewed

Alina Velniceriu – Counselor at Dorohoi Municipality

Agrigoroaei Simona – Counselor at Dorohoi Municipality

Maria Filip – Head of Green Spaces Service at Dorohoi Municipality

Butincu Liviu – Urbanism Service at Dorohoi Municipality

Luminita Anisia – Librarian at Dorohoi City Library