

BuurThuis

a citizen participation tool

that stimulates citizens to **feel home** in their neighborhood

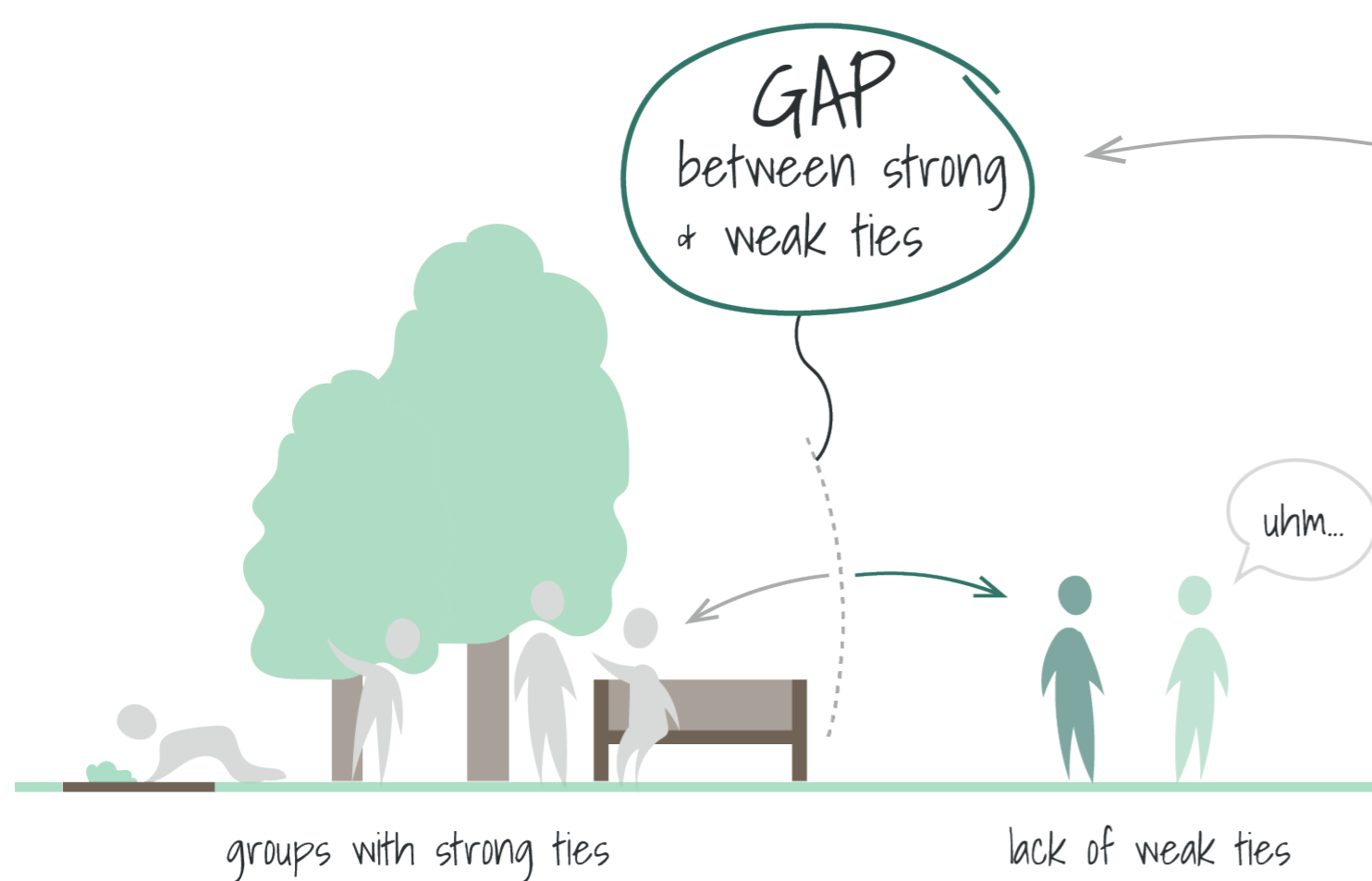


Research aim

Many cities in the Netherlands have poor areas that have to deal with a lot of social problems. One of the approaches that policymakers use to improve these areas is the so-called **gentrification approach**. The changes in spatial elements and social structure that gentrification implies, lead to a decreased or even a disappeared attachment to the neighborhood.

Research question

"How could the feeling home of residents in neighborhoods that are being transformed be improved?"



Feeling home in Spangen

A case study in Spangen, a gentrified neighborhood, is conducted to investigate how the feeling home manifests. The high involvement in Spangen is often the result of the effort of particular groups (strong ties) that are not representative for the neighborhood. The gap between strong and weak ties causes problems when a citizen's initiative is requested for public space and other residents are not being involved.

BuurThuis concept

BuurThuis is a pop-installation that makes participating in the development of a citizen initiative in public space more accessible. This enables people to **appropriate the place** and to explain their **needs towards the place**. Since both aspects are needed to feel home, BuurThuis presents a participation tool that stimulates the feeling home. The design principles describes how BuurThuis makes participating more accessible.

Design principles

1. A physical object with permanent appearance
2. Social distance early in the process
3. Presenting opinions of neighbors
4. Articulating social practices
5. Personalizing citizen involvement



Linda Smit
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Committee
Dr. I. J. Mulder
Dr. Ir. T. Jaskiewicz

